

MEETING MINUTES

VERNONIA SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD of DIRECTORS Regular Meeting – November 13, 2025 Mist Elementary, 69163 Hwy 47, Mist, Oregon

- 1.0 CALL TO ORDER:** A Regular Meeting of the Directors of Administrative School District 47J, Columbia County, Oregon was called to order at 6:02 p.m. by Greg Kintz, Board Chair. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER
- Board Present:** Lisa Curry, Javoss McGuire, Joanie Jones, Amy Cielo, Greg Kintz, and Alicia Mahoney BOARD PRESENT
- Board Absent:** Tony Holmes BOARD ABSENT
- Staff Present:** Jim Helmen, Superintendent; Nate Underwood, Middle High School Principal; Michelle Eagleson, Elementary Principal; Susanne Myers, Special Education Director; Marie Knight, Business Manager; Mark Brown, Maintenance Supervisor; Barb Carr, Administrative Assistant; Brett Costley, Licensed Staff; and Karen Roberts, Classified Staff. STAFF PRESENT
- Visitors Present:** Scott Laird VISITORS PRESENT
- 1.1** The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
- 2.0 AGENDA REVIEW:** Lisa Curry moved to approve the agenda as presented. Joanie Jones seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously with those in attendance. AGENDA REVIEW
- 3.0 PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA and NON-AGENDA ITEMS:** None. PUBLIC COMMENT
- 4.0 SHOWCASING OF SCHOOLS**
- 4.1 Administrator Reports:** All Administrator reports were provided to the Board prior to the meeting.
- Joanie Jones asked Susanne Myers to speak to the professional development with Special Education staff. According to Susanne, this all began when she noticed a pattern in what was written in student IEPs. Goals were written and progress was being seen but this led to some deeper thinking about what is actually carrying forward progress or stalling it. She did some research into possible barriers, including day-to-day workload for teachers, the impact of prepping lessons, individualizing instruction for each student and making adjustments to lessons if students are not making progress. Students take the skills they are learning back into the general education classroom as all lessons are designed to promote progress and should be aligned to general education instruction.
- Alicia Mahoney commented that Columbia County offers transitions services and felt it would be great to find ways to partner with them.
- Greg Kintz asked about Unified Sports? Susanne Myers stated that Unified Sports operates under the umbrella of Special Olympics. They operate with inclusive programming, not just with special education students, but also with students without disabilities. Generally, it works through athletics but other programs can be part of the program as well. She is currently working with high school leadership to see what programs the students may want to have.
- 5.0 BUSINESS REPORTS:**
- 5.1 Superintendent Report:** The Superintendent report was provided to the Board prior to the meeting. SUPERINTENDENT REPORT
- Discussion on how board members should be engaged and connect with the community was held. The Keynote speaker at the recent OSBA Annual Convention asked some great questions. Mr. Helmen stated he really liked the exercise using word cloud software. He is hoping to utilize this at the upcoming engagement night with our families.
- 5.1.1 Policy KL Complaint Procedure Review:** Jim Helmen reviewed the District's complaint procedures and policies in place that outline how the District addresses any complaints against staff or board members.

Step One – Complaint is submitted

Step Two – Building Administrator reviews and addresses complaint. If unresolved,

Step Three – Superintendent reviews and addresses complaint. If unresolved,

Step Four – Board reviews and addresses complaint.

Steps can be skipped based on the nature of the complaint and who the complaint is against. For instance if a complaint is received against an administrator, it would go start at step three. Discussion was held on the process for submitting formal complaints as well as the difference between a concern and a complaint. A verbal conversation or casual email does not warrant an official complaint. An official complaint must be documented.

A recent complaint was submitted via email and the board was made aware of it. The Superintendent investigated and offered on more than one occasion an opportunity to meet within ten days. No response was received through writing or by a returned phone call. The District will address any concerns if requested and is currently ready to address any response from O.D.E.

