

**Meeting of the School Board  
David Douglas School District No. 40  
April 17, 2008**

The regular meeting of the David Douglas School Board was held on Thursday, April 17, 2008, at 7:00 p.m. in the Board Room of the David Douglas School District Administration Building, located at 1500 SE 130<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Portland, Oregon 97233.

School Board Members present were:

Annette Mattson, Board Chair	
Dawn Barberis	Frieda Christopher
Bruce Burton	Donn Gardner
Mike Centoni	Mike Price

Also present were Barbara Rommel, Superintendent/Clerk; Mike Stout, Assistant Superintendent; Gary Haase, Interim Director of Administrative Services/Deputy Clerk; Sherrie Barger, Director of Curriculum; Susan Summers, Director of Human Resources; Barbara Kienle, Director of Student Services; and Gail Hunter, Board Secretary.

The agenda included consideration of the following:

**Call to Order / Flag Salute**

**Board Member Reports** – Mike Price attended Menlo Park’s K-2 musical at the PAC. He said he was very impressed with the turnout and the great presentation. Mike Centoni commented that one of his coworkers has students at Menlo Park, and has praised the principal, staff and students there. Frieda Christopher said that another day of bargaining was held on Tuesday, with good discussion. The DDEF dinner/auction will be held this Saturday. The East Portland Action Plan committee has requested an allocation of \$500,000 from the City budget to implement some suggested improvements. Central Gateway’s new street plan has moved to the Transportation Department for approval before being submitted to the City Council. Board Chair Mattson attended OSBA’s regional dinner meeting last week along with Dawn Barberis and Superintendent Rommel. Susan Castillo will participate in an East Portland Education Forum on Saturday, April 26 beginning at 2:30pm at Fir Ridge Campus. Ms. Mattson announced that Oregon will host a conference presented through the collaboration of school board associations from Oregon, Washington, Idaho and Nevada on April 25-27, titled, “Celebrating Educational Opportunities for Diverse Students Northwest”. She welcomed students from Boy Scout Troop 49 to tonight’s meeting.

**Student Body President’s Report** – none

**Superintendent’s Report** – Sherrie Barger reported that the district was notified of an increase of approximately \$1.5 million in our 2008-09 Title I budget, primarily due to the increase in numbers of our students in poverty. Middle and high school teachers had the opportunity to hear Heidi Hayes-Jacobs speak about implementing literacy across the K-12 continuum. Ms. Barger reviewed other literacy-focused early release day activities which took place around the district. Barbara Kienle said ESL teachers worked on curriculum mapping, and special education teachers heard Andrea Hungerford discuss special education law in general, and address some specific concerns. Superintendent Rommel announced that a group of our high school students participated in the Oregon State Skills USA competition in Albany, with several receiving awards. She congratulated the *Highlander* staff, who received a national first place award from the American Scholastic Press Association, as well as a “Special Merit” designation, the only competing school from Oregon to do so, making it one of the “Top 100 American High School and College Newspapers”. The superintendent noted that next week is National School Volunteer Week, and thanked board

members for the hours they spend as the ultimate school volunteers. A survey has been made available on the district website for students, staff, parents and community members to identify the qualities they find most important in the high school principal. The information gathered from the survey will help inform the selection committee as they consider applicants to replace Mr. Hutchinson when he retires this June. The David Douglas Historical Society will hold their annual Chautauqua meeting in the High School South Cafeteria at 11:30am on Saturday.

**Celebrating Special Education Students and Programs** – Student Services Director Barbara Kienle introduced a presentation on the district's special education program and efforts to help students achieve. She reviewed highlights of the special education report card. Students from the Community Transition Program served board members from their new coffee cart enterprise.

Ms. Kienle reported that the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) of 2004 significantly changed the way that districts are required to monitor their students with disabilities. Over the last five years, the number of our students has increased to 1,242 as of December 1, 2007, representing 12.3% of our student body. That percentage is lightly lower than the state average. The district's IDEA allocation has also increased, with about 18% of the program funded at this time. Districts are annually evaluated on a list of twenty key performance indicators. Tonight's presentation focused on three of those twenty.

1. *Percentage of students with disabilities graduating with a standard diploma compared to all youths*

Students receiving a modified diploma or certificate of completion are not part of these numbers. Elise Guest described the high school staff's collaborative efforts to keep students in school and find success. The high school utilizes a co-teaching model (MERGE) in which special education teachers co-teach with the general ed teacher, helping to accommodate and adapt that curriculum for students on IEP's. A reading forensics class offers a risk-free environment to learn specified skills listed on an IEP. Other options include the NovaNet night school computer-based program which addresses different learning styles, and the smaller Fir Ridge program. Special education personnel has also been increased to offer additional support.

