

THREE RIVERS SCHOOL DISTRICT
8550 NEW HOPE ROAD
GRANTS PASS, OR 97527

BOARD MEETING

REGULAR SESSION

February 7, 2011

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Three Rivers School Board of Directors met for a regular session, Wednesday, February 7, 2011 at Fruitdale Elementary, 1560 Bill Baker Way, Grants Pass, Josephine County, Oregon at 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT:

Dave Strahan, Chairperson of the Board, Zone IV
Bob Litak, Vice-Chairperson of the Board, Zone I
Jim Weaver, Member of the Board, Zone II
Leslie Meier, Member of the Board, Zone III
Ron Lengwin, Member of the Board, Zone V
Dan Huber-Kantola, Superintendent-Clerk
Debbie Breckner, Director of Human Resources
Doug Ely, Director of Student Services
John George, Director of Secondary Education
Peter Maluk, Director of Elementary Education

PRESENT

Also Present:

Kevin Marr, Lisa Cross/Accountant, Adam Hooper, Phil Biencourt, Van Grainger, Dustin Hill, Dawn Nowak, Helen Miljkovic, Linda DuBose, Kim Williams, Stu Burgess, Gale Barlow, Greg Baker, Leah Robinson, Carrie Linnemeyer, Marklan Linnemeyer, Dave Marks, Shane Jimerfield, Teena Neal, Jasper Neal, Michael Morris/Sodexo, Renee Hults, Steve Jones, Jonathan Gannett, Macario Linares, Owen Peterson, Lise VanBrunt/Madrona & Jerome Prairie Principal, Debbie Yerby, Claudia Dow, DJ Edmonds, Dave Bracken/Aramark, Kari O'Brien, Angie Kassab, Heidi Marks, Scott Perry/SOESD Superintendent, Carrie Simpson, Sharon Fisher, Kathy Cali, Peter Paul Mantague, Daniel Frankfort, Shauna Kenealey, Stacey Denton, Simon Hare/County Commissioner, Claire Anderson, Kai Schreiner, Matt Garrity, Wendy Patterson, Brian Hannagan, Michelle Bienick, Jaia Hannagan and Shelly Berry/Recording Secretary.

ALSO PRESENT

Board Chair Strahan called the meeting to order at 7:10 PM and led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

CALL TO ORDER

Madrona Principal Lise VanBrunt introduced this year's nominees for Madrona's Rotary Student of the Year: Ethan Hill, August Gannett, Dailia Linares and Erika Simpson. The students were nominated because they are always striving to be good citizens and excellent learners in school. She then announced that Erika Simpson was named the Rotary Student of the Year.

RECOGNITION OF
EXCELLENCE

Superintendent Huber-Kantola recognized Food Service Director Michael Morris for his outstanding dedication to the Toys for Tots Campaign. With his help they were able to provide toys to over 1300 children in Josephine County and the Rogue River-Wimer area.

Superintendent Huber-Kantola gave an update on the status of the Academic and Financial Sustainability work that has been going on. He shared data provided by COSA (Confederate Oregon School Administrators) association along with the

SUPERINTENDENT
REPORT

SUPERINTENDENT'S
REPORT (CONTINUED)

Oregon School Board's Association. The first slide presented shows that since 2003-2005 the percentage of Oregon's General Fund budget that is actually being allocated to schools has gone down on an annual basis. Last biennium was the first time in the history of Oregon that school districts and ESD's received less than 40% of the General Fund budget. He then reported that the percentage of school jobs lost over the last two years are about nine percent for teachers, eight percent of classified employees and nearly ten percent of the administrators in Oregon. Consequently, the class sizes have gone up. Elementary grades have experienced nearly a twelve percent increase; an eleven percent increase in middle school class sizes and close to sixteen percent increase in class sizes at the high school level. Back in 1997-98 Oregon was doing really well compared to the US average in what we spent on education compared to the national average (103.7%). Ten years later, we are significantly (7%) below the national average. With the numbers adjusted for inflation, back in 1990-91 we would spend the equivalent of \$4,760 per student; this last biennium that number is going to dip to \$3,700. Oregon funded a research project that said if a quality education model were to exist in Oregon, what would it cost to fund? The research said for the next biennium, 2011-2013, to do everything a quality education model calls for it would have to be funded at a cost of about \$8,747 per student. We will be about \$3,000 below that per student with our current budget projections.

