

**Bend-La Pine Schools**  
**Board of Directors Meeting Minutes**

**Meeting Date: November 12, 2019**

**Meeting Location**

Bend-La Pine Schools Education Center  
520 NW Wall Street, Bend, OR 97703

**Board Members Present**

Julie Craig

Carrie Douglass *via teleconference*

Melissa Barnes Dholakia

Shimiko Montgomery

Caroline Skidmore

Amy Tatom

Dr. Stuart Young *left meeting at 7:15 p.m.*

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Co-Chair Craig. The Pledge of Allegiance and review of the agenda followed. Superintendent Mikalson noted the updated agenda.

**Recognition & Appreciation for Charlotte VanValkenburg**

Superintendent Mikalson noted the recent passing of Summit High School Robotics Coach, Charlotte VanValkenburg, and shared about her efforts and contributions to the school and district. Caroline Skidmore also shared about VanValkenburg's work and impact and asked all in attendance to take a moment of silence in her honor.

**Public Input**

Scott Brees, shared about the Summit High School robotics team and invited board member to attend a robotics tournament on December 14 at Pilot Butte Middle School. He thanked the board and district for their continued support of robotics programs.

Matthew Haney, parent and teacher in the district, shared about his experiences and the need for more student behavior and mental health support in schools, especially in South County schools. He asked that the district and board make additional supports a priority as they consider future budgets and staffing.

Katie Hayden-Lewis, Rural Services Director with Oregon Early Assessment and Support Alliance, shared about her work to provide systematic and early psychosis intervention for students. She and a group of students have been working to develop and create a poster to bring awareness about the program and resources available for students in need. Several students who participated in the poster project shared about their work and asked that the district consider allowing the posters to be hung in schools.

Michelle Mitchell, parent, shared her support of the poster project and the efforts to bring mental health into regular discussions and provide resources for those in need. She is hopeful the district will support posters being hung in all schools as suggested by the students.

Minnie Purinton, parent, shared her support of the poster project and appreciates the passion and dedication of the students who helped create the poster and their desire to help those in need and to provide their peers information about how to find and access resources.

Naomi Crummett shared ideas for the board to consider as they search for a new superintendent. She encouraged the board to seek out a diverse leader and spoke about the positive impacts a leader of non-dominant culture can have.

Sarah Douglass, parent and volunteer with Moms Demand Action, offered her support of Resolution 1892. She shared statistics of gun violence and spoke to the importance of safe storage and securing guns properly. She thanked the district and board for taking initiative on the issue to help keep children and the community safe.

Carol Shoemaker shared her concerns about active shooter drills taking place in schools and the trauma students are being exposed to by being part of the drills. She also shared ideas on ways to communicate the importance of safe gun storage to students and parents.

Carol Palmer, volunteer with the Tri-Country Response team, shared about her experiences and offered support of Resolution 1892. She said safe gun storage is critical and appreciates the district and board for their focus on safety while also being respectful to Second Amendment rights.

Janet Whitney, from the First Presbyterian Peace and Justice Committee, spoke about safe gun storage and the need for continued communication about safe storage being important for not only students but our community.

Julie Zwillich, parent, addressed the board about district issued iPads and her desire to learn more about student usage while at school and at home. She noted several areas that would provide valuable information in considering the appropriate uses of iPads; such as hours on the device, the use for instruction vs. non-instruction, effect on home dynamics, etc. She gave a handout to board members with her specific questions and would like to meet to discuss her ideas further.

Sharon Bellusci, parent, spoke about dyslexia and diagnosis of dyslexia in schools. She shared a handout with student reading data and asked that the district use school improvement funds to focus on reading instruction and interventions.

Co-Chair Craig recessed the meeting at 6:25 p.m. The meeting resumed at 6:35 p.m.

### **Consent Agenda**

Superintendent Mikalson noted his letter of resignation at each board member's seat, effective June 30, 2020. He thanked the district, board (past and present) and community for their support over eight years he has been with the district and shared about the position he accepted with the High Desert Education Service District.

**Stuart Young moved to approved the Consent Agenda. Melissa Barnes Dholakia seconded the motion. Unanimous approval.**

### **Discussion**

#### **❖ Superintendent Vacancy Next Steps**

Co-Chair Craig shared potential options the board has discussed regarding the hiring of the district's next superintendent. She noted the board is working to put together an RFP for a superintendent search firm should the board decide to move forward with a full search process.

