

Special Meeting of the
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Corvallis School District 509J
1555 SW 35th Street
Corvallis, OR 97333

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 6:36 p.m. in the Board Room of the Central Administration Building, 1555 SW 35th Street, Corvallis, Oregon. The secretary recorded those present as listed below.

<p><u>BOARD MEMEMBERS PRESENT</u> Blake Rodman, Chair Matt Donohue, Vice Chair Lisa Corrigan Helen Higgins Anne Schuster Bill Ten Pas</p>	<p><u>EXECUTIVE STAFF PRESENT</u> Dawn Tarzian, Superintendent Jim Hogeboom, Assistant Superintendent Kathy Rodeman, Business Services Director Jeanne Holmes, Human Resources Director Julie Catala, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent</p>
<p><u>BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT</u> John Turman</p>	<p><u>BUDGET COMMITTEE CITIZEN MEMBERS PRESENT</u> Arne Larson Julie Manning Steven Martinson Liz Pearce Lisa Ullmer</p>
	<p><u>BUDGET COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT</u> Mark Yeager Leanne Giordono</p>

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Rodman led the group in the pledge of allegiance.

III. ACTION ON DISTRICT IMPROVEMENT PLAN AND 2007-08 DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT KEY INITIATIVES PLAN

Superintendent Tarzian introduced Liz Pearce, the newest budget committee citizen member.

Superintendent Tarzian noted that the agenda for the meeting had a lot to do with requests that came as part of the 2007-08 budget process.

Superintendent Tarzian framed the meeting agenda. She explained that Vital Signs gives signs of where the district is with key financial indicators, and School Improvement money is what the legislature has dedicated to schools. The Superintendent also noted there was a request that Kathy Rodeman, Business Services Director, further discuss the fiscal policy that came to the board at the last board meeting, and that Mike Strowbridge, Curriculum/Staff Development Coordinator, and Jim Hogeboom, Assistant Superintendent, will provide information regarding classroom instruction.

Superintendent Tarzian explained that the parameters and requirements imposed by the state on the budget process are substantial. She explained that so much of what the district does gets laid out as a result of fiscal requirements, strict guidelines about use of state and federal money and state curriculum standards and assessments, and expressed how frustrating it can be to be part of a budget building process with those constraints. She said this year's efforts are to engage the budget committee in a discussion before she presents her preliminary budget recommendation. She noted that in addition to input from staff and parents, a lot of the prior input from the budget committee goes into the first draft of the superintendent's budget recommendation.

Superintendent Tarzian noted that the district has traditionally engaged in considerable citizen committee work in the budget process, such as the Administrative Review Task Force that advised how the district budget compared to other districts of a similar size and provided good input about where the Corvallis district allocates resources. In addition, there was a Budget Communications Committee that created a cliff-note version of the district budget document. The district has also had rich opportunities for the budget committee to listen to community input. Superintendent Tarzian referenced the Additional Allocations Committee that was convened last year to identify how to spend additional money and PERS funds. There was a District Improvement Plan committee, headed by Mr. Hogeboom that included a large citizen group that spent a year looking at the achievement of district students and identifying where the district needed to improve. Superintendent Tarzian also noted the Community Vision and Vision Synthesizing committees. Mr. Hogeboom distributed the full document for these committees to the board.

Superintendent Tarzian explained that although there are 14 recommendations in the vision document, five specifically that are important for her to tell the board about up front, such as hiring and retaining quality staff, including how they are supported in their first couple of years in the district, ability to maintain and retain a class size that's conducive to individualizing instruction, commitment to deliver an essential curriculum that's aligned K-12, teacher ability to differentiate to meet the needs of their students, and long range fiscal planning.

Mr. Hogeboom asked the board to approve the District Improvement Plan (DIP) and offered to further discuss details of the DIP off-line because of the volume of the plan. He said page 31, the summary document, wasn't in the draft the board received at the November 5 board meeting. He then led a brief review of the items on that page, which focused on the Focus Area of literacy, the Key Beliefs, two main goals, the action plan and the implications. Mr. Hogeboom noted that this summary document was what the committee wanted school principals to know.

Julie Manning, budget committee citizen member, joined the board meeting at 6:55 p.m.

Mr. Hogeboom said the priorities for the last couple of years have been to get instructional materials and assessments in place. He outlined the curriculum that has been adopted over the last couple of years.

BOARD DISCUSSION:

Director Schuster asked what the secondary level language encompassed. Mr. Hogeboom replied that each department chair submitted a plan and that is what the DIP committee provided.

Director Ten Pas asked if the committee would take into account a school's diversity population versus using the district-wide population when a school uses their own improvement plan. Mr. Hogeboom replied in the affirmative.

