

MINUTES

4/ A Regular Meeting of the Lane County School District No. 19 Board of Education was held on September 22, 2008.

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER AND FLAG SALUTE

The Springfield Board of Education meeting was called to order in the boardroom of the Administration Center at 7:00 p.m. by Board Chair Nancy Bigley and was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Attendance

Board members in attendance included Laurie Adams, Nancy Bigley, Al King, Jonathan Light, and Garry Weber. Others identified in attendance included Nancy Golden, Marshall Curry, Kyle Barley, Cassidy Peterson, Logan Lewis, Sara Ticer, Matt Coleman, Dawn Strong, Karen Lewis, Judy Svoboda, Yvonne Atteberry, Mike Fisher, Elaine Rector, Ed Mendelsohn, Jeff Butler, Hanalei Rozen, Laura Jessen, Carolyn Hatefi, Anne Williams of *The Register-Guard*, Lottie Duey, Rae Ann Nichols, Jessica Thomas, and Judy Burton.

2. PRESENTATION

A. Academy of Arts & Academics Two-Year Report

Mike Fisher, head teacher at the Academy of Arts & Academics (A3) provided a two-year report. He introduced Elaine Rector as the new “coach” from the Oregon Small Schools Initiative. Mr. Fisher presented the goals that were set last year: to lower the percentage of students in pre-algebra, improve math scores, increase OSAT scores in reading and literature to 80%, improve school climate and culture regarding relevance and relationships, for all students to develop and maintain a four-year graduation plan, and for all students to pass all classes.

Next he reported on success with the goals through the school year. For math and science, included in one class called Inquiries, the first goal was attained through reducing the percentage of students in pre-algebra to less than 10%. In the OSAT tests only 37% of the students passed, although 24% nearly passed, so improving these scores will be one of the coming year’s goals. The OSAT scores in science were 67%, which was 10% higher than the state average. For reading and literacy, he said the school had a daily writing workshop, in which every student in the school wrote for one period each day. He also reported a school-wide common program for teaching vocabulary, resulting in 87% of the sophomores passing the reading and literacy test, 22% higher than the state average and the highest score in the district. For writing, over 72% of students passed, 15% above the state average scores.

In terms of school climate, Mr. Fisher pointed out that the school was small, fostering the possibility of getting to know everyone. To formalize the way people talked with each other, the A3 Constitution was developed. A democratic process was followed where a representative from each writing group served on a student board which met regularly to discuss issues and solve problems. This group also led community-style meetings where problems were discussed. A special process called Chalk Talk was used in which large pieces of paper were posted around the gym with specific questions posted. Students then wrote their ideas on sticky notes and posted them on the large paper, in a process of total silence, later walking around to read what others had written and having an opportunity to write commentaries about what they read. The Student Advisory Board then used these writings to create solutions or ideas for addressing the issues. Mr. Fisher reported that this process promoted very positive communication.

For the Four Year Graduation Plan, Mr. Fisher shared that a “credit map” was created to help the students understand their goals toward graduation and how their credits were being earned. Each student received a blank copy of this map in their writing group, and three times a year would consult their transcript to understand what credits were earned and which credits still needed acquiring. Next the students shared this information with their parents at a student-led conference, so that parents had a chance to help guide the students, along with the teachers. Participation in these conferences was 98% for a combination of students and parents. Lastly, students had an opportunity to plan for college classes and internship opportunities that could happen during high school.

For the goal of all kids will pass all their classes, Mr. Fisher reported that a “no-zero” policy had been established, meaning that students must complete all school projects. Incompletes on a transcript must be made up within a calendar year. This policy had helped create a high school-wide GPA last year of 2.77 for all grades.

Dr. Matt Coleman, Director of Secondary Education, described his experience of spending time with the A3 staff before school started as they planned the first three days of school, which were to be spent at SKY Camp. He was very much impressed, seeing 140 students engaged with the adult staff and their parents (who did all the cooking) during this three-day camp experience. He also spoke about enrollment trends, saying that startup schools usually take a dip in enrollment at first. This year the sophomore class enrollment was exactly the same as in their freshman year. Enrollment this year was 50 freshmen, 36 sophomores, 40 juniors and 18 seniors, with over 200 students anticipated for next year.

