

MINUTES

1. Call to Order and Roll Check

Chair Dyson called the meeting to order and a roll check confirmed that all directors were present.

2. Land Acknowledgment

Chair Dyson read the Land Acknowledgment.

3. Adoption of Agenda *(At this time Board members are provided the opportunity to amend the Regular Session agenda.)*

Director Skuratowicz moved and Director Hatch seconded approval of the meeting agenda for November 9 as presented. The motion carried by unanimous vote of the members.

4. Consent Agenda

4.A. Approval of Minutes for the October 12, 2023, regular session and the October 26 work session.

4.B. Personnel Report for November 2023

4.C. Enrollment Report for November 1, 2023

4.D. ASD-OSEA Memorandum of Understanding to comply with SB 283 granting classified employees the right to be dismissed, demoted, or disciplined only for just cause.

4.E. ASD-OSEA Memorandum of Understanding covering the Implementation of Paid Leave Oregon

4.F. Board Policy Updates

4.F.1) **Policy AC** Nondiscrimination

4.F.2) **Policy GBA** Equal Employment Opportunity

4.F.3) **Policy IGBHA** Alternative Education Programs

4.F.4) **Policy IL** Assessment Program

4.F.5) **Policy JB** Equal Educational Opportunity

4.F.6) **Policy JFCF** Hazing, Harassment, Intimidation, Bullying, Menacing, Cyberbullying, Teen Dating Violence, or Domestic Violence – Students

There was one change made to Policy AC, changing the word “patron” to “constituent”. After a short discussion, there was general agreement to continue placing policy updates with regulatory or other required changes on the consent agenda. The understanding is that any Board member with questions or desiring deeper review can pull policies from the

consent agenda. Policies that are new or with deeper changes can be placed on the regular agenda for one or two readings, and more if necessary.

Director Ruby moved to approve the consent agenda as amended (Policy AC) and Director Skuratowicz seconded. The motion carried by unanimous vote of the members.

5. School Report - Ashland Middle School

AMS Principal Steve Retzlaff and Assistant Principal Rebecca Gyarmathy presented an update on changes at AMS that give its leadership hope that they are turning the corner on pandemic recovery. Ms. Gyarmathy shared photos and information from the students. She reported that students are showing improved social skills, including making eye contact with each other. AMS made encouraging students to have more engagement with the school and other people a priority this year. They sent an AMS team to PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports) training with Diane Berry. They talked about a Tier 1 focus for all kids, Tier 2 help for students who need intervention, and Tier 3 students who need extensive supports. The Tier 3 group tends to be small but significantly lagging the other students.

Experts describe a “Covid diamond” in which the middle bulge of Tier 2 kids is a big cohort. They created a school-wide matrix of common behavioral standards across all aspects of the school. All adults help reinforce the common expectations. They changed the cell phone policy and required students to put the phones away, OFF and IN their lockers, during the school day. They got good support from parents once everybody understood the goal. Many families were grateful for that move. This has resulted in a big decrease in problem behaviors influenced by social media.

The home room calendar includes monthly themes. Examples are community, kindness, and goal setting. They provide links to resources for classroom use to build culture and community. The AMS Dean is their student support specialist, helping build culture and community. Teams get reward points for students going above and beyond on the theme of the month. At the end of trimester 1, they will celebrate and reward the team with the most points.

They have had a big drop in referrals, especially students walking off campus as often as they did last year. It is Not happening this year, they have less cell phone misuse, and less poor behavior in rest rooms with students vaping or hiding.

Director Skuratowicz what resulted in less vaping? Teachers believe that cell phone use encouraged acting out. Kids were using the vaping in the bathroom as a social occasion and they would encourage each other to “meet in the John” and vape in groups. The administrators worked with teachers to release students one at a time, keeping a log, and making sure they are checking back in. AMS has purchased a vape detector to sense and alert staff, and identify students who are doing it. This is also helpful.

Student Representative Noah Cott raised a concern about letting only one student go out. He said at the high school, if the first student fails to return, it stops other students from going to the bathroom. He also learned of one student with a drug use reputation who is denied permission to leave the classroom to go to the bathroom at all.

Mr. Retzlaff said that at AMS, bathroom policies are team-oriented because the bathrooms are located quite close to classrooms. Students are near their class teams, and teachers can more easily monitor the traffic, so they don’t have as much wandering away.

