

ROSEBURG PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Regular School Board Meeting & Executive Session
Hucrest Elementary School Multi-purpose Room
1810 NW Kline Street
Roseburg, Oregon 97471
Available via Zoom

Vol 5 No. 10

December 13, 2023

Board Members:

Rodney D. Cotton, Chair
Steve Hammerson Exc
Rev. Howard Johnson, Vice-Chair
Ann Krimetz
Michael Leone
Andrea Miner
Andrew Shirtcliff

Administration:

Jared P. Cordon, Superintendent
Michelle Knee, Assistant Superintendent
Cheryl Northam, Director of Finance and Operations
Melissa Roberts, Director of Student Services
Jill Weber, Director of Teaching and Learning
Chelsea Duncan, Communications Coordinator

SCHOOL BOARD MEETING

TIME/PLACE: A meeting of the Douglas County School District No. 4 Board of Directors was convened on Wednesday, December 13, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. in the Hucrest Elementary School Multi-purpose Room, located at 1810 NW Kline Street in Roseburg, Oregon, in person and available via Zoom link.

CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Board Chair, Rodney D. Cotton, called the regular meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and invited Teaching and Learning Director, Dr. Jill Weber to lead the Pledge of Allegiance. Chair Cotton also advised the audience that Board meetings are recorded for future viewing and to please silence their cell phones. Anyone wishing to be part of Public Participation was asked to complete a card at the back of the room and cards will be collected prior to Public Participation. Our Zoom link is available for family and friends unable to attend the student and staff recognitions. No media representatives were present.

Chair Cotton thanked Principal Thompson and the Hucrest staff for preparing this space for us tonight. The student artwork on view during the tour was very impressive.

PRINCIPAL REPORT – HUCREST ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Hucrest Elementary School Principal, Jennifer Thompson

Principal Jennifer Thompson led a tour of the school this afternoon, highlighting the supports provided to students. In addition to aligning decisions with the Strategic Plan, Mrs. Thompson promotes John Hattie’s research and emphasis of ensuring that all staff are moving in the same direction, and truly believing children can learn and succeed. Staff members including 25 licensed and 25 classified members assist 400 students in grades K-5 with three classrooms per grade level. Special programs include the Learning Resource Center (LRC), Developmental Learning Center (DLC) and the emerging kindergarten classrooms. Grade level teams meet regularly to review reading, math, attendance and behavior data to improve outcomes for students. Children are encouraged to be involved, not give up, and strive to be their very best while staff make sure that all students feel that they truly belong and are loved throughout the school day. Principal Thompson acknowledged highlights such as “the impossible shot”, Golden Shoe, Traveling Hawk Spirt Award and after-school activities such as Art, Robotics, Choir and Band.

For 2023-24, staff have based their goal of increasing growth by three percent in the areas of reading, math and attendance on iReady diagnostics that are administered three times during the school year.

Director Andrea Miner gave kudos to the principal for her Monday morning messages. She had viewed one of the videos and it was amazing!

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT:

RHS Leadership students Hannah Heuberger and Sylvia Eckman shared that with two days remaining until winter break, students are enjoying Winter Week, with preparations for finals looming! Students enjoyed dress-up days, lunchtime activities, a raffle and winter-themed scavenger hunt. Musical talents were showcased in a winter performance of the RHS band in the Rose Theatre yesterday. The latest edition of the school newspaper, the Orange R, will be released Friday. They have also begun releasing a video broadcast every Thursday. Auditions will be taking place January 31st and February 1st for the musical, *"The Addams Family"*. Clay Club's annual pottery sale is already underway this week to provide support for clay projects. Fundraising ideas are also being considered to support the EF Europe trip group. Winter sports, including basketball, swimming and wrestling are in full swing, with the wrestling team leaving tomorrow to compete in Reno, Nevada.

Leadership students are planning to better support all clubs through Interclub Council with student representatives from each club and are making executive council meetings accessible to any student interested in attending.

STUDENT / STAFF RECOGNITION

Vice-Chair Johnson expressed that it was his honor and extreme privilege to present Crystal Apple Awards to the following staff members:

Allison Bochart, Special Education Teacher at Hucrest Elementary School

Allison is the lead teacher of the Emerging Kindergarten classroom at Hucrest, and is known as a creative, diligent, and passionate teaching professional. Her approach to teaching is truly from the heart and she works tirelessly preparing activities, taking data, and reviewing her practice so that she can do her best by each child in her classroom. She is willing to take on challenges and help colleagues without reservation. Her educational experiences are great, but her knowledge and desire to continue to learn is even greater. Finally, Allison values being a member of a team – she wishes she could share this award with the assistants in her program as she doesn't believe she would be successful without their support.

