

Bend-La Pine Schools Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: October 13, 2020

Meeting Location:

To support Governor Brown's executive orders for social distancing, the Board of Directors conducted the Board Meeting virtually, through Cisco Webex. The meeting was also live streamed to the BLS Schoolboard YouTube webpage.

Board Members Present

Carrie Douglass
Shimiko Montgomery
Melissa Barnes Dholakia
Amy Tatom
Caroline Skidmore
Stuart Young

Board Members Absent

Julie Craig

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Chair Douglass, roll call followed.

Review of Agenda

Superintendent Nordquist noted that no action to approve the Executive Limitation Updates would take place at the meeting. Chair Douglass read a land acknowledgement statement, prepared by the Deschutes Land Trust and noted the Board is in the process of drafting a land acknowledgement statement, once ready, it will be read aloud at Board meetings.

Public Input

Chair Douglass noted the Board received public input in written format and the following comment was read aloud:

- Request and idea of how to make feminine hygiene products available in all middle and high school restrooms: Liam Smyth on behalf of the Design Justice Class at Bend Senior High School.

Consent Agenda

Melissa Barnes Dholakia noted a correction to the September 22 minutes, clarifying that executive limitations were not discussed at that meeting.

Melissa Barnes Dholakia moved to approve the Consent Agenda, with the amended September 22, 2020 minutes. Amy Tatom seconded the motion. Unanimous approval.

Reports

❖ **School Reopening Update**

Chair Douglass invited Superintendent Nordquist to share an update on reopening schools. Nordquist noted the update this evening will be focused on addressing issues and questions that the district is hearing most often. Dr. George Conway, Health Services Director for Deschutes County Health Services spoke about COVID-19 metrics and how they were established, what factors were included in setting the metrics, infection rates in Deschutes County, testing, contact tracing and suggested mitigation practices. Board members discussed and asked questions about school reopening scenarios. Caroline Skidmore expressed her frustration with the fact that bars and gyms, which have significantly higher levels of possible transmission, are open, while schools continue to remain closed. Chair Douglass agreed and encouraged community members to limit or not engage in activities with a high transmission rate. Amy Tatom emphasized the importance of establishing and

maintaining cohorts of students once the district does return to in person instruction. Superintendent Nordquist thanked Dr. Conway and the entire team at Deschutes County Health for their support and partnership, especially over the past several months.

Sean Reinhart spoke about Limited In Person Instruction which small numbers of students are participating in. He shared about needs based assessments, cohorts, staff participation and planning efforts to support student and staff health and safety. Katie Legace shared about strategies to refine and improve Comprehensive Distance Learning, including a possible restructure of teacher office hours and how to better utilize time on Wednesday at the secondary level. She shared about athletics and activities that have been a part of OSAA's Season 1 and how it has been a positive experience for students and staff even with guidelines and restrictions in place.

❖ **Strategic Investment Plan Update**

Superintendent Nordquist reviewed the Strategic Investment Plan that the Board approved in Spring 2020. She shared an update on the grant and funding process including the identification of strategic priorities where the district would invest the funds – the two key purposes being focused on meeting students' behavioral and mental health needs and reducing academic disparities and increasing academic achievement in four funding categories: addressing students' health and safety needs, reducing class size, expanding students' access to well-rounded learning experiences, and increasing instructional time. Nordquist shared the district will be receiving approximately \$4.4 million for the 2020-21 school year, and plans to invest the funds in the following ways: \$1.9 million for class size reduction, \$950,000 for social and emotional support, counseling and student safety and \$1.2 million for expanding students' access.

Nordquist said the updated grant agreement is included in the Board packet and does require future Board approval. The grant agreement will be posted on the district's website, and at the November 10 Board meeting there will be time for public comment and Board action. Nordquist offered to answer any questions. Shimiko Montgomery asked when the amount will increase back to the full funding the district was initially expecting (approximately \$14 million). Nordquist said it will depend on tax collection and will not increase or decrease until the next biennium. Melissa Barnes Dholakia clarified the cycle, this year is one year and then the future will be a two-year cycle. Chair Douglass thanked Nordquist for the update and appreciates the investment focus the district is continuing to pursue.

