

**Meeting of the School Board
David Douglas School District No. 40
July 15, 2010**

A regular meeting of the David Douglas School Board was held on Thursday, July 15, 2010, at 7:00pm in the Board Room of the David Douglas School District Administration Building, located at 1500 SE 130th Avenue, Portland, Oregon 97233.

School Board Members present were:

	Dawn Barberis, Board Chair	
Mike Centoni		Annette Mattson
Frieda Christopher		Mike Price
Donn Gardner		Cheryl Scarcelli Ancheta

Also present were Don Grotting, Superintendent/Clerk; Natalie Osburn, Assistant Superintendent; and Gail Hunter, Board Secretary.

The agenda included consideration of the following:

Call to Order / Flag Salute

Board Member Reports – Mr. Centoni welcomed new Superintendent Don Grotting and the new board leadership team, saying he is excited about the new energy and vision in the district which will propel us into the future. He was pleased to attend the award presentation recognizing David Douglas as one of the “Best Communities for Music Education” nationwide, held at Beacock Music in Vancouver, WA. Many of our music teachers attended, and he said without the efforts of our music staff we couldn’t achieve at this level. Mr. Centoni was pleased to announce that he is a new grandfather as of July 7. Frieda Christopher announced that the district will have an information booth at the East Portland Expo, to be held all day this Saturday and Sunday at Ed Benedict Park. Donn Gardner extended a warm welcome to Superintendent Grotting, saying he is glad to have him here. Cheryl Scarcelli Ancheta thanked the many staff members in attendance this evening, saying it is a great day to be part of David Douglas. She said that as the newest board member, it’s her privilege to sit beside the new superintendent. Annette Mattson recently participated in her first meeting as part of the Lents Urban Renewal advisory commission. She thanked staff members and patrons for sending her many emails regarding budget concerns. Ms. Mattson said more than 30 exhibitors will participate at the East Portland Expo this weekend. Board Chair Barberis was pleased to welcome Superintendent Grotting to his first David Douglas board meeting.

Superintendent’s Report – Superintendent Grotting thanked board members, members of the staff and community, the administrative team, and the leadership of our bargaining units for the way all have made him feel so welcome. He also expressed appreciation for the warm welcome extended to his wife and seventh grade daughter. He joked that when he accepted the position of superintendent he thought the budget would be solved, and negotiations would be over by the time he took the helm, and said nobody told him about board member idiosyncrasies. The superintendent said he has met with a number of our staff members and looks forward to carrying on the great work being done here. He asked staff from all of our elementary schools and Floyd Light Middle School to stand, and commended them for making AYP, saying this was a great achievement. He noted that while success is not measured by student achievement alone, student achievement is very important to him. Some of our schools are in school improvement status, and he said it is his priority to provide the resources and support they need to help staff and students achieve.

Superintendent Grotting announced that a group of our high school students participated in the SkillsUSA Competition, held in Kansas City in June. Junior Chloe Timmons brought home a gold medal. He congratulated her, as well as the other David Douglas students who competed, along with their advisors Keith Knight and Amanda Moore.

The superintendent concluded his report by saying that becoming our superintendent is a great opportunity for him. While coming from a small community, his previous district faced similar challenges regarding issues of diversity and poverty. He said he looks forward to working with our staff and students, and to engaging our community, to provide the best possible education for David Douglas students.

Budget Recommendations – Superintendent Grotting said this is a very difficult time in Oregon and throughout the country. Based solely on the state income tax, as the economy goes, so goes school funding. He thanked his Cabinet, in particular Dr. Osburn, Mr. Richardson, and Ms. Essenberg, as well as our administrators, as he has been working with them to provide a budget for the 2010/2011 school year intent on retaining educational programs, maintaining and improving student achievement, and decreasing the negative economic impact on our existing staff. He has also been mindful of the board's desire to maintain a 5% contingency as well as trying to predict future financial challenges. Superintendent Grotting noted that tonight's recommendations are not a fix in any way, and that this district cannot continue to spend down revenues, as the car is about out of gas. He announced that no current employee will be dismissed. If an employee currently has a job they will have one for next school year. He has talked with the leaders of both bargaining units, as it will take a joint effort to weather the next two or three years. He and the cabinet will spend this year looking at different efficiencies and options, but there will be some very difficult decisions to be made next year. For this budget to work, it will be necessary to spend down some cash carryover, which is currently about \$.5 million less than was last reported. He used part of the stabilization fund to ensure that employees continue to have their jobs. The UAL PERS fund will not be fully funded this year. This will not be an option next year. All stimulus funds will be fully expended during the next year. This one time money won't be available next year. We will have librarians in all buildings next year. Instructional assistants will be back, but will be reduced to 6 hours per day. Their duties and buildings may not be the same. We will be using Title I carryover and set aside to maintain staffing that would have been lost through budget cuts, specifically Title I instructional assistants. The cash carryover will be reduced to estimated \$5.1m, approx 5% of our budget. Also within this budget, we are reducing some positions. We have already reduced 21 FTE through attrition; reductions will total 36 FTE including classified and administrative positions. We are able to add about \$200,000 to middle school sports to reinstate some of those activities for youth under a community sports model. A hiring freeze will continue. If a position becomes open, we will strongly consider not filling it; preferring to reduce staffing through attrition rather than impact current employees.