Stuart Young extended his thanks to Mikalson for his leadership and complimented his integrity and guiding vision during his years as superintendent. He said the board is dedicated to moving quickly with a focus on hiring a leader to help continue moving the district forward.

Caroline Skidmore shared her hesitation about the costs associated to hiring a search firm and asked that the board be consciences of costs should they choose to hire a firm. Co-Chair Craig noted the district's Human Resources Department does not have the capacity to lead a full search and said she feels there is substantial return on investing in a quality superintendent search firm. Melissa Barnes Dholakia agreed and commented she was sad to hear of Mikalson's resignation because she was looking forward to working with him. She shared her thanks to Mikalson for his initiation of the Excellence and Equity Review and feels he is an excellent example of a servant leader and is excited to see him continue to lead in the region. Barnes Dholakia shared her thoughts on the RFP and timeline and is supportive of a full search process. Co-Chair Douglass agreed with fellow board members and was also supportive of a full search process. She encouraged internal candidates to apply and feels the district has a solid foundation which will attract excellent candidates. Discussion ensued on the superintendent search firm RFP process, costs, and next steps.

Young suggested that Co-Chair Craig, Co-Chair Douglass and Barnes Dholakia lead the superintendent search for the board and assign other board members work as they see necessary. All board members agreed and the three will move forward with the RFP to hire a search firm.

## **Reports**

### **❖ EL 8 – Academic Programs : Academic Excellence Policy Monitoring Report**

Lora Nordquist shared an update on the Excellence & Equity Review that is currently underway. To date, 37 listening sessions have been completed and over 1,800 families have responded to the online survey. The district will be reviewing themes from listening sessions and compiling data over the next weeks in preparation for the December report to the board. Shimiko Montgomery thanked Nordquist for her leadership, dedication and efforts with the review process.

Jay Mathisen introduced the EL 8 – Academic Programs: Academic Excellence Policy monitoring report, noting that the focus of tonight's report will be on three main areas of district work:

- Literacy Leadership Academy
- New Teacher Literacy Project
- High School English Language Arts PLC

Mathisen reviewed the executive summary in the board packet and highlighted the major accomplishments from 2018-19 and priorities set for 2019-20.

Instructional Coaches, Lindsley Gehrig and Jenn Montoya shared about the work of the K-5 Literacy Leadership Academy. The Literacy Leadership Academy has been a huge success and those who have participated are now serving as literacy leaders in their schools.

Gehrig and Montoya also shared about the New Teacher Literacy Project specifically at the elementary level. They highlighted new teacher and educational assistant literacy support efforts taking place, noting the classified staff training is a new addition to their program this year and has been exciting to see staff member's excitement and engagement in learning about literacy. Teachers and disciplinary literacy coaches at the secondary level, Jackie Greenwood and Alex Child, shared about the work their cohort has been focused on and the nuances of literacy in various disciplines like math, science, language arts, etc.

Michele Clements, Mt. View High School Language Arts teacher, shared about her work leading a professional learning community of high school language arts teachers. The PLC is currently working to review, update and align high school texts students read as part of their curriculum across the district. Clements also shared about regional efforts to partner with college level writing instructors to create a better understanding of what students need and are missing in their language arts education.

Mathisen thanked all presenters and noted the scale of work that goes along with each of the three areas discussed; all of which have the ultimate goal to improve literacy across all schools and use teacher leaders, who the district is fortunate to have many of. Superintendent Mikalson echoed Mathisen's sentiments and thanked all presenters for their work and dedication to improving literacy instruction.

#### ❖ **Community Climate Action Plan Presentation : City of Bend & The Environmental Center**

Cassie Lacy with City of Bend and Jackie Wilson with the Environmental Center shared the City of Bend's Community Climate Action Plan that will be reviewed and voted on by Bend City Councilors in December. Lacy reviewed plan's four areas of focus and strategies associated with energy supply, transportation, energy in buildings and waste and materials. Wilson shared how the district's current sustainability plan aligns with the climate action plan. Andrew Skidmore, student representative on the Climate Action Committee, shared about his work on the committee and spoke about the urgency for action to mitigate climate change.