Rae Ann Nichols, A3 parent, passed around her daughter’s portfolio from her summer internship. She reported her daughter had been a very shy person, lacking in confidence, when she entered the A3 program two years before. The three-day Sky Camp experience engendered a beginning sense of confidence, which continued to build as school continued. Also the small class sizes helped boost her progress, offering her the extra boost in support that she needed. Now, Ms. Nichols continued, her daughter knows who she is and where she wants to go for college. During her summer internship in photography she was expected to keep a journal, which became testimony for her experience and growth in this program. Throughout her junior year she was helped to understand her talents and skills, as well as direction for what she would want to pursue in higher education.

Mr. Fisher introduced a number of guest artists in the audience who worked with students at A3, several of whom had been funded from sources outside the school district.

Next he shared about goals for the coming school year. Students had requested more elective classes. Last year a trimester schedule included academic classes in the morning, a writing class immediately after lunch, and two blocks of art classes in the afternoon. For juniors, one of those blocks was taken up by Spanish in order to fulfill language requirements, leaving only one arts class per day. A schedule was then planned for the coming year where academic classes would still occur in the mornings, but in the afternoons rotating class blocks would offer a greater variety of arts classes, sometimes by blending academic and arts subjects together.

Mr. Fisher described EDCRO as a school-wide learning process of Explore, Design, Create, Refine and Own. A series of rubrics were created to explain EDCRO. He explained that internships were a major focus as gateways between high school and college. He introduced Jessica Thomas, the internship coordinator.

Ms. Thomas presented some of the careers being highlighted for the students. She pointed out some of the local businesses offering opportunities for internships, including KMTR (marketing, production, journalism, web design and video), Eugene Generals hockey team (training, nutrition, media, networking,

web design), High Priestess Tattoo (business management and customer service), and others, with more businesses on the way. She described her goal of offering opportunities for juniors and seniors to try out their dream jobs. Through the fall students would learn about filling out an application, resumé-writing, interviewing, and dressing for professional work. In January the internships would begin, with 8-hour work days for a period of three weeks. Next the students would create projects aimed at helping their employers. These projects would be presented to their parents, the business owners and Ms. Thomas. After January some of the students might continue their internships during block hours of the school day.

Garry Weber noted that it seemed obvious A3 families were definitely valuing A3 as a vehicle for college preparation.

Mike Fisher responded that the A3 staff had done much research to make sure their classes aligned with Oregon's system of higher education, identifying which classes were college prep. He said approximately 90% of the school's classes were currently college prep certified.

Chair Bigley asked how many students were using the no-zero policy. Mr. Fisher responded that staff had been making sure that all students stuck with the policy. When problems arose, the staff would talk with the students and give them clear expectations, negotiating with them how to accomplish the transformation of their incompletes.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chair Bigley called for public comment.

Hanalei Rozen, Springfield resident and volunteer at Brattain Elementary, announced that the week of September 24-30, 2008 was Take a Child Outside Week, a program initiated by the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences. She requested that those present participate in this national movement by finding time to take children or others outdoors during this week. She asked if board members were aware of legislation called No Child Left Inside. She noted that recently the House of Representatives had approved this act which had been tagged on to the renewal of the No Child Left Behind act. She hoped the board would join in the coalition working to pass this act in the Senate and eventually become a reality in the school district.

