

LINCOLN COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT
Board of Directors – Work Session
Tuesday, January 29, 2008- 6:30 p.m.
Newport High School
Newport, Oregon

Minutes

Present: Brenda Brown, Chairman; Jean Turner, Vice Chairman, Ron Beck, Jana Cowan, Amy Coulter, Directors

Also Present: Tom Rinearson, Superintendent; Len Geiger, Assistant Superintendent; Cathy Russell, Joe Novello, Kristin Takano-Becker, Administrators; Tiana Tucker, NHS teacher; Laurie Urquhart, Secretary;

Call to Order- Establishment of a Quorum

Chairman Brown convened the meeting and called the session to order at 6:40 p.m. with a quorum of all five board members present.

Discussion on Curriculum-Instruction-Assessment Alignment Project

Teacher Tiana Tucker and administrator Kristin Takano-Becker presented an update on the K-12 curriculum- assessment-instruction alignment project. The project is intended to ensure quality learning and raise the level of achievement for all students. Vertical alignment of curriculum is the goal of the first phase of the project. The undertaking's leaders posed a question to begin the process: "What knowledge and skills do this year's students need so they will enter next year's class with confidence and readiness for success?"

Using Oregon's content standards, the LCSD power standards are identified using the following four criteria:

Endurance- must retain meaning for the student's lifetime and withstand the test of time

Leverage- must have weightedness; "must knows"

Readiness for the next level of learning (not necessarily grade level)

What students need for success in school, life and on state tests

Four questions the group considered in beginning their work were:

- What are the "gotta knows"?
- How will we know they have learned them?
- What will we do when they have not learned them?
- What will we do when they **have** learned them?

Superintendent Rinearson commented the project seeks to identify what we want teachers to teach; the "how" is up to individual teachers. The goal for the current school year is to complete the vertical alignment and have staff in buildings examine it. "This is a living document; it is never complete," said Ms. Takano-Becker.

Benchmark tests will be a "natural occurrence" for students once the alignment is complete, and staff will be better able to do interventions with students to help correct deficiencies. Thirty teachers have

been working on vertical alignment for science and language arts; work on math and social science will begin in February.

The second phase of the project will be horizontal alignment, between subject areas. This phase will begin after the gaps in the vertical alignment are discovered and filled.

“A big part of this work is narrowing the information,” said Rinearson. “We want the conversations to be happening in buildings, so we need to create an environment for these conversations to happen.” To that end, three trainings are planned for lead teachers this spring; the workshops will focus on building a collaborative culture, structure of local assessments, and interventions. An introductory meeting on this subject was held in January.

Board member Jana Cowan noted she attended the January training and the national quality conference. “I can see that both of those workshops and the work you discussed tonight all align,” said Cowan. “It is exciting!”

Discussion on Methods to Increase Rigor

One of the 2007/08 board goals is the Board “will focus on student achievement by examining methods to increase rigor and raise expectations for each individual student.” Board members discussed this goal at the work session to discover ways the Board can meet it. Director Beck noted the previous alignment discussion fit well with the goal, and said “we should be giving students opportunities to do their individual best. I believe we are a better district every day, and we should continue to raise the bar.”

Director Turner noted the Board should “do this through Tom. It is our only way.”

Superintendent Rinearson raised the idea of policy conversations, and said the Board could consider “how does this policy increase learning for students?” He noted that the Taft High pilot project on academic eligibility is a great example of the board allowing buildings to try something new to try to improve student learning. He also said the alignment work teachers are doing will raise rigor and expectations.

Chairman Brown commented “We all agree rigor is important and we want a high level of proficiency. How do we translate that to rigor for each student?” Director Beck responded it can be addressed through the budget process and expectations.

Director Cowan suggested focusing on a “school of the month,” via newspaper articles, recognition when the Board visits the school, etc.

The Superintendent noted a shift has occurred at Taft High by staff communicating expectations more clearly to students. He said the board may want to make requests of each school to share their expectations for students with the Board, as a communication tool for the Board.

Discussion of Feasibility of Offering Cultures/Comparative Religions Course

This agenda item was postponed until the next work session on February 26.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Chairman

Superintendent