

Greater Albany Public School District 8J
718 Seventh Avenue SW
Albany, Oregon 97321-2399



REGULAR BOARD MEETING

April 8, 2013 7:00 p.m.

Minutes

Maria Delapoer, Superintendent

CALL TO ORDER

Board Chair Gordon called the regular meeting of the School Board to order at 7:03 p.m.

Sandi Gordon	Board Chair
Frank Bricker	Board Vice Chair
Jerry Boehme	Director
Lyle Utt	Director
Micah Smith	Director
Hannah Jefferson	SAHS Student Board Member
Johnny Pearson	WAHS Student Board Member
Maria Delapoer	Superintendent
Frank Caropelo	Assistant Superintendent
Randy Lary	Human Resources Director
Russell Allen	Business and Operations Director

A list of others present at the meeting is filed with the original minutes. It was noted that a quorum of the Board was present.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Girl Scout Troop 20215 led attendees in the pledge of allegiance. Susan Phillips is the troop leader.

CORE PURPOSE/GOALS

Board Chair Gordon began the meeting with a review of the district's Core Purpose and Strategic Goals:

Core Purpose: Educate and inspire all students to reach their full potential, equipped to be positive, contributing members of society.

Strategic Goals:

- We provide every student with challenging and motivating learning experiences that lead to continuous growth.
- We instill in every student the character traits that enable them to understand and interact in the world, appreciating and valuing differences.
- Our students thrive because every community member is a stakeholder and takes responsibility for the success of every student.

SUPERINTENDENT COMMENTS AND INTRODUCTIONS

NORTH ALBANY MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT REPORTERS

Executive Assistant Jim Haggart introduced North Albany Middle School Student Reporter Mackenna Grove. He said that she is taking Geometry, Composition, Leadership, Literature, Science, Social Studies, Health, PE. He said that her favorite subject is Geometry.

He said that Mackenna participates in basketball at the Boys and Girls Club and softball with Albany Little League. He said that Board members would recall that Mackenna was recognized as a Student All-Star at the February 25 Board meeting. Mr. Haggart said that she has a twin brother Samuel who is also a seventh grader at North Albany Middle School. Her brother Jacob is an eighth grader at the same school. Her parents are Deanna and Jeffrey Grove.

Mr. Haggart introduced Molly Hendricks and said that she was also a seventh grader. He said that she is taking Geometry, Composition, Leadership, Literature, Science, Social Studies, Health and PE. He said that he favorite subject is Language Arts.

He said that Molly plays basketball at the Albany Boys and Girls Club and participates in running events on the North Albany Middle School track team. She has a sister Karlee who is a ninth grader at West Albany High School. Her parents are Bill and Cindy Hendricks

Board Chair Gordon welcomed both students.

PLC VISITS

Superintendent Delapoe said that the District Leadership Team would summarize their observations of Professional Learning Community sessions in the schools.

She said that she visited Liberty Elementary School where third, fourth and fifth grade teachers were talking about math scores and examining student work. She said that teachers were making decisions about next year regarding using staff for interventions.

Assistant Superintendent Frank Caropelo said that secondary curriculum director Peggy Blair visited North Albany Middle School and observed the work of math teachers. He said that she also visited South Albany High School and participated in the foreign language teachers group with principal Brent Belveal. He said that teachers were discussing credit opportunities to the College Now program. He said that Ms. Blair also observed language arts teachers who were reviewing writing scores from the State testing.

STUDENT REPORTS

[North Albany Middle School Student Reporters Mackenna Grove and Molly Hendricks addressed the Board. The text of their report is provided as an attachment to these minutes.](#)

Board Chair Gordon thanked the students for their report.

STUDENT ALL-STARS

Hailey Wyatt and Benjamin Cox of Clover Ridge Elementary and Kylend Hart, Olivia Dixon and Athena Lawson of Timber Ridge School were recognized for their citizenship and community

service. Leo Raveling and Justin McKenzie of Central Elementary School and Arianna Boertje and Charlie Mack of Takena Elementary School were also honored.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Two individuals said that they preferred to address the Board during the discussion of the proposed charter school.