Allison is truly a one-of-a-kind gem!

Congratulations, Allison!

Teresa "Tracy" Creamer, Hucrest Elementary School Night Custodian

Tracy has been a quiet force behind the scenes, making our school shine – literally! For countless years, she has created a welcoming space for both students and staff. Her empathy, strength, intelligence and good nature are something that is very rare to find. She has been called an angel walking on earth due to her kind and caring soul. The Crystal Apple award is a long overdue acknowledgment of the warmth and care she pours into every corner of our building!

Congratulations, Tracy!

Director Andrea Miner had the honor and privilege of recognizing worthy students this evening. Recipients received certificates and McDonald's gift cards. Joseph Lane's honoree was unable to attend and is being rescheduled for a future meeting. Honorees this evening included:

Oakley Paulson, Twelfth Grade Student at Roseburg High School

Oakley is known as a hard worker who has especially shined in the Hospitality, Tourism and Recreation program for the past three years. Oakley has helped prepare food and served at catering jobs through the program. She is always on task and willing to help others and always enters class with a smile and a can-do attitude. She can get tasks done to the best of her ability without direct supervision. Oakley moved to Roseburg three years ago from California. This can be a hard transition, especially during a pandemic, but she has done a great job of working hard and keeping her grades up. Oakley would like to be a pastry chef and currently has her eye on Southwestern Oregon Community College - Oregon Coast Culinary Institute for her post-secondary training. Oakley's teachers know she will do her best and excel at whatever she decides to do.

Congratulations, Oakley!

Mason Witham, Fifth Grade Student at Hucrest Elementary School

Mason is so very curious and is driven to discover the way things work. He has extraordinary strategies and skills to acquire the knowledge he seeks and strives to help others be successful. He is calm and considerate, as well as a phenomenal academic. If Mason had to choose his future career today, he guesses he would be a mapmaker. One of the things he is the proudest of is the huge map he made by taping notebook paper together. It is a map of an imaginary world that hangs in his room. However, Mason thinks that he would like to attend Harvard because of the classes offered there like Botany and other sciences. Mason is also proud that he has had a personal conversation with each principal he has had in elementary school. During his conversation with Principal Thompson he advocated for a new school club – the Dungeons and Dragons Club, which will start at the school soon.

Congratulations, Mason!

BRIEF RECESS: On behalf of the Board, Chair Cotton thanked the attendees for coming tonight to support the honorees and offered a brief break to allow an opportunity for those who wished to depart for the evening. The meeting was recessed at 6:33 p.m. and reconvened at 6:37 p.m.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: Asst. Superintendent Michelle Knee asked for any cards to be submitted from anyone interested in addressing the Board. Three individuals present in the room (and no one on Zoom) asked to speak.

Kate Comisky, local resident and parent of a middle school student, shared that after growing up here, the family returned and she enrolled a bi-racial child. She reported that racism is rampant and epidemic and is appalled how many slurs her child has endured. Schools cannot parent all kids and are doing their best to discipline. The children are hearing this at home. This won't be resolved by a few kids receiving occasional detention. Not addressing the problem allows it to become the culture, and kids pay the price. There are programs, curriculum and services available to aid discussions on race to build bridges so that children understand the ramifications of words to create a better school system and town.

Ben Anderson, local resident and parent, spoke in support of embracing diversity after moving here from the Bay Area with his family. In coaching little league baseball, he observed that the majority of children have never had an interaction with a person of color. Building diversity over time helps a community become beautiful. His child is experiencing racism in school. He expressed the importance of embracing available tools and resources to help grow a healthier community. There are people who provide this expertise for a living and he encouraged the district to tap into those resources.

Bonnie Anderson, local resident and grandparent of two students added to her son's comments and shared that the first step is to recognize that there is a problem and understand that ugliness happens everywhere. She encouraged the district to seek to educate parents and children. Professionals are available to speak to districts and students to raise levels of awareness. It's hurtful when these things are happening to kids, and she is here to ask for support for the children. She thanked the Board for listening to her concerns.