Lacy asked the board and district to consider writing a letter of support for the Climate Action Plan in preparation of City Council's December vote. She also asked for feedback about the plan and if there are any areas the district would be interested in partnering with the city on. Co-Chair Craig asked Wilson how schools are currently educated on the district's sustainability plan and any challenges. Wilson shared her desire help update the sustainability plan in the near future and recommunicate it out to schools. The most challenging part of sustainability efforts is establishing a culture and being consistent across the district in sustainability efforts. Skidmore asked what is needed from the board to support the plan. Lacy said just a general letter of support would work. Bend-Parks and Recreation's board heard this presentation recently and have since provided a letter of support. Co-Chair Craig thanked Lacy, Wilson and Skidmore for their work on the plan and the presentation.

#### ❖ **PERS Matching Grant Fund**

Brad Henry reviewed the executive summary in the board packet which further explains the Employer Incentive Fund (EIF). In the 2019 legislative session, SB 1566, passed and created the EIF, which is designed to help employers reduce their unfunded actuarial liability reducing their contribution rates to PERS in the future.

Henry reviewed the district's history with PERS side accounts, how the EIF works, and a proposal for participation. The proposal is for the district to make a lump-sum payment of \$1 million which will be funded by using a portion of the budgeted contingency (\$500,000) that is uncommitted at the end of the year. In addition, an additional \$500,000 of ending fund balance would be used for the payment. The payment would be accounted for with the 2020-21 budget and, if approved, payment would be made in August 2020. The application period to participate in the EIF is December 2. No board action required for the district to submit an application. Assuming the district is successful with the application, Henry said the district will begin to prepare the 2020-21 budget with the dollars assumed and board action will come as part of the regularly scheduled budget adoption timeline.

#### ❖ **OSBA Legislative Policy Committee : Position 3 Election**

Co-Chair Craig shared that Courtney Snead, board member from Jefferson County 509J School District currently holds the OSBA Legislative Policy Committee, Position 3 position. Her term will expire on December 31, 2019. Snead is interested in continuing to serve and is the only candidate who has been nominated for the

position. Co-Chair Craig noted Sneads nomination and resume, included in the board packet, and said boards are asked to vote with official board action by no later than December 13, 2019.

**Melissa Barnes Dholakia moved to support Courtney Snead from Jefferson County 509J School District for the OSBA Legislative Policy Committee, Position 3. Amy Tatom seconded the motion. Unanimous approval.**

❖ **Resolution 1892 : Safe Gun Storage**

Co-Chair Craig reviewed Resolution 1892: Safe Gun Storage in the board packet and offered time for comment or discussion. Barnes Dholakia suggested, that once the resolution is approved, the board review Executive Limitation 3: Treatment of Students, Parents/Guardians and the Public to update and align with the language in Resolution 1892. Co-Chair Craig agreed and suggested the board review EL 3 at the December 10 board meeting.

**Caroline Skidmore moved to adopt Resolution 1892: Safe Gun Storage. Shimiko Montgomery seconded the motion. Unanimous approval.**

**Board Comments**

Caroline Skidmore shared about her recent visit to Bend Tech Academy at Marshall High School and the conversations she had with their leadership class. Questions and concerns around the PE program, transportation, and wanting to share more about their school were major themes of their conversations. She also attended the Cascade Advisory Counsel and AVID showcase at Redmond Middle School.

Amy Tatom thanked those who addressed the board about mental health and safe gun storage and agreed with the importance of continuing to discuss and improve communication about both topics. She is also interested in having conversations around the use of technology in the classroom and at home.

Melissa Barnes Dholakia also appreciated public input and thanked the students who spoke about mental health and their work to bring awareness of available resources for those in need. She shared her appreciation for the EL 8 presentation and the district's focus on literacy and noted the value of having teacher leaders train, lead and use their collective genius to support one another.

Co-Chair Douglass attended the Education Foundation's Principal for a Day luncheon and felt it was a powerful event; she appreciated hearing the comments from community members about how impressed they were with the work of the principals they were partnered with. She also thanked Superintendent Mikalson for his leadership during his years with the district.

Shimiko Montgomery appreciated the public input portion of the meeting and hearing about the district's work on literacy and the professional support being provided to staff members.

Co-Chair Craig shared she was a guest speaker in an AVID class at La Pine Middle School. She also appreciated public input, especially hearing from students who are passionate and leading efforts to support their peers.

Meeting adjourned at 8:32 p.m.

Recorded by: Andrea Wilson

**Minutes approved at 12.10.19 board meeting**