

# ROSEBURG PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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

Vol 2 No. 21

May 12, 2021

### Board Members:

Dr. Brandon Bishop  
Rodney Cotton  
Micki Hall  
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, May 12, 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. Student Services Director, Rick Burton, led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ATTENDANCE:** Board and Cabinet members attended in person. Board Position No. 7 is vacant. RHS Leadership students, Amiya Fulton and Marin Gray also attended in person. No reporters were present.

### COMMUNICATIONS TO THE BOARD / REVIEW OF AGENDA

Superintendent Cordon informed the Board that since initial publication, the Board will consider the purchase of a scoreboard for the RHS field. Additional recommendations for hire have been added to the Consent Agenda. 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 Roseburg High School outstanding Senior student, Kai Castle. Principal Jill Weber had the honor of presenting Kai and his family with a letter sharing accolades from teachers, along with an Award Certificate and gift card from McDonalds.

The Castle family celebrated Kai's long-time student career in Roseburg, having attended Fullerton IV, Fremont and RHS. Considerable talents including music, theater, and strong leadership should serve him well in his future aspirations to become a chemical engineer. His insatiable curiosity, enthusiasm for learning together with confidence and optimism will enable him to continue to impact the world in a positive way.

### STUDENT LEADERSHIP REPORT

RHS leadership students, Amiya Fulton and Marin Gray shared current activities at the high school. They reported that due to COVID, there will be no senior events this year, but students are researching leadership

books for next year to continue developing skills. Staff Appreciation was celebrated with a lunch prepared by catering students, and personalized gift baskets were distributed, along with recognition for the custodians. 2021-22 ASB co-presidents will be Marin Gray & Chelsea Miller. With Spring sports wrapping up, season four practices start this week. Students are participating in AP tests and SATs were given May 8th. A brain bowl trivia competition today vs. Coquille was successful, and a vaccine clinic is set for May 13 for students aged 16 and older. Plans are being made for a modified Evening of Excellence. Exciting summer learning opportunities are planned, including 3D printing, basketball stats, microbiology, photography, and printmaking, all in addition to credit recovery courses. Yard signs for graduates are also being made available to celebrate our senior class.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

The Consent Agenda was presented, including approval of the Consent Agenda, Minutes from the April 28 School Board Meeting, an update to the 2021-22 calendar, Gifts to the District and the following personnel actions:

Hiring Recommendations:

Licensed Staff:

- Stephanie Collins, Sixth Grade Math and Science Teacher at Joseph Lane Middle School, a temporary position for the 2021-22 school year;
- Megan Dee, STEAM Teaching & Learning Support Specialist;
- Kirsten Fox, Sixth Grade Math and Science Teacher at Joseph Lane Middle School;
- Alea Gerhartz, Kindergarten Teacher at Eastwood Elementary School;
- Heather McAnany, Fifth Grade Teacher at Sunnyslope Elementary School; and
- Caitlin Rauchwarger, Pre-Kindergarten Teacher at Green Elementary School.

Resignations:

- Gina Evenich, Fifth Grade Teacher at Green;
- Laura Harvey, Teaching & Learning’s Talented and Gifted Specialist;
- ReBecca Hupp, School Psychologist;
- Harmony Klingemeyer, Choir Teacher at Joseph Lane Middle School;
- Katherine Mahoney, First Grade Teacher at Green Elementary;
- Daniel McIntire, hired for Winchester’s Music position for 2021-22, has rescinded his acceptance and will be taking a position closer to his home in Canby; and
- Monica Yeomans, English Language Development Teacher for secondary students.

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

M2-98 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 monitor time limitations.

Jessica Bascom, RHS graduate, Beaverton resident, and member of Klamath Tribe with Creek and Cherokee heritage. She thanked members of the Board who voted to retire the mascot, and expressed disappointment that the policy required unanimous approval and is concerned that one board member opposed the change.

She suggested three options moving forward; state the district equity statement is in violation; update equity statement; and change policy to majority vote. She pledged to continue her efforts until it is changed.

Owen Bascom, Beaverton resident, enrolled member of Klamath tribe. Surprised after vote on mascot that it is not changed. Stated that policy was changed a few months ago to require a unanimous vote. (*Note: This policy has required a unanimous vote at least since 1997.*) He referenced the Articles of Confederation, prior to the establishment of the Constitution, as an example of weak government. He advocated reversing the policy as he believes it is the right thing to do.

