

**LEBANON COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
April 26, 2018, 6:00 PM**

Santiam Travel Station

750 S. Third Street, Lebanon, OR 97355

MEETING MINUTES

The following individuals were present:

Tom Oliver, Chair

Nick Brooks, Vice Chair

Richard Borden, Member

Michael Martin, Member

Dr. Robert Hess, Superintendent

Bo Yates, Assistant Superintendent

Linda Darling, Director, Business Services

Jennifer Meckley, Director, Human

Resources and Community Relations

Kim Grousbeck, Director, Classified

and Employee Relations

The meeting minutes were recorded by Executive Secretary Maura Kwiatkowski.

1. WELCOME

Chair Tom Oliver called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

2. AUDIENCE COMMENTS

Mr. Jason Pottorf addressed the Board. He indicated he has students enrolled in the District, and he currently volunteers at Riverview School. He would like to present some observations and ask questions of the Board.

Mr. Pottorf said Oregon is 21st of the 50 states in education funding, and we are at the bottom for instructional time, student-to-teacher ratio, and graduation rates. Since 2008, the State dropout rate increased from 3.4 percent to just under 4 percent. He indicated the Lebanon School District dropout rate has increased from 3 to 5.5 percent over the same period, and he believes this trend is accelerating. In addition our graduation rate has decreased 10 percent. Following the method calculation change, this rate increased by 10 percent, which is a net flat result.

Mr. Pottorf said the District's middle school ELA is below the state average for middle schools. Our staff is some of the lowest paid in the state. How can we improve if we do not offer appropriate compensation? Good, longtime teachers are leaving the District, and he is troubled by this turnover. Mr. Pottorf respectfully asked when the Board will take the steps necessary to move the District in the right direction. Given state and

District performance, why are we modifying the hiring policy? Why is there a rush to move forward with a new alternative school? Mr. Pottorf also asked the Board to fill the Zone 1 vacancy as soon as possible.

3. LEBANON EDUCATION SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS ASSOCIATION 2018–20 CONTRACT

Mike Martin made a motion to ratify the contract as presented, which was seconded by Nick Brooks, and unanimously approved by the Board.

4. SCHOOL CONFIGURATION: CASCADES, GREEN ACRES

Rob Hess reported the District spent months looking at different strategies to address overcrowding and academic challenges at Seven Oak Middle School, particularly as it affects 6th grade students there. Oliver noted the parent desire to have 6th grade added at the K-5 schools, particularly Green Acres. This offers consistency at elementary schools and self-containment for the 6th graders who attend Seven Oak.

Martin said he did not believe the Board made the decision to add 6th grade at all elementaries. They did agree 6th grade at Cascades was a good model, and Green Acres came into consideration afterward. Hess noted that Green Acres does have the two rooms required for 6th grade. Martin expressed concern about Special Education (SPED) students; will they have the option to move to a school with a 6th grade, in an environment of 20 students? Hess advised there would be no exclusions at any school. The District is looking for one self-contained school at Seven Oak for SPED and behavioral situations. Martin believes the elementary school is better for SPED 6th graders, especially if class sizes are smaller.

Hess reminded the Board that the goal is to decrease 6th graders at Seven Oak, and class sizes would be lower there as well. We want to reduce 6th grade class sizes throughout the entire District.

Brooks stated that this plan appears to be a good step for 2018-19. It does not necessarily limit us, but we may need a different approach at some point. He is glad to see the smaller class sizes, since Grades 6 through 8 are a critical time for students. He believes this proposal will be helpful.

Brooks asked about the impact of open enrollment on Seven Oak. Hess advocated keeping open enrollment closed at Seven Oak and reviewing this for future years.

Martin asked whether the families of incoming 5th graders are being made aware this 6th grade may be only a year or two. Hess indicated the Board needs to decide the timeline. Martin said parents want stability and to know about future configurations.

