

MEETING MINUTES

VERNONIA SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD of DIRECTORS Regular Meeting – January 13, 2022

- 1.0 CALL TO ORDER:** A Regular Meeting of the Directors of Administrative School District 47J, Columbia County, Oregon was called to order at 6:01 p.m. by Stacey Pelster. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER
- Board Present:** Stacey Pelster, Amy Cielooha, and Joanie Jones. Scott Rickard, Susan Wagner, Javoss McGuire, and Greg Kintz (arrived at 7:10 p.m.) attended virtually. BOARD PRESENT
- Board Absent:** None BOARD ABSENT
- Staff Present:** Attending in person: Aaron Miller, Superintendent; and Barb Carr, Administrative Assistant. Attending virtually: Nate Underwood, MS/HS Principal; Michelle Eagleson, Elementary Principal; Rachel Wilson, K-12 Vice Principal; Marie Knight, Business Manager; Heidi Brown, District Nurse, Rachel Brown, Malin Campbell, Brett Costley, Manning, Juliet Safier, Kendra Schlegel, and Justin Ward, Licensed Staff; and Kim Bernardi, Camrin Eyrrick, and Karen Roberts, Classified Staff. STAFF PRESENT
- Visitors Present:** Jeana Gump, Shelley Hennessy, Donald Iem, Scott Laird, and Julie Ramsey. VISITORS PRESENT
- 1.1** The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
- 2.0 AGENDA REVIEW:** There were no adjustments to the agenda. Susan Wagner moved to approve the agenda as presented. Joanie Jones seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. AGENDA REVIEW
- SCHOOL BOARD RECOGNITION:** Aaron Miller shared that January is School Board Recognition month and read aloud the proclamation from the Office of the Governor recognizing January as School Board Recognition month. Board members had the opportunity to select Logger Gear as a gift for their recognition. Mr. Miller and staff thanked the School Board for their service. BOARD MEMBERS RECOGNIZED FOR SCHOOL BOARD APPRECIATION MONTH
- 3.0 SHOWCASING OF SCHOOLS:** SHOWCASING OF SCHOOLS
- 3.1** Michelle Eagleson highlighted her written report to the Board: ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PRINCIPAL REPORT
- The elementary staff was highlighted as an amazing staff who has been very flexible on a daily basis.
 - Due to the road closure near the Mist School, Mist K-2 students have been coming to school at the Vernonia Schools building this week. They will return to their building next week as soon as road repairs are completed.
 - PLC work includes developing proficiency scales in reading.
 - Mr. Spackman, as part of the Social Emotional Learning team, has been giving lessons to students along with the teachers.
- Nate Underwood highlighted his written report: MIDDLE / HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL REPORT
- Shout out to Cody Hathcoat for earning the DAR Good Citizenship Award
 - The Netflix documentary *The Social Dilemma* is being shown in all Advisory classes. The documentary explores the dangerous human impact of social networking and the dangers of addiction to technology and social media.
- Rachel Wilson shared a couple SWIS reports which explain discipline numbers. Scott Rickard asked why the Kindergarten bar is higher? Ms. Wilson explained that some incoming students have trouble getting into the routine of school. Teachers are asked to record all issues, minor or major, for tracking purposes. The data helps to show areas of potential issues for the student as well the school. VICE PRINCIPAL REPORT
- Amy Cielooha questioned whether writing referrals for 5 year olds is effective? According to

Ms. Wilson, yes, it's a great way to really see what is happening with the student. Teacher must put down where and when and what happened which helps to develop a plan to fix. Aaron Miller also shared that the information included in the referral paperwork is critical data to help make sure we are meeting the needs of our students which can be very helpful in IEP situations.

- 3.2 Student Reports: Donald Iem, Public Relations Officer for Student Council reported: STUDENT REPORTS
- Homecoming, held in the Fall, was a success.
 - Mr. Bunke, Leadership Teacher, is pushing all students to be active in school, and for school to be as normal and as fun as possible.
 - Recently a Renaissance assembly and a couple holiday themed assemblies have been held.
 - Sports and clubs are continuing to be active. Students like having these back.
 - Students are trying to remain positive with today's news of returning to Distance Learning for the next two weeks.