When concerns are perceived as not being addressed and land on social media the reputational risk is a concern. The District and Board must be careful in what is said so as not to violate any FERPA regulations. The public does not have to be careful in what they say.

The Board requested that all official complaints be added to the Superintendent Board report. Mr. Helmen stated this will be provided and noted in meeting minutes. If a complaint goes to ODE, the Superintendent is notified. The District will hear all concerns and address them.

- 5.2 Financial Report:** Marie Knight provided a new layout to her financial report. One page is revenue information and one page focuses on expenses. The net revenue total does not include any adjustments due to upcoming staff reductions. FINANCIAL REPORT

Lisa Curry requested a separate column so she can see a monthly budget. Amy Cieloha received monthly financials from two other school districts and gave those to Marie for reference.

Alicia Mahoney asked about fund 2130, Health Services. Marie explained that this reflects service credits or cash from the ESD for services, which includes the school nurse. Our District opted to request cash in lieu of service credits.

A brief report showing the work on the Student body accounts was shared. Amy Cieloha asked why older classes with remaining money are no longer listed on the report? Marie explained that all these funds have been moved into the alumni scholarship fund. Going forward each class will determine where they want any remaining money to go.

- 5.3 Maintenance Report:** Mark Brown's report was provided to the Board prior to the meeting. MAINTENANCE REPORT

There were no questions from the Board. Lisa Curry noted that the concession building has been cleaned out for winter.

- 5.4 Transportation Report:** Shelley Hennessy provided a brief written report on routes and other information. It was noted that the Transportation contract will be negotiated again in 2028. TRANSPORTATION REPORT

Alicia Mahoney asked what the process is if busses are running late? She noted a recent delay of approximately 30 minutes and there was no notification to parents. Jim Helmen indicated he will visit with Shelley and let the Board know next week.

6.0 BOARD REPORTS/ BOARD DEVELOPMENT:

6.1 Committee Reports:

COMMITTEE UPDATES

6.1.1 Policy Committee: Quite a few policies were reviewed at their last meeting and are on the agenda this evening for a first reading.

POLICY COMMITTEE

6.1.2 Safety Committee: Amy Cieloha provided an update of discussions held at the last safety committee meeting. These discussions were about the recently held fire drill, concerns of when staff are working late in the building, safety walk-throughs needing to be done, Mist staff feeling as though they don't have a procedure for a lock down, needed hose reels at the shop, safety committee web page, and student vs. staff safety committees. SAFETY COMMITTEE

6.1.3 Scholarship Committee: The Committee recently met and reviewed their previous forms. They made minimal changes to wording in the descriptions and expectations. The scoring sheet was updated to align with scholarship descriptions and overall expectations. The updated documents were shared with the full Board and with approval will use in the 2026 scholarship season. The consensus was approval of the updates. SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

6.2 OSBA Board of Directors and Legislative Policy Committee: Greg Kintz, board member, and Sondra Gomez, legislative policy committee, for OSBA are both up for reelection. This occurs every two years. Both are asking for support from our Board. OSBA BOARD of DIRECTORS & LEGISLATIVE POLICY COM.

70 OTHER INFORMATION and DISCUSSION

7.1 Upcoming Bargaining Information / Professional Negotiator: Jim Helmen shared that the District has not hired professional negotiators in the past when going through bargaining but he wanted the Board to know there is the opportunity to do this. This is quite common in larger districts, but not in smaller districts. Mr. Helmen is willing to look into this if the Board would like him to do this. Consensus of the board is to not utilize legal for negotiations. PROFESSIONAL NEGOTIATOR FOR BARGAINING DISCUSSED

7.2 Policy 1st Reading: The following policies were presented for a first reading. 1st READING OF UPDATED POLICIES

- 7.2.1 GCBDE/GDBDE – Military Leave of Absence
- 7.2.2 DJ-AR – Expenditure of District Funds for Meals, Refreshments and Gifts
- 7.2.3 IF – District Curriculum
- 7.2.4 GCBD/GDBD – Sick Leave – Personal Illness and Injury Leave
- 7.2.5 DBEA – Budget Committee (ver. 2)
- 7.2.6 BBFA – Board Member Ethics and Conflicts of Interest
- 7.2.7 IKF - Graduation Requirements
- 7.2.8 IGBHD – Program Exemptions
- 7.2.9 CEA – Educational Equity Advisory Committee
- 7.2.10 IGBAB/JO-AR – Education Records/Records of Student with Disabilities Management