Hess pointed out that the facilities study will play a significant role in future direction. Projected enrollment numbers are highest at Seven Oak for the next two years. Yates

recommends a minimum three-year cycle. The facility plan will be complete, and enrollment numbers are projected to begin declining. Oliver suggested we implement the current configuration process and review how well it works at end of the 2018-19 school year. The Board have further conversations about what the future model looks like. We do not want to be changing school configuration every year, but nor do we want to commit now to how long 6th grade may be available at Green Acres or Cascades.

Brooks agreed now is not the ideal time to make a long-term commitment on configuration. We are not looking out five years now, but the Board will eventually need to do so. Martin stressed that we need to make clear to parents where we are now and that this configuration may be for just one year.

Borden pointed out that at a previous meeting, the Board was looking only at Cascades for 6th grade, although having it at Green Acres is positive. Hess indicated these are the two schools that have room for 6th grade without spending money on facilities.

Oliver noted that when the Board began this process, we knew we would have short- and long-term solutions and that the short-term solutions would not preclude long-term direction.

Hess advised that without 6th grade at elementary schools, Seven Oak would have 200 6th grade students. With 6th grade at the elementary schools, this number would be reduced to 125 to 150.

Upon motion, duly seconded, the Board unanimously approved the addition of 6th grade at Cascades and Green Acres Elementary Schools.

5. CREATION OF LEBANON ACADEMY, A DEDICATED ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION SCHOOL

Hess presented the memorandum and accompanying materials related to the creation of Lebanon Academy, a dedicated alternative education school. He also referred to the statistics quoted during Audience Comments – the dropout rate and the graduation rate. Hess advised we currently have 133 students enrolled in alternative programs, and this number increases to 160 if Beyond LHS is included. Over 150 students have been in and out of alternative programs this year. He noted that when students learn for less than a full school day, the District's ADM is only for the time they attend. The Lebanon Academy model offers services and the collection of resources, as well as an additional layer of accountability.

Oliver pointed out this is a significant change on a tight timeframe; but it is a refinement and expansion of programs and services we already offer. The majority of existing alternative program students would attend Lebanon Academy. The model does allow access to more funding for these students and a better level of service with

improved outcomes. The question is whether the Board agrees conceptually with moving in this direction.

Borden noted the financial upside but asked about the pitfalls. Hess said the upside is more services for more students, particularly at-risk students, as it increases accountability. Hess stated that if we cannot recoup additional staff cost with additional revenue collection, that could be a risk. Borden asked about the staffing plan. Hess indicated we are currently serving alternative education students through seven tutors, three Certified FTEs, and some Classified FTEs. He also noted students need more counseling and SPED support. Oliver asked about the FTE increase for next year over this year. Hess responded that the budget includes an increase of eight teachers, with three or four being at the alternative school.

Oliver asked if the Board approves this item now, are we simply approving the request to apply to the ODE for a school number. Hess responded yes. Oliver asked what would happen if the Board takes that step, and we do not end up moving forward with the school. Hess indicated alternative education would remain a program for the next school year.

Martin advised he could not support approval of a dedicated alternative school, since the Board has not had an extensive discussion of the issue. Hess stated that we will serve students regardless of the Board's action, but he believes we would be missing out on more resources for these students. Martin indicated he would support applying for the school number, but the topic requires a great deal more discussion. He said this is a significant enough issue to have been included in the Budget Message.

Hess noted funding for the school would be an incremental budget increase, not a totally new budget, since the services are already being provided. In addition, all locations but the Boys and Girls Club location already exist. Some facilities work would be required. Oliver suggested the Board receive additional information and have continued discussions regarding the formation of a dedicated alternative school. Brooks would like to see all the pros and cons of forming the school, and Oliver would like to see the metrics that would be used to measure success.

Upon motion, duly seconded, the Board unanimously approved applying to the Oregon Department of Education for a school number and to have further discussions regarding the implementation of a formal alternative education school.