Director Skuratowicz said that the AHS innovation group is talking about bathroom challenges at the high school, and it would be a good subject for the Board to review. She appreciated hearing from Noah that it is an issue.

Ms. Gyarmathy said that bigger enrollments in Fall sports indicate more student engagement. Students appear excited to be back in school and to have opportunities to do fun things. Students are talking to each other in the halls and making eye contact. They have greater theater enrollment this year. More than 65 students enrolled in theater and they performed *Sponge Bob* the musical this fall. About 70% of students are enrolled in sports and theater programs. Engaging in activities is a good measure of success in school. Karin Pasche, co-director of athletic activities, says they have the highest numbers ever.

Director Franko commented that it sounds like a lot of factors contributed to the successful improvement. She commended the AMS leaders in doing a nice job.

Affinity groups are also showing strength. They just added a new neurodiversity group called Eye To Eye, affiliated with a national organization. With support from Student Services they have funds for staff development and the program materials for the students. AHS students are mentors to AMS kids, and they do art-based projects together. The action is student-led. Membership in other affinity groups is also showing growth.

Principal Retzlaff presented data that AMS tracks showing student progress using Smart Ed software. At the end of the trimester, there was a big push to clean up missing assignments so students can complete their work. Chronic absenteeism was high last year, students missing 10% or more of class days. They are working hard on it this year and numbers are looking better. AMS had an outbreak of COVID at the beginning of the year which impacted early attendance numbers, but they are getting better overall. Staff are sending letters to families when students start slipping on attendance. They stress the importance of being in school and the majority of kids who get a letter have shown improved attendance following the letter. They also help inform and support families.

Director Skuratowicz said this is an excellent use of data in measuring students to make informed decisions and have the ability to track positive change. She congratulated the AMS team.

Director Dyson said she loved the cell phone policy and would like to see it tried at the high school. It shows the connection of phones to behavioral issues. She also reported they have 20 students in the new AMS choir and expressed gratitude to AMS for supporting the program.

Director Franko requested a spring report on how the new math curriculum is working. AP Gyarmathy said that would be a good time because they are still learning how to use it in classrooms.

6. Recurring Reports

6.A. AHS Student Report

Hank Stringer said they had a good month at AHS, with successful homecoming games parade, pep rally and dance. School spirit is better this year. Fall Sports are going well with successful seasons in girls water polo, boys and girls soccer, and football. Noah Cott agreed that school spirit is much better this year. AHS students presented the play *She Killed*

Monsters, a Halloween Ball at the end of October, an orchestra concert, and a “Grizzorama” day the previous week. Students played games and other activities with teachers.

6.B. OSEA Report

Steven Essig, OSEA board member, recognized our school psychologists during school psychologist appreciation week. They help classified staff provide better support to students. The OSEA Labor Management Committee worked on MOU’s about Paid Leave Oregon (PLO) and the new “Just Cause” law, both of which were on the Consent Agenda this evening. They are now working on Emergency Substituting and the new legislation about IEP engagement. Classified staff who work with students on behavior plans are now required to have a voice in their support. Emergency Substituting renewal can help enable trained and approved classified staff provide adult support to teachers in response to a shortage of Educational Assistants. He expressed thanks to custodial and maintenance staff for completing updates to the high school, including installing student murals and a front desk door bell. The AHS Robotics Team was featured in Ashland News and they appreciated their classified advisor. A successful fund-raising effort will help the Team participate in an upcoming competition.

6.C. AEA Report

AEA president Tia McLean glad to hear positive feedback from AMS. AEA was able to add extra duty stipends to support student activities at AMS. They just closed accepting employee contributions to the certified sick leave bank and are grateful that they received many donated hours to help those with serious health challenges. They heard positive feedback about the recent in-service days that were teacher-centered with some focusing on math curriculum implementation. They also did suicide awareness training. AEA has heard budget concerns from site reps and are looking forward to visits from Supt. Bogdanove and Business Director Whitman. Teachers also have concerns around regulatory changes to SPED programs and the impacts of thin staffing in some classes.