CONSENT AGENDA

- 1) Minutes from March 11, 2013 Regular Board Meeting
- 2) Personnel (with Addendum)

Board Chair Gordon stated that if there were no objections the Board would approve the Consent Agenda. There were no objections. Board Chair Gordon DECLARED THE ACTION DECIDED by UNANIMOUS CONSENT

BOARD REPORTS

LEGISLATIVE LIAISON REPORT

Board Chair Gordon said that she did not have a report as the Legislative Liaison. Ms. Delapoer said that she and Business and Operations Director Russ Allen were in Salem on April 1 to testify in hearings about education related bills.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

Board Chair Gordon said that she did not have a report from the Sub-Committee considering District Leadership Team compensation.

Director Utt said that he was in Salem on April 5 as part of Leadership Oregon. He said that he heard at the time that the Oregon School Boards Association proposal to amend the PERS system was functionally dead in favor of a plan that would essentially “kick the can” down the street. He said that he would return to Salem on April 19 to give a presentation on Greater Albany’s School Security Task Force to other Leadership Oregon participants.

Board Chair Gordon said that she saw the South Albany High School production of “Grease.” She described the performance as “fabulous.”

She said that she also visited Timber Ridge School that day. She said that a number of parents told her how impressed they were with how well the school was maintained.

Director Smith said that he appreciated the volunteers who participated in the Albany Public Schools Foundation “iRun for Kids” fund-raising event. He said that he competed in the ten mile event.

STUDENT REPORTS

Student School Board Member Hannah Jefferson said that the last six weeks were a trial process as South Albany High School learned the new tutorial schedule. Overall, the switch has been extremely successful. She said that nearly two hundred students worked to raise their failing grades to passing. She said that among those students were also people who had not met specific testing standards to graduate and the tutorial period provided much needed time for those students to catch up.

She announced that the varsity and JV dance teams completed their state competitions and brought home second place trophies for both teams. She reported that the senior all night party committee hosted a car show at South Albany High School sponsored by Dodge. She said that the event earned approximately three thousand dollars toward the party that will take place the night of graduation.

Miss Jefferson reported that on April 8, 9, and 10, South Albany High School would welcome incoming freshmen for the 2013-14 school year. She said that the current Timber Ridge eighth graders were getting to know the South Albany campus and becoming comfortable with the thought of transitioning to high school. She said that the South Albany art club was selling handmade baskets from Haiti for eight dollars each to aid an orphanage in Haiti. Miss Jefferson said that as the school year was coming to an end, students were looking forward to many events in the upcoming months such as prom, powder puff football, macho volleyball and of course, graduation.

Board Chair Gordon said that she and her daughter baked 40 dozen cookies for the South Albany high school welcoming event.

Director Smith said that he was invited to speak to the incoming students about media harassment, cyber bullying and being kind to one another.

Student School Board Member Johnny Pearson said the members of the West Albany High School Leadership class helped with directing runners during the Albany Public Schools Foundation "iRun for Kids" fundraising event. He said that his school conducted a dance with a theme of "Old School" He said that the baseball team again made its semi-annual trip to Arizona during Spring Break and was able to play four baseball games and view several major league teams.

He said that the Leadership class was preparing for a "Drama Drama Night" which was encouraging students to attend the drama club's performance. He said that the Leadership class would conduct a spring event and was considering several options. He said that the Leadership class would also go to North Albany Middle School and describe to eighth graders what high school was like.

Board Chair Gordon thanked Miss Jefferson and Mr. Pearson for their reports.

DISTRICT ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN
SCHOOL SAFETY TASK FORCE UPDATE

Former Greater Albany principal and risk manager Ric Blasquez stated that he would summarize the work of the School Safety Task Force to date. He said that it was not new ground for the school district. He said that for the last 14 years, since 1999, the district has had in place specific crisis response and school site safety plans.

He said that those plans were put into place in cooperation with the Albany Police Department. He said that the plans were adjusted as necessary over the years. He said that schools have drilled in those security plans and staff has participated in "Table-top" exercises with the Albany Police and Fire Departments and area agencies.

Mr. Blasquez said that the district put out an all-call to the community for people who had an interest in participating. He said that there were 27 task force members including parents, community

members, District employees, one student, two Board members and seven representatives from City and County agencies.

He said that participants were divided into four subcommittees to consider the physical environment, communications with parents and staff, policies and procedures, and mental health resources for at-risk students. He indicated the participants and objectives of each sub-committee. Mr. Blasquez also identified the timeline and stated that the committee would report to the Superintendent Delapoe on May 8. He said that the superintendent and Board would use that information to set priorities and identify future directions. He said that two task force members would share that evening, some of what their sub-committees were doing.

