

Minutes in Brief

SOUTHERN OREGON EDUCATION SERVICE DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 15, 2025

Call to Order

A regular meeting of the Southern Oregon Education Service District Board of Directors was held on Wednesday, January 15, 2025, at the SOESD's administration office in Medford, Oregon. At 6:08 PM, Chair Wright called the meeting to order, read the SOESD land acknowledgement, and led those attending in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Attendance

Board members in attendance:

Rosie Converse (arrived at 6:42 PM)
Jessie Hecocta
Ana Mannenbach
Mary Middleton
Robert Moore
Corbin Morell
Annie Valtierra-Sanchez
Justin Wright

Board members absent:

Maud Powell

SOESD staff members and guests in attendance:

Mark Angle-Hobson	Sandy Stack	Melissa Scaglione
Ryan Aydelotte	Ed Grassia	Dawn Stephens
Jessica Bach	Kylee Harrison	Peggy Stock
Scott Beveridge	Liz Littleton	
Stephanie Cossey	Taryn Nugent	

**Comments from
Representatives of
the Associations**

Amy Szeliga, president of the licensed association, recognized January as Board Recognition Month and thanked the board members for their service and support of educators and students. Ms. Szeliga thanked Superintendent Beveridge for his leadership and noted his retirement announcement, asking that the District consider including members of the association on a hiring team to select the next superintendent. Ms. Szeliga commented on the association's preparations to negotiate the successor agreement to the 2022-2025 Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA). Ms. Szeliga concluded by commenting on the unknown impact on education by the incoming federal administration, and she asked for the District's support in providing safe spaces for educators and students.

Taryn Nugent, vice-president of the classified association congratulated Superintendent Beveridge on his retirement, and stated that members of the classified association would also like to be included on a hiring team to select the next superintendent. Ms. Nugent commented on the association's core themes and priorities as they begin contract negotiations, the status of grant applications submitted by Student Focus programs, and communication between the association and the board.

**Requests to
Address Agenda
Items**

There were no statements from the audience or requests to address an agenda item.

**SOESD Board
Recognition**

In honor of School Board Recognition Month, Superintendent Beveridge recognized each board member for their years of service and expressed his appreciation for their dedication. Superintendent Beveridge also recognized Board Secretary Jessica Bach her many years of service and support for the board.

Consent Agenda

The consent agenda consisted of the following items:

- A. Approval of Agenda
- B. Approval of Minutes: November 20, 2024, Regular Meeting
- C. Personnel Report
- D. Financial Report

IT WAS MOVED BY MEMBER MANNENBACH, SECONDED BY MEMBER VALTIERRA-SANCHEZ TO:

Approve the consent agenda as presented.

MOTION CARRIED: 7-0

Member Converse was not in attendance at the time of the vote.

Communications

A. SOESD Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Beveridge's report included information on the following:

- The region's superintendents are preparing for the upcoming legislative session that begins February 1, 2025.
- Several dates have been scheduled for successor contract negotiations with the licensed and classified associations. The next meeting is with the licensed association on January 21st.
- Several key positions in the agency have been filled. Superintendent Beveridge recognized Liz Littleton, who has accepted the position of SOESD Executive Assistant and Board Secretary. Ryan Swearingen will join SOESD very soon as the Chief Human Resources Officer.
- Progress continues on construction of the SOESD Phoenix Campus.
- Remodeling of the Early Childhood Services campus in Grants Pass to support expansion of classrooms and services for Early childhood Services continues under the coordination of Director Harrison.
- Plans are progressing to launch a Regional Career Center next fall.
- Progress is being made to bring a Recovery High School to Southern Oregon.
- Superintendent Beveridge noted more information about many of these topics would be provided later in the agenda.

B. SOESD Superintendent's Retirement

Board members thanked Superintendent Beveridge for his 31 years of service at SOESD, the past ten having been spent in the role of superintendent. The board discussed options for conducting a superintendent search, selecting a search firm, and the anticipated costs.

IT WAS MOVED BY MEMBER MIDDLETON, SECONDED BY MEMBER VALTIERRA-SANCHEZ TO:

Accept Scott Beveridge's notice of intent to retire as of June 30, 2025.

MOTION CARRIED 8-0

IT WAS THEN MOVED BY MEMBER VALTIERRA-SANCHEZ, SECONDED BY MEMBER MANNENBACH TO:

Select OSBA as the search agency for our new superintendent.

MOTION CARRIED 8-0

Administration

- A. Southern Oregon Recovery High School
Director Kylee Harrison and Project Manager Sandy Stack reported on SOESD's work to bring a Recovery High School to Southern Oregon with ODE grant funding. The project would initially establish a small school in the region as a high school of choice providing in-person substance use disorder and mental health support, personalized educational plans, with pathways to graduation (including credit recovery), alternative peer group programs, and family training and counseling. Director Harrison and Ms. Stack provided a program overview and discussion with the board regarding internal resources, board engagement, challenges and opportunities, community engagement, and the start-up timeline.

