

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



REGULAR BOARD MEETING
February 23, 2015 7:00 p.m.

Minutes

Maria Delapoer, Superintendent

CALL TO ORDER

Board Chair Boehme called the regular meeting of the School Board to order at 7:00 p.m.

Jerry Boehme	Board Chair
Micah Smith	Board Vice Chair
Frank Bricker	Director
Sandi Gordon	Director
Lyle Utt	Director
Stephanie Dilbone	Student Board Member
Maria Delapoer	Superintendent
Tonja Everest	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

Board Chair Boehme led participants in the Pledge of Allegiance.

CORE PURPOSE/GOALS

Student School Board Member Stephanie Dilbone 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

SODEXO PRESENTATION

Food Service General Manager Kathy Pitzer presented a check on behalf of the Sodexo Corporation to Albany Public Schools Foundation president Cindy Draper for \$2,500. Ms. Pitzer said that the money was to go to the Foundation's iRun fund raising event.

Ms. Draper thanked Sodexo for their generosity.

Ms. Delapoer said that the Foundation's iRun event would be March 14 and the iSwim event would be February 28.

STUDENT ALL - STARS

Chanel Garcia Morales, Emily Rowe and Meighan Vanveldhuizen of Calapooia Middle School and Megan Carroll, Gracie Chagnon, and C.J. Womack of Memorial Middle School were recognized for their success in school and the community. Brooks Bontrager and Amanda Givens of North Albany Middle School and Steven Birtwell, Kylend Hart and Avery Martin of Timber Ridge School were also honored.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Brianna Trower said that she is a fifth grade teacher at Takena Elementary School. Charlene Ulrich said that she is also a fifth grade teacher at Takena School. They spoke together and said that later in the meeting the Board would discuss a proposal to blend Central and Takena Elementary schools. They said that as teachers, their focus was on their students' academic and social growth. They said that with the added rigor that came with the new Common Core State standards, more was being asked of their students. She said that also meant that the teachers were going to great lengths to develop lesson plans that meet the high expectations that Common Core demanded.

They said that with those demands, larger schools were at an advantage because they have more opportunities to collaborate with their-grade level colleagues to unpack standards, develop common assessments to drive instruction and create differentiated academic groups based upon student need.

They said that having two fifth grade teachers this year at Takena allowed them to construct focus groups, giving students the opportunity to learn in small groups with direct instruction from a certified teacher.

Ms. Ulrich said that merging the two schools together would provide each grade level with multiple teachers. That arrangement would allow administrators and teachers to even out populations and strategically place student based upon academic, behavioral and social needs. She said that students could be placed in an environment that would foster their learning and match their learning styles. It would provide students with opportunity to work and learn with a larger group of peers, which would better prepare them for the social demands of middle school.

Ms. Trower said that if a merger would take place, it would provide a wonderful opportunity to combine two great communities.

Renee Smith, executive director of the Family Tree Relief Nursery was given the opportunity to speak. She said that she preferred to wait for the discussion of the kindergarten plan later in the agenda.

Sarah Mack of 828 Lawnridge Street SW in Albany said that she has a second grader at Tadena Elementary School. She said that she and other parents had invested a great deal of time and energy in creating a positive learning environment at Tadena School and she had serious concerns that the proposal would undermine those efforts. She said that she was at the meeting that evening to hear the data behind the proposal so that she could better understand it. She said that she would share her thoughts during the time set aside on Wednesday, February 25 parents forum. She noted that the letter sent home to families indicated that "A quorum of school board members may be present." She said that she hoped that all of the Board members would be present at the February 25 parents meeting as it was an incredibly important issue. She also asked that teachers be provided an opportunity to share their thoughts about the proposal at that session.

Heather Slocum of 1115 Tadena Street in Albany said that she would make her comments as respectfully as possible. She spoke of the proposal to reconfigure Central and Tadena Schools. She said that she learned of the proposal from a Tadena parent on February 12. She said that on February 19, her student brought home a letter from the school which informed parents of a public meeting for parents to be held on February 25. She noted that the stated purpose of the meeting was to gather information. She said that it was not a decision to be made lightly. She said that the choice will impact thousands of people both now and the future. Ms. Slocum highlighted the district goal, "Our students thrive because every community member is a stakeholder and takes responsibility for the success of every student."

Board Chair Boehme thanked the community members for their comments.