Director Corrigan referred to page five of the DIP "measuring improvement for students beyond seventh grade", and asked if Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) was going to be extended beyond middle school. Mr. Hogeboom replied that it will be third through the eighth grade, versus what the district used to require which was third through seventh grade. He noted that some other measure for high school would need to be established because state testing is not adequate. Mr. Strowbridge added that state assessment is a summative measure, and only evaluates the tail end of the performance. He noted that the district is using formative assessment to allow intervention and it extends to tenth grade, but added that it is expensive and usually not used beyond eighth grade because it doesn't extend the whole four years of high school. Superintendent Tarzian said that there is an ACT test that can also be used.

MOTION # 21: It was moved by Vice Chair Donohue and seconded by Director Ten Pas to approve the District Improvement Plan. The motion was voted on and passed unanimously.

Chair Rodman expressed that it would be good for the board to have more opportunity for discussion before Mr. Hogeboom puts together the DIP committee.

Superintendent Tarzian outlined the Key Initiatives Plan and explained that within the plan are the things the district expects to accomplish this year.

MOTION # 22: It was moved by Director Higgins and seconded by Vice Chair Donohue to approve the Key Initiatives Plan. The motion was voted on and passed unanimously.

IV. SPECIAL REPORTS

A. VITAL SIGNS

Ms. Rodeman distributed the Vital Signs report to the board. (Filed as Supplemental Item #VII-10.) Vital Signs reports are given to the board two times a year to the board. They are considered indicators that action may be needed one way or another. When the board saw these vital signs last year, one of the things they were asked to look at was boundary work to make sure the district utilized capacity more fully at all schools. There was also emphasis on class size reduction that came about via the local option levy and through the school improvement fund grant from the legislature. It is targeted for class size reduction for K-2 and 6-12. Both of those sources helped the district reduce class size considerably.

Ms. Rodeman noted that even though the district has seen a drop in class size, it may still be above the state average because the most recent information available is from the 2005-06 school year. The district is only now reaching the level where other districts were two years ago. The budget committee will need to decide if class sizes are still a priority for funding for next year.

Superintendent Tarzian pointed out that the triggers noted in the Vital Signs report are critical information for the board to be aware of for their decision-making.

Director Higgins asked if charter schools were going to be figured into the district's capacity and utilization numbers in the future. Ms. Rodeman replied that she did not know, but would look into that question.

B. HIGH SCHOOL AND MIDDLE SCHOOL ELECTIVES; TALENTED AND GIFTED (TAG) STUDENTS; TEAM PLANNING TIME

Chair Rodman noted that this is a discussion the board asked to have at the last board meeting of the fiscal year.

Mr. Strowbridge distributed a report containing high school and middle school elective information. He said it is what is currently going on in the high schools and middle schools and includes some comparator information for middle school.

Director Higgins asked if an inventory had been done about equity of electives between Corvallis High School and Crescent Valley High School, as well as if there was an alignment about what an elective is. Superintendent Tarzian replied that the definition was around what is a vocational elective.

Superintendent Tarzian said that she had a document comparing the electives between the two high schools that was done for the 2006-07 school year and has not yet been updated. It was brought to the board during the discussion about limiting open enrollment.

Director Higgins noted that some board members have bantered about the concept of allocating the dollars to the boundary of the high school so that the district does not end up hurting the curriculum from year to year as a result of transfers.

Vice Chair Donohue referenced the public testimony given at a previous board meeting by Malcom Rose regarding automotive training. Vice Chair Donohue asked what the board was looking at when they looked at the functional costs of the vocational programs. He also asked how well the district was aligning vocational electives with the employment opportunities the students have to go into, as well as how aligned the district is with the skills that are being taught with the job market students will be entering. Mr. Strowbridge explained that a career related learning standards plan is required by the state, which has resulted in consistency. He explained that there are also career related experiences that are in place which allow students to go out beyond the school environment into internships.

Mr. Hogeboom interjected that there are also certifications required for teachers for these courses and noted that the district receives Perkins grant funds for that purpose. Mr. Hogeboom added that there will be a meeting approximately in March to determine if the district is offering the right courses.

Superintendent Tarzian explained that graduation rates at both high schools are an important indicator about whether students perceive education as an important pathway to their future. She referenced SB300 that requires the district to pay for community college or higher education courses for students. The law was rewritten to allow more flexibility for the district to target at-risk students, which is important to address the vocational issue.

Mr. Strowbridge then led a review of the Cheldelin Middle School team schedule, which was provided as an example of a teacher's weekly schedule based on how the team time is being used.

BOARD DISCUSSION

Director Ten Pas asked if Mr. Strowbridge had noticed any transfers due to students wanting to follow specific electives, and said he wondered, with CHS having a greater option of electives, if it encouraged transfers. Mr. Strowbridge replied that he had heard that it was a drawing point in the past but with transportation being provided it is probably not as much of an issue anymore. Mr. Hogeboom added that it is hard to schedule those electives between the two schools' schedules.