With the Governor's proposed budget of \$5.56 million, which is lower than the last biennium, Three Rivers School District will have to cut nearly \$6.7 million from our budget next year in order to meet the requirements of having a budget that is zero based. The Sustainability Committee met again last Thursday night and were broken into five groups: Committed Programs, Support Services, Illinois Valley area, North Valley area and Hidden Valley area. On a per student basis they were given a budget, and were asked to 'shop' in their area for the different things we can have in our programs. For example, choices had to be made such as staffing ratios, co-curricular and discretionary dollars. They were then asked what items would first be restored if additional funding were to occur. They were also asked to look at the second year of the biennium which potentially face further reductions. It was a very painful and difficult task, but the group did a great job. Our next step will be to compile the information and the district administrative team will try to reconcile how it comes out.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

District Accountant Lisa Cross stated the estimated ending fund balance is \$840,000. There is still \$200,000 in contingency.

CONSENT AGENDA
APPROVED

Member Weaver moved to approve the Consent Agenda as submitted. Member Lengwin seconded and the motion passed 3-1. Member Litak abstained.

COMMUNITY
COMMENTS

Lincoln Savage teacher Dave Marks stated that the forecast numbers are terrifying. Rumors he has heard recently surround the proposed charter school and the amount of money possibly being spent. He has heard that the start up costs were between \$300-500,000 and asked if that was correct? Superintendent Huber-Kantola responded that yes they are. He stated that if our district was in such dire straits, even though in the long term it may present some additional income for our district, he can't see spending money in that area with the needs we have in the district and the possibility of teachers losing their jobs. Mr. Marks asked the board to seriously consider the required additional costs.

Ian Kassab, a parent of two students at North Valley High School read a prepared statement in which he stated that since 2003 the budget of the school district has continually gone down. He stated that tough decisions have to be made. Some are black and white, while others are difficult to decide, such as sports. The teachers, the administrators and the countless other people that keep our schools going have given

enough, yet year after year they are asked to give more. The district is looking at raising class sizes to larger than what we already have and asked how we plan to maintain educational excellence at that number? The board has four established goals. Any decision that is made should be in support of these goals. The first goal is to "Deliver a high quality academic program that meets the individual needs of Three Rivers School District students." Can that goal be met by continually decreasing the teachers and increasing the numbers that we have?

COMMUNITY
COMMENTS
(CONTINUED)

He stated it is not the board's fault, and respects that. The board is also looking at a Charter school and looking at it at face value the district needs one-half million dollars to get it going. "This is like saying I am the poorest I have ever been, but look at the new car I bought" and doesn't make any sense. He stated that he is supportive of a charter school, but questions whether this is the time to do it. The state will not raise taxes. It's focus is on job creation, and that's it. It will take two to three years before we will ever see more revenue come into this district. As far as No Child Left behind, he fears that some of our children are going to get left behind, which is an unacceptable standard.

Mr. Kassab stated that a couple of months ago Superintendent Huber-Kantola talked about having levy's in the past and how uneasy that made the district. He talked about the uneasiness of election night for those who were on the bubble of losing their jobs. He would like to ask those teachers if they would rather take a chance on having a job, a manageable class or the option of flat out losing their job. He agreed that we shouldn't fund education on a prayer and a dream, but waiting for the state to help us doesn't seem to be working either. He asked if the community is willing to support educational needs of this county?

Mr. Kassab stated that he does not have all the answers, however waiting for a solution to come seems to be more damaging to our kids. These are tough times for most and in the current direction it will be even tougher for our kids, but we must not become victims by using such adjectives. We must not confine ourselves to a box.

SAFETY AWARDS

Human Resources Director Debbie Breckner shared that she and Kristen Curdy (Benefits Administrative Assistant) went to the Roseburg Public Schools last week to discuss with them what they are doing in Worker's Comp. Their district is a little bit larger than us. They only have six 801 claims and we have close to thirty. We were interested in what they do that is different than what we do, and is there anything there we could be doing? Every dollar we spend on insurance that we don't need to spend is a dollar that is not getting to the classroom. The good news is they are not doing a whole lot that is terribly different. There are a few things we learned from them that we may be implementing, but not completely revamp our program. Both districts are doing similar things.

Director Breckner then had the Board draw the names of the three safety award winners for the month. The names selected were: Dennis Powell, Janie Pope and Karen Feigert.

TREA LICENSED
CONTRACT

Director Breckner reported that a month ago the teachers and the district reached a tentative agreement for a contract. At that time Director Breckner stated that she would bring the contract back to the Board for full ratification vote upon approval by both Southern Oregon Bargaining Council (SOBC) and approval by the local TREA membership. Approval from SOBC has taken place; approval from the local membership has not. It is scheduled to take place this Wednesday (2/9). It has been a scheduling issue in terms of getting the meeting scheduled for full ratification. She recognized the Board would prefer to approve the contract with the approval of both SOBC and the local membership, but unfortunately that did not occur. Director Breckner requested that the Board approve the contract contingent upon ratification by the local membership on Wednesday so that we can get the payroll process to begin.

TREA LICENSED
CONTRACT (CONTINUED)

Member Weaver moved to approve the contract. Member Litak seconded the motion.