CONSENT AGENDA

- 1) Minutes from February 4, 2015 Special Board Meeting
- 2) Minutes from February 9, 2015 Regular Board Meeting
- 3) Personnel (with Addendum)
- 4) Bus Replacement
- 5) Board Policies *IGBHE, LGA*
- 6) Board Policies *AC, ACA, GBA, GBN/JBA, JB, JFCF*

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

BOARD REPORTS

LEGISLATIVE LIAISON REPORT

Superintendent Maria Delapoe said that the Legislature was in session. She said that the economic forecast indicated the possibility of the "Kicker" which would return money to the tax payers and reduce the amount of money the State would have for all the programs it supported. She said that she would have meeting on March 6 with State Representative Andy Olson to discuss school funding levels. She said that the Co-Chair's budget in its present form would

provide less money than the schools are now receiving. She said that reduce funding level would cause the district to dip into reserves or reduce programs.

She said that there were education bills on the horizon. She said that Senate Bill 322 would address the fifth-year advanced diploma programs.

Board Chair Boehme asked of the language of the bill. Ms. Delapoer said that was similar to the version she saw in December. She said that the proposal would reduce the amount of state school funds per student, but she said that she believed that the amount would be adequate to fund the district's program. She said that she would be meeting the following week with Linn Benton Community College and surrounding districts to discuss the language of the bill.

WORKING GROUP REPORTS

Board Chair Boehme said that the superintendent search was progressing rapidly. He said that he hoped to be able to name a superintendent by the first part of March.

BOARD MEMBER REPORTS

Director Gordon stated that South Albany High school principal Brent Belveal was inducted into the Oregon Athletic Hall of Fame for wrestling.

STUDENT REPORT

South Albany High School Student Board Member Stephanie Dilbone said that winter sports were wrapping up. She spoke of boys and girls swimming and said that three relay teams and five individual would go to state. She said that the district wrestling championships were the previous weekend and seven boys qualified for state. She said that the cheer team took second in state. She said that meetings for spring sports began that day.

REPORTS

FOOD SERVICE UPDATE

Business and Operations Director Russ Allen introduced Food Service General Manager Kathy Pitzer and stated that she would discuss her department's financial performance.

Ms. Pitzer said that in November the department underwent a very intensive Oregon Department of Education audit of the National School Lunch Program. She said that Food Service Manager Breanna Welch was instrumental in the successful completion of the audit.

She said that each year Sodexo pays for a NSF audit which is a health and safety audit that is more comprehensive than that performed by the county. She said that the department scored "Double Golds" on that assessment. She said that the audit examined Central Elementary, Calapooia Middle, Timber Ridge and Lafayette Elementary Schools.

She said that the department continued to be challenged by the menu requirements of the federal Healthy, Hunger Free Kids Act, particularly regarding the whole grain requirements. She explained that whole grain pastas are less appealing and did not hold up as well as the non-whole grain products.

Ms. Pitzer said that the department would host a dietetic intern in March whose assignment would be to gather data so the district might be able to apply for exemption from serving whole grain foods. She explained that it was an effort to recapture lost lunch counts by having more flexibility with menus and food offerings.

She said that the department would be offering a free breakfast for all grades on March 2-6 to celebrate and recognize the National School Breakfast Program and its benefits.

Ms. Pitzer said that the department lagged behind forecasts in lunch meals but was ahead of target in breakfasts. She said that the department was on track with labor, food and supply budgets.

ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS

Business and Operations Director Russ Allen said that he would discuss enrollment projections for the 2015-16 school year. He said that the packets contained two documents. He said that the first contained projected enrollment for the 2015-16 school year by school and by grade level. He said that the second document reported actual enrollment for the previous seven years and projected enrollment for the next ten years by grade level. He said that the projections indicate a slight downward slope. He noted that the transition to full-day kindergarten would put pressure on the schools.

Director Gordon asked about enrollment at Albany Options School. Mr. Allen said that enrollment at that campus was more difficult to project because of the various programs offered at the campus. He explained that the district did not base staffing at the school by enrollment.

Mr. Allen noted that the enrollment projections reflected retention at each grade level but did not reflect potential growth in the community. He said that growth in the community would increase those numbers.

CENTRAL AND TAKENA SCHOOL GRADE CHANGES

Assistant Superintendent Tonja Everest described a proposal to configure Tadena Elementary School as a grades K-2 campus and Central Elementary School as a grades 3-5 campus. She said that the campuses would be sister schools, similar to the structure in years past with Fir Grove and Oak Grove Elementary Schools and Fairmount and North Albany Elementary Schools.