Ms. Rozen continued that this past summer she had participated in the American Horticulture Society's National Youth Symposium. She expressed her hope that the school district would consider integrating a garden program into the curriculum, as well as bringing other learning to the outdoors when possible.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

A. September 8, 2008 Board Minutes

B. Personnel Action, Resolution #08-09.012

Dawn Strong recommended that the Board of Directors approve the personnel action for licensed employees as reflected in Resolution #08-09.012 as listed below:

New Hires

Dara Hansen

Carol May

Clifford Raish

Change of Contract Status

Sue Burden-Dickman

Armand Lake

Margaret Stevenson

Margaret Dean

Benjamin Muir

Angela Fritsch

Gary Mullen

Leave of Absence

Lyndsey Arnold

Retirements

Armand Lake

Gary Mullen

Margaret Stevenson

Motion: Mr. Light, seconded by Mr. Weber, moved to accept the Consent Agenda. The motion passed unanimously, 5:0.

5. ACTION ITEMS

There were no action items for the board to consider.

6. REPORTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Wildish Community Theater Board Representation

Superintendent Nancy Golden announced that she and Jonathan Light would represent Springfield Public Schools on the newly formed Wildish Community Theater Board.

B. New Schools Construction

Jeff DeFranco presented the monthly new schools construction report. He reported that concrete was being poured currently, as utility work and foundation slabs were complete. During the weeks of October 20, 2008 and October 27, 2008 at Maple Elementary and Thurston Elementary a giant crane will be onsite to help erect the many concrete slabs that essentially frame up the new construction. Some adjustments for recess would need to be made at the schools during this process, as well as temporary bike path closure at Thurston Elementary, so coordination work had been happening.

Mr. DeFranco continued that a small number of design errors had arisen and were being dealt with, some of which incurred additional contract costs to the district. He said these were typical things that arise in standard construction. At this point, he noted, about \$66,000 of the construction contingency had been spent, which seemed appropriate. A further issue arising had been the potential of the schools installing electronic reader boards at some point, motivating a decision to bring the conduit for power to the reader board sites so that upgrades to electronic reader boards could occur later. The contractor had been contacted and Mr. DeFranco felt that by March or April, 2009 there would be a better idea of cost and feasibility for the reader board upgrades.

Mr. DeFranco reported that some work had been done to address asbestos abatement, which would be a project for next summer. Work was also in progress, he said, to address the purchase of furniture, fixtures and equipment.

Mr. DeFranco said he had been in Salem working on the Thurston Elementary School bike grant. A number of challenges had been worked out, and efforts were being made to make sure this process would overlay with the existing timeline. Overall he felt quite positive about progress being made to this point.

Garry Weber asked if there would be some check points along the way with the construction projects. Mr. DeFranco replied that there were two phases: June 12, 2009 was the scheduled date for substantial completion of the new facilities at Maple and Thurston Elementary Schools. After that time, other projects needed to occur: salvaging, asbestos abatement, demolition projects, and bringing in of the infrastructure for the new buildings, such as playgrounds, parks and roads. The completion date for the second phase was September 1, 2009. He noted that at Maple Elementary road work could be done before demolishing the facility, while at Thurston Elementary road work would need to wait until the old school was demolished because of the narrowness of the site. He emphasized that next summer would be an intense time with many projects to complete, and that work was being done now to coordinate efforts for the summer schedule so that progress could be made in an efficient fashion.

In response to a question from Garry Weber, Mr. DeFranco responded that there were no explicit incentives from the school district, although the construction company had their own incentives for completion and getting off site as soon as possible. He showed some photos of the construction projects. At Thurston Elementary the playground was currently restricted to a narrow strip of concrete. He said that construction debris was being swept off the playground each week.

Mr. DeFranco continued by describing progress at A3. He said that during the bidding process hard work was done to bring the project within budget and to insure the best quality product possible. It had been necessary to eliminate some desired items, making sure to consider the most important elements that could not be added at a later time. As well a \$20,000 grant had been received from the Springfield Economic Development Agency for window art displays. Another grant was written for a mural to be created on the west side of the facility.

Mr. DeFranco showed photos of concrete and steel work currently happening at the A3 School site. He said the project was on track and scheduled to be substantially complete by March 2, 2009, with the move to the new facility to happen over the two-week spring break period. He explained that much of the work had needed to take place in the school building over the 2008 summer, in order to minimize disruption during the school year.