4.0 PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS: None. PUBLIC COMMENT

5.0 BUSINESS REPORTS:

- 5.1 Superintendent Report: Aaron Miller updated the Board on the following: SUPERINTENDENT REPORT
- Staff Sub Rates: Mr. Miller shared that he was able to compare the District's sub rates to those at the NWRESD and St. Helens School District. We are within the same range. Our licensed subs earn \$200 per day and classified positions pay at the first step by position on the Classified contract.
 - Mist Grade School was closed for a couple days due to the road closure just this side of the Mist School. The afternoon of the washout, students were bussed back to Vernonia through Clatskanie and Rainier to get them home. Mist K-2 students came in to town for school at Vernonia Schools building while the 3rd-5th grade class worked remotely. The road should be fixed by the end of this weekend thanks to ODOT jumping on it quickly. Mr. Miller thanked ODOT and the MBFD to make sure this was a priority.
 - Comprehensive Distance Learning (CDL) will start up again next week for two weeks. This is due to 18 staff members, as of this morning, and almost 100 students out on the quarantine list. The District did not want to have to go back into CDL but unfortunately the spread of the virus is happening in the school. The next two weeks away from in-person learning will allow COVID cases to run their course and give time for our staff to get healthy. The situation will be re-evaluated during the second week of CDL. Staff have been preparing for this possibility but still need time for the transition. We have a lot of new staff that did not go through CDL with us last year. Staff will be on-site tomorrow to finalize the plan. School is cancelled for tomorrow and CDL starts up on Monday.
 - Work on next year's budget is underway.
 - Adequate staff continues to be an issue. This is a common issue across the State.
 - The CDC is changing quarantine timelines from ten days to five days. Vernonia School District will continue to follow ODE's recommendations which is a minimum of five days not an automatic change to only five days. The District has seen cases of symptoms not showing up immediately during contract tracing efforts. To lessen the possibility of any exposures at school, our protocol will keep quarantines at ten days.
 - Strategic Planning surveys are ready. Next step is to place them online.

Amy Cieloha asked about the process when people are exposed. Are they in quarantine because of exposure or illness? According to Mr. Miller, staff and students with any of the primary symptoms of the COVID virus are placed in quarantine for ten days. If there are other symptoms, but there has not been contact with a known positive case, and if they have a negative test, they can return. If symptoms are not confirmed as COVID, and they've had no direct exposure, in 24 hours they can return. Mr. Miller further explained that the District has had students coming into the school testing positive. During lunch time masks are off and students are together. All close contacts are being reviewed and traced.

- 5.2 Financial Report:** Marie Knight reported that during the month of November, a lot of property tax revenue comes in. She is still estimating the ending fund balance to be approximately \$400,000. As the year progresses the ending fund balance becomes more and more defined. She is currently looking at the District's budget and grants. The Strategic Plan process will play into budget development more than it has in the past. There were no questions from the Board. FINANCIAL REPORT
- 5.3 Maintenance Report:** Mark Brown's report was reviewed by the Board. There were no questions from the Board. MAINTENANCE REPORT
- 6.0 BOARD REPORTS/ BOARD DEVELOPMENT:**
- 6.1 Committee Reports:** Susan Wagner reported on her association with the District's Safety Committee. The Committee operates very well. They are engaged in looking at the big picture items for school safety as well as what is going on with potential injuries. She appreciates being able to be a liaison for this committee. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS
- 6.2 Board Goals:** Chair Pelster read aloud the proposed Vernonia School Board (VSB) Goals for 2021-22 and asked the Board to review them one more time. BOARD GOALS DISCUSSED
1. The VSB will continue to hold the School District accountable for meeting student learning expectations.
 2. The VSB will develop a Superintendent and Board operating agreement by July 1, 2022
 3. The VSB will develop and execute a District leadership transition plan by July 1, 2022.
- Susan Wagner asked for clarification of goal #3. Was this relating directly to the current Superintendent Search for was this a standard process going forward. Stacey Pelster felt it important to have a discussion with OSBA about helping the Board with this goal.
- 6.3 Board Meeting Attendance:** Chair Pelster shared that she wanted to have the discussion about meeting onsite and in-person. It was the original wish of the Board to hold meetings in-person. Tonight only three members of the Board are in person for the meeting. She opened up the discussion on having everyone attend the meeting in-person unless ill or exposed to a positive COVID case. Joanie Jones agreed that all should be in person. Amy Cieloha agreed that the Board wanted to be back in person, not virtual, but it's easy to be at home. Susan Wagner shared as an elected official it's her job to be in person whenever possible. It may not always be easy but it's a choice she made when stepping up to serve on the Board. Stacey Pelster would like to have as many as possible in person for next month's meeting. Comments were made on the pitfalls of technology, sound quality, etc. BOARD REVISITS IN-PERSON MEETING ATTENDANCE
- 7.0 OTHER INFORMATION and DISCUSSION**
- 7.1 Superintendent Retirement Timeline:** Chair Pelster shared the response back from the District's attorneys regarding contract adjustments in response to Superintendent Miller's request to retire from PERS effective January 31, 2022 and be hired back through the end of the school year. Rebecca Jacobson at Garrett Hemann Robertson, our District attorney of record, provided amendments which were shared with the Board. SUPT. EARLY RETIREMENT DISCUSSED
- Scott Rickard shared that he had no issues with the cover email and contract language amendments. He asked for clarification on language in "Leaves" specifically the remaining leave days as noted in the conceptual comments by the attorney. Marie Knight felt the language is correct. Sick leave is cumulative and part of the payout.
- 7.2 2021-22 Calendar Adjustment:** The Board reviewed the current adopted 2021-22 calendar and an adjusted version with proposed changes. Due to losing three days of instruction prior to Winter Break (COVID concerns) and two days due to snowy weather in early January, students have missed a total of five days. The adjusted calendar converts the proposed three snow days to instructional days (March 4, April 22, and May 27) and then changes the Jan. 24 non-contract day to a school day, and adds one day at the end of the year, June 20th. 2021-22 CALENDAR ADJUSTMENT DISCUSSED
- Amy Cieloha asked if tomorrow's missed day of school will be made up? This day is for teachers to prep/transition to CDL. According to Mr. Miller, not likely due to budgetary concerns. If another instructional day was added to make up for this day it would be an additional staff work day which is currently not budgeted.

