

Three Rivers School District Board of Directors met for a special session, Tuesday, September 2, 2014 at the District Administrative Office, 8550 New Hope Road, Grants Pass, Josephine County, Oregon at 6:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Danny York, Board Chair, Zone II (*Arrived late*)
 Kate Dwyer, Member of the Board, Zone I PRESENT
 Kara Olmo, Member of the Board, Zone III
 Ron Crume, Member of the Board, Zone IV
 Ron Lengwin, Vice-Chair of the Board, Zone V
 David Holmes, Superintendent-Clerk
 Debbie Breckner, Director of Human Resources
 Casey Alderson, Director of Secondary Ed., Athletics & Alt. Ed.

ABSENT: Dave Valenzuela, Director of K-8 Education & Technology ABSENT
 Stephanie Allen-Hart, Director of Student Services

Also Present: Patricia Krauss, Kim DeForest, Sally Clements, Keith Haley, ALSO PRESENT
 Dennis Misner/North Valley HS Principal, Debbie Yerby, John
 Chambers, Linda Kappen, Van Grainger, Julia Richardson,
 Steve Jones, Kathy Jones and Shelly Quick/Recording
 Secretary.

Board Vice-Chair Ron Lengwin called the meeting to order at 5:10 PM and led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance. CALL TO ORDER

Board Member Olmo made a motion to approve the September 2, 2014 Special Session agenda. Member Dwyer seconded the motion. Mr. Lengwin stated he would like to add 'New Business' and 'Unfinished Business' to the end of the agenda, before the executive session. Ms. Olmo stated that was not her motion. She has concerns with adding things that aren't on the agenda at the last minute. If there is an item of interest she would want the public to have an opportunity to attend. Mr. Lengwin restated the item could be on the following agenda. Ms. Olmo offered to amend her motion to approve the agenda with the addition of 'Future Agenda Items". Ms. Dwyer seconded and the motion passed unanimously. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Board Vice-Chair Lengwin presented the Consent Agenda. All items on the Consent Agenda may be approved by a single motion unless a member of the Board or the Superintendent requests that an item or items be removed and voted upon separately. CONSENT AGENDA

Member Olmo made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented—items A, B & C. Member Dwyer seconded the motion. Ms. Olmo requested that the board report forms reflect the recommendation (yes/no) from Superintendent Holmes. Mr. Lengwin called for a vote and the motion passed unanimously.

The board requested to vote on item 'D' separately—*Approval of Draft Minutes*. Mr. Lengwin asked if the board members wanted to vote on each meeting individually? Ms. Olmo responded that she didn't need to, she was okay with doing them as a

CONSENT AGENDA

group. Member Crume stated he read through the minutes and feels that he would need to abstain. His reason is because the minutes go back to January. He has found a couple of discrepancies—one meeting had him listed as not being present. For him to accurately approve the minutes he would need to go back and listen to the recording. Ms. Olmo spoke with the previous superintendent and there was so much going on that needed immediate attention due to the superintendent search and transition that they decided doing this as a chunk, after, made the most sense. Board Secretary Quick added that an additional person helped with the minutes utilizing the meeting recordings. Ms. Olmo stated that there are recorded meeting minutes to what actually happened versus what she recalls. If they actually needed to go back and figure out exactly what was said for some reason is what recorded the legal minutes—or are they approving the legal minutes? Ms. Quick added that when she is composing the meeting minutes she is listening to the recording—it's pretty much verbatim from the recording. Mr. Holmes suggested they make a motion to approve the minutes that were presented as a fair representation of the official recording of the meeting. Should discrepancies arise we could refer back to the actual recording. The idea that if push came to shove, and if there was some legal matter that you really could go back and verify something, the recording would still stand as the official record of the meeting. They would be approving the minutes as a reasonable representation of that recording. Ms. Quick commented that if there is something specific that is being questioned she can go back and listen to that portion of the tape again and make sure it is correct. Member Olmo made a motion to approve the minutes as presented as a fair representation of the recorded minutes. Member Dwyer seconded the motion. Member Crume stated that on April 15th it showed him as not being present, but he was. Ms. Dwyer had some tiny corrections—like somebody's name. Ms. Quick asked Ms. Dwyer email her those corrections and she would make the change before they are finalized and put on the web—as long as it doesn't change the content.

Board Vice-Chair Lengwin called for a vote and the motion passed 3-0 (Member Crume abstaining and Board Chair York absent).