C. Enrollment Update

Matt Coleman presented preliminary enrollment information. He reported a small positive change since the Board Report was prepared, the addition of 16 students to the overall total. He said the district was currently over projection by less than 1%, which was a good position. Elementary totals were still the same as had been reported earlier, Springfield Middle School was under projection by about 10 (rather than over by 15), and the high schools were essentially the same as reported. Elementary classes were under-enrolled by about 20 students, middle school under by 72, and high schools up by 114. For the middle school, the 6th grade class was simply small. Dr. Coleman noted that the high school numbers were very impressive, stressing that the evolution of Gateways into a full-fledged high school program had produced a significant impact. Overall, he said, enrollment in the district was good.

Al King asked about the 6th grade small class, if the low population was generally a low year population-wise, or if 6th grade was perhaps a peak year for home-schooling or something else that would lower the class size. Dr. Coleman guessed it was just a low population year, although he said he would check on it.

D. 2007-2008 Student Achievement Results

Rob Hess presented the 2007-2008 achievement results across the district in reading and mathematics for each grade level measuring growth between the 2006-2007 and the 2007-2008 school years. Dr. Hess presented a two-year comparison, noting particularly how important the tracking of the “exceeds” mark was, because when students exceeded on tests, they tended to have higher GPA averages and greater chances to be prepared for college or working.

The first chart showed district scores for this year and last year compared with state scores. Two categories presented showed percent of students district-wide and then the success factor. For reading in grade 3 there was a notable gain in the district (+13) while the state numbers stayed the same as the previous year. For reading in grade 4 there was a large gain in the district (+24) while the state had a slight gain. Grade 5 scores showed a +6 exceed level.

Dr. Hess explained that in order to prepare students for a bright and successful future, students needed to exceed the test standards rather than just meet them. He said that students who exceed in 3rd grade had a 90% chance of meeting standards at grade 10.

Dr. Hess continued that for reading in grade 6, the reading score was -1, which was low. For grade 7 the district was below the state by 4 points. For grade 8 the reading score was +10. He noted that the 8th grade had received extra attention last year, which was reflected in these results, showing the importance of putting extra energy and resources into different areas. For grade 10 the state lost quite a lot of ground, and in the district only 10% of the students had exceeded. The test for 2006-7 was a paper and pencil test, while the test for 2007-8 was a computerized test.

In math, Dr. Hess reported, grade 3 had a +10, grade 4 had a -3, grade 5 had a +12. Grade 6 had a -11 score and was quite a bit lower than the state level, grade 7 dropped in the number of exceeds to -5, grade 8 had a little gain to +3, and grade 10 had a small gain to -5, with still over half the students in the district not passing. Dr. Hess stressed that the hard work was ahead, which was to change the teaching structure, especially at the secondary level. He noted that staff had been meeting about creating new teaching strategies.

Jonathan Light requested more information about the math steering committee. Dr. Hess emphasized that Matt Coleman or Sara Ticer could speak whenever they wanted, as it had been a team effort. He explained that a group of 18-20 people had been pulled together from around the district to work on the math issues over the last two years. He said the group would sum up their work, then would look at current math research, and come up with recommendations that would be brought to the adoption committees -- one for K-5 and a second for 6-8 grades. High school would not be adopting this year.

Dr. Hess said the steering committee for K-12 would look at the overall picture and determine what students would need to do and know by 2014 to meet the requirements, and then would back-track to see how to implement the new programs. He remarked that the staff members were excited about the possibilities with math, feeling that if a protocol similar to the successful one used with the literacy program could be used with the math, that similar positive results could be attained.

Garry Weber suggested that the math testing for one year in certain grades possibly benefited the students and teachers by preparing them for what would be coming the next year.

Al King was curious about what effect cohort tracking might have on the test scores. Dr. Hess said it would be possible, if it were desired, to track cohort progressions within the district as well as compared with state scores. Mr. King responded that he was not requesting a presentation on cohort effect, but that the team might consider finding some time to make such a comparison.

Jonathan Light added that when certain classes were seen to be struggling, focusing on cohort groups might be helpful.