Member Meier expressed concern over the fact that it was the Board's understanding that the contract would come before the Board after full ratification, but will move forward with the vote for the betterment of education. She asked Director Breckner to speak to what would happen if the contract was not approved tonight. Director Breckner responded that if the Board chose not to approve the contract tonight the vote would then be delayed until after ratification Wednesday, which would mean the Board would need to either schedule an additional meeting to hold the vote on that item or a delay on the vote until the next scheduled board meeting on March 7th. Because of the shortened payroll time lines in February and March it would be April before any deductions could be made from teachers checks.

Member Meier then asked what would happen if the Board approved it tonight and the contract was not ratified on Wednesday. Director Breckner responded that the Board would have to go back and look at unilateral implementation.

APPROVED

A vote was called for and the motion passed unanimously.

WOODLAND CHARTER
SCHOOL

Board Chair Weaver commented that in response to comments about the proposed charter school that we don't need it and can't afford it - he does not think that. We have excellent teachers, aides and administrators at our schools that provide a well-balanced education. We base so much attention to achieving adequate yearly progress (AYP) as defined by the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) law and to Oregon's annual Report Cards. The result is our kids are getting better at taking the tests than reading, writing and arithmetic. Member Weaver stated he likes Woodland's Waldorf idea because it offers choices and the ability to do things in a different way. The elementary schools in our district that are doing the best job of giving our kids the other stuff (visual arts, music) are our smaller schools, especially Williams and Applegate and would not like to see them adversely affected. We do not need another community school in the Williams/Applegate area. He would like to see a Waldorf-based charter centrally located to serve the whole district, perhaps at the Hidden Valley campus. Member Weaver believes such a school would draw students in to the district that would not otherwise attend our schools.

Member Weaver stated his final point is financial. He will not vote to approve the Woodlands Charter unless there is no net cost to the district. In our dire situation, this is not something we can afford to do at this point.

Member Weaver moved that we approve this charter for a term of three years with the conditions that there be no net cost to the district in any of the contracted years and that it be located in the Murphy area at Hidden Valley High School. Board Chair Strahan seconded to facilitate discussion.

Board Chair Strahan stated that he is in a position that is very distasteful. Through this process he has learned a lot about the Waldorf approach to education and finds it to be a very positive model with a lot to offer. He stated he has reservations that will lead him to not support this with a yes vote because every year with the budget cuts we keep asking the teachers to do more and they step up and do it. We have just completed nearly a year of negotiations and the outcome of that is that our teachers are going to ratify an eight percent decrease in their salary. We have 4800 kids that are going to be denied eleven instructional days because of our budget situation. We have teachers that could potentially lose their jobs, and their homes. Board Chair Strahan stated that he could not, in good conscience, approve any money to go to "a frill" that will benefit a

small number of kids, when you consider the other 4800 that we have to take care of and educate.

WOODLAND CHARTER
SCHOOL

Member Meier stated that personally this is one of the most difficult things she has had to face as a Board member. She has worked really hard to support and protect Applegate and the small schools. She believes there is a large number of people that we are not serving and are looking for an alternative. Member Meier is very impressed with the Woodland Charter proposal, there is a lot of passion and hard work behind it. Unfortunately it just comes down to money, and we just don't have it. She stated it makes her sad to have to vote no, but is also sad that we have lost eleven days of seat time for our kids and fifteen days of time for staff. It's a question of timing; if economic times were different it would be a wonderful proposal to give our kids a choice.

Member Litak asked in regards to procedure, are we not required to vote on the proposal that has been presented to us and do not have a chance to make a counter-proposal?

Federal Programs Director Peter Maluk responded that is his understanding as well. Oregon Statutes requires the board, if it denies the proposal, to make a statement that specifies, not necessarily the cost, but the effects it would have on our students in decreasing the quality of our programs that currently exist in our district. That is the way the decision has to be addressed.

MOTION FAILED

Board Chair Strahan called for a vote on the current motion on the table presented by Member Weaver. The motion failed 3-2 (Members Strahan, Meier and Lengwin opposing).

Superintendent Huber-Kantola clarified that as per Roberts Rules of Order there are currently two options. One is to approve the presentation as presented and the second is that it could die due to a lack of motion.

Member Meier moved to approve Woodland Charter School proposal as presented. Member Litak seconded.

Member Litak commented that the group did everything right and the charter is an effective alternative. He expressed concern on the affect it could potentially have on our small schools out there, but the largest hang-up is that it requires the district to lay out over \$500,000 next year. Our policy states that we are not to approve charter schools if they have an adverse impact on the rest of our school district. It is clear that this would have an adverse impact on the rest of our school district. The proposal before us is the one we have to vote on. He could possibly see things differently if we had a proposal that we could say does not have these adverse impacts. We cannot be closing schools, cutting days, cutting staff and so forth. As it is structured right now he will have to reluctantly say that he will not be able to support this.