Timber Ridge School principal Jason Hoffert-Hay identified the participants of his sub-committee. He noted that Board members had in their packets a draft "Crisis Communication Response Checklist." He said that the committee began their work by considering all of the questions that might need to be answered during all parts of a crisis. He said that the participants drafted a checklist. He said that checklists can be important during a complex situation when one might otherwise forget to do some of the simple things. He said that the checklist would also serve as a tracking document to record a timeline of information.

He said that the document was divided into two sections. He said that the first section was intended as a site document and the second was intended for district use. He said that the sub-committee was still considering which items should be performed at the building and which should be accomplished at the district level.

Board Chair Gordon said that it might be helpful for the schools to each have their own Facebook or other social media page. She said that things that happen at school are often posted on Facebook and things expand from there.

Director Smith said that standardized templates would be helpful. Mr. Hoffert-Hay agreed, saying that it might be helpful to be able to cut and paste information on an electronic form.

Director Utt spoke of social media. He suggested that the district request the advice of the Oregon School Boards Association (OSBA) in structuring the social media. Director Smith agreed.

Mr. Blasquez said that Director Smith was involved in both the physical environment and policies and procedures sub-committees. He invited Director Smith to describe the work of those sub-committees.

Director Smith said that the sub-committees had completed an assessment of 16 district locations. He said that there were vulnerabilities to security at nearly all of the schools. He said that several of the schools have offices situated where office staff cannot see the front entrance doors and some schools have roof access points that pose a dangerous access to curious youngsters. He noted that last summer, a student fell through a skylight at a school.

He said that the great thing about having custodial and administrative staff taking part in the physical assessments was that employees were learning how to look at buildings from a safety and security

standpoint. He recalled one instance in which a discrepancy was identified and 15 minutes later maintenance people were on the scene to make repairs.

Director Smith spoke of the work of the policy and procedures sub-committee, including communication as a policy. He related that parents on the committee indicated that they did not want social media. He said that they wanted to receive information by existing means. He said that the district uses FlashAlert communication, but FlashAlert was not mentioned in one of the communication documents. Director Smith said that it might be possible to communicate by more than one means.

Mr. Blasquez noted that Board packets contained a document entitled "School Response Major Incident Plan." He said that the page was developed in 1999 in cooperation with the Albany Police Department. He said that in the past, each school in the state had a file folder on the wall in the school office with critical, key information for that building. He said that when an officer from any law enforcement agency came into the building, he knew right where to go to get key information. He said that soon, all that information would be available in the cloud, and any law enforcement officer responding to the scene will be able to access that same information from their police vehicle.

Director Boehme said that the work of the task force was fabulous, especially as quick as the work has come together.

Board Chair Gordon suggested that the work of the task force be shared with the Oregon School Boards Association.

OLD BUSINESS **CHARTER SCHOOL**

Assistant Superintendent Frank Caropelo said that he would summarize the staff's review of the revised application received on March 6, 2013 from the Albany Community Charter School. He said that under the administrative regulation, the district had 20 days to review the application but by mutual consent, the date was extended to the April 8, 2013 Board meeting.

He directed the Board's attention to Administrative Regulation *LBE-AR, Public Charter Schools*, provided at Board member places. He stated that pages 8 and 9 of the document identified the criteria to be used in the evaluation of the application. He summarized the requirements.

Mr. Caropelo said that applicant Jennifer Cummins requested time to address the Board. He said that Board Chair Gordon granted that request.

Jennifer Cummins of 530 First Avenue East in Albany read a letter to the Board in support of the application. [A copy of her letter was provided to directors as an addendum to the Board packet and is provided as an attachment to these minutes](#)

Greater Albany Education Association president Cheryl Hultberg said that as an Albany teacher, she had concerns with the application. She said that the charter school proposed to offer small class sizes but at the expense of the remainder of the district. She said that the charter school teachers would not be under the same rules and protections as district teachers.

She said that the evaluation of the teachers would not be the same. She said that the district spent two years putting procedures into practice to comply with Senate Bill 290 concerning the evaluation of teachers. She said that she did not see a similar plan for the evaluation of teachers at the charter school.

