

ROSEBURG PUBLIC SCHOOLS

School Board Work Session
1419 NW Valley View Drive
Roseburg, Oregon 97471
Available via Zoom

Vol 4 No. 10

January 25, 2023

Board Members:

Dr. Brandon Bishop Exc.
Rodney Cotton
Rev. Howard Johnson, Chair
Ann Krimetz
Rebecca Larson, Vice Chair
Charles F. Lee
Andrew Shirtcliff Exc.

Administration:

Jared P. Cordon, Superintendent
Robert Freeman, Director of Human Resources
Michelle Knee, Assistant Superintendent
Cheryl Northam, Director of Finance and Operations
Melissa Roberts, Director of Student Services

SCHOOL BOARD WORK SESSION

TIME/PLACE: A School Board Work Session of the Douglas County School District No. 4 Board of Directors was convened on Wednesday, January 25, 2023, in the administrative office board room located at 1419 NW Valley View Drive, Roseburg, Oregon, in person with an electronic link available.

CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Board Chair Howard Johnson called the Work Session to order at 6:00 p.m. and led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ATTENDANCE: Board members attended in person, and Superintendent Cordon and Cabinet members were present. No media representatives were in attendance.

COMMUNICATIONS TO THE BOARD / REVIEW OF AGENDA

Superintendent Cordon welcomed everyone present in person, as well as those who were joining the meeting remotely. He announced that Directors Bishop and Shirtcliff were excused tonight.

***SCHOOL BOARD RECOGNITION MONTH CONTINUES THROUGH THE MONTH OF JANUARY
THANK YOU – RPS BOARD OF DIRECTORS!***

GRADUATION RATE AND 9th GRADE ON TRACK

(slide deck attached)

RHS Principal, Dr. Jill Weber and RHS Drop-Out Prevention Specialist (Graduation Coach), Rob Coulson shared how the graduation rate and 9th Grade on Track calculations are made, and steps being taken to help students regain momentum. Dr. Weber began with the Board's work around the Strategic Plan, noting that student care and support are at the heart of the work at RHS. Mr. Coulson shared that the 9th Grade on Track calculation is a one year calculation of the percentage of freshmen on track at the end of their freshman year, with the entire

picture developing over time. It's important to note that the on-track numbers are indicative of the grad rate three years later. The grad rate differs in that it is a four-year calculation, meaning that freshmen are already accruing data for their graduation rate. While some districts choose to place kids in alternative schools because it makes their numbers look better, our district has the philosophy that we will provide the right support needed by a student, whether it is graduation, GED, modified diploma, etc. Principal Weber explained that when students are successful in their first year of high school, they want to keep going and are more likely to continue and graduate on time. We understand know the transition from middle to high school can be difficult, and are proud of the work we have done over time. Dr. Weber noted that the GED program can be life changing for some students. That gets to the heart of what we want to do – prepare students for what lies in their future after graduation. It's not always the shiny and pretty, but it is the right thing to do. She thanked the Board for rallying around that program.

Dr. Weber described how the impact of COVID is reflected in both on track and grad rate numbers, and we expect similar results over the next two cohorts. The necessity of distance learning during the pandemic didn't allow for the achievement results students benefited from until 2020 when they enjoyed the support, care and connection that had resulted in student success. Mrs. Weber related that COVID negatively impacted not only students who really need to be in the building connecting with adults, but also our community, demonstrating how important school is to us all.

Added student supports we provided during COVID were:

- Chromebooks / hot spots
- Home visits
- Meals—3 per day during distance learning
- Clothing Closet and supplies provided
- Attendance Monitor
- Admin/Counselor regular Check ins
- Working on Engaging Instruction

Mr. Coulson shared heart-wrenching stories of students who were on track prior to COVID who abandoned their academic trajectory to instead enter the workforce to help provide for their families.