6. AWARD OF BANKING SERVICES CONTRACT

Linda Darling reported that the proposed banking services contract with Umpqua Bank is a partnership of three Districts: Greater Albany Public Schools, our District, and the Linn Benton Lincoln Education Services District. Our District will realize significant savings in banking services costs.

Upon motion, duly seconded, the Board voted unanimously to approve the banking services contract with Umpqua Bank.

7. AWARD OF LEGAL SERVICES CONTRACT

Darling reported that six firms responded to the District's Request for Proposals, and three finalists were selected for interviews. Board Chair Oliver and Vice Chair Brooks served on the interview panel. Consensus was achieved by the panel to recommend Garrett Hemann Robertson, PC (GCR), Salem, Oregon as the District's new legal counsel effective July 1, 2018. GCR rated highest among the finalist firms, and Oliver indicated their staff is very engaged and is familiar with the District. Brooks noted the firm is professional, competent, and available when needed. They are also geographically close and specialize in areas of law relevant to the needs of the District.

Upon motion, duly seconded, the Board unanimously approved selecting Garrett Hemann Robertson, PC as the District's legal counsel effective July 1, 2018.

8. RESIGNATION OF ZONE 1 MEMBER RUSS MCUNE, TIMELINE TO FILL VACANCY

Chair Oliver advised the Board was required to declare the vacancy in Zone 1 following the resignation of Dr. Russ McUne. He asked Board members about their preference for the process to fill the Zone 1 vacancy.

It was agreed that Kwiatkowski would work with Brooks and Martin to develop an appropriate advertisement, applications, and candidate review process.

Upon motion, duly seconded, the Board voted to declare the vacancy and requested that a process to fill the vacancy be brought to the Board for consideration at their May 10, 2018 meeting.

9. GENERAL BUSINESS

A. Policies: Second Reading

Regarding Policy CCC, Hiring of Licensed Administrators, Brooks asked if we are eliminating the steering committee and only having a building level process. How do we receive the input we previously received at this screening committee level? Oliver advised that the screening committee's role would follow the selection of the finalists. Qualified candidates would then move to a public process. Oliver indicated the Board could look at this in greater detail now or adjourn for the Budget Committee and discuss it at a later time.

Upon motion, duly seconded, the Board voted unanimously to adopt all Second Reading Policies as presented, with the exception of CCC – Hiring of Licensed Administrators.

Chair Oliver adjourned the meeting at 7:00 PM to provide for the convening of the Budget Committee, advising that he would reconvene the School Board meeting following adjournment of the Budget Committee meeting.

Chair Oliver reconvened the School Board meeting at 7:58 PM.

10. CONSENT AGENDA

Martin made a motion to approve all Consent Agenda items, with the exception of Item F, Appointment of the Interim Principal for Seven Oak Middle School. Borden seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved by the Board.

Regarding Item F on the Consent Agenda, Martin wanted to comment on the process. He indicated some disappointment with the process; but he is confident Mike Hillman is right for the role, and he supports Hillman's appointment.

Hess noted the recruitment was a public process, and there is a great deal of support for Hillman. He acknowledged that a public process takes more time, but it provides an opportunity to learn about each of the candidates.

Oliver indicated that if there are specific aspects of the process the Board would like to review, they should discuss the policy and change it, if appropriate. Oliver requested review and discussion of this policy on the May 10, 2018 meeting agenda.

Upon motion, duly seconded, the Board voted unanimously to approve Consent Agenda Item F, appointment of Mike Hillman to the position of Interim Principal at Seven Oak Middle School.

11. FORMATION OF AN AD HOC SCHOOL SAFETY COMMITTEE

Oliver indicated there has been a great deal of public comment regarding the issue of school safety. Brooks stated that we need to take this opportunity to make our schools safer for everyone. He does not have the answer to the problem, but he believes we can improve in this area. An Ad Hoc Committee would assist the Board by reviewing the issue. We can learn from people in the community and review recommendations for improvement. Brooks and Martin expressed an interest in serving on this committee. Oliver requested that Brooks and Martin, in coordination with District staff, bring a proposal to the Board for formation and responsibilities of an Ad Hoc School Safety Committee.