Mr. Allen said that there were two items discussed in the application that he wished to clarify. He said that he concurred with Ms. Cummins comment regarding budget carryover. He said that when reviewing the fiscal aspects of the application, staff reviewed Appendix IV, "Detailed Yearly Budgets for GAPS Sponsorship in the Years 2014-15 and 2015-16." He said that there were no revenues identified as either "Cash in the Bank" or "Cash on Hand" in that document. He said that staff concluded that there would be no carryover from one fiscal year to the next. He said that it was later determined that the proposed budget on pages 70-72 contained information that the detailed yearly budgets did not, namely the existence of budgeted ending fund balances in the second and third years of the proposed charter.

He said that he also wished to discuss technology costs. He said that there were assumptions made by staff regarding the cost for technology at the Fir Grove campus. He said that staff assumed that the computers would be networked and that the charter school would do what other charters have done and that would be to contract with the Education Service District to provide Internet access and filtering. He said that if the solution would be to load desktop filtering software while sharing a commercial Internet service provider for Internet access only, he concurred that the costs would be less than staff anticipated.

Mr. Caropelo noted that the administrative regulation requires that when a charter school applicant submits a revised proposal the Board must either approve or deny the resubmitted proposal within 20 days.

Board Chair Gordon asked for comments from the Directors.

Director Boehme said that he had no objection to offering another option to children in the district, but his concerns were about the financials of the school and the location. He said that he examined all of the documents and spoke to people who have been in charter schools. He said that none of the schools exist without outside grants. He said that he was concerned about the financial viability.

Director Utt said that he had the same financial concerns. He said that he also had a problem with the location at the Fir Grove building.

Director Bricker said that before the Board got to a vote on the actual charter, he said that the Board should address the request to lease Fir Grove School. He requested that the Board deal with that as a separate issue before considering the charter itself. He moved that the district not lease Fir Grove School to the charter school.

He said that his concern was that if the charter school had not found a new location when the district wished to reopen Fir Grove School in one or possibly two years, the district would essentially have to

shut down the charter school. He said that he did not want to start a new school and then for a lack of location have to close the charter school.

Board Chair Gordon noted that as the district moved to State mandated all-day kindergarten in the future, Greater Albany classroom space would be priceless. Director Smith agreed, noting previous statements by the Board of their intention to reopen Fir Grove when the district became financially stable and necessitated by attendance.

Board Chair Gordon said that she would like to see a charter school but she was concerned about the leadership position at charter school and wondered how the school could attract a quality principal for just \$12,000 a year. She recalled that when the district opened Timber Ridge School. She said that the scope of work to begin a new school was phenomenal.

She said that she was also concerned about continuity in teachers. She doubted the ability of the charter school to retain quality teachers at the proposed salaries. She said that a key element of a school is the staff. She said that she would love to have a charter school with just 20 children in a class, but she did not want to take away from the other 9,000 students in the district.

Director Smith said that he had the same financial concerns that were previously discussed by other members of the Board. He said that he was hesitant to fund the charter school by taking money away from the other 9,000 students in the district. He said that he hoped that there would still be collaboration between the district and supporters of the charter school to meet the needs of all of the all 9,000 students equally.

Director Bricker said that he appreciated the large amount of time staff put into evaluating the proposal. He said that staff members were the educational professionals. He said that he was not an educator so he valued the advice of the staff.

Superintendent Delapoer acknowledged that there was a tremendous amount of staff time devoted to the analysis, discussion and communication in trying to get clarity about the vision for the charter school and to determine whether that fit within the mission of the public school district. She said that some good issues were raised. She said that the district should investigate and perhaps consider some alternative programs to meet the needs of younger students. She said that she suspected that the district was missing the mark in providing for some of its students who may need a different kind of schooling. She said that staff has begun considering what that education should look like. She said that she wished to recapture some of the enthusiasm and support from the parents who were not satisfied with what the district could currently provide.

Director Bricker repeated his motion to not lease Fir Grove School to the charter school. Motion APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Director Smith moved to deny the revised application submitted by the Albany Community Charter School. Motion APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

SCHOOL FUNDING RESOLUTION

Superintendent Maria Delapoer recalled that at the previous meeting she discussed information provided by the Oregon School Boards Association in requesting the district's participation in the "Strong Schools, Strong State" campaign. She requested the Board's approval of a proposed resolution urging state policy makers to prioritize education among state investments by supporting adequate and stable funding to ensure a full academic school year for every child in Oregon.

