

SOUTH LANE SCHOOL DISTRICT
Cottage Grove, Oregon

Public Hearing of the School Board

District Service Center

August 18, 2008

MINUTES

Board Chair Jim Goes called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

The following board members were present:

Sherry Duerst-Higgins
Carrie Gilmore
Jim Goes
Tom McVey
Cheryl Mueller
Joe Raade – via phone
Leslie Rubinstein

The following District Administrators were present:

Krista Parent
Julie De Pauw
Sue Wickizer
Tim Rochholz
Todd Hamilton
Chris Parra

Cheryl Mueller led the flag salute.

BLUE MOUNTAIN CHARTER SCHOOL NON-RENEWAL APPEAL

Blue Mountain School Representatives

Demian Schwartz and Therese Nguyen greeted the board. Demian thanked Cheryl and Joe for joining these sessions via telephone. Therese and Demian continued their presentation from a prepared statement. (A copy of the prepared statement was submitted by Demian Schwartz for inclusion with the minutes.)

Therese Nguyen, 242 S 2nd street, Cottage Grove, – Therese thanked the board for the opportunity to work with Blue Mountain Charter School (BMCS) staff during this renewal process. She provided a brief overview of the BMCS model and the need that it fills in the education community. Therese continued by addressing two questions that surfaced regularly when communicating with board members: Why should BMCS be given a chance? Would the school board be supportive of a shortened contract term of three years to allow BMCS an opportunity to address board concerns and show growth over time?

Demian Schwartz, 33878 Walden Lane, Cottage Grove, OR – Demian thanked the district for including her on the district's Superintendent's Summer Institute team and the August Ad Council retreat. She proceeded to share highlights and changes in the appeal, with BMCS

making a firm commitment to: improve OSA participation, increase OSA scores, include grades 3-10 in OSA testing, and improve student attendance rates. In addition, BMCS will establish plans to: complete/revise the science and social studies matrices, meet the new diploma requirements, and meet staff Highly Qualified (HQ) requirements.

Therese thanked the board for their consideration.

School Board Questions and Discussion

Cheryl Mueller asked – Who will be HQ during the coming year?

Demian responded – There are a handful of high school students at BMCS. The plan is to begin with English/Language Arts and Mathematics and add Social Science and Science the following year.

Cheryl asked – Your Response to Non-Renewal says that it will be two years before you have an HQ teacher in Social Studies and Science. What do you plan to do in the meantime? Demian stated - BMCS is looking at outside resources (e.g., OMSI, on-line/virtual classes) to provide instruction in the short term. For those students wanting instruction in science, BMCS will find qualified resources to meet their needs.

Cheryl asked – How do the matrices get to the students? Will your policy still be to just show them where it is located in the building and do they still have to access them themselves?

Demian responded – Yes. The matrices will be shown to the students at the beginning of school and they will be shown how to access the resources.

Cheryl said – BMCS OSAT test results for 2007-2008 were very low. You show a goal of increasing participation rates but why are you not showing a goal of increasing the test scores?

Demian responded – There is often fluctuation in assessment results, especially in a small school when there are few students at benchmark levels, so BMCS established attainable percentages that it felt were reasonable.

Cheryl asked – Are there outcomes for how well students perform on the state assessments in the conditions of early termination of the contract?

Demian responded – No, the OSAT scores in academics are not included because scores vary from year to year.

Cheryl asked – How will students use assessment data to help them target their own instructional needs?

Demian responded – Our plan is to address targeted needs in workshops that they can choose to attend.

Joel added, (623 N 10th street, Cottage Grove, OR) – BMCS will begin offering OSA opportunities to students sooner. Last year BMCS was only able to offer one testing session.

Jim Goes asked – Will you only test once?

Joel responded – We'll start providing opportunities in the fall, and test throughout the year.

Sue Wickizer shared with the board – We look at school totals when evaluating assessment data, not just data at each grade level.

Therese added – Students in the assembly are committed to seeing the school stay open and therefore willing to support the school by participating in assessment opportunities.

