

MINUTES

Special Meeting of the

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Corvallis School District 509J
 1555 SW 35th Street
 Corvallis, OR 97333

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair O’Malley called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. in the Central Office Board Room, 1555 SW 35th Street, Corvallis. The secretary recorded those listed below as present.

<p><u>BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT</u> Nell O’Malley, Chair Kari Rieck, Vice Chair Helen Higgins Blake Rodman Matt Donohue Donna Keim Sara Gelser</p>	<p><u>EXECUTIVE STAFF PRESENT</u> Dawn Tarzian, Superintendent Jim Hogeboom, Assistant Superintendent Mary McKay, Student Services Director Jeanne Holmes, Human Resources Director</p>
<p><u>STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT</u> Lynn Hector, Corvallis High School</p>	<p><u>PRINCIPALS PRESENT</u> Mike Strowbridge, Franklin K-8</p>

A quorum was present and due notice had been published.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair O’Malley led the group in the pledge of allegiance.

III. PUBLIC TESTIMONY

Payton James-Amberg, 6240 SW Trellis Drive, Corvallis, urged the Board to accept factors other than a strict birth date deadline in determining kindergarten entry. She feels that her daughter, born three days past the deadline, will not have an appropriate and reasonable alternative in 2008 if denied

kindergarten entry. She understands other districts use different criteria for entry though she acknowledged use of the birth date was fair. She and her husband both earned doctorates in biological sciences and attended Massachusetts Institute of Technology and she feels it is reasonable to expect that their children might be academically gifted. She does not want her daughter to begin kindergarten in 2009 and then skip a grade nor does she want her to be bored. She spoke to the ability to attend other districts, home or private school but really does not want to pursue those as she pays taxes here for education and the District loses the revenue and her parent involvement, possibly for many years if they like the situation. She noted that most other policies in the District are mindful and respectful of the individuality of students but not this one. While she acknowledged that the current policy may be the most economical to the District, she reminded them that they work for the community.

Arnold Larson, 4037 NW Elmwood Drive, Corvallis, expressed his view that the Board could be better communicators with the public. He cited an example of a co-worker who, after reading a Gazette-Times article, felt a Board decision was the result of a student comment, which was not the case. He also elaborated on an e-mail suggestion that he had made earlier to the Board stating that he believes it is not a necessity to assess a certain amount of money each time; a levy could be set up to cover variations in State revenue.

IV. COMMITTEE/BOARD MEMBER ITEMS

Vice Chair Rieck reported that she and Director Gelser had attended Peace Jam on Sunday. She reported the event was just as great as it was last year. About 250 students from Oregon and surrounding states attended; up from about 100 last year. About 50% of the attendees were from Corvallis.

Vice Chair Rieck also reported that she, Director Keim, and Superintendent Tarzian attended the Oregon School Boards Association (OSBA) regional meeting. She will be distributing some information received regarding upcoming legislative sessions and noted that OSBA has an agenda survey they would like them to complete. She encouraged members to look at today's OSBA clipping service. The articles have a focus on funding.

Director Gelser reported that she discussed with Ken Pastega of the Pepsi-Cola Bottling Plant regarding a study local distributors undertook of carbonated beverages consumed at school, which they found averaged one a week per student. He will provide her a copy of the report that she can distribute to Board members.

V. DISCUSSION AND DECISION REGARDING NEXT STEPS IN FACILITIES ALIGNMENT

A. SUPERINTENDENT'S TIMELINE

Superintendent Tarzian presented her timeline to the Board for review and adoption, which she had amended slightly since its presentation April 10.

She wanted the Board and the community to understand that the timeline was developed as a way to address the decisions regarding the CHS Master Plan, decisions that would be made this year for implementation in 2007-08. This remaining CHS Master Plan decision is one of the four key decisions developed at the December 12, 2005 work session. The other three key decisions to be addressed and implemented this year were:

1. Remaining bond dollars
2. Inavale
3. District transfer policy revisions

Superintendent Tarzian clarified that the question is not "Where will Franklin be next year (07-08)?" but "Will Franklin be at its present location in 2007-08?" meaning that the decision could very well be to leave it in its present location for that time period.

MOTION #65: Director Rieck moved, Director Rodman seconded, to accept Superintendent Tarzian's timeline for Board decision-making regarding the CHS Master Plan as it relates to Franklin K-8. The motion passed unanimously. (See Supplemental Item #IX-2 in the official 2005-06 Board minutes.)

Director Donohue agreed to look into additional library Comment Corner times should the Board want to make itself more available for feedback on this topic.