ACTION / DISCUSSION ITEMS

ATTENDANCE: Board members were present with the exception of Director Steve Hammerson, who was excused. Cabinet members were present and 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 via Zoom. With Director Hammerson excused this evening, Director Andrea Miner will be our presenter for student recognition.

He further noted that since initial publication, we have added additional recommendations for hire within the Consent Agenda along with updated Gifts to the District. October 25 Board minutes and updated the Gifts to the District. The letter from audit firm KDP to our Board is also included on pages 40-43.

Thank you to those who have donated gifts to the District.

CONSENT AGENDA:

The Consent Agenda was presented for consideration, including approval of the Consent Agenda, Minutes from the November 15th Board Meeting; Curriculum and Instruction Committee Minutes; Dept. of Student Services s Committee Minutes; Surplus Items listing and Gifts to the District, as well as Personnel actions including the recommendations for hire and acceptance of resignations as listed below:

Recommendations for Hire:

Licensed Staff:

Eastwood Elementary School –

- Misty David, First Grade Teacher

Hucrest Elementary School –

- Tammi Hausman, Developmental Learning Center (DLC) Teacher

Winchester Elementary School –

- Sharon Bareswell, Fourth Grade Teacher

Roseburg High School –

- Rachel Engle, Language Arts Teacher

Licensed Resignations:

- LeAne Bustamante, Social Studies Teacher at RHS, after starting in August of this year, is resigning effective February 2, 2024, or until a suitable replacement can be found, whichever occurs sooner;
- Kimberlee Danielson, Language Arts Teacher at RHS, resigning after 11 years in the district, effective January 5, 2024;
- James Early, Career Center Counselor at RHS, has submitted his resignation for PERS retirement purposes after 25 years in the district, effective January 1, 2024. He would like to continue working in his position for the remainder of the school year; and
- Sara Frich, temporary Fourth Grade Teacher at Winchester Elementary School has submitted her resignation effective December 4, 2023; and

Director Andrew Shirtcliff moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Director Ann Krimetz seconded, and the Motion passed unanimously.

M5-036 Approved the Consent Agenda

PHOENIX CHARTER SCHOOL CHECK-IN

Phoenix Principal Kat Bierkens was present to update the board on the three established student performance goals. She expressed excitement that two students graduated today after challenging beginnings at the school. Her focus is for Phoenix to be the school kids can come to if they are struggling or dealing with emotional trauma. Kat shared the school's academic data dashboard as follows:

- Student Attendance: For first quarter 2023-24, 31% of total students are attending less than 50%.
- Student Completion Rates: For the period ending 2022-23, 34% of all students were three or more credits behind in earning high school success via diploma, modified diploma or GED option.
- Academic growth in English Language Arts and Mathematics:
 - For 2023-24, 38% of all students are at or above benchmark in English Language Arts
 - For 2023-24, 15% of all students are at or above benchmark in Mathematics

Principal Bierkens presented summary of action information toward performance growth goals including:

- Goal 1: Postsecondary Readiness through Increased Attendance
- Goal 2: Increasing Completion Rates for Various Diplomas
- Goal 3: Improvement in ELA and Mathematics

She confirmed that she was shocked after seeing the comparison with RHS on the state report cards, especially 9th grade on track data, adding that 15 of the 19 students were previously RPS students. She further pointed out that in ELA, the 10th grade math students spent their puberty in COVID. She shared that Phoenix is making adjustments to add additional classes in ELA and Math, and determining what supports are needed to set students up for success.

The Board later expressed deep frustration with the report and data.

DEPARTMENT OF STUDENT SERVICES REPORT

Committee Chair Andrea Miner noted that the Student Services Committee met November 14th to review the new education laws coming into effect. There were over 1,000 proposed laws potentially impacting education. The committee discussed the impacts of new and revised laws pertaining to restraint and seclusion and abbreviated days. Both of these practices are used sparingly and with the highest priority placed on serving all

students safely. Director Miner also shared that this district meets training requirements that emphasize being proactive and practicing de-escalation. Staff receive training from the Crisis Prevention Institute. Director Miner encouraged individuals to access more information online if interested.

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT (December 12 Audit Team Presentation) and ACCEPTANCE of the 2022-2023 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Committee Chair Howard Johnson was prepared to share the results of the most recent annual audit, but also reminded us that as a public entity, the district is required to follow general accounting rules and regulations in how we receive and disperse fund as we have accountability for those funds. The independent auditors review our policies and procedures that are in place to assure compliance with auditing standards.