Action: Director Smith moved to approve the resolution as presented supporting the district's participation in the *Strong Schools, Strong State* campaign. Motion APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY. (A copy of the signed resolution was forwarded to Governor Kitzhaber and local legislators Senator Betsy Close and Representative Andy Olson on April 11, 2013.)

Board Chair Gordon requested that each school be provided with a copy of the school funding poster. (Copies were provided to each of the schools.) She also asked that the information be posted on the individual school websites. Director Utt suggested that the district use the Greater Albany specific poster.

NEW BUSINESS ***PERS RESOLUTION***

Business and Operations Director Russ Allen said that the directors had two resolutions at their places. He said that PERS reform was a subject of discussion in Salem. He said that there were two bills that were getting the most attention. He said that one proposal was Senate Bill 754 which was sponsored by the Oregon School Boards Association. He explained that the document encompassed all of the ideas believed to generate savings that would also pass judicial scrutiny. He said that a second proposal, earlier discussed by Director Utt, would generate less savings. He said that the Oregon School Boards Association asked school boards to consider passing a resolution in support of Senate Bill 754 or whatever school boards felt comfortable in passing in the form of a resolution.

Mr. Allen said that the Board could consider either of two proposals. He said that the first would recommend that the Legislature enact the provisions of Senate Bill 754. He said that the second resolution would support PERS reform but would be less specific and simply state that there was a need for sustainable cost savings.

Director Utt said that he understood that Senate Bill 754 was "dead in the water." Mr. Allen said that Senate Bill 754 would not be enacted in its present form, but whether some elements of the bill could find their way into other PERS related bills was still certainly possible. He explained that no one really expected Senate Bill 754 to be enacted as it was. Rather, it was a vehicle to create dialogue about serious PERS reform. He estimated that a Board resolution supporting Senate Bill 754 would essentially support all of the aspects of Senate Bill 754.

Board Chair Gordon asked why the Board should support the resolution. Mr. Allen explained that in legislative vernacular, "dead" had a number of meanings. He said that the bill had a public hearing in committee in the Senate, but there was no belief that the committee chairman would ask the committee for a vote. He said that it was difficult to know when a bill was dead because at any time, someone could change their mind. He clarified that staff provided the Board with two options.

Director Smith said that everyone agreed that the PERS program needed to be reformed. He said that he was in favor of the second resolution option regarding PERS reform.

Director Boehme said that he was in favor of adequate funding for the schools but he thought that it should not be the role of the Board to tell the Legislature how that allocation should happen. He said that doing what was best for district employees was the most important objective. He said that he was not in favor of vote on the resolution.

Director Bricker said that he has voted against most resolutions that come before the Board. He estimated that resolutions such as this were meaningless and ineffective.

Director Utt agreed with Director Bricker. He said that Legislators were already aware of the need to fix the PERS program.

Director Boehme moved to table the resolution.

Board Chair Gordon said that legislators know that the PERS system has to be fixed. She said that the PERS Board understood that as well. She said that in her line of work she observed several meetings which considered advisories from the top banks in the state to help the PERS Board make financial decisions on short term and long term investments. She said that the situation was much broader than the Legislature. She said that the PERS reform would include a revision as to how investments were made, what the PERS Board was investing in, and a review as to where bad decisions were made. She said that PERS was seeking out financial strategy guidance from well-run banks. She said that PERS reform was being looked at, by many people, at the 30,000 foot level.

Board members agreed to table the resolution.

BOARD POLICY, ADMINISTRATION

Superintendent Maria Delapoer recommended revisions to Board Policy *CBA, Qualifications and Duties of the Superintendent* to align the document with current Teacher Standards and Practices Commission licensing language. She said that the revisions more accurately reflected the duty of the School Board to approve appointments, renewals, contract extensions, contract non-renewals, contract non- extensions, or dismissals of licensed staff.

There was no Board discussion. Board Chair Gordon forwarded the topic to the Consent Agenda of the next meeting.

REPORTS

DISTRICT FACILITY NEEDS

Business and Operations Director Russ Allen said that the information included in the Board packet identified unfunded capital projects at ten of the district's schools. He introduced physical plant supervisor Doug Pigman. Mr. Pigman displayed a number of failed or worn-out parts to illustrate maintenance and repair work being done throughout the district.

