

ROSEBURG PUBLIC SCHOOLS

School Board Regular Meeting
Roseburg High School – The Rose Theatre
400 West Harvard Avenue, Roseburg, Oregon

Vol 2 No. 20

April 28, 2021

Board Members:

Dr. Brandon Bishop
Rodney Cotton
Micki Hall (via livestreaming)
Rev. Howard Johnson, Vice Chair
Rebecca Larson, Chair
Charles F. Lee
Vacant Position



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. on Wednesday, April 28, 2021, in The Rose Theatre on the campus of Roseburg High School, located at 400 W. Harvard Avenue in Roseburg, Oregon, in person and accompanied by live streaming.

CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Board Chair Rebecca Larson confirmed that we had live streaming active and called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and welcomed attendees. Director Rodney Cotton led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ATTENDANCE: Board and Cabinet members attended in person, while Director Micki Hall attended via livestreaming. Board Position No. 7 is vacant. Education reporter, Sanne Godfrey, Reporter Kyle Bailey and the RHS Leadership students, Marin Gray and Elizabeth Wilson, also attended in person.

COMMUNICATIONS TO THE BOARD / REVIEW OF AGENDA

Superintendent Cordon informed the Board that there were no changes to the regular agenda this evening. Mr. Cordon thanked our Technology staff and RHS team for preparing this great space for the Board Meeting as we continue adherence to State COVID guidelines.

STUDENT RECOGNITION

The Board was very pleased to welcome the family of Fullerton IV Elementary Fourth Grade Student of the Month, Miya Otis. Principal Katrina Hanson had the honor of presenting Miya and her family with a letter reflecting thoughts from her teachers, along with an Award Certificate and gift card from McDonalds.

The Otis family celebrated Miya's strengths as identified by her teachers, including creativity, tenacity and perseverance, along with a willingness to help others. Her positivity is contagious and there is a shared belief that her strength of character and kindness will help her to achieve any goal that she sets her mind to. Congratulations to this impressive and deserving student.

STUDENT LEADERSHIP REPORT

RHS leadership students, Marin Gray and Elizabeth Wilson shared current activities at the high school. Marin

confirmed that this has been a difficult year for students, but they are gearing up for Staff Appreciation Week the first week of May. Candy baskets, etc. will be distributed throughout the week to express appreciation and students are creating sticky notes to leave positive messages for their favorite staff members. Music in the Hall has been a positive addition for students as they move from class to class.

Elizabeth provided all the latest spring competition results. Teams have been playing both at home and away.

Key Club's Student Clothing Closet is now open to serve students two mornings each week before school to provide needed clothing and personal hygiene supplies. Chair Rebecca Larson confirmed that donations of new or gently used clothing and new toiletry items are very welcome at the school. She encouraged the community to take advantage of great deals when they find them and to consider generously sharing with students.

Everyone is getting excited about the upcoming summer program options that will provide opportunities for students interested in both remedial and accelerated learning.

Our 2021 seniors are making preparations for their goodbye videos, and plans are being made for the annual Senior Sunset event. These 2021 graduates will be honored and celebrated at an in-person graduation ceremony to take place June 5th on Finlay Field.

CONSENT AGENDA:

The Consent Agenda was presented, including approval of the Consent Agenda, Minutes from the April 14th School Board Meeting, Gifts to the District and Surplus Items Listing as well as the following personnel actions:

Hiring Recommendations:

Administrative:

- Chelsea Duncan, District Communications Coordinator; and
- Melynda "Mendy" Endicott, Social-Emotional Administrative Coordinator for Teaching & Learning.

Licensed Staff:

- Robyn Bath-Rosenfeld, Science Teacher at Fremont Middle School;
- Cassidy Bell, Health & Physical Education Teacher at Joseph Lane Middle School;
- Tristan Reustle-Church, First Grade Teacher at Melrose Elementary;
- Daniel McIntire, Music Teacher at Winchester Elementary;
- Samantha Schmidt, Music Teacher at Green Elementary;
- Andrea Stanley, Music Teacher at Fullerton IV Elementary;
- Chase Wentz, Music Teacher at Melrose Elementary;
- Austin Wersal, Science Teacher at Fremont Middle School;
- Sarah Wersal, Language Arts Teacher at Fremont Middle School; and
- Elizabeth Zignego, Science Teacher at Roseburg High School.

Resignations:

- Katherine McMurrin, RHS Language Arts Teacher, resigning June 11 after one year in the District; and
- Everett Somers, Fremont MS School Science Teacher, resigning June 11 after one year in the District.

Director Brandon Bishop moved to approve the Consent Agenda and Director Charles Lee seconded. The Motion passed unanimously.

M2-93 Approved the Consent Agenda

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: Chair Larson opened the Public Participation portion of the meeting, explaining the two-minute time limit and that Assistant Superintendent Michelle Knee would gently remind speakers when their two minutes were up.

Mr. Gerald Barr of Coos Bay and parent of a Roseburg elementary student, suggested that only Native Americans should determine the mascot issue. He also prays that the District doesn't agree with the current popular race theory, noting that his family is comprised of multi-race individuals.