12. OPEN ENROLLMENT

Oliver indicated it is important for the Board to begin discussing the District's Open Enrollment Policy. He noted there are multiple reasons for open enrollment's attractiveness for families – school preference and childcare issues, among others. He stressed the need for the Board to be deliberate and solicit input. He pointed out that open enrollment creates challenges for the District in terms of enrollment projections and balancing resources among the schools.

Hess presented his memorandum regarding this subject in which he recommends that open enrollment language be removed from the District's School Admission and Open Enrollment policy.

Martin asked if the Board could receive a report on how many open enrollments there are in each building and what enrollment would look like if open enrolled students attended their home schools. Hess indicated staff would compile and provide this information to the Board in early summer.

13. DEPARTMENT REPORTS

A. Financial report

Darling presented the financial report. There were no questions from the Board regarding this information.

B. Operations

Yates advised that he would be at the land lab on May 1, walking the forest. Progress is being made toward implementing the logging project.

C. Human Resources

1. BeUndivided. Jennifer Meckley reported on this partnership between the local faith community and the District and the rally held on March 18. District areas for volunteers include mentors, academics, food insecurity, employee wellness, general labor, attendance, and the clothing closet. More than 100 people signed up to volunteer, and the first work party was held on April 7 with 20 participants. The warehouse was painted, and volunteers built hanging systems for clothes. The next event is May 4 and will focus on the garden at Cascades School. BeUndivided is helping the District make positive connections with the community.

2. Job Fairs. Meckley indicated the District has participated in two job fairs and scheduled three days for invited candidates to present demonstration lessons. She advised the District has hired 14 new teachers

and rehired 8 temporary teachers, and more hiring will occur. Meckley is working with Maureen Twomey on a robust mentorship program to retain teachers in the District.

14. COMMUNICATION

A. Board

Brooks made reference to questions asked by a District resident under Audience Comments. Brooks noted that the Board must analyze data, review policies and processes, educate themselves about issues, and ask questions. Although action may not be apparent, such does not mean progress is not being made. Often, many steps are required to conduct a fair and accountable process.

Oliver noted that one issue raised was employee compensation. The action taken by the Board tonight was to approve the Classified staff contract. The Board made a significant commitment to improving compensation, but the District does have budget constraints. He is confident the work the Board is doing is making progress to address on employee compensation concerns.

B. Superintendent

Hess reported on the 21st Century Grant, a partnership with the Sweet Home School District and the Boys and Girls Club. This is a \$500,000 federal grant for summer and afterschool programs for struggling students, as well as enrichments. Hess believes the partnership has a good chance of being successful, and grant award information will be released in June. Oliver cited this grant application as another positive community collaboration.

15. AUDIENCE COMMENTS

Chris Meek addressed the Board. He advised that he is active in the School District with approximately 250 volunteer hours in the current year. Meek noted the benefit of volunteering helps him know the climate of the schools. He thanked the Board for their service and said he is excited to see the Board pursuing new resources. Meek noted that the culture of an organization is more than salary. Organizational culture also includes the tools we give teachers to support their efforts. He believes discipline is an issue. Students often come right back to the classroom after discipline in the Principal's Office. Meek said part of teacher retention is support. He recommends the Board members volunteer at each school level to become acquainted with the atmospheres in the various schools. Meek noted Mike Hillman is a great addition at Seven Oak. He hopes the Board will next focus on goalsetting for the District, and the Board's financial planning should be driven by the goals. Once goals are established, resources can be targeted toward their achievement. Meek thanked all those working to recruit great teachers to the District.

16. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Board, Chair Oliver adjourned the meeting at 8:30 PM.

Tom Oliver, Board Chair

Rob Hess, Superintendent