7. Board Reports

Chair Dyson reported that the Board did considerable work on the superintendent search, soliciting feedback on criteria for the district’s next leader. The next step will be a public meeting on November 14 to adopt priority search criteria, which will be posted for the public. The Board participated in OSBA governance training, along with routine meetings. Director Ruby worked on the innovation subcommittee to increase enrollment, attended special sessions, participated in a land trust meeting, and governance training, among other things. Director Hatch concurred that they had a busy month. His innovation committee on school calendars is going well, and he is impressed with the professionalism and depth of effort from the volunteers. They launched a community survey to solicit feedback on possible ideas. He attended the Willow Wind Pumpkin Festival which was sweet and did the ASF Monster Dash with his son. Director Skuratowicz said the innovation group on reimagining high school had a great discussion and is hoping to meet with the calendar group. She found the governance meeting very helpful. The trainer said that Ashland is one of the most well-informed school boards. Several board members are in Portland now for the OSBA annual conference, meeting with others from around the state and learning from each other. They also have regional meetings so they meet with other southern Oregon board members. Director Franko participated on the Ashland Schools Foundation board, went to Homecoming parade, did an OSBA southern regional meeting in Ashland and got to

meet with other southern districts. Directors Ruby and Franko also attended the OSBA Legislative Road Show Dinner held this year in Ashland.

8. Student Reports Noah Cott reported that he met with search consultant Hank Harris to talk about the superintendent search and share student input. It was nice to have the student perspective. He is interested in the idea of 4-day weeks with breaks spread through the year. He mentioned that mental health work at the high school is focused on school spirit right now. Director Ruby said he was glad that the survey is causing conversations. Director Skuratowicz encouraged students and the public to click on the link to the survey and she encourages people to respond. It has been emailed widely and it is a safe link. Director Russell added that the survey has been distributed through parent-teacher conferences on paper, weekly Smores from several schools, and individual emails to families throughout the school district. The Board is hoping for a robust response from both students and parents.

Willa Vogel said that she also enjoyed the superintendent search focus group. In the Leadership class they created a subcommittee to focus on student mental health, with resources for students around the seasonal challenges of winter and holidays.

9. Hear Public Comments (*The Ashland School District Board of Directors reserves this time for individuals to relay comments in writing to the Board regarding topics, not on the printed agenda.*)

Alex Sol, a resident of Ashland, spoke on school safety and security measures.

Gina DuQuenne, a resident of Ashland, spoke on school safety and security measures.

10. District Staff Updates

10.A. Superintendent Report

Superintendent Bogdanove said that he appreciates the passion and concerns about student safety. It is on everyone's mind. Too much open public engagement has been discouraged by law enforcement professionals in order to protect the details of our planning. We are in a continuous improvement cycle, working to make informed decisions relying on successful efforts to stop violence before it happens. The district has strong relationships with community partners including the Ashland Police Department, Jackson County Mental Health, security professionals, SOESD, and neighboring school districts. Everybody is committed to working together on enhanced security. Tonight's meeting features a focus on physical facility improvements and response programs. Overall stewardship of student safety and well being has many elements and interventions, all of which work together. These efforts can prevent escalated behaviors. We must also plan for things like natural disasters. Student engagement is critical to mental health and personal security.

10.B. Capital Bond

10.B.1) Monthly Bond Report - October 2023

HMK Program Director Mike Freeman reported that the bond teams focused on AHS in October, especially work on the structural and seismic upgrades to the Humanities Building. They are pushing to complete the work on the structural steel and the elevator structure.

10.B.2) Recommendation to Award for the Ashland High School Modernization Project Design Service Contract Amendment 4.

HMK Company recommends that the Board award Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) Amendment 4 for the Humanities Mechanical, Electrical, and Plumbing (MEP) Package to KNCC + Outlier, LLC(KNO) in the amount of \$2,450,682.00. There were some questions about the expense of the re-design, made necessary when original ideas arrived at a cost estimate significantly over budget. Mr. Mitzel pointed out that pressing pause on the high school work did benefit the district. The early estimate of \$24 million blew up to \$41 million during COVID challenges. The contractors came back to the table, did deep value engineering, and redesigned proposed systems to meet our fiscal goals. They have been great partners and he fully supported this proposal

Director Franko moved and Director Hatch seconded approval of the recommendation as presented. The motion carried by unanimous vote of the members present.