Cheryl asked – How much is BMCS moving forward with changes? She wondered if the proposed curriculum for Science and Social Studies was just going to sit on a shelf and not get used like what happened last year according to one of the BMCS's teachers during the Site visit in May. She read (twice) directly from the charter law, ORS 338.045(2)(e) which states the

charter is to provide “a description of the curriculum and a description of the expected results of the curriculum and the verified methods of measuring and reporting objective results that will show the growth of knowledge of students attending the public charter school and allow comparisons with public schools.” She asked how will these requirements be met with specific ideas for measuring progress on subjects not tested by OSA, such as their new proposed Science and Social Studies curriculum.

A Blue Mountain parent in attendance added (no name or address provided) – BMCS has a philosophy that supports student learning that is not measured by OSA or other tests, as demonstrated when students leave BMCS and attend other schools (e.g., CGHS, LCC). She asked the board how they were to measure that type of learning?

Cheryl responded – This is a question for BMCS. BMCS needs to provide these measures. BMCS provided no answer for this.

Cheryl asked Krista Parent – Do the new diploma requirements apply to charters?

Krista Parent responded – Yes. She shared a brief overview of the new diploma options and requirements.

Julie De Pauw added – Students will need to meet assessment standards.

Cheryl – Will the state recognize a BMCS diploma?

Krista – The state may recognize a BMCS diploma as a certificate of completion.

Cheryl asked BMCS - Do you think most students will choose a Blue Mountain Diploma instead of an Oregon State Diploma?

Demian responded – We're unable to answer that question at this time. We hope that time will give us a better sense of what students will choose.

Leslie Rubinstein asked – Will BMCS provide a framework for HS students entering BMCS to obtain an Oregon State Diploma?

Demian responded – That is our hope.

Leslie asked – Do you have options other than proficiency?

Demian responded – There are other options, including Oregon Virtual High School and LCC.

Demian responded – She shared an example of how Redmond SD is using credit by proficiency for students. Demian also noted the possible use of on-line courses and that students at BMCS have taken courses at LCC. BMCS will start with OSA, and use the matrices and workshops to meet the needs of students. BMCS is considering offering an Oregon State Diploma. Currently, BMCS offers a Blue Mountain diploma.

Joe Raade asked – Is it possible to set targeted goals with percentages that are lower than state guidelines within a new charter contract? What happens if BMCS doesn't meet the criteria setup in a contract for each year?

Sue responded – All schools are expected by Oregon Department of Education (ODE) to meet state guidelines. She added that if a new contract were put into place and annual targets are not met, then the board would be initiating a mid-contract termination.

Leslie asked – With regards to participation rates, did the district talk with BMCS about the rates? Are they reasonable?

Krista responded – we did discuss with BMCS that participation rates were not rigorous enough in the initial renewal proposal. Our other charter schools are held to state guidelines, and we are wondering if it is even possible for BMCS to not also be held to the same standards.

Demian added – Our plan is to have all students take the assessments, but our concern is that one or two children can significantly affect participation rates.

Leslie asked - Did BMCS request renewal within the timeline?

Krista responded – Yes, we believe we did receive the request in a timely manner.

Leslie asked – Is BMCS a Title I school?

Krista responded – No, it is not.

Leslie asked – What consequence is there to a school if it does not meet AYP?

Julie responded – In this case, the consequence would affect the district AYP status. AYP also includes the 100% HQ requirement.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

Rebecca Miller, 1316 Community Place, Cottage Grove, OR – spoke about her son and his experiences in education. After struggling to find an education environment to meet his needs, Rebecca discovered BMCS. Her son found a school that meets his needs by attending BMCS.

Sophia Jones, a BMCS student, shared that her previous school didn't let her learn in a way that fit her learning style and that she wasn't able to express herself well. BMCS provided her the freedom and more opportunities for learning. She was also able to become higher educated in areas she was interested in, such as astronomy. BMCS has provided her with the things she needs for her education and doesn't understand why it can't stay open. It would mean so much to her if the board would renew the contract.