Beth Griffin, band parent, PAC member and proud graduate of RHS, in a class that produced doctors, nurses, lawyers, teachers, military officers, engineers, Sunrise workers, homemakers, a Rhodes scholar, hair-dressers, truck drivers, business owners, etc. She reflected that her diverse neighborhood school closed due to effects of poverty, and students are bused away from their neighborhoods now. Her daughter will be a 2021 RHS graduate after persevering from the loss of school social events and academics this year and can't invite all family members to graduation. This community has abundant marijuana dispensaries, broken families, and ongoing economic challenges. She encouraged the Board to support the needs of the community and all students, and use resources to establish finance, trade and mentorship programs, while adding more college courses, to raise the bar for a prosperous future. Beth thanked the Board for their service.

Zack Bascom, Beaverton resident, was encouraged at the Boards' concern at the previous meeting for local native students and the community. He believes that not changing the mascot shows the power of a unanimous decision. He is happy that his three native children don't attend Roseburg High School. He urged the board to change the policy and move forward, showing that what you say in your equity statement is also how you act.

Mandie Pritchard, no address provided, reminded Board members of research that she continues to do on their behalf. She referenced a 2010 study which advocated that the tendency of stereotyping minority groups can affect academic performance, memory, leadership aspirations and self-esteem. She believes the mascot impacts students who have been marginalized over time. She encouraged the Board to re-evaluate the process.

Ava Bascom, Beaverton resident and enrolled member of Klamath tribe suggested that the mascot is racist and she requested it be changed. She acknowledged that some people have memories and see no harm, but others do. Some feel pain, but she explained that people can still be proud of the past even if the mascot changes. You may not have experienced the harm, but that doesn't mean you can't change it.

Andrea Falgout, of Roseburg, asked who is advocating for elementary students, as that is where stereotyping begins. She encouraged conversation with those counselors. Believes Roseburg Indians solidifies stereotypes. Actions mean more than words. Encouraged the Board to continue to push forward and advocate for the kids.

Hadley Becksfort, 11 years old and friend of native Klamath tribe people. She thinks the mascot is racist and should go. Change can be hard but could have been done long ago to make everyone feel safe and happy.

Eliza Garcia, attended RHS 2015-19 and believes using a native American as mascot is wrong. She is not native, but finds it necessary as a woman of color to speak about injustice. Use of native mascots perpetuates false stereotypes. She does not feel comfortable claiming to be a Roseburg Indian if you have not endured the hardships. Changing the mascot does not change the success or legacy of RHS or the community in any way, but is a crucial step in creating an inclusive and welcoming environment for all.

Criset Palenshus, no address provided, celebrated the youth here tonight and shared her appreciation for the work being done, noting that it should be done by the Board, specifically Charles Lee. Believes teachers and students will be ashamed. Spoke to Director Lee previously and he shared that he has no native friends to consult and she stated it's time for him to step down. Noting that her residence is a few blocks away, she indicated she would be here every night and her group will start having conversations about Mr. Lee. Ms. Palenshus again insisted that Director Lee resign.

Linda Snyder, local resident with grandchildren attending Fir Grove. She expressed concern for children having to wear masks, believing it is abusive. Expressed her opinion that Safer Oregon guidelines do not make it okay to abuse children. She also spoke in support of the native American mascot and Charles Lee for standing up and voting the way he did. Many in this community have absolutely no problem with it. She likes it the way it is and thinks it would cost a lot of money to change. And it's not fair to say someone is racist for having an opinion.

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

### **APPROVE RESOLUTION 20-21-15: PERS PENSION OBLIGATION BONDS**

The Board is asked to approve this resolution authorizing the District to participate in the Oregon Education Districts Pension Bond Program; authorizing a full faith and credit pension bond and related full faith and credit pension obligations, to be issued in one or more series. The Board will consider next steps in June.

Director Micki Hall moved to approve Resolution 20-21-15 authorizing the District to participate in the Oregon Education Districts Pension Bond Program as requested. Director Charles Lee seconded, and the Motion passed unanimously.

M2-99 Adopted Resolution 20-21-15: PERS Pension Obligation Bonds
------------------------------------------------------------------

### **APPROVAL OF PROPOSED 2021-2022 STUDENT FEES**

Superintendent Cordon emphasized that our continuing focus is to remove barriers of access for students in accordance with our Strategic Plan. With the exceptions of non-returned items and Driver's Ed fees, the Board was asked to approve a proposed list of student fees for 2021-2022 that continues the District's goal of eliminating class and athletic fees to remove potential barriers to student participation.