B. FRANKLIN SCHOOL AND PROGRAM AND RESOURCE REVIEW (PR2) COMMITTEE SCENARIOS

Board members offered up questions and information they would like to consider when discussing the future of the Franklin building and the possible re-location of its current program. Ideas brought forth included:

- Would like to hear the answers to the questions prior to hearing the District's recommendation
- Given its size, where else in the District would the Franklin K-8 program fit?
- What is the historical experience of Franklin K-8's waiting list?
- What do parents find most beneficial, K-8, core knowledge, etc?
- What does staff see in the scenarios as far as their interrelatedness, preclusion of other scenarios?
- What would the impact of decisions be to the Franklin program?
- How many dollars will be freed up and what will they be used for?
- Strategy regarding K-8 at Lincoln and Franklin, how will they be different or the same?
- Have one scenario make use of the Harding site. Do not want to be remiss as have been

hearing the community mention

- Are there any leftover bond dollar commitments to Franklin K-8 and Inavale K-8?
- How much leftover bond money would be available if Franklin stayed or moved?
- Would be more comfortable if Business Services Director Rodemen, Auxiliary Services Director Wright or legal counsel would state what the District is able to use bond dollars for. Can they be used for Harding?
- Given rationale that others have named, would like Superintendent Tarzian's ranking of scenarios.
- Would like to know impact of capacity in District for the different scenarios
- Would like what information was distributed regarding bond passage: anything from District, county, etc, who promised what and when, absolute promises, conditional promises, etc.

Superintendent Tarzian responded that her staff intends to deliver to the Board by Friday at the latest answers to tonight's questions and the recommendation. She stated that the District has a bucket of uncommitted leftover bond dollars that will not be committed to Tier 3 until these decisions are made. She brought to the Board's attention that use of one-time money is different if it incurs ongoing costs versus one that does not. She noted that the use of the Harding building would be addressed as one of the scenarios. She expressed her wish that she could say that one idea would make everyone happy but she does not see one and everyone needs to be aware of that.

Chair O'Malley advised the Board that it is important not to just react to communications received. She advised them to listen but consider the whole picture. She asked that members keep a phone log for perspective.

Director Rieck suggested that the Long-Range Facilities Master Plan reflect the timing of actual decisions as they are deviating from the 5-year lag to address Franklin after the completion of Phase I. Superintendent Tarzian pointed out that there are leftover funds from Phase I which would enable portions of Phase II to be completed without an additional bond.

Director Gelser cautioned that if CHS's athletic fields are not finished with the leftover bond funds that there are those in the community who would feel a campaign promise was broken, even though it was not called for until Phase II.

Director Higgins suggested that the Board/District find a way to make the community understand the benefits of tradeoffs in the District.

VI. LOCAL OPTION LEVY

Director Gelser announced that Director Keim would replace her as the Board liaison to the levy political action committee (PAC) as she would be leaving the Board in the fall due to her legislative duties. She added that by stepping aside she is not rescinding her commitment to work on the levy.

Director Gelser suggested that the Board prioritize the needs of the levy money; then Business Services Director Kathy Rodeman could assist in determining the rate. She suggested that the Budget Committee assist with this after hearing Superintendent Tarzian's opening review at the first upcoming budget meeting. Superintendent Tarzian could make recommendations for increasing student achievement. She stated the process would be akin to that of establishing a cut list last year, only in reverse.

Board members named various dates and orders of events to achieve their refining, communication, and organizational goals regarding the levy. Items included considerations for the PAC, voter's pamphlet statement, "As I See It" column, communication with county commissioners as they are also considering a levy, and time for other organizations to consider endorsement.

Director Donohue requested all known or predicted deficits in the foreseeable future, list of items that would enhance student achievement, and the "holes" in funding. He added that he does not want anyone to think that the District wants to develop or get some more stuff for kids to do, the education system is breaking.

Director Gelser stated her view that after the Board determines the rate and the items the levy would support that it be turned over to the PAC. Director Donohue expressed that he wanted to make sure there was constant Board presence advocating during the campaign.

Director Rieck requested that Business Services Director Kathy Rodeman provide information on the differences and implications of the governor's various proposals.

Chair O'Malley summarized that the following components would be handled by those listed:

- Communication Plan: Directors Gelser, Keim, and Donohue
- Recruiting two board members to be on PAC organizing subcommittee: Director Keim
- Planning Board Calendar and Prioritizing: Chair O'Malley, Vice Chair Rieck, and Superintendent Tarzian

In looking at the Board's full agenda over the coming months, Superintendent Tarzian suggested a pending list be established to handle requests for any additional items as a way to prioritize meeting times. She also added that one would not have to go far in talking with parent clubs and supporters of athletics to garner a list of funding "holes" and pressure points; they could easily identify them. She stated that she would like to underscore that there is a huge crosscut in the community that understands the needs.

VII. ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Assistant Superintendent Hogeboom reported that his department has a myriad of projects underway:

- History Live: Schools met who had been piloting in grades 3-5 and decided to adopt. Really engages students with simulations and hands-on learning, not just textbook. Has staff development component; will send six people down to San Diego at their expense except for transportation for four-day training during summer. They will then train others here.
- District literacy: Next year will pilot two programs at every school at three different grade levels (K-1, 2-3, or 4-5) to result in thoughtful decision for a K-5 or K-6 adoption
- ELL (English Language Learner): Summit tomorrow, determine where going with ELL and dual language. Trying to get District vision, bringing in facilitator who is expert in ELL. ELL in a.m., dual immersion in p.m.
- Textbook adoption: math for high school and possibly middle school if have enough funding: Superintendent Tarzian had set aside money last year through the add-back list for literacy. Will be looking at piloting textbooks.