Jessica Bascom, RHS graduate, Beaverton resident, member of Klamath Tribe and creator of the online petition to change the mascot, reminded the Board of the research and expressed her continuing concern about the potential negative impact of the current mascot, but indicated she was encouraged from the previous Board Work Session. She shared a prayer for the honor and dignity of native people.

Andrea Falgout, of Roseburg, voiced her concern on behalf of her sisters, asking for equality for indigenous Mexican and black children who have always been here. She appreciated her father teaching her to solve her own problems and explained that racism begins well before high school and words can be much more harmful than sticks and stones. She expressed gratitude for the Board and thanked them for spending their time on the issue.

Mandie Pritchard, no address provided, reminded Board members that the real issue has always been race, and the racial climate which is detrimental to students at RHS. She reminded the Board of previous comments concerning negative impacts of the mascot and expressed her belief that the mascot is a symbol of systemic racism in Roseburg High School. She suggested that votes will indicate what you stand for and stand with.

Cathy Tyler, 1978 Graduate of RHS, expressed that she and many others in her family are proud graduates of RHS. She is concerned about the substantial cost of changing the mascot. She explained that once an Indian, always an Indian.

Christie Warren, a local resident and small business owner, explained that we live in the hundred valleys of the Umpqua and hundreds of entities use the name "Umpqua" and is concerned that we are taking history away from the school. The actual name Indian is not a name that does harm to individuals. We all come from places of hurt and harm, no matter our walk of life. Also concerned with the use of popular media terms such as systemic racism, indicating planned harm. She does not believe anyone here planned to do harm to anybody.

Criset Palenshus, no address provided, Mohawk background, encouraged the Board to do the right thing, even though some remain unconvinced, having no sympathy, humanity or ability to understand. Denying systemic racism exists is ignorant. You and your ancestors have caused pain and suffering and you refuse to acknowledge and change it because you haven't experienced it. She encouraged the Board to exercise understanding and sympathy.

Megan "Imogen" Bentley of Portland, and RHS valedictorian from 2002 shared that she earned a law degree and certificate in American Indian Law. She challenged those present to challenge their opinions. With native

family through marriage and by custom, she has learned to listen as some things are difficult to understand. She suggested the Board Imagine that others are right, and question what the right decision would be.

Marcia Jaques, 21-year employee of Roseburg Public Schools and 1978 graduate of RHS, with Choctaw Tribe heritage, spoke in opposition to mascot change. Questioned the rush to change our culture, wondering if those who want to change it live in Douglas County, and are the signatures on petitions from our area? This decision will affect our strong community, with roots that have grown deep by people living here in Douglas County. We all have a past, and the past makes our future better.

Wynena Bryant, no address provided, with Muskogee, Creek Nation and some Cherokee. In favor of retiring the mascot. Referenced the News Review article quoting the Athletic Director and Director Johnson talking about racism and the time to change. Being open to listening is important to learning, and to know better and do better is relevant. She hopes the Board does the right thing.

Chair Larson thanked those who have shared their insights with the Board.

CONSIDER DECISION TO RESPECTFULLY RETIRE THE RHS MASCOT

Chair Rebecca Larson shared that pursuant to much discussion, months of research and public input and a work session at the previous meeting, she indicated that she would now entertain a motion.

Director Brandon Bishop moved to retire the RHS mascot. Director Howard Johnson seconded. Chair Larson inquired if anyone required more time, information or further discussion. The Motion failed with Director Charles Lee voting against.

Superintendent Cordon provided clarification that this motion does require a unanimous vote and all Board members to vote pursuant to Policy FF, adopted in 1982, and mascots are included in that policy. Director Hall inquired about the strategic plan and policies around equity. Chair Larson responded that would require further discussion.

M2-94 Motion to respectfully retire the RHS Mascot did not carry
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APPROVAL OF COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT (CBA) WITH ROSEBURG EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

Human Resources Director Robert Freeman acknowledged the process the REA entered into with the Board of Directors to reach a tentative agreement. The REA has voted in favor and it is now presented to the Board for ratification.

Director Charles Lee moved to approve the Collective Bargaining Agreement with the Roseburg Education Association. Director Howard Johnson seconded, and the Motion passed unanimously. Chair Larson expressed appreciation for the efforts of Mr. Freeman to facilitate this process, and invited REA President, Camron Pope to address the Board. Mr. Pope thanked the Board for their support along with Mr. Freeman for working through the Agreement with the Association to come up with a great contract for the next few years.

M2-95 Approved three-year contract between the district and the Roseburg Education Association
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APPROVAL OF PURCHASE OF CHROMEBOOKS

Technology Coordinator, Matt Hill, asked for approval to purchase 600 new chromebooks to replace older models that no longer have the ability to update and are no longer useful. The quote from CDW-G is in the amount of \$145,200 and devices would be purchased using ESSER funds.

Director Howard Johnson moved to approve the purchase of new chromebooks. Director Charles Lee seconded, and the Motion passed unanimously.