Director Micki Hall moved to approve the 2021-2022 Student Fees as proposed. Director Brandon Bishop seconded, and the Motion passed unanimously. Director Howard Johnson inquired about the insurance made available to student families, and it was informed that insurance is required to participate in sports, and parents are provided the option to purchase the insurance made available through the District. Chair Larson stated that this listing represents great work. The cost of participating in an activity should not prohibit a child from being involved, as developing talents and having the opportunity to learn and grow is very important.

M2-100 Approved 2021-2022 Student Fees
----------------------------------------

### **CONSIDER APPROVAL TO PURCHASE 344 W. SELMAR**

Chair Rebecca Larson advised that this is a suggested purchase as we continue to look at the properties adjacent to the high school. Chief Operations Officer, Cheryl Northam, shared that the property owners have agreed to a purchase price of \$455,000 pending Board approval. If approved, this would result in ownership of 20 of the 23 houses and lots behind the high school.

Director Charles Lee moved to approve the request to purchase the home located at 344 W. Selmar. Director Micki Hall seconded, and the Motion passed unanimously.

M2-101 Approved purchase of 344 West Selmar

### **CONSIDER PURCHASE OF NEW ROSEBURG HIGH SCHOOL FIELD SCOREBOARD**

Chief Operations Officer, Cheryl Northam, explained that the RHS scoreboard is approximately 30 years old and doesn't always work. Through careful management of funds, RHS has the funds necessary to purchase replacement equipment. Athletic Director Russ Bolin has researched bids and made a recommendation to purchase a new intelligent captioned LED scoreboard from Nevco that can be used for football, soccer, and lacrosse. It will also have the capacity for a message center at the bottom that could include advertising messages from RPS supporters and businesses.

Director Micki Hall moved to approve the purchase of a field scoreboard for the RHS field from Nevco at an anticipated cost of \$56,901. Director Rod Cotton seconded, and the Motion passed unanimously. Director Cotton expressed surprise that local businesses have not offered to participate in such a purchase, but he supports the request. Director Hall noted that many local businesses have been impacted by the pandemic.

M2-102 Approved purchase of RHS field scoreboard

### **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

Superintendent Cordon shared that it's always great to hear from our students and thanked them for being here tonight. He again encouraged everyone to reconsider the current narrative of a "lost" school year, instead celebrating recent learning activities that included:

- Farm days focused on STEAM;
- Bicycling safety programs;
- Indoor high school sports;
- Elementary school jog-a-thons;
- School gardens, etc.

Kids can learn and engage, even in a mask and 3 feet apart, and oftentimes become our example. The two middle schools are now open in person 4 days a week. Our K-12 summer enrichment and learning program sign-ups start this week and include supporting students in unfinished learning; strengthening connections with students, families & staff; accelerated learning for students and support for families over the summer break.

We are looking forward to this fall, and are planning for and our intent will be for five days a week, in-person instruction. With guidance anticipated to change over the summer, we will continue to work with ODE, the Oregon Health Authority and Governor's office. Roseburg virtual options will give families flexibility and rigor, along with alignment and coherence in the classroom. Options will be available online in the registration portal, and he encouraged families to take a look and consider those. APEX will be an option for grades 6-12 for work on credit-bearing courses for next year.

A group of very active/organized community members have been asking the question, "What do we want for our community...what's our focus? This is a great opportunity to develop partnerships across our community, county and state with business owners who are like-minded in supporting our success. Recent survey results have been compiled into a two-page report with the help of the Ford Family Foundation. We are grateful to this community and their participation in our schools.

## **INDIVIDUAL REPORTS BY DIRECTORS**

Chair Rebecca Larson shared her intention to clarify a few things. First, she reiterated that RPS will be providing summer camp options at every level that are free of charge. More information is being released later this week. She expressed pride in the District for taking advantage of that, adding that a district where her sister teaches opted not to take advantage of that opportunity. Mrs. Larson shared her excitement about all the neat things happening here, and this is truly a “shout out” to our district staff, principals and teachers who are digging deep after an exhausting year to help our students and community, providing a safe and free place for kids to go all summer long to explore their talents and interests. We are grateful to all of them.

Second, Chair Larson explained that we really do have to operate within the guidelines from the state. We can't change those directives and even if we are as frustrated as you, we have to abide by them. However, we anticipate that every grade will be five days a week next year, and our families can plan for that. For those who may prefer to remain online, that option is available as well. Rest assured we are planning for and anticipating being open five days a week next year!