8.0 ACTION ITEMS

8.1 OSBA Election for Board of Directors: Amy Cieloha moved that the Vernonia School Board nominate Gregory Kintz for the OSBA Board of Directors North Coast Region Position #14 as discussed. Javoss McGuire seconded the motion. Greg Kintz abstained from voting. All others voted in support of the motion. Motion passed. KINTZ NOMINATED FOR OSBA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

8.2 OSBA Election for Legislative Policy Committee: Lisa Curry moved that the Vernonia School Board nominate Sondra Gomez for the OSBA Legislative Policy Committee for the North Coast Region Position #14 as discussed. Javoss McGuire seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously with those in attendance. GOMEZ NOMINATED FOR OSBALEGISLATIVE POLICY COMMITTEE

9.0 MONITORING BOARD PERFORMANCE: Greg Kintz stated he continues to forward emails to keep the board as informed as he can. OSBA's Summer Board Conference will be offered twice this year - July 10 in Redmond and July 16 in Eugene. Each session is a single day event. MONITORING BOARD PERFORMANCE

Greg encouraged all to join the rural caucus. The Rural caucus has \$25,000 from OSBA to operate and offers several scholarships to attend conferences. They also offer \$1500 in scholarships for board development. Applications must be in before Nov. 29th.

Annual convention update:

Amy Cieloha shared that she really liked the questions asked during keynote speaker presentation. She attended a couple workshop on finance and found them informative.

Alicia Mahoney felt the session on the State School Fund was the most informative one she attended.

Jim Helmen shared that he enjoys the conversations with other superintendents and boards. It's nice to see similarities and differences. He also appreciates the time to be able to visit with our board members.

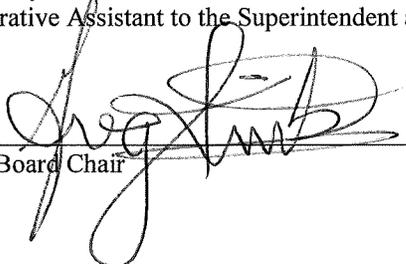
Greg Kintz shared that he loves all the questions people ask him about Vernonia. He mentioned the opportunity to have student representation on the board. Jim Helmen stated he will visit with some students and report back to the board.

A comment was made that the Board should start doing acknowledgements to students and staff during the board meetings.

A request was made to update the board on any previous public comments under the Other Issues time in the agenda.

- 10.0 **CONSENT AGENDA:** CONSENT AGENDA
- 10.1 Minutes of 10/09/2025 Regular Meeting, 10/30/2025 Scholarship Committee Meeting, and the 11/03/2025 Special Board Meeting. CONSENT AGENDA APPROVED
- Amy Cieloha moved to approve the consent agenda as revised (adjustment to the Scholarship Committee meeting minutes). Javoss McGuire seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously with those in attendance.
- 11.0 **OTHER ISSUES:** OTHER ISSUES
- The next agenda setting meeting will be Jim Helmen, Greg Kintz, and Javoss McGuire. The virtual meeting will be Wednesday, December 3 at 5:00 p.m.
- 12.0 **UPCOMING DATES:** UPCOMING DATES
- November 20, 2025 – Fall Community Engagement Night – 5:00 – 7:00 p.m.
- November 26-28, 2025 – Thanksgiving Break
- December 11, 2025 – Board Meeting 6:00 p.m.
- December 19- Jan. 2, 2026 – Winter Break
- 13.0 **MEETING ADJOURNED** at 9:16 p.m. ADJOURNED

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



Board Chair



District Clerk