Principal Weber described some of the tools put in place to help students thrive at RHS, including:

- Clubs/Activities/Athletics
- Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)/QPR/ASIST (training staff on suicide prevention)
- PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports)
- Advisory—4-year cohort (with same group)
- After-school Activity Bus
- On-campus Mental Health access
- On-campus Physical Health access

Instruction is further bolstered by:

- Engagement strategies-5D
- Student interest courses
- Increased CTE
- Credit Recovery
- Summer School
- Tutoring
- Strategies classes

Additional supports are also being targeted specifically to 9th and 10th grade students, such as the 9th grade support team that monitors attendance and student data, the transition class, summer proficiency class for those struggling with English or math, house class and credit recovery class. The Board's focus on student care and connection and making sure we serve all kids is something RHS takes very seriously.

Principal Weber was also quick to point out that while metrics are below pre-pandemic levels, her team is encouraged that we are ahead of where we were 6 years ago.

Director Rod Cotton thanked Dr. Weber and Mr. Coulson for coming tonight, and emphasized that our community needs to be aware of all the work the high school is doing in moving forward after COVID. We are all here to work for our kids and make students and our community successful. This is a conservative, small community that wants kids to do their very best.

Vice-Chair Rebecca Larson thanked both presenters, acknowledging the heartbreak of students no longer attending when everything we were doing pre-COVID was working.

Director Ann Krimetz reflected that what the high school staff is doing is a huge undertaking, and definitely needed in providing what's necessary to get kids where they need to go. She added her appreciation for the graduation coaching and attendance monitor positions that are very challenging, but immensely valuable in encouraging students to attend and stay in school.

Director Charles Lee expressed that what we are doing is working well for kids who desire to attend school. In his work, he deals with vicious custody battles that create conflict and result in kids not putting school as a priority. Even judges aren't successful in getting kids to go to school.

Dr. Weber agreed that it's really a community responsibility. Student success is good for a community. They are working on a campaign educating the community the reasons why school is important; look at what schools can offer for students interested in the trades.

Superintendent Cordon noted that we are partnering with other organizations to provide behavior and mental health. He can't emphasize enough, however, that the most important teaching happens within the walls of home. We are thinking about how to ensure kids come to school ready to learn. To maintain the integrity of our design to meet them when they get there, the parent support piece is becoming more important. We also need to meet parents where they are, and work together for the success of kids.

Chair Johnson expressed his gratitude for the RHS staff, Dr. Weber and Mr. Coulson for the work they do. Director Charles Lee suggested that it would be good to add the various categories of student success at the bottom of the graduation

BRIEF RECESS: On behalf of the Board, Chair Johnson thanked Dr. Weber and Mr. Coulson for their presentation. With no objections, he called for a brief break at 6:40 p.m. to allow those who wished an opportunity to depart for the evening. The meeting was reconvened at 6:43 p.m.

BOND MEASURE 2023 – DISCUSSION (slide deck attached)

Supt. Cordon reviewed the \$154M 2022 bond effort along with the proposed 2023 capital improvement bond

needed to address investments within the three priority areas identified by this Board and community:

School Security
Health and Safety
Rebuild of Old Main

Following the defeat of the 2022 bond effort, the board met to discuss next steps and polling results and engaged in a process of prioritizing with the intent of moving forward with a bond in May 2023. They focused on top priority projects and investments important to the board and this community: school safety and security; building reno and repair to address health and safety; and a rebuild of the Old Main at the high school. This was accomplished while respecting the community's call for a smaller financial investment. School safety includes functional space for quality teaching and learning.

Mr. Cordon shared a slide deck, "2023 School Bond Proposal Discussion". The \$4.4M security proposal encompasses controlled access systems district-wide; electric strike exterior and interior doors throughout all buildings (allowing for one-push emergency protocol response action); and protective window film. Also included are camera system completion district-wide; and perimeter fencing installation around athletic properties at secondary schools. The vestibule and fencing projects already underway are not included in the estimated costs as they are being paid for through one-time federal ESSER funding.