Director Micki Hall pointed out that this is one of the busiest times of the year in our classrooms, where there are many events in spite of COVID. Teachers are already starting to plan for the next year and hopefully next year will be joyful for them. Mrs. Hall emphasized that Roseburg was the first 6A district to open at the end of January with a hybrid model. Other high schools were calling the district and Jill Weber hoping for guidance on how we accomplished that. In spite of outspoken individuals, this Board made tough decisions respectful of our kids, teachers and community. It is not true that all we have done is speak to the mascot issue; we spent time on that as it's an important issue. She is confident that people in our schools, the offices and on this Board will give just as much time and attention and reflection to make sure that our number one priority remains our kids. Our kids are fantastic, and they go to other places, making a difference in those communities, providing a tremendous amount of joy. Director Hall continued that everyone here makes decisions based on kindness. These are people who care about what kids are given. Speaking to her fellow Board members, Micki encouraged them to pat themselves on the back and she thanks them all for doing a good job for Roseburg Public Schools.

Director Charles Lee reflected on the accomplishments of the RHS student who was honored tonight, noting that for years Roseburg has made rigorous courses available, and we continue to be proud of that. Real effort has been made over a number of years to work on strengthening programs so that students can flourish and be successful. For years, kids would drop off over the summer. The new summer program this year will be even more valued, especially considering the difficulties this year. The program will provide ways for students to stay engaged and develop new skills. He expressed optimism that this will not happen only this year. Director Lee also shared that, concerning the mascot issue, he made a statement in the newspaper expressing his concerns and the reasoning behind them, in the hope that people would respond with answers during public participation. He suggested that progress has to be made in the context of discussion, and he looks forward to the school experience being better and better as time goes by.

Director Howard Johnson humbly requested prayers on behalf of his sister and wife, both of whom are experiencing difficult illnesses.

Director Brandon Bishop shared that this school year has been interesting; not perfect, but yes, challenging. He joins those who have wished that everyone could be back in schools months ago, but that was not an option. Dr. Bishop expressed gratitude for parents, students, and staff, and is grateful to have made it through this year.

**RECESS:** Chair Larson recessed the regular meeting at 7:10 p.m. and announced that after a brief recess, the

Board would reconvene in a Board Work Session.

## **BOARD WORK SESSION – BOND DISCUSSION**

Chair Larson convened the Board Work Session at 7:19 p.m., and invited Superintendent Cordon to lead a discussion regarding the possibilities that a bond measure could mean to Roseburg Public Schools.

Superintendent Cordon shared his excitement about the possibilities of what a bond would mean to the support of our kids and community. He reflected that in 2018, the District applied for and received a grant to deeply examine our facilities and report on short, medium, and long-term planning. The report confirmed that we have done a commendable job maintaining our facilities, while confirming that significant investments are needed both short and long term. Jared acknowledged our Chief Operations Officer, Cheryl Northam, for her success in obtaining grant funding to increase safety through seismic rehabilitation grants. An additional recent award adds to a total of \$10.5 million in funding under Cheryl's leadership. Our reality is, however, that not even State School Funding and grant funding can adequately address the facility needs existing in our aging schools.

The previous bond measure helped to build the RHS Main and beautiful Rose Theatre that we are enjoying tonight. That bond helped create a high school that staff, students, and our community can be proud of. Prior to that project, the newest building in our District was Sunnyslope Elementary, constructed in 1978.

In 2020, we asked our community to support a bond focused on safety, security, and renovations. The effort was complicated by the pandemic and resulting economic pressures, ultimately failing by 52/48%. This past school year has reminded us yet again that our facility needs have not changed, with deficiencies in safety and air quality becoming even more obvious and important than ever.

Tonight we review why this does matter to our community as a whole. Questions will come later as we move to discovery and exploration. Jared shared a video in honor of mothers, imagining if the world could see what a mom sees; if schools, the Board, and the community could see what a mom sees and wants for her children. The Superintendent asked Board members for their input as to the "Why" relative to the upcoming bond.

Director Micki Hall expressed that every mom absolutely wants what is best for kids. Our great teachers often make up for what we don't have in terms of facilities, while custodial staff take care of what we do have. If people could see what the buildings look like inside, they would know we are not giving our kids the best.

Director Rod Cotton noted his appreciation for the video, adding that dads want the best for their kids too. Our HVAC systems need improving, and we have done what can be done. Roseburg is a really cool community and grandparents want the best for their grandchildren. Of the many votes taken over the years, the most important vote taken was for the last bond that nearly passed. This Board has voted to put a bond forward, hoping that kids can drive up to our buildings and say "Wow"! We have absolutely wonderful educators, teachers and friends, but we are lacking in gym spaces for our kids. He emphasized that everything on the last bond was important for our kids – and it matters to dads too.