Mr. Pigman spoke of the most pressing unfunded capital project priorities. He began with a discussion of the communication systems at Calapooia and North Albany Middle Schools. He said

that the current Meridian and Telcore systems were between 13 and 22 years old and in need of replacement.

He said that the district received a \$5,000 grant from the Energy Trust of Oregon to study the energy efficiency of district heating and ventilation systems. He said that he wished to replace inefficient boilers with high efficient systems at North Albany Middle School. He estimated that the boiler replacement could save \$5,000 annually.

Mr. Pigman said that he wished to replace asphalt at North Albany Elementary School. He said that the bus loop had pot holes and significant roots from nearby fir trees. He said that he also wanted to replace sections of the student parking lot at South Albany High School.

He said that he wished to replace some of the exterior doors at Liberty Elementary School. He said that the existing wood doors continue to swell and crack and are beyond further repair. He said that it would be necessary to replace the entire end unit at both ends of the building. He said that he also wished to replace the siding and handicap ramp at the modular classrooms.

Mr. Pigman spoke of the computer space at Oak Grove Elementary. He said that the space was never designed as a computer lab. He said that the lab was not large enough to allow for testing and the space did not have proper ventilation or cooling.

He spoke of the roofing at the West Albany High School stadium. He said that the membrane roof needed a coating installed over it. He said that if the surface was not dealt with soon, it would later need to be completely removed and replaced at a much higher cost.

Mr. Pigman said that those projects would be the highest priority. He estimated their cost at \$451,000.

He described other maintenance needs such as the communication system at Clover Ridge Elementary, Tangent Elementary and South Albany High Schools, a boiler and controls replacement at North Albany Elementary, and restroom renovations at South Albany and West Albany High Schools. He also wished to drill field irrigation wells at South Albany and West Albany High Schools.

Mr. Pigman said that those projects were the most pressing of the immediate needs. He said that if the Board were to approve all of the projects in the immediate needs category, the cost would be approximately \$5,531,000. He said that the expense of all of the maintenance needs would exceed \$36,000,000.

Board Chair Gordon estimated that some of the projects would be further identified during the physical assessments by the School Safety Task Force.

Director Smith agreed and stated that the physical assessment team noted communication systems shortfalls in many of the schools. Mr. Pigman further described the communication system challenges at some of the campuses.

Director Smith spoke of Oak Grove School and noted that staff was considering adding modular classrooms to the site. He suggested that the district consider making one of the modular classrooms into a computer lab. Mr. Allen said that relocating the computer lab could be part of the discussion at the parent forum at Oak Grove School on April 9, 2013.

Director Boehme said that he would put first priority on safety repairs and communication materials and second priority on things that would have an energy payback. Mr. Pigman spoke of typical lead times for developing contracts and ordering materials.

Board Chair Gordon said that she wished to further discuss facility needs at the next Pre-Planning meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS

Board Chair Gordon reviewed the Dates of Interest at the conclusion of the Agenda. She said that Board members were invited to participate in an April 9 discussion with Oak Grove parents to consider options for reducing over-crowding at the school. She said that the next meeting of the School Board would be April 22, 2013. She said that the next meeting of the Budget Committee would be May 1.

She said that the Directors would need to identify who would speak at each of the three high school graduation ceremonies in June.

ADJOURNMENT

Board Chair Gordon adjourned the Board meeting at 9:27 p.m.

Sandi Gordon, Board Chair

Maria Delapoer, Superintendent

(Recorded by Jim Haggart)

Business and Report Items - Document Reference (filed with original minutes)

Student Report
Mackenna Grove and Molly Hendricks
North Albany Middle School
April 8, 2013

NAMS has many activities and fund-raisers throughout the year. Most of the fund-raisers are organized by the Leadership class. Right before Spring Break, our school had a fund-raiser for leukemia and lymphoma victims called "Pennies for Patients." Students were given small boxes to take home and fill with coins and donated cash. Our school is very involved in this project and raises a lot of money each year. This year we raised about \$400.

Just that same week, the school had a Fair Week. Monday was "Green Day." All of the students wore green for St. Patrick's Day. Tuesday was "Twin Day," Wednesday was "Oversized Clothes Day," Thursday was "Pajama Day" and Friday was "Team Color Day." All of the students wore the color of their favorite team for the students vs. staff basketball game.