10.C. School Safety

Executive Director of Operations Steve Mitzel presented an overview of the safety and security methodology in use, Bond Administrator Rebecca Bjornson spoke to new protocols and procedures, and HMK Program Director Mike Freeman covered security enhancements achieved through bond work. Specific changes include better visibility of exterior spaces with direct sight lines from school administrative offices to entrances, increased use of cameras, better perimeter barriers, and tighter access control.

Ms. Bjornson expressed gratitude to district administration for making safety and security a priority, not just with physical improvements but also with strong support for behavioral health and threat assessments. The district team strives for a safe and secure learning environment for our staff and students.

Mr. Mitzel reported that the district plan takes a 360° approach. About \$4 million of the overall bond budget is devoted to safety and security measures. The District is continuing upgrades with general fund dollars, including technology like video cameras and more secure doors with controlled access. In Ashland we are lucky to have response times from the Ashland Police District of about 2 minutes from dispatch. One goal of our safety approach is to achieve maximum security for the 2-4 minutes it takes help to arrive. The District has begun discussions about the option of having a School Resource Officer assigned by the police department to be present full-time at the high school.

Director Hatch commented that for many parents you cannot have too much security. He appreciates that the District is looking at the bigger picture of mental health and violence prevention as part of the solution. Director Ruby asked how much we make publicly available and Mr. Mitzel said that the District does maintain a Safety Web Page. On the advice of our security consultants, we are judicious about public information so as to avoid giving bad actors a road map to our operations. Superintendent Bogdanove said that we are beginning a series of formal security audits of each building, after training several District staff to conduct them. We are doing vulnerability assessments of our buildings, noting weaknesses, strengths and vulnerabilities. We are working with others in the region. Ms. Bjornson encouraged parents to view the Parent Resources tab on the District home page for more school safety information.

10.D. Finance Report

10.D.1) Finance Report for the period ending September 30, 2023

Director of Business Services Scott Whitman presented the monthly financial report. He said that the Lead Team has begun preliminary discussions about paths to achieving the necessary reductions to our current budget and next year's to address the current and projected fund deficits.

He reported that our audit for FY2021-2022 has finally arrived. The District received a clean opinion and our new auditors can now begin to audit FY2022-2023. They are getting a late start, as we are required to submit a report to the state by December 31. They could not begin without final numbers from the prior year.

11. Unfinished Business

There was none.

12. New Business

Given that the time was 10:00 pm, Chair Dyson invited a motion to extend the meeting. Director Skuratowicz moved and Director Franko seconded an extension of 30 minutes to 10:30 pm.

12.A. Student Investment Account (SIA) Update on District Plan

Assistant Superintendent reported on the fourth quarter report on the district's SIA plan. She presented details on the focus areas:

- Mental Health Services
- Behavioral Support
- Academic Improvement
- Support for English learners and interpretation/translation services

Directors expressed some concerns about whether we have adequate counseling staff at the secondary sites. Ms. Bare noted that we hired 2 graduation coaches to support the 2 full-time counselors working at the high school and they have help from Jennifer Marsden, the College and Career Counselor.

12.B. Board Policy IGDJ Interscholastic Activities First Reading

Superintendent Bogdanove presented for a first reading a new, required policy responding to new legislation requiring school districts to confirm equity policies and standards in organizations with whom they collaborate on interscholastic activities. There were questions about exactly which groups would be included and how frequently these relationships should be reviewed and confirmed. Superintendent Bogdanove will seek clarification and bring the policy back for a second reading at the December 14 meeting.

12.C. 2024-2025 Budget Committee Recruitment

Business Services Director Whitman reported on the need to fill three vacancies on the district budget committee. Members Brian Pistole and Peter Caudle have terms that expired June 30. The committee to review the district budget for 2024 will begin meeting in the middle of April.

12.D. OSBA Annual Elections Ballot

After discussion that surfaced some questions about the Bylaws amendments, the Board

deferred final votes on them to the December meeting. There was a unanimous consensus to approve the re-election of Sara Crawford to the OSBA Legislative Policy Committee.

13. Announcements and Appointments

Chair Dyson read the announcements of upcoming meetings.

14. Adjourn

There being no further business, Chair Dyson adjourned the meeting at 10:25 pm.

Submitted by:

Jackie Schad, Board Secretary

Dated for Board Approval: December 14, 2023

Board Chair Rebecca Dyson

Superintendent Samuel Bogdanove