Director Charles Lee explained the importance of schools being places where kids want to be. Roseburg grew in the 1940's and 50's and those buildings are becoming functionally obsolete. We want kids to be in schools that have working, reliable heating and plumbing, sanitary and water systems. It's terribly distracting for kids when the temperatures become uncomfortable in the classrooms, so we need HVAC systems that make our students comfortable so they can learn. Nationally, we have learned more about school security. Parents want

their kids safe in schools. We all want to have a modern, welcoming, and safe physical plant for kids to be learning in physical surroundings that encourage active learning.

Director Howard Johnson reflected his belief that his generation opened doors for the current generation to achieve. He would like to believe that suggestions will be followed if other people listen, cosign and provide the authority to get it done. He suggested asking this community what they need so that children can be in a safe environment. His parents had the vision of his siblings having a college education. We must be attentive and listen to our stakeholders, gather input, then create a format to achieve the desired result. Then they need to cosign and pass the bond. He added that we all live by words, and words can hurt. He suggested we cannot hang onto a building called the Heritage, as people will hang onto it until it falls down.

Director Brandon Bishop stated that all our children deserve to have buildings that are safe. Our buildings have air flow issues, along with other issues that need to be addressed yesterday. We need this bond to help with basic water and sanitation needs. He further agreed with Director Lee that to make schools safer, we need to establish single access points along with camera surveillance.

Chair Rebecca Larson stated that we did a lot of work on the bond, talking about the “why” and identifying projects. We previously had a facility study done that went through each building identifying needs. We want the outside of our buildings to reflect what is going on inside; the great teaching and kids on the inside. This is something we can all be proud of. She reported that sometimes when parents are picking up youngsters, the buildings smell like sewage due to aged systems. We have old radiators, and no air conditioning. It’s hard for kids to focus, learn and listen because they are uncomfortable. She expressed appreciation for what Director Johnson said concerning getting the community involved and moving forward with the original intent of the last bond. Begin working with community groups to get input and insights, establish team leaders and work on a bond that hopefully we can successfully pass. We came so close the last time.

Director Micki Hall surmised that had it not been for COVID, there was a good chance the bond would have passed. We had videos of boiler rooms needing updating. She believes the community would be appalled at the condition of the Heritage, and similar conditions at the elementary schools. She heard a report today about mistakes made by the CDC when COVID appeared, and air quality was the one thing they missed. They should have suggested that windows be left open, and air purifiers would have also helped. All of our buildings except Hucrest and RHS have air quality issues. This District has a history of frugality, and should be applauded for what has been done to make things better for the kids. The district office looks like trailers patched together.

Director Rod Cotton appreciated Director Johnson’s comments and direction. He recalled attending RHS and was also a part of the bond that passed successfully. He sits here tonight in awe of this building that was created from that. Prior to that bond effort, we had the “Black Box” theater. That community driven effort came close to 60-70 percent favorability, but there was no pandemic. The economy was not the best at the time, but the effort was community driven.

Director Brandon Bishop pointed out that teachers don’t have enough plug-ins in the classroom to do the things they need to do. There are more basic needs that the public is not aware of. We need to share more examples of those essential needs to help educate the community on why this needs to happen.

Superintendent Cordon acknowledged that it’s part of our conservative nature to be frugal and not like to say what is wrong, and becoming accustomed to the status quo. This is a great conversation, and we know we have to start with the “why”. This requires a strong community-driven process moving forward. Jared also shared



that this bond does matter to this community. As a parent with kids in the system, the most important thing you have are your children. You send them to school expecting at a minimum to get them back safely, but we should expect to get them back even better. We desire great places to learn and teach, and safe places for kids.

Chair Rebecca Larson shared that the state of our schools impacts everyone. She explained that when they try to recruit staff in her husband's line of work, oftentimes the candidates tour facilities and unfortunately our schools don't look great. If we want people to come here, we need to have appealing facilities. That benefits everyone.

Superintendent Cordon summarized that in all his years of working in schools, he never encountered a thriving community with a failing education system. The two are inextricably linked.

Jared expressed appreciation for the opportunity to visit tonight. The team will provide a framework around the "why" and bring back ideas for a community-driven process to upcoming board meetings.

**ADJOURNMENT:** With all business concluded, Chair Larson adjourned the meetings at 7:47 p.m.

**Jared P. Cordon, Superintendent**

JPC/jlk

**Next Meeting:** May 26, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. in The Rose Theatre located at Roseburg High School, 400 W. Harvard Avenue, Roseburg, Oregon.