

# ROSEBURG PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## School Board Regular Meeting and Board Work Session Via Zoom

1419 NW Valley View Drive  
Roseburg, Oregon

Vol 2 No. 14

January 13, 2021

### Board Members:

Dr. Brandon Bishop  
Rodney Cotton  
Micki Hall  
Rev. Howard Johnson  
Rebecca Larson, Chair  
Charles F. Lee  
Steve Patterson, Vice Chair



### Administration:

Jared P. Cordon, Superintendent  
Richard Burton, Director of Student Services  
Robert Freeman, Director of Human Resources  
Michelle Knee, Assistant Superintendent  
Cheryl Northam, Chief Operations Officer



## SCHOOL BOARD MEETING

**TIME/PLACE:** A regular meeting of the Douglas County School District No. 4 Board of Directors was held at 6:00 p.m. via Zoom on Wednesday, January 13, 2021, in the Administrative Office Board Room, located at 1419 NW Valley View Drive in Roseburg, Oregon, via Zoom link.

**CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Board Chair Rebecca Larson called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and welcomed Zoom participants. Director Micki Hall led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ATTENDANCE:** Board and Cabinet members were in attendance via Zoom. Superintendent Cordon and Assistant Superintendent, Michelle Knee were on site, along with Chair Larson. Education reporter, Sanne Godfrey and RHS Leadership student, Marin Gray, joined the meeting via Zoom.

### COMMUNICATIONS TO THE BOARD / REVIEW OF AGENDA

Superintendent Cordon addressed the Board, acknowledging a year of transitions/adjustments for all, including readjusted life and work schedules, routines, new ways of teaching and learning, Canvas, Zoom, Break-out rooms, and an increasing sense of isolation. We have all had to navigate the constant shifts in policy, mandates, metrics and expectations from the Oregon Health Authority, Department of Education, local public health, Governor's office and others. We have consistently adhered to a process involving setting and preparing goals, setting dates, adjusting to changes in policy and observing metrics to prioritize student and staff safety while promoting student learning.

We have been told to prepare for another adjustment from ODE and OHA on January 19<sup>th</sup>, in the form of updated guidance and metrics to the Ready Schools, Safe Learners (RSSL) mandates. We intend to again follow the process set forth earlier this year, taking into account the changes in these new policies, observing and adhering to metrics to help us keep our kids and staff safe. Doing so will also ensure that we qualify for the COVID-19 liability protections that the Oregon Legislature passed in HB 4402 on December 21<sup>st</sup>. These

protections are critical as they help ensure that our taxpayer dollars stay in the classroom supporting our kids, our parents and our staff. There is a possibility this new guidance could impact or alter our current reopening plans approved earlier this month. Once the new metrics are released on January 19<sup>th</sup>, we will examine the potential changes in metrics, mandates and policies and adjust our plans accordingly.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

The Consent Agenda was presented, consisting of Approval of the Consent Agenda and Minutes from the January 6, 2021 School Board Meeting.

Director Brandon Bishop Moved to approve the Consent Agenda and Director Micki Hall seconded. The Motion passed unanimously.

M2-73 Approved the Consent Agenda
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**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:** Chair Larson opened the Public Participation portion of the meeting, noting that public comment would conclude no later than 6:30 p.m. to allow the Board adequate time for the Board Work Session. Zoom attendees wishing to address comments with the Board regarding the reopening plan were asked to please consider tabling those comments as the reopening plan is included on tonight’s agenda and there has been a dramatic shift in the information we are receiving from the Governor’s Office and ODE. She reminded everyone that additional metrics and guidance are expected on the 19<sup>th</sup>. Assistant Superintendent Michelle Knee informed observers that individual public comment would be limited to two minutes per participant, and she would inform each person once they approached the two-minute limit. An additional opportunity for public comment is being provided after the Work Session.

Stacey Atwell-Keister, (no address provided) a staff member of Fremont Middle School, recapped portions of a letter from Fremont teachers, expressing concern with the hybrid learning model due to COVID leave expiring resulting in a lack of protection from financial hardship in the event of quarantine; uncertainty of self-screening and vaccines; clear definitions of co-horts, metrics, consideration of case rates and social distancing. They are requesting vaccinations prior to their return.