She said that the idea to reconfigure Central and Tadena schools was not new. She recalled having conversations seven years ago as to what should be offered to students so that all would have similar educational experiences. She noted that larger schools can better adjust staffing to offer things like PE, music and counseling. She said that conversations about the schools come up every year. She said that several years ago there was discussion about making Tadena School a STEM Magnet school as a way of making Tadena a viable site for students and programs. She said that the idea was worked behind the scenes but staff determined that the timing was not right and it was not a viable option to take forward to the community.

Ms. Everest said that this year, a sub-committee discussed plans for full-day kindergarten and out of that work came the vision for what the district really wanted for our students and what the district should be offering at our schools. She said that participants acknowledged that staffing at

small schools was difficult. She said that the schools need at least one teacher at every grade level and sometimes, the number of children at the smaller schools does not bring in the FTE ratio needed for an actual teacher. She said that the Board had committed to not having blended classes and had provided extra staffing.

She said that such discussion come up every year but this is the first time the Central/Takena restructuring has been brought before the School Board and for public comment. She said that she believed that this was a viable time for having a sister school model.

Ms. Everest said that there were two key issues. She said that she visits all of the schools and observes teachers in the classrooms. She said that she noted that teacher collaboration was becoming more and more necessary. She explained that teaching is becoming ever more complex and the demands upon teachers were growing exponentially. She said that she appreciated the weekly Professional Learning Community time, but she said that teachers were also working together daily. She said that they were regularly sharing assignments, talking about how they are doing, and fluidly moving students to get them the instruction they need. She said that it was quite dynamic. She said that students would get a better education if the district could provide a model in which there was more than one teacher in the same grade level working collaboratively together.

She said that as a former teacher, counselor and building principal, she knows that student placement takes a lot of thought. She said that when there is more than one classroom per grade, one can adjust for student personalities, place students according to their academic needs and match students and teachers. She said that student placement was another viable reason for the proposed restructuring of Central and Takena Elementary Schools.

Ms. Everest said that there was work behind the scenes, both at the administrator level and with teachers. She said that the issue was before the Board that evening as a public forum to gather input.

Superintendent Delapoer said that the goal and responsibility of educators was to provide the very best education possible for the students. She said that staff would not have brought the proposal forward if it did not believe it was the best education model. She acknowledged that there was a downside every time one made a change as it could be disruptive to students, staff and their families. She said that it was difficult when parents had a certain expectation and the district made changes. She said that at some point the proposal had to be presented to the public. She said that it appeared that the idea was being sprung on the families when instead, staff spent considerable time even deciding if this was something it wanted to do. She said that she wanted to create an excellent model for instruction and she believed that by having multiple teachers of the same grade, who could work together and share best practices, that was a better model than what the schools already had.

She said that small schools were expensive to run. She said that to keep small schools viable, the district needed to provide the best model possible. She emphasized that there was no interest in closing either school. She said that this model would make both better schools and greater assets to the district.

Director Gordon said that her daughter attended two schools, Clover Ridge and Timber Ridge Schools. She said that principals and teachers helped her daughter make the transition between the two campuses. She said that she initially worried about her daughter moving between the two schools but she learned that children are more resilient than we give them credit for.

Director Utt asked about children who walk to school and those who would potentially have to cross Elm Street. He also asked how the district would accommodate handicapped students at Central School. He said that it was his understanding that when teachers were afforded the opportunity to work with each other, great things would come from that interaction. He said that his third child attends Tadena School and his wife attended Tadena School herself.

Director Smith said that the Board packet did not address financial impact. He asked of fifth grade enrollment at Tadena School. Teachers Brianna Trower and Charlene Ulrich said that they have 18 and 19 students each in their classes. Tadena principal Lisa Shogren said that the other grades at the school have just one teacher per grade.

Director Smith said that his daughter attends Clover Ridge School which has multiple sections of each grade. He said that if she needed interventions that would be available. He said that his goal as a Board Member was to put into place systems that allow for interventions for students who need it. He said that if Tadena and Central Schools were reconfigured, a student could receive intervention without having to leave the building.

Director Bricker said that Fir Grove School was once the sister school of Oak Grove School and it worked extremely well. He said that both schools acted as one. He said that a similar structure could work for Central and Tadena Schools.