2. *Percentage of students with disabilities dropping out of high school compared to all youths*

Anyone earning a certificate of completion is considered a dropout on this report, as well as any student who leaves to enroll in a community college GED program not sponsored by David Douglas, or a private program. Ms. Guest described diploma options for students. Again, efforts focus on providing as many options and strategies as possible for students to be successful. Collaborative efforts to support students include Fir Ridge, GED options, and support classes at the high school.

3. *Percentage of students with disabilities removed from regular class <21% of their day, >60% of their day, and in outside placements*

Students are served in pull-out Educational Resource Centers and Speech and Language programs. Placement Coordinator Pamela Cunningham said that as more time in ERC is required, we begin to question whether that is the least restrictive placement, and may need to look at a more structured program. These include Life Skills, Structured Learning Program-Academic and -Behavioral, and the Community Transition Program. Outside placements are also available for students who for a variety of reasons need another setting. They may be returning to school from incarceration and need a more structured setting upon release, some have been expelled from our programs, other are medically fragile and need skilled nursing care.

Each of the district's programs was highlighted.

Life Skills: Serving 27 students in grades K-12, this program provides small group and individual assistance. Students work on functional academic skills, such as survival reading and using money, with the focus to make them as independent as possible. Community outings focus on safety, public transportation and expose students to the world of work, as does the vocational training component. Celebrations include the jobs students perform at Alice Ott Middle School, their worm casting fertilizer enterprise, and Ventura Park's Oregon Trail Overnight program.

Structured Learning Program-Academic (SLP-A): 89 K-12 students are served in this program. Smaller classes focus on intensive academic skill development, community outings to build independence skills, and a thorough vocational training, work experience, and job exploration program. Celebrations include the very popular Fantasy Basketball curriculum, in which the program's author featured our students in a documentary which was featured at a math conference recently; the impressive student-designed courtyard at Alice Ott Middle School; and the Italian soda businesses at Alice Ott and the high school.

Educational Resource Centers (ERC): 582 students K-12. At the high school, co-teaching is taking place in six English and math classrooms. The program will expand to 18 classes next fall, including science, social studies and health, all of which are core classes required for graduation. An instructional accommodations and modifications flip chart was created to provide a ready resource for teachers. "Special Ed 101" reviewed legal mandates as well as how the staff can best support students in a collaborative model. Assistive technology carts are being piloted in each building.

Structured Learning Program – Behavior (SLP-B): Intense pro-social instruction is difficult in a large general education classroom, and students who need this support can be disruptive to the regular classroom learning environment. 32 students, aged K-8, receive intense behavior support in a smaller class setting with a heavy academic focus and instruction in pro-social skills, as well as more adult staff in the classroom. Mental health services are provided to middle schoolers through visits from Trillium Family Services staff who provide counseling. The SLP-B program allows students to remain in our district with the goal of transitioning to the high school with a known peer group.

Community Transition Program: Teacher Emily Stefansson thanked board members for making the coffee cart possible. She said the goal of the CTP program is for graduates to step out of the program and be as successful and independent as possible. She and co-teacher Lynne Hare work with 18 students, ages 18-21. Goals include application of life skills, independent living, employment, and social and recreational skills. She introduced Sally DeFord, vocational/technical services assistant, who has been instrumental in doing job searches and setting up the coffee cart. Students who served board members from the coffee cart were introduced. Ms. DeFord said it was a wonderful experience establishing the coffee cart project, with students participating in planning, deciding what to serve, and learning how to place orders. They visited a graphic designer to learn about selecting their logo, and visited Longbottom Coffee. Students are learning to maintain a budget, count money and divide tips, to work as a team, and about the components of providing good customer service. Another student-run enterprise is the cultivation of 1,700 plants along with handling orders and deliveries.

A "Snapshot" has been designed by high school case managers to identify goals and specific accommodations written on the IEP as well as an indication of any other services a student is receiving. This is given to the general education teacher. As changes are made to an IEP, those snapshots are revised.

Ms. Kienle said that performance targets on the state report card may be revised downward in the future to be more realistic in reflecting the diverse needs of special education students.

