

**LEBANON COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT  
SCHOOL BOARD WORK SESSION  
March 8, 2018, 5:00 PM**

Santiam Travel Station

750 S. Third Street, Lebanon, OR 97355

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**MEETING SUMMARY**

Tom Oliver, Chair  
Nick Brooks, Vice Chair  
Richard Borden, Director  
Mike Martin, Director  
Russ McUne, Director

Dr. Rob Hess, Superintendent  
Bo Yates, Assistant Superintendent  
Jennifer Meckley, Human Resources and  
Community Relations Director  
Linda Darling, Business Director  
Jan Sansom, Special Education Director

Audience members included school principals, teachers and district staff, among others.

**1. WELCOME**

Chair Tom Oliver called the work session to order at 5:05 PM.

**2. DISCUSSION: 2018/19 SCHOOL CONFIGURATION**

Superintendent Rob Hess indicated the purpose of this work session is for the Board to obtain principal, teacher and staff input regarding the options contained in Hess' March 2, 2018 school configuration memorandum. The Board would also like to have the principals discuss the community feedback obtained through forums and various electronic surveys, which indicates strong interest in kindergarten through 6<sup>th</sup> grade at all in-town schools.

Cascades Principal Tami Volz believes we need to ensure there is equity for all students as the Board considers school reconfiguration.

Riverview Principal Joe Vore indicated that adding 6<sup>th</sup> grade would result in 480 students at the school next year. The space required for 6<sup>th</sup> grade classrooms would displace music and reduce preparation time. It would also require adding three more teachers, space, and schedule sections. Four fewer music sections would be available, and Riverview is already close to the minimum number of sections. Accommodating 150 students in the cafeteria is not feasible. Riverview would need to add another recess and another lunch.

Richard Borden asked about the overall space at Riverview. Vore indicated maximum capacity was 500 when the school was designed, but the school is actually substantially overcrowded at that level.

Principal Geno Bates noted Hamilton Creek experienced a similar problem two years ago. Schedules were very tight, and teachers needed to transition from space to space. Music on a cart can be done, but it was not a positive experience for staff or students.

Mike Martin asked about Special Education (SPED) being expanded for additional 6<sup>th</sup> graders. Hess advised that an additional SPED teacher would be part of any reconfiguration, as this need had already been identified in budget planning for 2018/19.

Green Acres Principal Amanda Plummer reported many of the school's parents are in favor of 6<sup>th</sup> grade. This is overwhelmingly the case for their Latino families. She pointed out that Green Acres houses most of the district's programs. Adding 6<sup>th</sup> grade would create space issues, but they do have some options, particularly if some of the district programs currently housed there are relocated to other school buildings. Russ McUne asked what would be needed in terms of teachers and modular buildings. Plummer advised two modular buildings, an additional restroom, and more staff would be required.

Oliver acknowledged that more classroom space is needed at Green Acres. Three classrooms are being used for life skills programs. Life skills and English Language Learner programs may also affect space availability. Oliver asked about space for two modular buildings at Green Acres. Plummer advised she had reviewed section planning. If there is no preschool at Green Acres, they would have space for 6<sup>th</sup> grade, but it would be tight because Green Acres houses many programs. Regarding the equity discussed by Principal Volz, Plummer stressed that we do not want to create barriers to the opportunities that are very important to families.

Pioneer Principal Tonya Cairo advised that the school is already a K-6. She confirmed the challenges being discussed by the other principals, including scheduling, overlapping recess, and combining groups. She noted that difficult behaviors are not generally seen in 6<sup>th</sup> graders. At Pioneer, the 6<sup>th</sup> graders are school leaders, and they serve as mentors for the lower grades. Pioneer has a leadership class based on Seven Habits of Highly Effective Teens. Cairo noted that one challenge they face is advanced classes, particularly math. Seven Oak uses a different curriculum that is not accessible at Pioneer. Oliver noted that if we remove 6<sup>th</sup> grade from Seven Oak, those 6<sup>th</sup> graders would lose that advanced track for math and language arts. Cairo confirmed that her 6<sup>th</sup> grade advance math group is at a disadvantage over the 6<sup>th</sup> grade advanced math students at Seven Oak.

Oliver asked the group whether 6<sup>th</sup> grade at all four in-town schools is the right approach – is it the best configuration for our students? High School Principal Brad Shreve noted that barriers faced by 6<sup>th</sup> graders show up in the transition from 8<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> grade. He emphasized that configurations must include equity.

Cairo pointed out that more teachers using advance math would provide opportunities for collaboration during professional development.

Hess confirmed the district would need to provide increased support for schools with new 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Electives, band, and leadership curriculum would all require space.

Oliver indicated Riverview is the greatest challenge, since they would need three classrooms. Vore advised they would need to eliminate the computer lab, although it does get used. There is currently no band at Riverview, but they do have in-classroom music three days per week. The remaining two days are used for SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Results-oriented, Time-bound) goals.

Oliver asked Vore what would be needed to make 6<sup>th</sup> grade work at Riverview. Vore cited a need for equity for staff, as well as additional SPED staff. It would, however, result in fewer preparation sections being available.

Martin pointed out that, technically, Seven Oak can accommodate the projected 6<sup>th</sup> grade population. If modular buildings were added, 6<sup>th</sup> graders would be self-contained. Acting Principal Jordon Ford pointed out that locker space and cafeteria capacity are issues. These would also be problematic at Riverview.

Borden asked whether the district has considered rolling back open enrollment. Hess advised that 15 to 20 percent of families utilize open enrollment. The Board has not previously considered eliminating this policy, but it is something to consider. Borden noted that elimination of the open enrollment policy would help mitigate overcrowding. If that action was taken, current open enrolled families could be grandfathered into their current schools. Martin asked how those who have already made connections at schools would be handled. Oliver indicated families would need to be grandfathered in, since it could be detrimental if their open enrollment was revoked. Moving forward, however, this process needs to become more restrictive, particularly at the schools that are enrollment challenged. Ultimately, we need to eliminate open enrollment entirely.

Cascades could add 6<sup>th</sup> grade with its current facilities, but staffing is the challenge. Volz would want to maintain the music room and keep their computer room. Oliver asked whether Volz wanted 6<sup>th</sup> grade at Cascades. Volz advised she has not experienced 6<sup>th</sup> grade at the elementary level it, but research indicates the model works.

Jan Sansom noted that the Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) program also needs more space. Ford indicated that including space for Alternative Education programs at Seven Oaks would be a positive.

Ford said he enjoys the 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade model. When the 6<sup>th</sup> graders were in their own wing, it was successful. With increased numbers and fewer staff, however, 6<sup>th</sup> graders are all over the school. If the school operated with the 7<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade model, they could maintain the elective programs they have been building. A student population of less

than 500 is much more manageable for the size of the building. The environment feels better. Ford noted that if the 6<sup>th</sup> graders had their own wing and 6<sup>th</sup> grade enrollment was capped at 150 to 180, the grade 6 through 8 model would work at Seven Oak.

Jordon pointed out that licensure may be an issue with staff movement. Teachers must be appropriately licensed to teach dedicated 6<sup>th</sup> grade classes.

Shreve also noted the urgent need for a true alternative education school from which students can graduate and receive an actual diploma.

The Board expressed their appreciation to the principals, teachers, and staff for their input regarding the very important issue of school reconfiguration.

### **3. ADJOURNMENT**

The Work Session was adjourned at 6:00 PM.

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Tom Oliver, Board Chair

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Rob Hess, Superintendent