Sara Ticer, Director of Elementary Education, said that as the district moved forward with the math testing process, strategies that had worked with the reading program could be applied for math. The reading program had been addressed with a core curriculum supported by supports that were found to be important to success for individual students. She suggested that more time needed to be invested with the math program.

E. Student Communication

Marshall Curry reported that at Springfield High School plans were in progress for a pep rally on October 9, 2008. He said there would be 27 booths, hosted both by school clubs and outside groups and both the band and choir would perform. In order to get the community involved, students would be passing out flyers to Springfield residents announcing the pep rally. He further reported that there were plans for all sophomores and most juniors to take the PSAT test. Mr. Curry was happy to report that for the first time in Springfield history, the football program was 4:0.

Logan Lewis reported that for the past two weeks at Thurston High they had been having their annual Coats for Kids drive, sponsored by the leadership class. Students had collected donations of coats for community children who needed coats for the winter. The coats were then grouped according to school classes (freshmen to seniors), which sparked class rivalry and much fun. Then the coats would be distributed throughout the community to children who needed them.

F. Board Communication

Al King reported that the new Labor Commissioner, Brad Avakian, would be visiting the district on October 24, 2008 at 1:30 p.m. Mr. King had attended the Labor Education Task Force. He mentioned that Mr. Avakian was looking to the Springfield School District to be a player in some plans on his agenda.

Rob Hess clarified that the meeting would be a round-table discussion from 1:30 – 3:00 p.m., held in the first floor conference room. There would be about twenty people attending, including the new commissioner, Nancy Bigley, and some students from Thurston High School who had started a new pre-apprenticeship program. He emphasized that the press would be at this meeting, making it a good time to highlight some of the work being done within the district.

Mr. King continued, saying that six pilot programs would be set up around the state, with Springfield potentially being one of those six programs.

- **Willamalane After-School Activities Levy**

Laurie Adams presented Ballot Measure 20-138, requesting that the board approve the measure. She read the resolution aloud and asked board members to approve:

Urging the Springfield Public Schools' Board of Directors to support the Willamalane Park and Recreation District After-School Activities Measure 20-138 and to urge the school district patrons to vote yes for Measure 20-138.

Whereas: Willamalane Park and Recreation District and Springfield Public Schools have worked successfully and cooperatively the past eight years to provide after-school activities for children, and;

Whereas: The funds for those programs were provided through a variety of grants including BEST, Schools Plus, and SAFE and will no longer be available after the 2008-2009 school year, and Willamalane is proposing a tax levy that would generate the funds necessary to continue and expand the after-school program for 5 years, and;

Whereas: The community has responded both in the Springfield Quality Education Model process and the Springfield 2015 survey that after-school activities for kids are a top priority, and;

Whereas: It is in the best interests of children to be in a safe and controlled environment after-school, where they are staying busy and focused on academic and recreational activities, thus working to help them achieve academically and participate in physical activities that improve wellness and fight childhood obesity, and;

Whereas: Ballot measure 20-138 would provide these activities to 12 elementary and 5 middle schools, thus providing the services to more than 2100 children in the shared service area of Willamalane and Springfield Public Schools regardless of the economic status of the children or their families, and;

Whereas: Passing the measure will preserve Willamalane's innovative after-school and summer programs that serve low-income students, and;

Whereas: The new after-school programs will provide a mix of recreational and educational services, such as literacy support, homework club, games, arts and technology, and the measure will also fund school swim lessons for all fourth graders and other youth recreation programs, and;

Whereas: Growing up to be a well-rounded adult takes good role models, positive friendships, academic achievement, physical activities and arts. After-school activities help build self-esteem in students. Willamalane's after-school programs focus on the whole child, and;

Whereas: Measure 20-138 will make affordable and effective after-school activities widely available. The annual cost to the average Springfield homeowner is less than a family would spend on one night out for dinner and a movie, therefore

Be It Resolved by the Springfield Public Schools Board of Directors: That the School Board publicly and formally supports passage of the After-School Activities Measure 20-138.