**Construction Report and Project Bid Approval** – Gary Haase reviewed slides of progress on the Floyd Light Middle School expansion project. The construction committee met last Friday with the architect, the superintendent, and Mr. Haase to review bid information on the Floyd Light and high school track and field projects. The committee recommends approval of the following:

*Floyd Light Classroom Addition*

This project includes the addition of six classrooms. Bremik, CMGC for the project, has priced the addition at \$1,965,473.

As the project was discussed with the middle school administration, concerns were voiced about the need for additional office space, a staff lunchroom/work center, and a small conference room. The architect prepared a plan to address these concerns. Bremik has priced the cost of the office area remodel and extension at \$683,184.

The asphalt in the parking area at Floyd Light needs to be replaced. Some landscaping and drainage improvements are required by the City. Bremik has estimated the cost at \$325,570. Adding the classrooms required improvements in fire/life safety at the school. Adding a sprinkler system and replacing corridor ceiling tiles is expected to cost \$645,033. The library windows were boarded over in the 1970's. Uncovering and replacing those windows will improve lighting in the library. The cost would be \$43,534.

The Construction Committee recommends approving all of these projects for a total of \$3,662,794.

*David Douglas High School Track and Field*

Robinson Construction submitted the lowest bid for the project: \$1,756,864.73.

The cost of the visitor bleachers was not included in their bid. Low bid for the bleachers was received from Saxton Bradley in the amount of \$41,750.

The Construction Committee recommends approval of these bids for a total of \$1,798,614.73.

Terry Rommel said these projects could not have been fast-tracked without the full cooperation of the City of Portland Development Services Bureau. Stan Woodfill and Paul Arzt were also commended for their efforts in coordinating activities around construction. Work on the track and field will begin on May 1. Sports activities have been scheduled as away events this spring due to construction. It was suggested that the district review requirements for a grant from Nike for track material.

Mr. Burton moved approval of the construction committee's recommendations totaling \$5,461,408.73 for both projects, seconded by Mr. Gardner. The motion carried in a vote of 6-0, with Mr. Centoni abstaining due to a potential conflict of interest.

**Consent Agenda** – Mr. Gardner moved approval of the following consent agenda items, seconded by Mr. Burton. The motion carried in a vote of 7-0.

- **Opening of North Powellhurst Early Childhood Center**
- **Personnel Recommendations**

**Audience Participation / Break** – Board Chair Mattson opened the meeting for public comment. As there were no remarks from the audience, she declared a brief recess. The meeting was reconvened.

**2007-08 Review / Future Focus** – Chair Mattson introduced a discussion reviewing 2007-08 and focusing on the future. The superintendent asked board members to identify an area of focus or an action undertaken that is proving to be successful. Areas identified included the expansion of advanced placement offerings at the high school; the ability of the district to absorb the cost of the new wing at the high school, the work at Floyd Light and Ron Russell Middle Schools and the high school track and field, without having to go out to our citizens to request a bond; the recognition the district has received for support of the arts K-12; the high school’s visioning work; and the Fir Ridge program, which is proving to be an excellent model for reaching students who would not otherwise be successful. In summary, board members were pleased to have been able to maintain and improve curricular, extra-curricular, and facilities needs across the district despite the financial challenges.

Areas suggested for future focus included clarification of how dropout figures are reported and where we can focus additional improvement efforts; reviewing activity fees to determine how much of a barrier these are to students; scheduling a full day board retreat to discuss multiple topics; determining how to encourage future leaders from our community who might serve on the board in the future; fleshing out the criteria and timeline for a superintendent search and determining whether to solicit applicants from outside the district; the need for greater understanding by the board of the impacts of growing up in poverty; making improvements in our industrial arts programs to keep curriculum, materials and technology current; looking at the possibilities for dress codes as we plan for the opening of Cedar Crossing; working to convince every student of the need to further their education beyond high school and giving them the support to access available assistance; continuing to develop alternative programs for students who are not finding success; continuing to make efficient use of classrooms and providing professional work spaces for teachers to use during their planning periods; and additional focus on extended day and after school programs.

**Other Business / Future Agenda Items** – It was the board’s consensus to hold an executive session on Wednesday, June 25, 7:00pm, to discuss the superintendent’s evaluation. An all day board retreat was scheduled for August 2. Summer board meetings are scheduled for July 17 and August 21.

**Adjournment** – There being no other business, Chair Mattson announced that the board would reconvene in executive session immediately following the regular meeting, in accordance with ORS 192.660 (2)(d) Collective Bargaining. She then declared the regular meeting adjourned.



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Annette Mattson, Board Chair



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Barbara Rommel, Superintendent / Clerk