M2-96 Approved purchase of chromebooks from CDW-G in the amount of \$145,200
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APPROVE RESOLUTION 20-21-14: TEACHER APPRECIATION WEEK

Chair Rebecca Larson shared that this particular item is near and dear to her heart. The week of May 3-7 is National Teacher Appreciation Week. We like to honor all of our instructional staff by dedicating that week as Teacher Appreciation Week here at Roseburg Public Schools. She explained that after the Board votes, she would be signing a resolution in support of our esteemed licensed staff members, and thanked them for their work during this very difficult year, noting that there has been a lot of heavy lifting this year for our teachers. They have looked for creative ways to reach out as they learned new skills and platforms to help students learn and engage. We are so grateful for the excellent caliber of teachers we have here in Roseburg Public Schools.

Director Brandon Bishop moved to approve Resolution 20-21-14 dedicating the week of May 3-7 as Teacher Appreciation Week. Vice Chair Howard Johnson seconded. Director Bishop shared that he is very appreciative of what our teachers do. He added that he has been very impressed with their ability to adapt to ever-changing circumstances and requirements and responding to the expectations of students, staff and parents during this challenging year. The Motion passed unanimously.

M2-97 Adopted Resolution 20-21-14 dedicating the week of May 3-7 as Teacher Appreciation Week.
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SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Superintendent Cordon vigorously contended that in spite of the current narrative that this was a 'lost year' of learning, seeing tonight's Student of the Month demonstrates that is not the case. Our kids will not be defined by COVID, facemasks, a mascot or a vaccine. Our students will be defined by resilience, grit and ability to adapt and thrive in the face of change. Our kids, staff, parents, community and Board have been exemplary.

The District & families have rallied to focus on what matters most - our kids and providing them with opportunities to learn, grow and thrive. Our schools have been open and kids have access to course work, arts, music, core subjects, STEM, STEAM and CTE. We are now gearing up for free summer programs to address unfinished learning, focus on care and connections, as well as acceleration opportunities. Our 2021-22 budget includes Student Success Act and ESSER funds. One of the key elementary of our Strategic Plan includes the need to provide safe and inclusive environments for all students, and we are eliminating class and athletic fees, removing barriers to participation and addressing access, equity and gaps we see within our school population. We are planning for school psych services, skills trainer services, and adding a Social/Emotional Learning Coordinator. We are offering virtual options to all students K-12 to provide families with choice and flexibility while investing in improved technology. We are also adding teachers to focus on STEAM education and reducing class sizes. We fully anticipate a return to a five day a week return school year for 2021-22.

At the next Board meeting, we will discuss the opportunity to look at capital improvements to support our students and community long term through a Capital Improvement Bond. Jared expressed appreciation for the

Board for their consistency, steadfast support of our kids, and thanked the community and parents as well.

INDIVIDUAL REPORTS BY DIRECTORS

Director Micki Hall thanked teachers and staff members who are being honored next week from the bottom of her heart. They have all been remarkable dealing with the cadence of change this past year. Director Hall later read a lengthy statement pertaining to the mascot decision process. She suggested consideration of a mascot that students could rally around and represent our community. Director Hall believes that the state will tell districts they have to change the names of their mascots, and had hoped we had been proactive.

Director Rod Cotton expressed that the Board did an admirable job on the studies, etc. Due to comments made through the process, he encouraged the Superintendent and Chair establish communications with our partners and community to talk about what we have heard. He suggested an expert to guide the discussion. Board members run for school board due to their love for kids. This Board spends hours to make our schools better and he admonished those who sit back and criticize.

Director Charles Lee acknowledged the numerous respectful communications from individuals who disagreed with his position on the school name issue, adding that they were too numerous to respond to. He emphasized that in Roseburg we have the long history of the Indian name, and a community that identifies with that name. After looking at the science and sociology offered, he found it unsupportive of the broad claims being made to justify support of changing the name but added that it was worthwhile to look at this issue. He agreed that we should take the opportunity for students to think about relationships one to another and look at questions individually and in depth.

Director Johnson made assurances that words can do harm. He noted that the local tribe does not use the word Indian in their advertising. He expressed concern with the MOU with the tribe. He encouraged doing what he believes is right. He added that the high school he attended was permanently closed and erased from history. He encouraged students to create a new name and momentum around doing so. He encouraged the most advanced curriculum and educators so that students may develop into meaningful and contributing adults.

On behalf of the Board, Chair Rebecca Larson expressed gratitude to everyone for sharing their thoughts and insights. She emphasized the amount of time and effort that board members put into this volunteer capacity, explaining that they wrestle often with complex issues because they care about our kids. The hard decisions always start with the students first, and she is grateful for their efforts. Chair Larson also encouraged everyone to remember the positive things happening in the district right now, including the three-year contract with our teachers, the upcoming summer program that will enhance opportunities for our kids, and looking forward to five days a week of school next year. While it's easy to simplify the work of the Board, she encouraged everyone who might be disappointed and point fingers, to also consider the positive things that are being done.

ADJOURNMENT: With all business concluded, Chair Larson adjourned the meeting at 7:08 p.m.

Jared P. Cordon, Superintendent
JPC/jlk

Next Meeting: May 12, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. in The Rose Theatre located at Roseburg High School, 400 W. Harvard Avenue, Roseburg, Oregon.