Janet Smith (no address provided), a staff member of Joseph Lane Middle School, referenced a letter from 22 fellow staff members. She communicated their concerns centered on risk of COVID spread in schools; high rates over past two weeks; shared data from American Academy of Pediatrics; and proposed that both doses of vaccination be provided prior to returning; and warned of a shortage of substitutes in the event of spread.

Jeff Jackson, Instructional Assistant, expressed shock at the information released last week and advocated against the reopening plan while stating concern that the classified staff had not been involved in the process.

**FREMONT SEISMIC PROJECT MANAGER**

Purchasing Supervisor Denny Austin expressed appreciation to the Board for tabling action on this item until tonight’s Board meeting to allow the selection committee to complete reference checks on the three finalists.

The Board is in receipt of the January 12<sup>th</sup> memo regarding the RFP 20-693 Project Manager – Fremont Seismic Upgrade. WestCoast Solutions was selected by the evaluation committee as the successful bidder.

Director Hall moved to direct the staff to publish in accordance with the timeline, a Notice of Intent to Award and begin contract negotiations with the firm scoring the highest combined evaluation and reference scores, WestCoast Solutions. Director Bishop seconded and the Motion passed unanimously.

M2-74 Approved the selection of WestCoast Solutions as Project Manager of Fremont Middle School Seismic Project Manager
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### **INDIVIDUAL REPORTS BY DIRECTORS**

Chair Larson wished the Board of Directors a Happy School Board Appreciation Month and invited her colleagues to make their individual reports prior to moving on to the second Public Participation.

Director Steve Patterson shared his appreciation for the 100 plus Zoom attendees tonight and expressed hope that this level of interest continues as we work through these processes as it avoids misinformation within our community. He is also awaiting the release of new metrics on January 19<sup>th</sup> and reflected that while he has seen the letters supporting that we move forward outside of the metrics, that has never been his stance. Steve encouraged patience as we move forward.

Director Howard Johnson shared a quote and noted that this Board has moved in leaps and bounds, and he is proud to be a part of that. He thanked his fellow Board members for their contributions.

Director Brandon Bishop thanked the individuals who have reached out through email. He continues to learn and become informed.

Director Lee shared that he enjoyed tonight's meeting. He cautioned that part of the problem is that we can confuse what we think and believe with what we actually know. On this Board, we do a good job of talking – and he expressed his wish that there was more of that in our community as a whole.

Director Hall encouraged everyone to be calm, patient, and offer grace to others.

Chair Larson thanked everyone for attending.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Chair Larson adjourned the regular meeting at 6:21 p.m. to enter into a Board Work Session.

### **BOARD WORK SESSION**

**CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Rebecca Larson brought the Board Work Session to order at 6:21 p.m. Attendance again included the School Board and Superintendent Cordon. Education Reporter Sanne Godfrey also remained in attendance.

The Board and Superintendent first revisited the District's Strategic Plan, adopted over a year ago, focused on equitable student experiences. The intent is for our students to master grade-level academic standards, attain the behavioral and social-emotional skills needed to thrive and graduate from high school with a plan to achieve success. The team reviewed what equity looks like; i.e., equality vs. equity.

Roseburg Public Schools utilizes an “Equity Lens”, an important tool used to improve decision-making and resource allocation. The Equity Lens provides focus on:

- Whose voice is and isn’t represented in a decision?
- Who does the decision benefit or burden?
- Does the decision close or widen the access, opportunity and expectation gaps?
- How will you modify or enhance your strategies to ensure each learner and communities’ individual and culture needs are met?

Current and ongoing efforts in this area include:

- Adoption of a Strategic Plan that focuses on equitable outcomes.
- Adoption of RPS Equity Lens, a tool used to improve decision-making and resource allocation.
- Merging Rose School into Roseburg High School.
- Development of RPS Virtual School.
- Developing an A-ROI system that helps us better understand if our investments are working to support our kids.