❖ **Division 22 Assurances Report**

Katie Legace reviewed the Division 22 Assurances for the 2019-20 school year. Legace noted the new timeline and streamlined set of standards that are defined in OAR 581-022-0103. The streamlined standards for 2019-20 reflect the need for flexibility as districts managed distance learning for all during Spring 2020. Legace reviewed the 17 standards and said the district is in compliance and meets all requirements of each standard. Legace also reviewed the timeline and process of reporting and posting Division 22 Assurances and said the district will be completing and submitting the annual assurance form to the Oregon Department of Education by the November 15, 2020 deadline.

❖ **Executive Limitation 7 – Facilities Policy Monitoring Report**

Mike Tiller reviewed the executive summary and policy monitoring report in the Board packet. He shared his compliments and thanks to the classified staff members who have continued to work on maintaining and improving district facilities. Tiller reviewed construction progress and project completion for projects funded by the 2017 Construction Bond. Tiller noted the recommendation to postpone the Sites and Facilities Review process to begin in fall of 2021 due to the need for the committee to actively visit sites and locations around the district as well as wanting to include details of the revised Sustainability Plan in the review process.

Caroline Skidmore thanked Tiller and the district for their efforts to replace and update air filtration filters from MERV 8 to MERV 13. Tiller reviewed how the district's air handling and filtration systems work adding there are thousands of filters being replaced district wide. Melissa Barnes Dholakia shared her thanks and appreciates the thoughtfulness of delaying the Sites and Facilities Review. Chair Douglass also thanked Tiller for the update.

❖ **Financial Update**

Leah Bibeau reviewed the financial update in the board packet and offered to answer questions. There were no questions.

❖ **Policy Update**

Andrea Wilson reviewed the policy update in the board packet and offered to answer questions. There were no questions

Discussion Items

❖ **Superintendent Search Process**

Chair Douglass shared an update on the Superintendent search process. The Board continues to work with Valerie Pitts from HYA and is excited about the candidates thus far. The next update will include more details about the search / interview committee, timeline, etc.

❖ **Executive Limitation Updates**

Melissa Barnes Dholakia led Board members through a review of Executive Limitations 3, 4, 5 and 8 with key considerations including:

- What do we seek in terms of an organizational structure?
- What are our systems for empowering student and family voice?
- What are our systems for advancing staff diversity?

Board members and district staff shared thoughts and feedback, which Barnes Dholakia said she will incorporate and bring revised versions of the limitations to the October 27 work session meeting with the goal of adoption at the November 10 Board meeting.

Board Comments

Caroline Skidmore thanked teachers for their continued work and innovation during comprehensive distance learning. She also thanked district leaders who are continuing to manage and think creatively throughout the pandemic to do what is best for students and staff.

Chair Douglass shared she has missed being in schools and seeing students and staff in action. She also appreciates the innovation and the efforts being made to reach out to students and families. Douglass also thanked parents for their partnership in education now, more-so than ever.

Melissa Barnes Dholakia noted the continual change and update to guidelines that impact the district. She shared her appreciation for district leaders who continue to navigate and make plans during incredible uncertainty. She also shared her appreciation, as a parent, for the creative efforts her children's teachers are putting forth to help keep students engaged in learning.

Amy Tatom spoke about pandemic fatigue and the importance of mental health. She noted there are many things that can be done to mitigate risks of infection while still allowing for people to be together in safe, low risk ways. Tatom emphasized it is going to take a community-wide effort to get students back to school and encouraged community members to continue to make healthy and safe choices for the greater good.

Stuart Young appreciates the efforts made to make Limited In Person Instruction a possibility. He thanked Dr. Conway for his time and wisdom, noting that our community holds the key for getting students back to school and we all need to work together to do what's best for our students and schools.

Meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Recorded by: Andrea Wilson

Minutes approved at 11.10.2020 board meeting