- B. SOESD Local Service Plan, 2025-2026
The Board received copies of the proposed 2025-2026 SOESD Local Service Plan (LSP) prior to the meeting for review. Superintendent Beveridge shared that component districts rated satisfaction with LSP service last June at 93% or higher on average across each division. The 2025-26 LSP continues newly designed program offerings in the current LSP that were based on SOESD's 2023-25 strategic plan, and adds new services for the 2025-26 school year. On the horizon are the potential for a regional career enter and recovery high school. Mr. Beveridge explained the LSP development and approval process. The region's superintendents gave consensus approval for the proposed 2025-2026 SOESD Local Service Plan during a meeting on December 16, 2024. Once adopted by the SOESD Board of Directors, the 2025-2026 Local Service Plan will be forwarded to each of the component school district boards for formal action. The Local Service Plan must be approved on or before March 1, 2025, by at least two-thirds of the component school districts with at least a majority of the student enrollment.

IT WAS MOVED BY MEMBER VALTIERRA-SANCHEZ, SECONDED BY MEMBER HECOCTA TO:

Approve the 2025-2026 SOESD Local Service Plan.

MOTION CARRIED 8-0

- C. Employee Appreciation Weeks
Superintendent Beveridge explained that the employee appreciation weeks are a formal opportunity to recognize the staff of SOESD.
- 2024-2025 SOESD Resolution #7
Classified Appreciation Week, March 3-7, 2025
 - 2024-2026 SOESD Resolution #8
Licensed Appreciation Week, May 5-9, 2025

IT WAS MOVED BY MEMBER MIDDLETON, SECONDED BY MEMBER VALTIERRA-SANCHEZ TO:

Approve 2024-2025 SOESD Resolutions 7 and 8.

MOTION CARRIED: 8-0

D. Special Education Educator Stipends

As noted in the November board meeting, Senate Bill 5506 directs ODE to provide stipends to licensed educators and classified employees working in special education during the 2024-2025 school year. Director Harrison reported that the list of SOESD employees qualifying for the stipends had been shared with both associations prior to submitting SOESD's application for funding to ODE on January 13, 2025. The stipend amount per educator will be determined by ODE once the data from all districts are compiled and used to determine how the funds will be divided statewide. Director Harrison noted that the funding allocated by the legislature does not provide for matching the employer payroll costs. SOESD will need to determine where to allocate funds in the budget to pay for those costs when the stipends are provided to eligible staff.

E. Budget and Legislative Updates

Superintendent Beveridge reported that Governor Kotek's proposed State School Fund (SSF) budget represents a strong starting point that is close to current service levels. However, challenges exist with reduced proposed funding in programs provided by SOESD, specifically School Safety and Prevention Specialists, the Student Success Act, and Regional Inclusive Services (RIS). The shortfall in RIS funding would significantly impact services SOESD provides to students with low-incidence disabilities. It is necessary that legislators understand that without adequate funding SOESD cannot maintain these critical services for students.

Business Services

Phoenix Campus Reconstruction Project Update

Director Angle-Hobson provided an update on the SOESD Phoenix Campus Reconstruction Project. Dr. Angle-Hobson continues to participate in weekly site visits and walk-throughs. An arborist has examined the three trees close to the highway and reported them to be healthy and thriving. Work is progressing; concrete foundation slabs are being poured, and steel beams have been ordered and are expected to arrive in mid-February. Soon after, construction will go vertical which Dr. Angle-Hobson noted would be a tangible and visible sign of the progress as the building "rises from the ashes."

Executive Session

At 8:21 PM, Chair Wright announced the board would meet in executive session pursuant to ORS 192.660(2)(d) to conduct deliberations with persons designated by the governing body to carry on labor negotiations. Chair Wright noted that the board would not be meeting in executive session pursuant to ORS 192.660(2)(a) as had originally been published.

Open Session

At 9:32 PM, Chair Wright reconvened the board into open session

**Appointment of
Board Member
Representatives**

Appointment of Board Member Representatives for Labor Negotiations. While a number of board members expressed interest in participating in bargaining sessions, they also noted challenges with their personal schedules. The board discussed sharing the responsibility of attending meetings as capacity allows, rather than nominating an individual board member.

Miscellaneous

- A. OSBA Webinar on SB 1502 and HB 2805, February 6, 2025, 5:00 PM.
On January 1, 2025, a new law (SB 1502) went into effect requiring public education governing boards to post video recordings of each meeting within seven days of the meeting. Additionally, HB 2805 requires all school board members to complete public meeting training once per terms of office. OSBA will be hosting a webinar scheduled for February 6, 2025 from 5:00 to 6:30 PM open to administrators, board members, and board secretaries with information on both topics. SOESD board members are encouraged to attend. Registration for the webinar can be found on the OSBA website.
- B. Next Regular Meeting: February 19, 2025, 6:00 PM
- C. Special District Election – Important Dates
 - February 8: First day a candidate can file
 - March 20: Last day for a candidate to file or withdraw
 - May 24: Voters' pamphlet filing deadline (Jackson County)
 - May 20: Special District Election
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Adjournment

Chair Wright adjourned the meeting of the Southern Oregon ESD Board of Directors at 9:39 PM.