Upcoming Work includes:

- Continued work toward passing General Obligation Bond to improve safety and security district-wide.
- What are potential barriers to promoting equity within our district and what can we do to address them?

Priorities surrounding equity –

- Student and staff safety
- Student learning and care

### ***Capital Improvement Bond***

Upcoming Work: Continued work toward passing General Obligation Bond to improve facilities district-wide

- What are the next steps moving forward?
  - November 2021 timeline?
  - Proposed Projects
  - Marketing

Board members noted that inadequacies remain in our buildings and reached consensus in support of a bond measure in May of 2022. The pandemic prevented supporters from completing outreach to the local citizens during the previous bond attempt. Director Hall noted that citizens couldn’t tour the buildings to see the windows nailed shut and electrical issues. Director Patterson observed that our needs have not changed much, but our message will need updating. Director Johnson shared that he received feedback from community members regarding areas of confusion that we will need to be aware of and address going forward, but believes our economy is improving. Director Cotton encouraged the Board to continue to move forward, and both staff and Board members need to be on board. Director Lee confirmed that last year he observed a crisis of confidence in our community when the local economy tanked, in addition to COVID. He believes the community does understand security and safety issues confronting our schools. He encouraged an emphasis on how physical changes in our buildings could improve services and equity to kids – the primary reason for a bond.

## ***RHS Mascot Discussion***

Upcoming Work: What are the potential barriers to promoting equity within our district and what can we do to address them?

Superintendent Cordon encouraged Board members to share their questions to allow for engagement in a thoughtful, informed discussion regarding the RHS mascot and/or school names as they relate to our equity work.

Director Cotton encouraged the District to involve our students/stakeholders. Vice Chair Patterson would like to research what steps other communities have taken, and agreed with the importance of hearing from students, teachers and our community. Director Lee reflected that the Indian symbol was adopted as a symbol of pride in this community, and we have eliminated the use of previous caricatures in favor of the “feather” which he does not perceive as offensive. He expressed concern with social research and is reluctant to make changes based upon assumptions unless those assumptions are valid. Director Johnson cautioned against approaching this issue as if placing blame but suggested moving forward as a united community. The superintendent provided some feedback concerning process to Director Bishop. Director Hall recalled Director Johnson speaking a few meetings ago about cultural humility and suggested that institutions are responsible for creating life-long learners and fixing imbalances. Director Johnson suggested establishing a sub-committee to gather data to bring back to the Board.

Chair Larson thanked everyone for their participation.

### **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:**

Chair Larson opened the floor to community members wishing to address the Board, and Asst. Superintendent Knee reminded viewers of the two-minute limit and to utilize the “raise your hand” feature.

Emily Cable, (no address provided) a 2002 RHS graduate, added her support to change the RHS mascot and asked that former students be considered as stakeholders. She further suggested the Board consider other options that would not require a unanimous vote. Ms. Cable commended the Board for their work in keeping students safe.

Amanda Mendoza (no address provided), an educator from Beaverton, identified herself as a member of numerous tribes, as well as being German and Norwegian. She expressed appreciation for the different perspectives this evening, and Jared’s Equity Lens. She encouraged the Board to consider the voices of other people as they do the equity work.

Rebecca Snyder (no address provided), a 2002 RHS graduate and educator, reiterated the need for a swift mascot change. She expressed appreciation for the words spoken by Directors Hall and Johnson.

Ariane “Annie” Reichelt, (no address provided) a 1997 graduate and Beaverton educator, acknowledged that the mascot change is not popular in Roseburg, but the Board has the power to make a change.

Chair Larson thanked everyone for their participation.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Chair Larson shared that the January 27<sup>th</sup> School Board Meeting would be held in person,

with the location yet to be determined. With all business before the Board concluded, the meeting was adjourned at 7:36 p.m.

**Jared P. Cordon, Superintendent**  
JPC/jlk

**Next Meeting:** February 10, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. in a location yet to be determined to allow for an in-person Board Meeting.