Board Chair Boehme said that this was the first time the Board saw this proposal and he emphasized that the Board valued public input. He said that this was not a “done deal.” He said that the Board would do what it believed what was best for kids. He said that the discussion would continue during a public session a 7:00 p.m. on February 25 at the district office.

Superintendent Delapoer said that staff would continue to investigate the questions as best as possible and would continue to gather information.

ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATION, TRANSFERS

Superintendent Maria Delapoer said that she would discuss proposed revisions to Administrative Regulation *JECC-AR(2) In-District Transfer Information Summary*. She said that the document did not require a Board vote but it was more of an explanation of the implementation of a Board Policy.

She recalled that in recent years, the policy for granting out-of-district transfers had changed drastically. She said that districts now have to decide how many transfer slots they might have for out of district students. She emphasized that by law, districts cannot ask any information about the incoming students.

Ms. Delapoer said that in the past, in-district transfers were site-based decisions, determined by the principals after they looked at their enrollment. She said that principals used their own criteria and she did not previously question the principals in their decisions. She said, however, that inconsistency between principals might open the district to claims of discrimination. She said that she would therefore move the decision making to the district level so that the criteria could be used consistently across the district.

She said that the district has previously given transfer priority to students with a sibling currently enrolled at the requested school. She said that new paragraph 5, in the administrative regulation, would give transfer priority to students with a sibling previously at the requested school if the transfer request was submitted prior to the March 1 lottery.

Ms. Delapoer noted that the second paragraph of the second page would move approval authority from the building principal to the Assistant Superintendent or designee. She said that principals would have the opportunity to discuss transfer requests with the assistant superintendent.

She noted that all employees work very hard to help students be successful but occasionally there will be a reason to revoke a transfer. Those revocations would occur at semester break, she said, and final approval would reside at the district office level. She noted that there were very few transfer revocations.

Board Chair Boehme asked about families having a sibling at the school. He said that he supported approving transfers for students with a current sibling at the school but he asked if it was appropriate for a sibling previously enrolled. Ms. Delapoer said that some families have a tradition of attending a particular school and feel comfortable there. She said that the district wanted families to attend the school they preferred. She said that generally, if there is room available, transfers are approved.

Board Chair Boehme asked if the priority factors were in logical priority. Ms. Delapoer said that she would review the question. Director Gordon suggested that could be a Board Update article.

DISTRICT ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN

None.

OLD BUSINESS

KINDERGARTEN PLAN

Assistant Superintendent Tonja Everest said that she would summarize preparations toward offering full-day kindergarten for the 2015-16 school year. She said that there were no new options. She said that the options still under consideration were identified in the Superintendent's memo of February 18.

Ms. Everest said that she wished to focus on the preparations for full-day kindergarten for all schools. She said that a contingent of kindergarten teachers was working earnestly on the professional development and they attended a full-day conference in Eugene. She said that the professional development would be provided to all kindergarten teachers upon their return from Spring Break.

She said that retired principal Jay Thompson was helping the district ensure that all details were considered including the Community After School Program, technology, movement of furniture, and the purchase of materials. She said that discussion of the building plan would also include locations for early intervention, developmental kindergarten, LBCC Pre-school and Pre-Kindergarten programs.

Board Chair Boehme asked of the number of districts currently offering full-day kindergarten. Mr. Allen said that there were very few.

Director Smith said that some districts were offering full-day kindergarten to only a portion of their students and others relied upon partial parent funding. Ms. Delapoer said that some districts were using Title I funding.

Director Gordon asked Director Bricker if he had received input from his neighbors wanting to open Fir Grove School. Director replied that he had. He said that one parent offered to help get the building ready.

Ms. Delapoer said that Board Members, principals and association leaders had toured Fir Grove School. She said that DLR group, which was working with the District Facilities Advisory Committee, had also visited the building and North Albany Elementary.

She spoke of short and long term options. She said that the district needed a short term solution because the full-day kindergarten students would be coming in September. She said that long term solutions were also needed as the district continued to look at resources. She emphasized that small schools were less efficient fiscally than larger buildings. She said that at some point the district would have to look at consolidating schools, adding space to existing schools or building new schools. She said that the District Facilities Advisory Committee would examine those possibilities.