CUSTOMER SERVICE/
PUBLIC RELATIONS
REPORT

Superintendent Holmes reported that he had two main goals for the district: increase the graduation rate and to improve customer service across the district. Graduation rate is a huge long-term issue to tackle. There will be an update on that in a few months. It appears customer service and public relations are getting put in the same category. He believes the reason for that is because as much as Ruth Kingsland at the Daily Courier has done a nice job of trying to have our district be seen in a very positive light, there has been a lot of negative press. Not just in the newspaper, but around the district, for a lot of things over the past recent history. One of his goals is to try to make sure that those messages become very positive in the future and not negative. He was told numerous times that there are many real estate agents in our area that suggest to homeowners that they purchase inside District 7 but not Three Rivers School District because that's a better place to send their children for education. That's a sad state of affairs when that's going on in the community. There are two pieces to this—there is customer service and public relations. From a customer service perspective he has met with each individual group of employees—admins, teachers and office managers. He has had the same conversation with all of them—improving the graduation rate and improving customer service. The point around customer service is that you only get one chance to make a first impression—and you don't every get the chance to change that. His conversation with all of those groups have been that we are here to serve the students and make self-reliant life-long learners. During that process we encounter all of the stakeholders that are associated with that student. That would be their parents, grandparents, neighbors, teachers, administrators, the directors and the board. When we encounter those people they make judgments about us, and in turn they make judgments about the district based on that encounter. We have over 500 people that work for the district and there are a lot

of very visible things that happen. When speaking to the teachers he explained that creating a team that's a triad between the teacher, the student and the parent and that team supports the success of that student. One of the philosophies he has is that when a kindergartener comes to us that the success of that kindergartener is about 34% on the parent and about 45% on the teacher and about 10% on the student. When they get to about sixth grade that shifts a bit and becomes about 30% of the success relies on the sixth grader and about 35% relies on the parent and about 35% relies on the teacher. By the time that student is ready to graduate about 90% of the success of that student is reliant on the student because they are just month or weeks away from walking across the stage and have to be successful members of society with no support. Also as a teacher:

- What does our greeting of parents look and feel like?
- Phone calls, emails and notes home
- Accurate and timely student grades, reports and feedback
- Great on-going communication and support (sooner rather than later) - *all roles, not just teachers.*

In reviewing old board notes from years ago he gets the idea that we have not done a very good job of communicating with stakeholders, asking for input and listening to that input when it's given. Examples include things such as schedules, adopting instructional materials and making up the school calendar. It is his experience that with taxpayers, parents, community members and stake holders—this is their district and when we have the attitude that we know better and we set the rules and do things to you, it doesn't go over well and is not looked at very positively. But when you listen to those people and get their input you make better judgments long term that represent that represent the wishes of everybody to the best of your ability. You can't make decisions to make everybody happy all of the time, but you can do a much better job making most of the people happy more of the time and represent what this community wants us to be doing with their students. His conversation with office managers was just a bit different, because with office managers they have the ability to be in the front office when new parents and students walk into that school. They are the face of that school. The same thing with principals and administrators. As an administrator or principal—what does that interaction with parents look like? It is important that we send a message ongoing that we want to hear from you—but we don't only want to hear from you when things go bad. We want to hear when things go well too because people need to hear that they are doing things well. Because when they hear they are doing things well they are more likely to replicate the good things later and more often.

Mr. Holmes plans on conducting a "How are we doing" survey to be linked on school home pages as well as sent in an at home communication. "How are we doing" comment boxes in the school front offices—although not sure about this one yet. He wants to make sure he has enough trusting relationship with the buildings and employees that it doesn't come across as the superintendent trying to catch them doing something bad. He does not want to illicit negative things. He also knows that this district, from an internet access saturation point, is pretty low so he can't just rely on electronic means of communication. There needs to be a way to get it in the hands of everybody. He is going to work on it and come back to the board potentially at the workshop in October with a rough draft. He definitely wants to find a way to illicit conversations and input from a variety of stakeholders.

Mr. Holmes explained that we need to be in control of our public relations. As part of that he has carved out three hours of district office support time to have a lady that is a former newspaper reporter and has a degree in English. He passed out a draft document of a four-color tri-fold that can be passed out to real estate agents that are looking to find homes for perspective students in our county. As soon as we get the official release of our test scores from the state they will be included. Historically they have been very favorable in our county compared to some of the other schools. She is putting together a four-page

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newsletter. That will be linked on the district home page. She will support the principal's doing like things. His hope would be that in the very near future we will be very much in control. Ruth (Daily Courier) will get inundated with all kinds of good things that are happening in the Three Rivers School District.

Mr. Holmes then proposed to the board that immediately following the Pledge of Allegiance and the approval of the agenda that we have a piece called "Say Something Positive." The way it works is each board member has one thing to say that's positive that they have observed over the past month in the district. He would like to have it not be particularly focused on athletics. He would like it to be about something they have attended or something they have seen in the district. He will then add something then open it up to the audience. It should go fairly quickly and it sets the tone for meetings. It's really hard to be antagonistic and negative in the audience if you just went through ten minutes of great things that are happening in the school district. There are a lot of really good things going on here and his hope is that as we move through this school year they are focusing on the good things that are going on and celebrating the successes. There is always a way to have a professional conversation about things that aren't going quite so well and need to be talked about. Unless he hears that they are not up for it—it will be included on the next agenda and we will give it a try.