ADJOURNMENT

The hearing was adjourned at 7:13 PM

Jim Goes, Chair

Krista Parent, Superintendent

Minutes approved:

September 8, 2008

SOUTH LANE SCHOOL DISTRICT
Cottage Grove, Oregon

Regular Meeting of the School Board

District Service Center

August 18, 2008

MINUTES

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The following board members were present:

Sherry Duerst-Higgins
Carrie Gilmore
Jim Goes
Tom McVey
Cheryl Mueller
Joe Raade – via phone
Leslie Rubinstein

The following District Administrators were present:

Krista Parent
Julie De Pauw
Sue Wickizer
Tim Rochholz
Todd Hamilton
Chris Parra

BLUE MOUNTAIN CHARTER SCHOOL APPEAL DECISION

Jim Goes made a motion to renew the BMCS Charter, subject to the following conditions and understandings:

1. Term of the charter contract will be a maximum of three years, with annual continuation subject to verification of BMCS meeting or exceeding performance targets and conditions as indicated below and in BMCS Renewal Application (6-27-08) and Response to Non-renewal (8-8-08).
2. BMCS and SLSD will jointly petition the Oregon State Board of Education for a waiver of ORS338.065 (3)(c), enabling a three year charter contract.
3. Both BMCS and SLSD agree that any failure to meet the annual monitoring, reporting, or performance benchmarks set forth below shall be grounds for immediate termination of the charter by the Board. The parties agree that any noncompliance shall be grounds for termination without an opportunity for correction or cure by BMCS.
4. BMCS will provide written, verifiable proof to SLSD of meeting the conditions specified below.
5. BMCS and SLSD staff will work in a mutually respectful and constructive manner to develop a charter contract that fully articulates the intent of this motion.

Conditions for charter continuation in Year 2 (met or submitted for district approval by 6-30-2009)

1. BMCS will improve OSAT participation rates to 90% in reading, math, and writing
2. BMCS will improve OSAT reading scores to 65% meet/exceed in grades 3-8 & 10
3. BMCS will improve OSAT math scores to 50% meet/exceed in grades 3-8 & 10
4. BMCS will improve OSAT writing scores to 30% meet/exceed in grades 4,7 & 10
5. BMCS will increase the percentage of staff meeting HQ status to 50%
6. BMCS will present a detailed, written plan for achieving 100% HQ status in staff by 6-30-2010.
7. BMCS will work with SLSD leadership to complete instructional matrices that reflect the state common curriculum goals and grade level standards in the core areas of Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies. All matrices are subject to approval by SLSD leadership.
8. BMCS will develop a detailed plan acceptable to the Board regarding how the new graduation requirements will be implemented at the school.
9. BMCS will improve attendance rates to 85%, and develop a detailed plan with specific steps to achieve attendance rates of 92% by June, 2010.
10. BMCS will develop a detailed plan acceptable to the Board regarding how student learning files will be built and organized to reflect learning, and how student reflections on file content will be conducted.

Conditions for charter continuation in Year 3 (met or submitted for district approval by 6-30-2010)

1. BMCS will improve OSAT participation rates to 95% in reading, math, and writing
2. BMCS will improve OSAT reading scores to 70% meet/exceed in grades 3-8 & 10
3. BMCS will improve OSAT math scores to 60% meet/exceed in grades 3-8 & 10
4. BMCS will improve OSAT writing scores to 50% meet/exceed in grades 4,7 & 10
5. BMCS will increase the percentage of staff meeting HQ status to 100%
6. BMCS will improve attendance rates to 90%.

The motion was seconded by Carrie Gilmore.

Jim Goes shared that the board needs to make a decision and acknowledged the recent and positive changes at BMCS. He felt that there was an opportunity for a fresh start because of a clear indication from BMCS that it is willing to make changes. In support of this, Jim mentioned new leadership, a new attitude, and a new willingness to compromise. He further stated that the Board needs to set the bar high and expect BMCS to step up to these expectations. Jim believes the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) appeal process would likely take a long time and that the District would be “in it” another year anyway.