Director Schuster noted that Mr. Rose had discussed electives in terms of the fact that there is an automotive class at one of the high schools; however, the school doesn't have enough money for needed supplies. Director Schuster also noted that in terms of the budget for band and choir, parents have to do a lot of fundraising and that is a concern. In addition, she noted that Corvallis

High School Choir Director Brett Godfrey wrote a letter to the board last year about how the Corvallis School District has the only middle schools in the state that do not have a choir program. Crescent Valley High School Principal Cherie Stroud replied that Cheldelin Middle School now has a choir program. Mr. Hogeboom added that the electives at a middle school are up to the school community.

Budget committee citizen member Steven Martinson noted that in elementary school, students attend music and art classes, and in high school students have a state requirement of four fine arts credit hours. Ms. Stroud interjected that world language is also an option. Mr. Martinson continued by saying that in middle school there is no such requirement. He said there is a disconnect between elementary and middle school where students do not attend music or art classes. He said fine arts classes are required again in high school after students have lost momentum in those subjects, and opined that it is the district's responsibility to maintain that continuity.

Director Corrigan referenced the high school and middle school electives report and asked where the data in the document regarding high schools came from. Ms. Stroud replied that the data came from the work of last year's High School Schedule Committee and from the survey that was distributed at each high school.

Director Corrigan then asked why the district doesn't just shorten the school day.

Superintendent

Tarzian said the committee looked at that option, but the consensus was that the shortening would be perceived negatively and made it more challenging to manage the schedules of the students. She said that survey results showed that concern about the open block was the highest for parents of freshman students and that the concerns lessened each year a student attended high school.

Director Corrigan asked if the \$675,000 used to replace the Extended Learning Time (XLT) is really a replacement. She asked if the committee had taken out the cost of teachers who are currently supervising XLT. Mr. Strowbridge replied that they had not. Ms. Rodeman replied that the net would be about half the cost.

Director Corrigan expressed a wish to include the Franklin and Lincoln students in the look at the middle school electives, and asked if it was something the board wanted to revisit before the budget.

Mr. Strowbridge led review of the report entitled Differentiated Instruction for Students in Corvallis Schools identified as TAG. He noted that the model Corvallis uses for TAG is the differentiation model, which takes a number of different forms that may involve content, process, activities, products or environments. He said the new core reading program is designed in a way to ensure that all levels of readers will be challenged.

Director Ten Pas asked if TAG testing was ethnically appropriate or if schools were having problems identifying students because of their language skills. Mr. Strowbridge replied that English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA) can be used for non-English proficient students, but that schools probably lack access to other tools for that testing. He added that through the ESD the district has access to Spanish forms of assessment tool Terra Nova. Superintendent Tarzian added that the district only looks at the areas that are required under Oregon law.

Director Ten Pas expressed a concern that the district is cognizant of socio-economic status (SES) levels at schools but not of TAG levels at schools, adding that enriching the student body with thinkers enriches the entire student body. He asked if schools track TAG students for Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) to make sure they're getting the education they deserve. Mr. Strowbridge replied that the testing tools schools are using now, such as MAP, are really helping; teachers can then hone in on the students who aren't meeting the growth targets at the top end. Mr. Hogeboom added that on that topic, the only available data is by school.

Vice Chair Donohue said he shared the same concerns as Director Ten Pas. He expressed that the TAG program appears to have considerably more resources at the middle school and high school levels than the elementary level. He expressed concern that it is dangerous to have elementary students top out on their educational curve. Mr. Strowbridge replied that schools focus on reading and math; the district is much better positioned to provide the mentioned extension now that the core curriculum is in place. He added that writing has always had a level of differentiation to it, and regarding math, it is typical to see some grouping by level by the third grade; in the primary grades there are extensions the teachers can set up. Part of the role in the professional development is to get teachers to ask the questions.

Vice Chair Donohue asked what schools have as a TAG program, starting at the elementary level, in relation to science. Mr. Strowbridge replied that at the elementary level there is a full-options science program called Science Education Partnerships (SEPS). It is heavy on materials and activities, and teachers can tier the lessons. He added that a lot of this is about informing teachers about what is in the notebooks provided for the program. He included that in two years the district will be looking at a science adoption, and will have to make sure the materials purchased address those issues.

C. USE OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GRANT MONEY

Chair Rodman announced that the School Improvement Grant Report will be removed from the agenda and reported on by Kathy Rodeman the next time the Budget Committee joins a board meeting. He added that she will also report on rainy day funds and the contingency fund at the next board meeting.

