

VERNONIA SCHOOL DISTRICT 47J
1201 TEXAS AVENUE
VERNONIA OR 97064

BOARD OF DIRECTORS WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES

August 29, 2013

- 1.0 CALL TO ORDER:** A Workshop of the Board of Directors of Administrative School District 47J, Columbia County, Oregon was convened at 6:15 p.m. by Bill Langmaid.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Board Present: Bill Langmaid, Jim Krahn, Greg Kintz, Brett Costley, Tim Bamburg and Ernie Smith

Staff Present: Ken Cox, Superintendent; Nate Underwood, Middle/High School Principal; Aaron Miller, Elementary Schools Principal; and Barb Carr, Administrative Assistant

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Visitors Present: Scott Laird

2.0 Administrative Discussion

- A. District goals Focus for 2013-14:** Dr. Cox distributed the current district goal and goal objectives. Bill Langmaid asked for input from the Principals in the following areas:

DISTRICT GOALS
REVIEWED

- Promoting Volunteerism. Through the collaboration grant we were able to have a Volunteer Coordinator and develop the area of volunteerism. Having someone track and coordinate our volunteer program takes pressure off of office staff and principals. Hopefully the grant will continue.

PROMOTING
VOLUNTEERISM

- Positive, Safe & Secure Work & Learning Atmosphere: Practice drills have been occurring, the safety committee is active. PBIS committee did a great job in helping to foster a positive atmosphere. Students are policing themselves and older students are mindful of their actions knowing that younger students are observing them. For the most part, pride and sense of ownership is good. Trash pick-up has been better since additional cans have been placed outside. There is still an issue around the recycling dumpster.

POSITIVE, SAFE &
SECURE WORK &
LEARNING
ENVIRONMENTS

- Communications: this will be the #1 focus of the administration this year. It was agreed by all that positive communication needs to happen as well. There is now a "Positive" referral in place for staff to complete on a student that has gone above and beyond.

COMMUNICATION

- Attendance: A draft of the new attendance policy was shared with the board. After 5 absences – a call will be made to the parent and a conversation with the student will occur. After 10 days – a counselor will call the parent, talk to the student and mail a letter home. After 15 days – the Principal will call the parent, write an attendance contract with the student and contact the NWRESA Truancy Officer. Counselors David Spackman and Pete Weisel were instrumental in the development of the new policy. Bill Langmaid recommended implementing the new attendance policy.

ATTENDANCE

Discussion was held on having a closed campus. The board felt this was important and needs to be enforced. Administration agrees although it is sometimes hard to find staff with time to be able to police it. There should be consequences for those that choose to leave. Jim Krahn offered to come to the school at lunch time and monitor the comings and goings.

CLOSED CAMPUS
DISCUSSED

Discussion was held regarding online classes. Mr. Underwood explained that the district currently has a contract with EdOptions to offer online classes, however the contract we have allows only eight students to be able to log on simultaneously. Multiple students can have a

ONLINE COURSE
OFFERINGS DISCUSSED

log in access however, only eight can work at one time. The high school is currently looking at moving to a new program call Acellus which will offer an online seat for every high school student. If this new program does what they think it will it will eliminate the premise that we don't have enough elective course offerings. Mr. Underwood is also looking into dual credit courses and community college options.

SAME GOALS &
OBJECTIVES WILL BE
USED FOR 2013-14

The consensus of the group was to keep the same goals and objectives for this year.

- B. Graduation Requirements:** Mr. Underwood presented at the last board meeting a proposal to eliminate one of the elective credit requirements for graduation. Discussion was held on the new online courses eliminating this need. Also discussed was the option for awarding a PE credit for athletic participation. According to Mr. Underwood this would be on a case by case basis and only if our limited schedule kept a student from being able to take a PE class during their Freshman or Sophomore year.

GRADUATION
REQUIREMENTS
DISCUSSED

- C. Grading Policy:** Mr. Underwood presented at the last board meeting a proposal to eliminate all D grades requiring students to earn a C grade or better to pass a class. Last year Mr. Underwood went on an accreditation visit and saw other schools using this guideline. He would like to work with the minimum requirement that Vernonia School District does not put out below average students. Employers will not hire below average people.

GRADING POLICY
DISCUSSED

Dr. Cox feels discussion on this topic is appropriate. A suggestion was made to possibly still award a D at the midterm progress report but not on the semester report card. If a student does not earn at least a C grade they would be required to retake the course. Dr. Cox recommends putting together a task force to look at the plan and implement in phases. The first phase might be to not allow a student to advance to the next level of class unless they receive a C grade. Phase two, possibly next year, implement removing the D grade entirely. Phasing in by graduation year is another option.. He'd like to see all teachers involved in the task force.

COX RECOMMENDS
TASK FORCE TO
DEVELOP NEW
GRADING POLICY

Dr. Cox recommends having a specific plan with steps of action defined. Just as in the attendance policy with a certain number of absences, actions should be defined for when a student fails or gets a D. What steps will be taken to communicate with the parent and student and what is the plan to help the student succeed. The plan needs to be worked out before implementation.

Dr. Cox will meet with Mr. Underwood to develop a plan of implementation. Jim Krahn offered to be involved with this task.

Discussion was held on athletic eligibility and the ramifications of implementing a no D policy.

3.0 Board Goals for 2013-14.

Discussion was held on areas of focus.

1. Know that you are heard – improved in-district communication. Dr. Cox indicated that he has scheduled meetings with both Classified and Licensed. He is suggesting that all should hear back within 1 week of when the question was asked.
2. How can the building be used all summer long? Bill Langmaid would like to see the building in use all summer for academic classes / summer school. There was concern expressed over maintenance and summer cleaning schedule as well as funding for summer school.
3. Long Term Funding Picture: Jim Krahn stated that he feels OSBA does not have a large amount of respect in the legislature. To think as a board you'll have the ability to make changes in our funding is a long shot. Portland legislators have a lot of pull, Betsy Johnson has a lot of pull financially. Legislators have a handful of cards and realistically they are not going to play one of their cards on our behalf. Everyone wants money. Dr. Cox mentioned Oregon Small Schools Association (OSSA) as a group that has come together to advocate on behalf of small schools. They sponsor a breakfast at the OSBA annual convention and honor

a small school teacher of the year. Ernie Smith suggested that small schools should work together to order text books, athletic equipment, etc. to get a large volume price and save money.

4.

The VEF is a great opportunity however the VEF fell short this year in supporting the districts QSCB loan payment of \$203,000. They were able to pay \$178,000. Next year the payment will be \$290,000.

3.0 Long Term Areas of Focus: Discussion was held on the work of the Met Group to help the district satisfy our debt. It was suggested to change the focus of the Met Group for the remainder of their time and try to secure more funds. Ernie Smith has been doing research and has found numerous grants that are available for small schools to develop athletic facilities.

4.0 Other Issues:

A. Board Member Building Access: Ernie Smith felt board members should have access/badge without having to check in at the office each time. A name badge for board members would keep them from having to check in at the window. Dr. Cox indicated he will take care of this for the board.

B. Alert Now Call Lists: Discussion was held as to who should get calls. The board group should not be part of the school groups and receive all the school specific calls. The board will be notified of school closures and emergencies. Bill Langmaid requested that his home number be deleted and only his cell number listed.

MEETING ADJOURNED at 8:41 p.m.

ADJOURNED

Submitted by Barb Carr, Administrative Assistant

Board Chair

District Clerk