

**MINUTES**

**Joint Work Session Of The  
Corvallis School District 509J Board of Directors  
1555 SW 35<sup>th</sup> Street  
Corvallis, OR 97333  
And The  
Portland Public Schools Board of Directors  
501 North Dixon Street  
Portland, OR 97227-1804**

**I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

Corvallis Board Chair Rieck called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. in the Corvallis Depot, 700 SW Washington, Corvallis. The secretary recorded those present as listed below.

<p><u>CORVALLIS BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT</u> Kari Rieck, Chair Helen Higgins Matt Donohue Anne Schuster</p>	<p><u>PORTLAND BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT</u> Dan Ryan, Co-Chair Bobbie Regan, Co-Chair</p>
<p><u>CORVALLIS STAFF PRESENT</u> Dawn Tarzian, Superintendent Julie Catala, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent</p>	<p><u>PORTLAND STAFF PRESENT</u> Dr. Vicki Phillips, Superintendent Eileen Flinn, Legislative Assistant Lorna Fast Buffalo Horse, Principal, Roosevelt Spanish-English International School</p>

**II. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Corvallis Superintendent Tarzian briefly reflected on the visit with the Portland board members and staff earlier that day, noting the realization that their districts are dealing with the same issues, have the same philosophical beliefs, real estate issues, and population issues (families having fewer children).

**III. INFORMATION SHARING REGARDING ISSUES AND INITIATIVES COMMON TO BOTH DISTRICTS**

A summary of Superintendent Tarzian’s comments:

- Visits by Portland Public Schools board co-chairs and staff were made to Lincoln School, Franklin School and Corvallis High School.

- Lincoln and Franklin Schools were selected because they are both K-8 schools, one which is only three days old, the other which has been in place for a very long time and has a principal that has been a K-8 principal for 10 years.
- Portland Superintendent Phillips has asked Franklin Principal Mike Strowbridge if he would consider being part of a design team in Portland.

A summary of comments by those present from Portland:

- Lincoln didn't feel like a "new" school – it felt so wonderful there.
- Portland also is going out for a local operating levy – \$33 million. A lot of work went into the decision to go for the levy.

Portland Superintendent Phillips and Co-Chairs Regan and Ryan shared information about the funding shortfall Portland is dealing with. They touched briefly on the cuts and the effects they have had on the district. The Portland business community has come forward to help bridge the shortfall.

A summary of comments by those present from both Corvallis and Portland:

- Some people believe that more is spent out of the central office than really is.
- Corvallis's community budget guide is excellent.
- The Chalk Board project has taken a very complex explanation about funding and put it into an easy-to-understand graphic, both for funding within the district and across the state. Bi-partisan respect is possible primarily because the business community is the primary backer. There may be a significant percentage that doesn't agree with the numbers but they support the project.
- In both Portland and Corvallis, there are many community members without children; districts need to help them understand the importance of adequate school funding.
- Corvallis's Senator Morse has put together an excellent presentation on tax reform. It's a non-partisan look at taxes that does a good job of demonstrating the loss of funding for public education and the volatility of Oregon's income tax system.
- Oregonians value education but some ask why Oregon students' test scores are so good if education funding is so bad.
- It would be good if the people who don't have kids could look at education as a productive investment in the society vs. a non-productive investment (in jails and welfare).
- Portland tackled pretty tough issues and helped schools rethink how they did business. Had a multitude of conversation with staff, parents and the community, but were clear on where the district was going to go.
- Some decisions, such as closing schools, are gut-wrenching.

A summary of comments by Portland Superintendent Phillips:

- Portland Public Schools are moving toward K-8, although there are middle schools in some areas. The district is large enough to accommodate both K-8s and middle schools.
- The goal is to have great neighborhood schools in every part of the city and a great system of choice.
- Want to strategically look at services for English as a Second Language, special education, etc.
- The cost savings isn't about K-8 or middle schools, it's about size – what is saved by co-locating services. But one has to consider achievement effectiveness as well.
- Different communities are comfortable with different things.

Principal Fast Buffalo Horse shared demographics of Roosevelt High School. Dr. Phillips pointed out that Roosevelt has been historically an underperforming school but this past year all schools on the campus posted double-digit gains in several academic areas.

#### **IV. ADJOURNMENT**

Corvallis Superintendent Tarzian expressed appreciation to the visitors from Portland Public Schools for their visit as well as for their deep commitment to students and their achievement.

There being no further business before the board, Corvallis Board Chair Rieck adjourned the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

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Kari Rieck, Chair

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Dawn Tarzian, Superintendent

Prepared by: Julie Catala

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