Ms. Rodeman noted that discussion came up last spring about whether to use the School Improvement (SIF) money for class sizes or electives. If the district is lacking in one area, there will have to be a trade-off for something else.

**V. DISCUSSION WITH BUDGET COMMITTEE CITIZEN MEMBERS
REGARDING BUDGET PRIORITIES FOR 2008-09**

Chair Rodman opened the floor about new priorities or any that need to be accentuated in the priority process.

Ms. Manning began by saying that the district had obtained an enormous amount of public input by way of the vision process. She explained that there are three primary things the district has already identified as areas of focus in the DIP and the Vision report, adding that an important focus is on new graduation requirements.

Ms. Pearce said she perceived class size as a work that is still in progress. She also expressed that she was impressed by Cheldelin Middle School and the complexity of the team meetings she was able to observe while on sabbatical at the school last year.

Budget committee citizen member Lisa Ullmer said that she was happy to see the work that had been happening to bring schools back to where they started. She said her priority is differentiation so that TAG students are addressed. She also referenced a six-week rotation that her children completed in middle school and asked if that could be brought back for \$325,000; half of the \$650,000 mentioned in the District Improvement Plan report.

Director Corrigan said that some of the TAG advisory group parents feel that they work without the full support of the district. She encouraged the district to take a partnership role for the groups in the community that are putting together some of these experiences for students because they are all expensive and not all families can afford them.

Chair Rodman expressed a desire to discuss the central office staff. He acknowledged that the district does not have a communications person; someone responsible for communicating with all of the players outside of the central office, not just a public relations person. He said currently, Superintendent Tarzian and Human Resources Director Jeanne Holmes write all the articles from the district. He asked if that is something the board wants the superintendent and human resources director to be doing. There has been a perception of a communication problem over the last five years; the community does not feel communicated with. Director Corrigan said she remembered that about ten years ago, the Gazette Times offered column time to the district to communicate directly to the community.

Vice Chair Donohue echoed Chair Rodman's sentiments. He noted that over the years the district has removed a lot of classes from schools; however, the district has cut more out of the district office. He expressed concern that if programs are being brought back into the schools, support needs to be brought back to the district office in order to increase the effectiveness of the district. He requested the examination of the district office budget.

Vice Chair Donohue explained that with the additional funding the district is adding back class size, which is an important thing, but also the most expensive. He expressed concern that three years from now if the economy suffers, the district will have to lay off teachers.

It was noted that a rainy day fund builds off of Director Donohue's sentiments and that an unwritten policy is to stay away from programs that may not be able to continue in the future. It was suggested that the district look at having a rainy day fund, and a desire was expressed to avoid another year where seven days are cut out of the school year.

Mr. Martinson said that in order to add new positions in the district office, the board should consider a no-growth policy or restructure positions.

Director Higgins reiterated that vocational education should be a priority.

Vice Chair Donohue requested information regarding the cost of vocational programs as well as how much it would cost for some of the improvements that have been requested, in order to have that context for the next budget discussion. He also requested a revision of the figure for the XLT money.

Director Ten Pas explained that before costs can be determined, "vocational education" needs to be defined.

Vice Chair Donohue referenced the first page of the High School Electives Report, and mentioned robotics and architecture electives. Chair Rodman expressed a desire for the plan to be more organic and for the schools to explain what they value and what they want to have instead of the board developing something for them.

Director Ten Pas opined that Chair Rodman was talking about classes, not vocational education.

Vice Chair Donohue referred to a sentence in paragraph three of the High School Electives Report and said he would like to know what costs are not covered by the currently-charged lab fees. Mr. Hogeboom replied that the District Improvement Plan discussed the certified programs. Vice Chair Donohue said he would like the costs for the certified programs.

Director Corrigan said that parents want to know about the levy money identified for athletics and how it is being distributed at each school. She said she thought it might reduce activity fees. Superintendent Tarzian responded that the levy money is to reduce fundraising in the community. Director Corrigan said that it has not succeeded in doing that. Mr. Martinson added that high school band students work at OSU games to fund raise and it is unpleasant labor.

Mr. Martinson asked whether students not signed up for an advanced placement class could sit in and take the class if space was available. Ms. Stroud responded that there may be only two or three spaces available and fifty students who may want to take that spot; she expressed concern

about equity, noting that a school would have to open new sections to accommodate everyone's wishes. Mr. Martinson said schools should make that a priority.

Ms. Pearce commented about adding to the district office staff, and said that facilitating partnerships takes staff time. She requested information about what the job loads would be.

Vice Chair Donohue suggested going over the historical financial cuts and bring it up to date.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the board, Chair Rodman adjourned the meeting at 9:12 p.m.

Blake Rodman, Chair

Dawn Tarzian, Superintendent

Prepared by: Chelsie Biegel

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