Member Meier echoed Member Litak's statements and added the eleven days that we have cut this year adversely impact our students and having to cut more days and increase class sizes just furthers that impact on our existing students and can't, in good conscience, do that. It absolutely has an adverse impact on our other students.

MOTION FAILED

A vote was called for on the motion failed unanimously.

Woodland Charter representative Stacey Denton stated they intend to submit a revised proposal and requested that the district get back to them in writing by February 14th a response regarding the reasons as to the denial of their proposal. Superintendent Huber-Kantola agreed to accommodate their request.

SOESD Superintendent Scott Perry presented the 2011-12 Local Service Plan for approval. Mr. Perry stated that the law calls for Educational Service Districts to get board approval of

SOESD LOCAL
SERVICE PLAN/
RESOLUTIONS

SOESD LOCAL
SERVICE PLAN/
RESOLUTIONS
(CONTINUED)

the Local Service Plan. Southern Oregon Education Service District (SOESD) serves thirteen school districts in three counties (Josephine, Jackson and Klamath). They provide services in three major areas: Special Education, School Improvement and Technology/Media Support. The plan presented tonight is essentially the same as the one presented last year. The plan doesn't specify how much service in each area, it specifies kinds of service the ESD will be providing.

Superintendent Perry directed the Board's attention to page three of the plan that states in the event of a funding shortfall, services will be prioritized in close consultation with superintendents of the districts served by the ESD. SOESD, like our district, does not know where the funding picture will end up under this legislative session. Superintendent Perry reviewed some of the services utilized by our district:

- Special Education—purchases some services such as interpreters, brailleists working with students with visual impairments and paying for early intervention assessments. Their special education software is utilized. The most significant part of special education funding comes back in terms of cash that can be utilized at the district's discretion for special education services.
- Technology—The tech team was utilized quite heavily by our district last year to support us.
- School Improvement Services—Items such as mentoring and the Oregon Leadership Network.

APPROVED

Member Meier moved to approve the SOESD Local Service Plan and resolutions one, two and three. Member Lengwin seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

MAINTENANCE REPORT

Dave Bracken stated he had nothing to add to his written report unless there were questions. Member Weaver questioned how the testing was conducted to come up with the usage data for various appliance and equipment. Mr. Bracken responded the tests were conducted utilizing a "Kill a Watt Electricity Usage Monitor". Mr. Bracken then added that power bills have gone up 14% this month, as well as paying for the dam removal on the Klamath River, which is now included in our power bills.

Member Litak questioned how many personal heaters there were in the district, and the need for them? Mr. Bracken responded that it is a comfort issue. Some of our staff feels like it is too cold in their room, and if the heat is turned up for a complete zone, then the other three or four rooms get warmer as well. Member Litak feels that all of the rooms should be kept at a comfortable level with the equipment we have and eliminate the need for the personal heaters.

Teacher Van Grainger stated that he feels that some of the issue is due to the infrastructure. Different classrooms with the same heat source can vary 5-10 degrees.

Member Litak is hopeful that with some of the improvements that have been made in the district recently will help alleviate some of the heating issues.

Member Meier appreciated the information on the energy conservation efforts and applaud all of the schools and buildings that have managed to save more compared to last year. A couple of schools are quite high, for example Fruitdale, compared to other buildings and requested feedback as to why. Mr. Bracken responded that our biggest energy consumers are our two new schools, Lorna Byrne and Fruitdale. Most of the reason behind that is because they have air conditioning.

Member Litak asked about the issue with the duct work at Madrona. His understanding is that we are hiring an outside contractor to install new ducts. Mr. Bracken responded

that there were some air quality issues in there and they brought in a company to test the air. Through that testing it was found that there was a small minute amount of fiberglass. In researching where it was coming from it was determined that the ducts have insulation inside composed primarily of fiberglass and it could degrade over a period of time. The inside appears to be okay, but to err on the side of safety and health the duct work will be removed and replaced with flexible duct. The work will occur over the upcoming cut days. Member Litak asked if the work is something we are hiring a contractor to do, or are we able to do with our staff? Mr. Bracken responded that we could do it but we don't have the fabrication capabilities, and feels the contractors are a better option.

MAINTENANCE REPORT

Michael Morris stated that he had nothing to add to his written report unless there were questions. The Board let Mr. Morris know how much they appreciated his great report.

FOOD SERVICE REPORT

Adjourn at 9:30

Dave Strahan
Chairperson of the Board
THREE RIVERS SCHOOL DISTRICT

Dan Huber-Kantola
Superintendent-Clerk
THREE RIVERS SCHOOL DISTRICT