The committee met with auditor Aria Bettinger, CPA and Partner with KDP Certified Public Accountants, LLP yesterday after receiving advance copies for review. The summary letter on page 40 confirms to the board that in accordance with accepted accounting principals, the District has received an unmodified opinion, which is the highest level of assurance for financial reporting that a district can receive. The auditors confirmed that we are doing things correctly by processing samples that enables them to certify accuracy of the whole. This finding puts Roseburg Public Schools in a favorable position to make decisions when borrowing from banks or other institutions, when selling bonds, etc. Bonding companies refer to our audit report to allow offering of more favorable rates. Director Johnson commended the savings we have achieved through our PERS funding.

Committee Chair Johnson then moved to accept the KDP CPA, LLC auditing report for the year ending June 30, 2023 and that it be made a part of our permanent record. Director Andrea Miner seconded and the Motion passed unanimously. Chair Cotton stated his hope that fellow board members realize how lucky we are to have Director Johnson on this board as we deal with finances as he is so knowledgeable. Thank you, Cheryl Northam, and staff for your work on the audit.

M5-037 Accepted annual financial report for the year ending June 30, 2023.
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CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION COMMITTEE REPORT

Committee Chair Michael Leone shared that the C & I committee met December 6, 2023 to review curriculum development. Through many questions, the committee learned a great deal about what is being taught in schools in order to make wise decisions as it relates to creating policy for them to do their jobs. Director Leone stated that he was impressed with the transparency of Dr. Weber as she presented what she and others are doing in this area. He acknowledged that the public and media create controversy, and it was refreshing that to hear that instruction is developing at the school level. He continued that RPS is community-based and reflects what this community is all about. He expressed optimism that we will move to do more in the areas of racism.

The committee learned that Roseburg High School students can complete high school with a standard diploma, a modified diploma, an extended diploma/certificate of attendance, or a GED.

Beginning in 2026-27, the state is requiring that students earn a half-credit in personal financial education and another half-credit in higher education and career path skills. Director Leone pointed out that we are now exploring options for a new K-12 district-wide science curriculum. He encouraged Teaching & Learning's Dr. Jill Weber and Asst. Superintendent Knee to keep up the good work.

2023-2024 STUDENT INVESTMENT ACCOUNT (SIA) GRANT APPROVAL

Assistant Superintendent Michelle Knee had informed that Board in December that she would be bringing the request to approve the 2023-2024 Student Investment Account (SIA) Grant in January. The grant agreement has arrived from ODE and is on pages 44-71. The grants were delayed this year as they now must go through the Department of Justice. School Boards are required to approve prior to any release of funds.

Director Ann Krimetz moved to approve the 2023-2024 SIA grant as proposed. Director Michael Leone seconded, and the Motion was unanimously approved.

M5-038 Approved the 2023-2024 Student Investment Account (SIA) Grant as proposed.

REQUEST FOR APPROVAL TO PURCHASE CAFETERIA TABLES

Director of Finance and Operations, Chery Northam, pointed out how exciting it can be for staff to have equipment updated to improve function and prevent injuries. During meal services through COVID and the lack of ability to hire for all open positions, there now exists an excess ending fund balance in the Nutrition Services Fund. We are requesting approval to purchase tables, benches and wall pockets for Eastwood Elementary, Fullerton IV Elementary, Hucrest Elementary, Melrose Elementary, Sunnyslope Elementary, Winchester Elementary, and Fremont Middle School at a total anticipated cost of \$730.073.

Director Andrea Miner moved to approve the purchase of cafeteria tables as proposed from the Nutrition Services Fund. Vice-Chair Howard Johnson seconded, and the Motion was unanimously approved. Director Miner received confirmation that monies within the Nutrition Services Fund may only be used for that specific department for nutrition services materials and supplies.

M5-039 Approved purchase of cafeteria tables, benches and wall pockets as proposed.

CONSIDER 2024-25 SCHOOL YEAR CALENDAR

Assistant Superintendent Michelle Knee informed us that the Calendar Committee met on November 29th to review two options for a 2024-25 calendar, one starting before Labor Day, and the other following. There was unanimous preference to put forward the calendar that begins after Labor Day.