Ms. Holmes shared that there will be board reports monthly from every principal and director. They won't be lengthy, but will highlight things that are going on or coming up that they might need to know that would be important to them as board members. All administrators will also be present at all business board meetings. His goal to move the work shop meetings to be more of an informal conversation around topics and just discussions and have the business meeting be business meetings with an agenda and taking action. He does not want the work shop to get sidetracked into a lot of the business stuff. He believes, based on his experience, that's a very doable scenario.

Member Crume shared an interaction with a community member that had a problem at one of the schools and the positive outcome it had by working with the school administrator and district director. It was a perfect display of customer service by our district staff.

FOOD SERVICE UPDATE

Director Debbie Breckner introduced the new Sodexo Food Service Manager Brian Hershey. He has only been in the district four days. The district is fortunate to have a positive partnership with Sodexo in that while their hire is their choice, they allowed her to participate in the interviews and give feedback on different candidates.

Ms. Breckner then provided the board with food service updates. Where the district ended in June is not the ideal place desired for food service. She has been working with Lisa Cross and Sodexo to come up with a plan for the next school year. Knowing that if the district does nothing the likelihood of us being where we're at may exist. This does not work for her, the board or the students and staff of our school district. They have taken some actions already this summer to make some changes. The approach to improving the food service program and what's in front of kids and maximizing our resources is built on a two-prong approach. One of those is cost reductions, which they made by reducing some days for some of the food service staff. They have worked with the union and let them know that she will be looking every quarter at the meal hours per hour of food service staff and will be making adjustments every quarter as needed. The idea that we served 67,000 meals last year and maintain the same amount of staff seems like an unlikely situation. Brian Hershey's focus will be on how the district can enhance the program. He has some ideas. He comes to the district from Idaho. One of the things that impressed her about Brian was his ability to take commodity kinds of foods and turn it into things that look more homemade. As well as improving on local partnerships to improve what our community has to offer. They met with the food service staff last week

and talked to them for about an hour explaining where the district is financially. What they have read in the paper versus what is reality. Also talking with them about changes that were coming. With all of the information they received on Thursday, the staff seemed to leave with an air of excitement—even though there are some big changes coming. They put in some pretty black and white rules for authorizing extra time. She then spent forty minutes talking with them about customer service as well. Because likely all of our kids come in to the cafeteria and she wants that experience to be a warm and welcoming one—not a confrontational one. She reviewed some additional information from her presentation to the food service staff regarding customer service. She stated that as of today the food service program is about \$1,500 to the black. Her plan is to update the board every month as to where they are financially. It likely will be a month behind due to when the month-end figures come in. A couple of things that need to continue to happen is that they need to sit down with Lisa Cross and the accounting folks at Sodexo and make sure they are measuring apples to apples—so that they don't get to June and find they are measuring something differently and numbers don't match. Also, once Brian is comfortable, they are going to set up a meeting to go and meet building principals. They have some feedback about how the program has gone in the last several months that they would like to see changed. They will be doing what they can to increase revenue.

FOOD SERVICE
UPDATE

(Board Chair Danny York arrived at 5:52 PM)

Board Chair York apologized for arriving late. He was broke down in Cave Junction.

Board Chair York then called for future agenda items. He requested an update from the transportation committee and Member Dwyer asked what the deadline is to get things on the agenda? Mr. York explained they meet the Tuesday before the board meeting to finalize the agenda. He passed along Ms. Dwyer's email regarding the Library. Ms. Dwyer is interested in doing some strategic planning for the grant as well as, separately from that, looking at where we stand in terms of the district's adherence to the Senate Bill for continuous library improvement and how we are doing as a district.

FUTURE AGENDA
ITEMS

Superintendent Holmes responded that's something they can talk about. How much lead time they need to gather that information and have an adequate discussion at the board level in terms of where we stand and how to proceed. Transportation and library on the radar—a possibility for the October workshop of business meeting. Transportation is a big thing. He believes the district spends more dollars per student mile than anybody in the state. It's worth while to continue to have that conversation and look as things transpire and change. There a large budgetary considerations if improvements could be made.

Board Chair York recessed the meeting to Executive Session at 6:00 PM.

RECESS

Board Chair York called the meeting into Executive Session under ORS 192.660(2)(d) "Bargaining". At 6:05 PM.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Board returned to open session and Board Chair York adjourned the meeting at 6:45 PM.

ADJOURN