Starting in the next nine week, Language Arts teacher Ms. Spires will be teaching a creative writing and art flex class. This class will teach students writing, art and design publication. Ms. Spires will be teaching writing and showing students how to present their writing professionally to the public.

PE teacher Mrs. Bottaro and science teacher Mrs. Kelly started a new club at NAMS called Toms Club. The club focuses on raising money for the victims of Hurricane Sandy. The school is going to have a "No Shoes Day" on April 16 to show students what it is like for children in other countries to go to school without shoes.

Last week, NAMS had the annual Tiger Talent show. There were awards for the best performances by judge's vote and audience vote.

The last event of the year is the NAMS track team. Joining the track team is a fun way to make a friend while also enjoying a true school sport. Any student can join and compete in the events they choose. The track team will be coached by PE teacher Mr. Silbernagel, Mrs. Spires and Social Studies teacher Mr. Maness.

There are many activities planned for this year. Spring is very busy with forecasting for next year as well. Students are looking forward to school starting next fall.

We would like to thank the School Board for allowing us to come and represent NAMS at the meeting tonight. Thank you and have a good week.

Dear Greater Albany Public School Board and District Leadership Team:

Upon picking up the agenda packet for the April 8th meeting, we were saddened to read of your recommendation to deny the charter school application again. Albany Community Charter School believes that if we would have been granted a meeting as we so often requested, that many of the issues you brought up in your recommendation could have easily been remedied. ACCS would also like to state that we are willing to change things and negotiate with the school board, upon approval. The process for approval of a charter school in Oregon calls for an initial approval, and then negotiations to fix the areas with which the sponsor is uncomfortable. It is impossible to have a proposal that is free of disagreements and issues. ACCS has found it difficult to know what details Greater Albany Public Schools (GAPS) will have a problem with when our repeated requests for information and answers have been ignored. We do have responses to issues listed in your recommendation to the school board.

ACCS has looked at other locations and considered them. We felt that it was in everyone's best interest to use an existing school building so that we would have more funds available with which to pay faculty and staff. It does not mean that we have not considered other options, but that we thought Fir Grove was the best option, and would provide an extra benefit to GAPS. ACCS would like to see our money go back the district rather than a private developer.

On page two in paragraph two, and repeatedly throughout the staff recommendation, it mentions that there is no budgeted amount for a site director or a behavioral specialist. **This is completely untrue.** All budgets provide for a site director (listed under 2410-113) as well as a problem-solving staff (listed under 2520-112). The office manager information is listed as it is a part of the proposed budgets for state sponsorship. ACCS will hire an office manager when financially feasible with district sponsorship. In the meantime these duties will be handled by the site director with cooperation from volunteers.

The staff recommendation claims that there is no carryover from year to year in the budget. This is also untrue. Every year after operation there is a balance carried forward. The carryover to the 2014-2015 school year is approximately \$53,000 while the carryover to the next school year exceeds \$100,000. These amounts are listed under # 5400 Beginning Fund Balance.

GAPS cites that the start dates of teachers and staff are not compatible with the lease of the building. In the "Intent to Lease Letter," the occupancy date is listed as July 1, with the first lease payment due in September. Therefore, the start dates are perfectly reasonable. The recommendation letter also cites that there is not enough time for teachers to cooperate and share information. ACCS is aware of your deep affection for Professional Learning Communities (PLC's) and the money and time that they take. Our concentration was on time with students throughout the school year without cut days, early release days, and unnecessary days away from school. Teachers cooperated and communicated long before the invention of PLC's.

Financial policies were designated as draft policies and should be treated as such. While ACCS had carefully selected these policies, they are still under revision and have not been officially approved. All financial policies should be considered as works in progress which will be finalized and approved prior to the opening of ACCS. The policies were given to ACCS from an existing charter school, and were used in

the format in which we received them. They will be revised to better fit ACCS' management system. We would be happy to have your long standing expertise in this area.