Another concern was if there are any other snow days, how will these be handled since we are using all potential snow make-up days with this calendar adjustment? According to Mr. Miller, any other snow days could be added back at the end of the year or during Spring break although he would not recommend using Spring break. Families plan vacation during this time as do staff.

POTENTIAL NEED FOR
ADDITIONAL MAKE-UP
DAYS RELATED TO
WEATHER

Scott Rickard agreed with not adding back a day if it impacts the current budget. He was not in favor of using Spring Break days to add back if we have more snow days. If the need arises to make up any additional instructional days, his preference would be the end of the year.

Greg Kintz also agreed with adding back any potential for missed days to the end of the year not in the middle.

8.0 ACTION ITEMS

8.1 Board Goals: Joanie Jones moved to adopt the 2021-22 Board Goals as discussed. Scott Rickard seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

BOARD GOALS
ADOPTED

8.2 Superintendent Retirement and Hire Back: Scott Rickard moved to approve the Superintendent retirement date of Jan. 31, 2022 and hire back date of February 1, 2022- June 30, 2022. Susan Wagner seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

SUPT. RETIREMENT &
HIRE BACK APPROVED

8.3 2021-22 Calendar Adjustment: Discussion continued on ways to add back a day of instruction for students. Taking time from the late start Wednesdays was suggested. Mr. Miller stated this could be an option if absolutely needed but this time is critically important to staff development. He estimated it would take five Wednesdays to make up the one day of instruction for middle and high school students. It would take more than five for elementary. It was noted that the District has been adding back days regularly each year into the budget. Seat time is important and the District makes a strong effort to make up any days missed. This one day may not be able to be made up due to the circumstances this year.

2021-22
INSTRUCTIONAL
CALENDAR AMENDED

Joanie Jones moved to amend the 2021-22 Instructional Calendar as presented and discussed. Susan Wagner seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

10.0 MONITORING BOARD PERFORMANCE:

Discussion was held on the date for the next DEMSP training / data monitoring session. Mr. Miller shared that his preference is to hold this meeting in-person as it will be hard to share the data online. The Board indicated they would prefer in person as well and selected Saturday, January 29th from 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. for this workshop.

MONITORING BOARD
PERFORMANCE

11.0 CONSENT AGENDA:

12.1 Minutes of 12/09/21 Regular Meeting

CONSENT AGENDA
MINUTES APPROVED

Scott Rickard moved to approve the consent agenda as presented. Greg Kintz seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA
APPROVED

Other Board Issues:

Amy Cieloha asked for an update on the athletic program in relation to the upcoming school closure.

OTHER ISSUES

Mr. Miller shared that even though school is moving to Distance Learning the next two weeks, athletic programs will remain as they are. There is currently enough staff and students in the programs that are not subject to quarantine. Athletics are a critical element of school and will be maintained for the kids if possible. He noted that if any issues arise with spread of the disease, kids will be removed from attending practices or contests. As long as the current status of no infection is maintained, practices and contests will continue. This is also something that must be maintained by other schools in order for contests to occur.

The District is making some changes to protocols when we invite visiting teams on-site. Each Vernonia athlete will be given four passes for family attendance at a home event, however, at this time no opposing fans will be allowed to attend. There will not be concessions on site and food or water will not be allowed in the gym for attendees. The District will be extra vigilant on masking of non-

participating players and coaches.

Nate Underwood clarified that the four athletic event passes are for family members only. Greg Kintz asked if the closure of the concession stand is only for the two weeks or will it be longer? According to Mr. Miller this will depend on infection numbers but for sure concessions are closed the next two weeks.

12.0 MEETING ADJOURNED at 7:49 p.m.

ADJOURNED

Submitted by Barb Carr,
Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent and Board of Directors

Board Chair

District Clerk