He also announced that Franklin K-8 will be holding their annual Medieval Festival tomorrow.

VIII. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Superintendent Tarzian announced that Crescent Valley High School would be holding an art festival. She also informed the Board that the Strategic Leadership Team (23 community business leaders) would be meeting to develop and implement an E3 (Employers for Educational Excellence) literacy program at the middle school level. They have made the commitment to involve their employees. She expects implementation in October with as many as 50 volunteers on a weekly basis. She is serving as the co-chair along with Julie Manning, helping to organize local businesses in providing the school volunteers. Assistant Superintendent Hogeboom will be preparing a report for this group on the present state of middle school literacy, reading and writing.

IX. BOARD COMMENTS

Vice Chair Rieck stated that she has noted a perception that there is not subject alignment in the District; she would like to see communication to the public in the areas of social studies, math, and reading.

Chair O'Malley commented that she was very excited to hear about staff development as it has been reduced as a result of Measure 5; being able to discuss curriculum is great. She noted that History Live is a hit with her daughter.

X. REPORT ON POLICY JEBA – EARLY ENTRANCE (REGARDING KINDERGARTEN EARLY ENTRY) (See Supplemental Item #VII-28 in the official 2005-06 Board Minutes.)

Assistant Superintendent Hogeboom introduced the topic by stating that in 2004 the Board voted to keep the Early Entry policy in place, with a review in two years, which is tonight's report. It has now been in effect for 5 years. He related that much information and research was gathered for the review in 2004. He did a bit of additional research of which he referred to three items of interest related to information he found: cut off dates used, legally defensible criteria, and standardized testing as criteria. He reported that since February 2005 a total of 18 early entry requests had been made. He noted that requests are falling off each year and that most families accept the policy. The committee who reviewed the policy is still in agreement to retain it. Their concerns:

1. Standardized tests are hard to be reliable when the students are so young
2. Time and cost of testing
3. Fairness, those who get tested are those who seek
4. Harmful affects of starting too soon, hard to predict
5. Prior policy that allowed testing: only a fairly low number got in, those that did not felt a sense of failure, setting a bad tone for school

Assistant Superintendent Hogeboom also recommended maintaining the policy.

Chair O'Malley noted that if exceptions are made to the birth date criteria. classes could have students that are fifteen months apart. She added that her own children were very near the deadline but they have been served well.

Director Gelser commented that the Board had dissenting opinions on this before. She related that she herself entered early and that she does not feel damaged. She gave an example of twins born on each side of the deadline and noted that there is no leeway in this policy. She added that those who can pay to go to a private kindergarten can then enter the District the following year as a first grader, which makes for an inequity. Testing in years past for early entry covered what would be known at the end of kindergarten year. She trusts that teachers and parents can choose correctly.

Director Donohue questioned whether the District had ever considered testing students who fell within a range of the entry date. Superintendent Tarzian responded that the State of Oregon passed a statute that kindergarten students need to be 5 years old by September 1 and 6 years old for first grade, it went on to allow exceptions by districts. If there is a window for testing, there will always be someone who is born the day before. She noted that the district could also have students who might be developmentally disabled or for other reasons are a year or two behind that enroll at 5 years old. She questioned that if the District enrolls them without a test, why should the District test others for enrollment? She reasoned that if 18 professionals (including the District's kindergarten teachers) who

from experience have seen many children daily over the decades say this is best, why not take their word as well as others who have researched?

Director Keim voiced that she has three children with fall birthdays so she can relate. She pointed out that when students reach the teenage years the huge issues are the social aspects, puberty, driving, etc. Her children are now the older ones because they were “held back.” She feels they are much more comfortable than they would have been had they entered early.

Director Rodman added his endorsement of the policy, noting that from his teaching experience he has seen that children can be cognitively ready but not developmentally.

Superintendent Tarzian related that the former policy included a time frame window to identify students who were eligible for testing for early entry. After the testing, more families were denied entry than were accepted. The criteria included a publisher-adopted test for readiness and an opportunity to be observed with other children and with a teacher. It was time-consuming and expensive. She did not have the opportunity to speak with parents of past early entry students to see how they were doing.

Vice Chair Rieck voiced that when this policy was questioned she spent a lot of time studying policies from other states. She found that most had gone to the birth date deadline. Some would not even allow parents to hold their students back for sports reasons citing too large of an age span in classrooms. With all the research she did, she ended up supporting a very specific birth date deadline for entry.

Director Donohue stated that he now understands the issue and can support the current policy.

Director Gelsner agreed that the presentation was well done and that she respects others’ positions. All other directors voiced their support of the current policy. Vice Chair Rieck clarified that this was a report; that the Board need not take any action.

XI. ADJOURN

Being no further business, Chair O’Malley adjourned the meeting at 9:04 p.m.

Kari Rieck, Chair*

Dawn Tarzian, Superintendent

*Chair at the time the minutes were submitted for adoption.

Prepared by Jolene Shute

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