She said that her recommendation was to go with Option C which would re-open Fir Grove School as a K-1 feeder campus for Oak Grove School and site a modular classroom at North Albany Elementary School. She said that the option would permit Family Tree Relief Nursery to remain stay at the Fairmount building and the option would not disrupt the Special Education Department. She noted that several years ago, when the district closed Fir Grove School, it was the Fir Grove and Oak Grove staff, parents and students who made the biggest sacrifice. She said that if the district were to reopen a school, its first obligation would be to the Fir Grove and Oak Grove parents.

Ms. Delapoer acknowledged that there would be a cost to reopen Fir Grove School but it was a district asset that would continue to deteriorate regardless of what the Board decided what to do. She said that using some of the Construction Excise Tax money to get the school ready would certainly be appropriate. She said that reopening Fir Grove School would help the district maintain its community partners. She said that Family Tree and other Pre-K programs help get children ready for kindergarten. She said that the Community After School Program keeps children safe before and after school.

Renee Smith, executive director of the Family Tree Relief Nursery thanked the Board for their diligence in finding the best options for everyone.

Board Chair Boehme said that he was concerned about the \$300,000 expense and perhaps 24 weeks of labor at Fir Grove School. He said that the classrooms were huge but he was concerned about it being a short term solution.

Director Bricker said that he disagreed that it was a short term solution. He said that it might be eight years before the district could build another school. He said that even if a new school was constructed in the North Albany area, Fir Grove could be put to other uses such as a magnet school. He estimated that the school could be valuable even 10-15 years from now.

Director Smith said that all students need a dependable school environment. He said that population growth in that area was inevitable. He said that use of the Construction Excise Tax money would be an appropriate. He said that he was in support of Option C.

Director Gordon said that she was also in favor of Option C. She recalled that parents in North Albany gave up Fir Grove School four years ago.

Director Smith asked of the grades when Fir Grove reopened. Ms. Delapoer said that the school would have grades K-1.

Action: Director Utt moved to accept Option C as presented. Motion APPROVED BY MAJORITY. Directors Bricker, Gordon, Smith and Utt voted to approve. Board Chair Boehme opposed.

Director Smith thanked the staff for all of its work.

Ms. Renee Smith said that action would regain the trust of North Albany parents.

OPEN ENROLLMENT AND INTERDISTRICT TRANSFERS

Assistant Superintendent Tonja Everest said that House Bill 3681 created a new transfer process that does not require consent of the school district in which the student lives (“Open Enrollment”). She said that the law allows districts to continue to enter into voluntary inter-district transfer or tuition agreements. Under Open Enrollment, the district in which the student resides has no ability to deny the transfer under this law. For all purposes, students who transfer under this policy become resident students of the district in which they attend school, she said.

She said that in 2014, the Board declared that the district would have zero openings through this method of transfer. She recommended that the Board similarly declare that the district has zero openings available for the 2015-16 school year through this method of transfer. She also made recommendations regarding the number of slots available for inter-district transfers. She noted that both sets of numbers must be set by March 1.

Action: Director Smith moved to approve the recommendations as presented. Motion APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

NEW BUSINESS

CONTRACT EXTENSIONS/RENEWALS

Human Resources Director Randy Lary noted that Board members discussed administrator and certified employee contract extensions during the Executive Session prior to the February 23, 2015 Regular Board meeting. He said that at the March 9, 2015 Regular Board meeting, he would request Board approval to either extend or decline to extend the administrator and licensed employee contracts. He said that the Board's actions would become public information on that date.

OTHER BUSINESS

GRADUATION RATES

Board Chair Boehme noted that the Board packets contained a report describing the 2014 high school graduation rates.

AMAO

Board Chair Boehme also noted that the Board packet contained the Annual Measureable Achievement Objective report. He said that the document described the progress the district was making in helping English Learners gain proficiency in English and exit English Language Development programs.

ADJOURNMENT

Board Chair Boehme noted that there would be a parents meeting with Central and Takena Elementary families at 7:00 p.m. on February 25 in the district office. He said that the Foundation iSwim fundraising event would be Saturday February 25 from 8:00 - 11:00 a.m. at the community pool. He said that the next regular Board meeting would be March 9, 2015.

Ms. Everest noted that there would be a parents' presentation on the Smarter Balance Assessment on March 11 at the City Library.

Board Chair Boehme adjourned the Board meeting at 8:46 p.m.

Jerry Boehme, Board Chair

Maria Delapoer, Superintendent

(Recorded by Jim Haggart)

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