- ✓ The Health & Safety packages included items necessary for improved air quality, roofing needs, plumbing and electrical. Air quality is not only related to COVID, but also the recurring issues we have experienced with wildfire smoke.
- ✓ The \$45.4M option (package 2) includes upgrading and installing heating/cooling/air exchange systems district-wide and additional roofing addressing immediate and medium-term needs.
- ✓ An Old Main Rebuild (\$31.5M) would create a modern educational facility including historical architectural elements.

A total bond package as illustrated would be \$81.3M. The district has applied for and received a \$5.8M matching grant commitment from the Oregon School Capital Improvement (OSCIM) that would be awarded only if the May 2023 bond is successful. This would reduce the \$81.3M package to \$75.5M.

A final slide illustrates a 20-year bond issue, as well as a 25-year bond issue. At the February 8th board meeting, a Resolution will be considered to move forward with a May '23 bond measure. The district was awarded an OSCIM matching grant of \$5.8M (if the bond measure is successful) reducing the \$81.3M package to \$75.5M. The Rate per \$1,000 assessed property value for the \$75.5M package would be \$.99 per \$1,000 of assessed property value over the 20-year bond issue, or \$86.5 per thousand over a 25-year issue. This compares with the \$1.85 per \$1,000 proposed in 2022. Mr. Cordon pointed out that numbers do reflect updated cost estimates.

Vice-Chair Larson explained that \$75.5M is less than half of the amount proposed in 2022, and these three priorities were the result of listening and working with this community. She shared that the sad reality for schools is that there is no other avenue available to address capital improvement needs aside from asking our communities to please help. She reflected that this was entirely a community-driven process. We have tried hard to listen and do what the community asked. This bond request is down to bare bones. This is no one's fault, it is not fair, but it is the system we have to support infrastructure across the district.

Chair Johnson provided the directors the opportunity to ask questions. It was clarified for Director Krimetz that

there is currently no levied amount for a bond as the 20-year bond was satisfied in 2021. It was also pointed out that the costs reflect inflation increases of up to 20 percent. Waiting has a cost in materials and labor. We are beginning to see some decreases in materials.

Director Lee made note of items no longer included in the bond proposal, such as new multi-purpose spaces at the elementary schools, playgrounds and fields, for example. Mr. Lee pointed out that modulars are not intended to be permanent, and he suggested sharing with the public how a new education facility; i.e., the Old Main could benefit CTE or other work. Principal Weber confirmed that some classrooms have had to be combined, and teachers have not been able to work collaboratively as efficiently as they had previously.

Director Cotton stated that one of the board's responsibilities is to work with administration to assure that our buildings are maintained. The issues remain, but we have to work within the system here in Oregon. This district has done a good job pursuing seismic rehabilitation grants. He encouraged patrons to reach out to the Board with comments. The Old Main is no longer conducive to teaching. He likened it to your residence that eventually has to be updated or replaced. Our ability to borrow money becomes more expensive with inflation. Other surrounding districts have embraced the need for bonds.

Superintendent Cordon shared that while the Board was not being asked to vote this evening, Director Shirtcliff had indicated that he would be comfortable supporting a levied amount of \$75.5M. Vice-Chair Larson had to leave for a family obligation, but indicated her agreement with Director Shirtcliff. No other amounts were suggested, and Chair Johnson confirmed that the Board would need to be prepared to vote on a resolution at their February 8th meeting. A resolution will be prepared in advance of that meeting for the Board to review.

ADJOURNMENT: With discussion concluded, Chair Johnson thanked everyone very much for coming, and adjourned the meeting at 7:22 p.m.

Jared P. Cordon, Superintendent

JPC/jlk

Next Meeting: Regular School Board Meeting, February 8, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. in the Winchester Elementary School library located at 217 Pioneer Way, accessible from Page Road (no stairs), in Winchester, Oregon and available via Zoom.