

Minutes in Brief SOUTHERN OREGON EDUCATION SERVICE DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20, 2024

Call to Order A regular meeting of the Southern Oregon Education Service District Board of Directors was held on Wednesday, March 20, 2024, at the SOESD’s administration office in Medford, Oregon. Chair Wright called the meeting to order at 6:03 PM. Chair Wright read the SOESD land acknowledgement and led those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Attendance Board members in attendance: Board members absent:
Jessie Hecocta Rosie Converse
Mary Middleton Ana Mannenbach
Robert Moore Maud Powell
Corbin Morell
Annie Valtierra-Sanchez
Justin Wright

SOESD staff members and guests in attendance:
Mark Angle-Hobson Susan Peck
Jessica Bach Amy Szeliga
Scott Beveridge Daniel Weaver
Stephanie Cossey
Kylee Harrison

Comments from Representatives of the Associations Amy Szeliga, president of the licensed association, commented on discussions in labor-management meetings regarding layoff and recall language in Article 13 of the collective bargaining agreement.

There were no representatives of the classified association in attendance.

Requests to Address Agenda Items There were no statements from the audience or requests to address an agenda item.

Consent Agenda The consent agenda consisted of the following items:
A. Approval of Agenda
B. Approval of Minutes: February 21, 2024, Regular Meeting
C. Personnel Report
D. Financial Report
IT WAS MOVED BY MEMBER MOORE, SECONDED BY MEMBER MIDDLETON TO:
Approve the consent agenda as presented.
MOTION CARRIED: 6-0

Communications

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Beveridge's report included the following topics.

1. Legislative Session

Time has been spent meeting with the region's legislators to inform them of anticipated impacts of previous and potential legislation. Although the short session has concluded, the superintendents from the three-county region will continue meeting monthly with the legislators.

2. Budgeting

Legislative funding outcomes are known now, and work is underway at SOESD preparing for budgeting. The board will be involved in reviewing and approving a balanced budget for 2024-2025. Superintendent Beveridge noted that revisiting the priorities identified in SOESD's strategic plan will be an important part of the budgeting process.

3. Building for EI/ECSE

Superintendent Beveridge reported that a building is being considered in Grants Pass for Early Childhood Services. Administration may request board authorization to proceed with a purchase after more analysis is done.

4. SOESD Phoenix Campus Insurance Settlement

Superintendent Beveridge and CFO Weaver continue working to reach an insurance settlement with PACE for the reconstruction of SOESD's Phoenix Campus that was destroyed in the Almeda Fire on September 8, 2020. Mr. Beveridge hopes he will have a positive update for the board at the next meeting.

5. Meetings with Component District Leadership Teams

One of the initiatives of the SOESD's Strategic Plan is to develop and implement clear feedback loops with those we serve. To that end, Superintendent Beveridge and cabinet members are meeting with the leadership teams of each component district to gather their feedback in preparation for next year's Local Service Plan. Mr. Beveridge reported that the meetings held so far have been positive with praise for the adjustments in the strategic plan and additional suggestions are being made for new and expanded services.

Administration

A. Authority to Layoff/Reduce in Force

As a yearly proactive process, administration requested authority to layoff/reduce in force for fiscal year 2024-2025 should it become necessary. There are several reasons for this request, including district selections in the Choice & Equity model for delivery of Special Education Services, possible reductions within other ESD Local Service Plan programs, and funding shortfalls, should they occur. Superintendent Beveridge reported that no regular employee positions are currently identified for reductions for the 2024-2025 fiscal year.

IT WAS MOVED BY MEMBER MOORE, SECONDED BY MEMBER MIDDLETON TO:

Authorize administration to layoff/reduce in force for fiscal year 2024-2025.

MOTION CARRIED 6-0

B. Budget and Legislative Update

Superintendent Beveridge provided an update on budget and legislative activity impacting education. The superintendent's report covered four areas with impact on services provided by SOESD.

1. Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education (EI/ECSE)

The budget reconciliation bill (SB 5701), Section 2 provides \$22 million in needed stopgap funding for SOESD's EI/ECSE programs during the 2023-2025 biennium. This funding will help SOESD continue to consider adequate infrastructure for classrooms and office space.

2. Regional Inclusive Services (RIS)

As forecast, funding for RIS was not included in the short legislative session. This will impact SOESD programs negatively as federal ESSER funding expires, and state funding is not at current service levels. Superintendent Beveridge noted that, at this point, SOESD is considering reductions of contractors but has not identified any reductions of current staff. However, other areas of the state will be impacted more widely and are having to reduce staff and services. Mr. Beveridge noted that continued conversations need to take place in the legislature as services for students cannot be sustained with the low level of funding.

3. Summer Learning Opportunities (HB 4082)

The Oregon Department of Education is distributing \$30 million in funding for summer learning opportunities using a new process for prioritization of funding to districts. SOESD will receive \$60,000 for the Southern Oregon region. Superintendent Beveridge explained ODE's process for prioritizing and allocating funds to school districts and charter schools in the region. SOESD will work with those school districts to determine how to spend the \$60,000 in a way that best benefits students.

4. Regional CTE Academy Funding

SB 5701 (Section 316) resulted in a continued \$1 million in General Fund revenue for regional CTE programs provided by Willamette Career Academy. The mechanism used for this funding is anticipated to be available for future legislative funding in the next session, as SOESD's work on a Regional CTE Academy in Southern Oregon continues.

C. 2024-2025 SOESD Local Service Plan Update

Superintendent Beveridge reported that the 2024-2025 Local Service Plan has been unanimously approved by the boards of SOESD's component school districts. Mr. Beveridge expressed his thanks to the SOESD team for their work developing the plan and noted that the shifts for 2024-2025 had been well-received by the school districts.

Business Services

There were no business services topics.

Miscellaneous

- A. Next Regular Meeting: April 17, 2024, 6:00 PM
- B. OAESD Spring Conference, May 8-10, 2024, Sunriver Resort
Board members interested in attending were asked to let the board secretary know so that conference registration and lodging reservations can be made.
- C. SOESD Budget Committee Meeting, May 15, 2024, 6:00 PM.

Adjournment

Chair Wright adjourned the meeting of the Southern Oregon ESD Board of Directors at 6:30 PM.