Director Andrea Miner moved to adopt the 2024-25 school year calendar as proposed. Director Andrew Shirtcliff seconded, and the Motion was unanimously approved. Vice-Chair Johnson pointed out that there is a level of instructional hours that must be met. The make-up days within the calendar would not be implemented unless more than three unavoidable closure days occur. Director Miner pointed out that the committee must consider many different components in making their determination, and higher temperatures and the potential of smoke from wildfires, as well as our lack of air conditioning, were factors in making this recommendation.

M5-040 Approved the proposed 2024-2025 school year calendar as recommended by the Calendar Committee.

SUPERINTENDENT REPORT *(slide deck follows)*

Superintendent Cordon shared examples of some of the countless opportunities students can enjoy to prepare and inspire their future success.

Mr. Cordon shared that there was a positive start to Collective bargaining. Meetings have been scheduled with the goal of working toward a strong contract for staff. The licensed bargaining team will be meeting soon and contracts will also be created for the remaining employee groups, administrators and confidential staff.

Eastwood Elementary and Joseph Lane Middle Schools are among the four pilot districts in Oregon selected as pilot sites to study ventilation and energy efficiency through House Bill 3031. The legislation is creating pathways for school districts to access funding for heating, ventilation and air conditioning repair and installation.

Suggested topics for Board Work Sessions in early 2024 included:

- ✓ Review of mid-year math and literacy achievement data to determine whether we are on track for growth;
- ✓ Review of Accountability Detail reports from ODE;
- ✓ Discussion with Douglas ESD Superintendent Analicia Nicholson regarding services received by the District; and
- ✓ Long-range facilities planning. We received a technical assistant grant to support the development of a long-range facilities plan that will require Board input and guidance.

Superintendent Cordon also acknowledged Mr. Brett Steinacher, our P20 Coordinator working with Umpqua Community College and local and regional partners as they endeavor to create exciting, advanced career pathways for students in the areas of manufacturing and healthcare.

Jared concluded by wishing our students, families, staff and school board members a Merry Christmas, happy holidays, and a joyful 2024!

BOARD OF EDUCATION REPORTS

Director Andrea Miner reported attending the recent Robotics competition at Roseburg High School. She shared it was amazing to see what the students could do. Instructor Ira Wier explained to her how students are utilizing English, math, science and leadership skills as they were put into managerial situations in helping manage their teams. She continued viewing the competition from home utilizing YouTube. She would encourage our community to become involved in helping students with the \$500 costs associated with the program as she believes the program is very beneficial with many students continuing on to engineering careers.

Vice-Chair Johnson was pleased and honored to attend an assembly in November where his great-granddaughter received an achievement award. His wife was also able to attend and acknowledge this fourth generation moving forward. Rev. Johnson wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Director Ann Krimetz shared that the Policy Committee expects to review some of our policies based upon recently passed legislation. She also noticed the Gifts to the District in the Consent Agenda and noted that it is great to see individuals in our community recognizing that this is a good place to invest and do end-of-year donations as it benefits the whole community. Director Krimetz then expressed her appreciation to Vice-Chair Johnson for his expertise in reviewing the audit. She leaned on that expertise during her review of the materials and valued his help. Merry Christmas everyone!

Chair Rodney Cotton stated that while he was not surprised, he was deeply saddened by what we were told by individuals sharing experiences their children were having. He extended his personal regret to them and assured

that efforts will be made to assure that no child has to put up with these behaviors. He further expressed deep disappointment with the Phoenix report and intends to follow up with their Executive Director or board chair. He made assurance that we want to help them, but wants kids to be helped where they most need it. Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays!

ADJOURNMENT: With regular business before the Board concluded, and with no objections, Chair Cotton announced that the next meeting will take place at Sunnyslope Elementary on January 10, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. with a facility tour at 4:45 p.m. He then adjourned the regular meeting at 7:30 p.m. and announced the board would take a brief recess and reconvene in Executive Session pursuant to ORS 192.660(2)(i).

EXECUTIVE SESSION
Pursuant to ORS 192.660(2)(i)

Chair Rodney Cotton convened an Executive Session pursuant to ORS 192.660(2)(i) at 7:37 p.m. to continue the Board/Superintendent check-in evaluation process. The executive session was concluded and recessed at 8:45 p.m.

Jared P. Cordon, Superintendent
JPC/jlk

Next Meeting: Board Meeting and Executive Session, January 10, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. at Sunnyslope Elementary School located at 2230 Cannon Avenue, Roseburg, Oregon and available via Zoom.