

MEETING MINUTES

VERNONIA SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD of DIRECTORS Special Meeting – November 3, 2025 Vernonia Schools, 1000 Missouri Avenue, Vernonia

1. CALL TO ORDER: A Special Meeting of the Board of Directors of Vernonia School District 47J, Columbia County, Oregon was called to order at 5:34 p.m. by Greg Kintz. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Board Present: Greg Kintz, Amy Cieloha, Lisa Curry, Alicia Mahoney, Joanie Jones, Javoss (remote) BOARD PRESENT

Board Absent: Tony Holmes BOARD ABSENT

Staff Present: Jim Helmen, Superintendent; Michelle Eagleson, Elementary Principal; Susanne Myers, Special Education Director; Mark Brown, Maintenance Supervisor; Marie Knight, Business Manager; Barb Carr, Administrative Assistant; Jessica Kintz, Ashley Ward, Courtney Ferguson, Doug Bilodeau, Brett Costley, Olivia Keister, Juliet Safier, George Spaulding, Karla Myers, Jenn Schram, Justin Benassi, Dawn Jay, Rachel Brown, Jennifer Adkins, Charise Ash, Lee Costanzo, Kristin Hansen, Sara Goodman, Heidi Rice, and Dakota Jackson, Licensed Staff; and Camrin Eyrrick, Jana Titus, Karen Roberts, Tiffany Little, Kim Hathcoat, and Katreasa Beattie, Classified Staff. STAFF PRESENT

Visitors Present: Scott Laird VISITORS PRESENT

2. Flag Salute: The Flag Salute was recited. FLAG SALUTE

3. Mid-Year Staff Reduction Discussion: Jim Helmen shared the purpose of the special meeting is to hopefully answer all questions. STAFF REDUCTIONS DISCUSSED

Reasons for Staffing Changes

- Required ODE repayments & financial stabilization
- Anticipated SSF and SIA grant fund reductions in 25/26 in state and federal funding
- Rising operational and salary costs
- Enrollment levels below staffing and program requirements (small class sizes)

Financial information was reviewed with an explanation of projected savings.

Program and staffing reductions were reviewed. A total of 9 FTE will be reduced in the following areas:

- Tier III Elementary
- Tier III Secondary
- Special Education Director
- SEL Director
- World Language / Drama Program
- K-5 Enrichment Program
- 1st Grade Elementary Class
- 5th Grade Elementary Class
- 6-8 Social Studies Teacher (replaced by College & Career readiness staff)
- College and Career Readiness Program (moving from certified to classified)

Discussion was held to confirm that the SEL Director/School Psychologist would be leaving. The District will contract psychology services through the ESD as needed. Also, confirmed that the Tier III program teachers are going away but classrooms will remain for Tier III classified staff to assist students. Students will still need a place to be. How this will look is still being reviewed and worked out.

The 1st and 5th grade classrooms will be combined and these teachers will receive extra support. Administration is looking at what needs there will be. There is a lot of coordination currently happening to work through the transition.

Mr. Helmen explained the matrix he used, highlighting the key factors, in determining where the reductions would happen. Those key factors include:

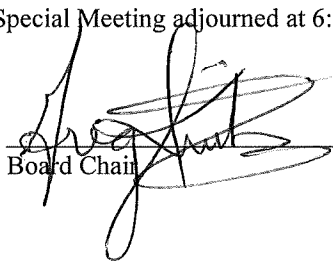
- Requirements and constraints in collective bargaining agreement
- Contractual obligations (competence, merit and seniority)
- State/Federal K-12 program requirements (core academics, special education, EL, 504)
- Class size and safety requirements
- Student enrollment / program utilization
- Overstaffing identification by building/department
- Prioritizing the district's Mission and Goals and student impact

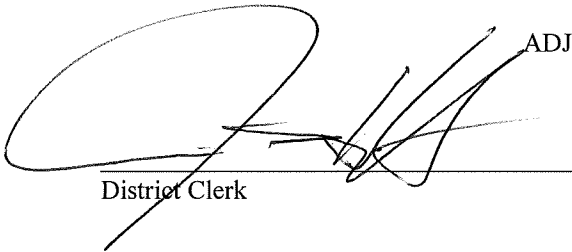
Classified positions were not considered for reductions due to having reduced 9 classified positions over the last 3 years. For safety and adequate supervision of students the district must maintain all current classified positions.

Currently the district is paying for an administrative substitute to fill in for the principal on leave. This is a necessity in the case of any emergencies. The sub has administrative training and experience. Asking current staff to cover all administrative duties in addition to their own is not feasible.

Jim Helmen shared a research document entitled *Here comes The Big Shrink* . Written by Marguerite Roza with Georgetown University, the research focuses on declining enrollment, financial impacts, and the future of school districts.

4. Adjourn: Special Meeting adjourned at 6:53 p. m.


Board Chair


District Clerk

ADJOURNED