In the staff recommendation GAPS staff cite that our curricular alignments are not sufficient. Saxon Math and Core Knowledge are respected curricula with a lot to offer our students. Just because they are different from what GAPS uses does not mean that they are not aligned to the state and national standards. Staff members from Core Knowledge were involved in the development of the national common core standards. Schools using these programs have repeatedly outperformed other schools in their districts using these exact curricula in Oregon. This information is available in the proposal within the curriculum section. Schools using these curricula repeatedly achieve results of as much as 20% higher than other schools in their district not using the curricula. All teachers spend time making sure what they present in class aligns to the common core state standards, and our teachers will be no different. ACCS believes in putting the decision-making power into the hands of the teachers who will be teaching the students, and not to force those teachers into teaching the same across the board. Every teacher is different, just as every student is different.

While our costs for technology support may not be listed in the appropriate class according to what GAPS uses, we ask you to understand that this system of budgeting is new to us. ACCS is happy to follow all budgeting practices prescribed by GAPS. Our technology budget is listed under Depreciable Technology, and the monthly service costs are included under Communications Services (2540-350). Our quotes for internet service are much lower than what is mentioned in the staff recommendation, and are at a higher speed than the staff recommendation. We would be happy to get a copy of the quote for your reference. Our technology budget was drastically increased from the original proposal to address GAPS concerns regarding technology. ACCS again reminds GAPS that lack of technology is not an acceptable reason for denial.

One complaint has to do with consistency in wording about the job of a principal/site director. ACCS chose to adopt policies from GAPS on detention and expulsion that contained wording pertaining to a principal. Since ACCS proposed using these policies, we felt that it was only appropriate to leave them in their original form. Yet you Cite issues with the policy itself, which seems inconsistent.

Lack of community support is cited as a reason for a recommendation of denial. Two hundred and forty five students signed up and ready to enroll does not constitute a lack of support. ACCS is unaware of any GAPS school with two hundred forty five currently un-enrolled students ready to enroll. We have had GAPS staff support our efforts through private phone calls and emails. They are afraid to speak out publicly for fear of losing their jobs. One of our directors- Ellen Carlson- was a long time employee of GAPS before retiring last June. Her opinions and support of our efforts should be considered. The staff recommendation letter cites the lack of business support received for ACCS. There was no effort made by ACCS to go out and gather business support in the community. ACCS did not want to take away from the business support of GAPS by trying to convince businesses to support us. We wanted your endorsement before we went to businesses for support. Our support comes from the parents who want an alternative option. Yet you discount that support as not good enough, which says a lot about how you feel about the parents of GAPS students.

GAPS continues to provide high-cost alternative options for middle through high school students including Albany Options, college credit classes, transitional programs for incoming students, the

technical education program, and soon the extended year program. These programs are not always a big success and the district continues to fund these programs. It seems unfair that students who are almost adults and have been given the resources of the district for so many years are given the smaller class sizes and increased attention that students at Albany Options get. Albany Options four year graduation rate is listed as 17% while the five year rate is listed at 17.4% for the most recent school year. Kids need to have this attention when they are younger so as not to become students who are falling so far behind and needing an alternative placement when they are older. While we do not want you to end these programs, we as a group would like you to consider an alternative for younger students.

Albany Community Charter School has been held to standards that are unclear and have not been shared with ACCS. We would ask that GAPS holds itself to these same standards. A collection of worksheets are used in the elementary grades to meet state standards. Many parents find this unacceptable. Students bring home worksheets and parents are unclear on how to help their child because there is nothing to refer back to. Students in the GAPS system are taught so little about history, science, and art in the elementary school years. The majority of GAPS classroom teachers are forced to teach to the middle of the class, excluding the gifted as well as the struggling. The parents of your students want answers for these questions, and they want a different option. You are refusing to give that option to these students and their parents.

We urge you to consider that just because something is new and not exactly as you would do it, does not mean that it is not a viable option. Just because our classrooms will have fewer students does not mean that it is not possible to operate this way. Will sacrifices be necessary? Of course. But we along with the parents of our future students are willing to make those sacrifices. Charter schools are by their nature unconventional. Our desire in this process has always been to work together to help develop an alternative in Albany. It is unfortunate that GAPS has chosen to not work with the charter school group. You will continue to lose students from the district because of the lack of an option for Kindergarten through eighth grades. Many of our supporters are currently looking at transferring their children out of the GAPS district to better meet their children's needs.

Regards,

Jennifer Cummins

Ellen Carlson

Ed Gallagher

John Borden

AN DIFFICULT
WORKSHEET
FOR THE
PARENTS