Be It Further Resolved that the School Board urges all Springfield voters within the Willamalane Park and Recreation District to vote "YES" on Ballot Measure 20-138.

Motion: Laurie Adams moved for passage of the resolution. Al King seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously 5:0.

Laurie Adams reported attending a Legislative Policy Committee meeting in Salem, where the platform of what the Committee would be working on was formalized. She urged board members to attend the OSBA Fall Regional Meeting at Lane Education Service District on October 2, 2008, with dinner beginning at 6:30 p.m. Laurie Adams, Jonathan Light, Nancy Bigley and Al King responded they would attend the meeting.

Chair Bigley reminded the board that in order to stay on schedule with the new adopted budget rotation, the board's mid-year goal planning meeting was scheduled for December rather than January. She suggested possible dates for the meeting, with December 1, 2008, being chosen.

Garry Weber read from the A3 Student Calendar Planner, from a section called 16 Habits of Highly Effectual People. The #3 habit, Listening to Others with Understanding, he noted, would be a good habit during an election cycle. It suggested listening in such a way that one could truly understand what the other person was saying. At the end, the listener might disagree sharply, but because he had listened carefully, he would know exactly what it was he was disagreeing with.

G. Superintendent Communication

• Listening Sessions

Superintendent Golden reported that the first listening session was scheduled before the board meeting on January 12, 2009. This session would be with community members and would be led by Shannon Priem from OSBA, who had facilitated the listening sessions for Salem-Keizer School District. Dr. Golden felt that after the first meeting someone internally could facilitate future sessions. The focus for the January session would be the district's vision statement, asking community members such things as what achievement of the vision would look like, how progress was going so far, what areas of improvement were needed, and which aspects were seen as the community's or the district's job in making the vision happen. She said that two or three listening sessions would be scheduled for the current academic year, and then the board could decide whether this was a good tool to use each year.

- **OSBA Legal Assistance Trust**

Superintendent Golden mentioned that last year Mr. Weber had asked if it was worth paying the \$4,000 for membership in this fund. She reported that two important special education cases would be considered this year, one being a student who needed 24 hours/day care. In the second case, the parents of a special education child and a school team had decided against identifying the child as a special education child when he was young, and who now as a high school student had problems with drugs and alcohol and needed rehabilitation. The parents were now saying the student should have been identified as special education when he was young and that the school district should now incur the cost of the bills for rehabilitation. Superintendent Golden recommended strongly that the district support this trust and its addressing of the important high-profile issues. She said that if no big cases arose which needed funding during a school year, the district would not be charged the full \$4,000 during that year.

- **Student Representatives**

Superintendent Golden reported that there would soon be student representatives from A3 and Gateways high schools. She said that since there would not be enough space for eight students to sit in the current area at the board meeting table, the students would help decide the new seating arrangements.

- **Key Communicator Group**

Superintendent Golden reported, again about Listening Sessions, that a long list of key communicators was being developed. She asked the board members and student representatives to list on cards she distributed any persons they felt would be good to have on the list. Those people would then be contacted for permission to have their names on the list.

- **Partnership with Tacoma School District**

Superintendent Golden reported discussions with the Tacoma School District about forming a partnership with Springfield in some projects that might benefit both the districts. A two-day meeting was being planned for next spring, probably to be held at Springfield, to look at what projects might be possible to work on together. The superintendent from Tacoma was one of the first people to have a Bill & Melinda Gates grant, and had formed a strong relationship with people at Gates. Both boards would meet together during the time of the visit.

7. OTHER BUSINESS

Laurie Adams offered congratulations to Superintendent Golden for her 2008 Women of Achievement Award from the Oregon Commission for Women.

8. NEXT MEETING

Chair Bigley announced that the next regular board meeting would be held on October 13, 2008 at 7:00 p.m.

9. ADJOURNMENT

With no other business, Chair Bigley adjourned the meeting at 9:05 p.m.

(Minutes recorded by Judy Burton)