Leslie Rubinstein asked about whether the 70% meets/exceeds criteria for reading is appropriate. Julie clarified that is appropriate for the year in which the criteria is set.

Leslie shared an appreciation for the last minute proposal, and acknowledged that it was sneaky. Joe agreed that it was sneaky. Leslie shared that there is an elephant in the room – the ODE Proposed Final Order – and that we need to acknowledge the difference between what the ODE final order says and our response to BMCS about why their renewal application was denied.

Cheryl shared concerns about the proposal and whether BMCS could even meet the expectations.

Jim shared that this proposal is an attempt at a compromise.

Leslie asked for clarification about the student learning files, since the revised BMCS proposal indicated that they would serve only as an internal assessment.

Krista shared that graduation requirements will require work samples as part of the new graduation requirements.

A roll call vote on the motion was taken:

Carrie – yes

Cheryl – no

Tom – no

Jim- yes

Sherry – no

Leslie – yes

Joe – no

The motion failed, 4-3.

Joe Raade moved that the school board reaffirm its decision from July to non-renew the contract. Tom McVey seconded the motion. Jim clarified with Joe that the non-renewal motion includes consideration of additional information submitted by BMCS after the July board meeting.

A roll call vote on the motion was taken:

Carrie – no

Cheryl - yes

Tom - yes

Jim - yes

Sherry - yes

Leslie - yes

Joe - yes

The motion passed, 6-1.

CONSENT AGENDA

Sherry Duerst-Higgins made a motion to approve Consent Agenda Items A-Q, Hiring of Giacomina Logue, .5 FTE, Delight Valley; Hiring of Michelle Weybright, .75 FTE Special Education, Harrison; Hiring of Dena Morosin, 1.0 FTE Elementary, Bohemia; Hiring of Cindy Vogel, 1.0 FTE Reading Specialist, Bohemia; Hiring of Jessica Wells, 1.0 FTE Elementary, Harrison; Hiring of Wes Yound, .5 FTE Library, Lincoln Middle; Hiring of Cleo Droege, .5 FTE Library, Lincoln Middle; Hiring of Sarah Parsons, .5 FTE Elementary, Harrison; Hiring of Heather Casey, 1.0 FTE Elementary, Bohemia; Hiring of Laurie Melendy, 1.0 FTE Elementary, Delight Valley; Hiring of Amy Swearingen, .4 FTE Reading Specialist, London; Hiring of Carolyn Jenkins, .75 FTE Special Education, London; Resignation of Ryan Beck, 1.0 FTE Elementary, Delight Valley; Resignation of Joni Wareham, .5 FTE Elementary, Bohemia; Resignation of Randy Fisher, 1.0 FTE Math, Cottage Grove High School; Resignation of David Bailey, 1.0 FTE Campus Security, Cottage Grove High School; and Resignation of Jeremy Cohen, 1.0 FTE, Kennedy Alternative High School. Tom McVey seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS' COMMENTS/FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Leslie

Kennedy Alternative is painting the new library space and they definitely need more help.

She also shared her disappointment that Parent Partnership is planning to limp along for another year instead of maintaining a robust program.

Sherry

Candidates for the Fund Development Director were interviewed and the process is ongoing.

Tom

Shared that he invited the Kennedy AmeriCorp volunteer to present to the school board about the positive work happening at the school's Greenhouse.

Krista

Invited school board members to swing by DSC and see the new teacher institute workshops in action. Also, please stop by and introduce yourself to the new board secretary.

Julie

Provided an overview of the new mentor program at Lincoln Middle School and invited board members to join the group.

UPCOMING DATES

- A. August 25, 2008, Board/Admin Work Session, 4-8 p.m., District Service Center
- B. September 8, 2008, Joint Board/City Council Meeting, 6:00 p.m., Regular Session, 7:30 p.m., District Service Center

ANNOUNCEMENTS/CORRESPONDENCE

There were no announcements.

ADJOURNMENT

The regular session was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Jim Goes, Chair

Krista Parent, Superintendent

Minutes approved:

September 8, 2008