Mr. Gardner said that these numbers have been gone over more than once; the last round of difficulty was generated by the state's revenue forecast. He said another is due in the fall that may further complicate our finances. He said Superintendent Grotting has looked under every rock, taking one time dollars and using those to give staff the opportunity to continue working. He noted that reductions will necessitate larger class sizes, but expressed hope that staff will remember when workloads increase that they are still working. This budget does not require a cut in days. Mr. Gardner said he hopes our district's team spirit will take us through these difficulties.

Mr. Centoni agreed, saying that there will be three more revenue forecasts before the end of next school year. He said he hopes that even if we don't see an increase in funding, we don't see an additional reduction. He said the board wants to give Superintendent Grotting the opportunity to build his own budget from the ground up.

Ms. Mattson said she talked at length with Superintendent Grotting, and that one item discussed was \$550,000 in Title 1 carryover to be used to support Title 1 positions. She asked whether conversation with the state has been completed regarding this item. Superintendent Grotting said he called ODE to confirm whether this expenditure is appropriate; he thinks we're on solid ground.

Ms. Christopher reiterated that when the board says there will be more cuts, there will be. Most of these funds will not be available next year. There will be staff cuts if funding doesn't come through. If ARRA funds are tied to 2006 levels, we might be OK. She said she doesn't like spending down so many of these accounts, as we are left with no cushion. The administration and staff will spend this year trying to find efficiencies.

Superintendent Grotting said we will be spending \$7-9 million more than we'll receive in revenue. This next year will take everyone's best efforts. He noted that the district spends more than \$1.3 million in substitute costs per year. Some of that may be through required activities; some absences are just part of life, but if we really buckle down we can save some jobs. He has instructed principals to find things we're doing that don't make sense, and to identify what can we take off our plates. He said he will be sensitive to adding to work loads: if something important needs to be added, what task can we remove to compensate?

Ms. Scarcelli Ancheta said she is very appreciative of the superintendent's efforts, and tonight's more positive message. She said she has confidence that we'll continue to do our very best for students. She challenged staff members who visit with parents who aren't working, to invite them in to volunteer. She said it should be a priority for all to continue to have a stronger voice with state representatives. Mr. Centoni announced that Rep. Mike Schauffler will host a town hall the last Saturday of this month at Happy Valley School.

Mr. Gardner made a motion to approve the proposed adjustments within the adopted budget, seconded by Mr. Price. The motion carried in a unanimous vote. Superintendent Grotting thanked board members for their support.

Late Wednesday Start: Student Achievement/Professional Development – Superintendent Grotting presented a recommendation to have all David Douglas schools begin one hour late every Wednesday, in order for building administrators and staff to focus collaboratively on student achievement. Having the late start every Wednesday would provide consistency for staff and our families. He said his primary focus is student achievement, and his past experience has shown him that time needs to be set aside to make that happen. Providing this staff development time would allow staff to plan and collaborate to align curriculum to content standards, research best instructional strategies, and analyze data. In talking with our building administrators, the superintendent said they feel this time is necessary if they are going to move their schools forward. He stressed that this time will be used wisely, and, if implemented with fidelity, will result in better teaching, improved instruction, and finally, student achievement.

It was asked whether the request is for one school year only. Superintendent Grotting said he would hope this change would become imbedded into our district culture. He was asked whether the agenda would be district- or school-driven. He said the district will have oversight into looking at data and determining where improvement needs to be made. It was remarked that in a district with our poverty rates, parents rely on the free breakfast program. The superintendent said breakfast would be served on Wednesdays, but it might be structured differently. A question was asked about whether this change would cause a reduction in hours for any of our support personnel.

Superintendent Grotting said he believed hours would simply be shifted where necessary. It would also provide additional opportunities and time for support staff to accomplish tasks in times of diminishing resources and personnel. It was suggested that by approving the recommendation for one year, the practice could be discontinued if it is not making a positive impact. Superintendent Grotting responded that it would really take at least a full year to determine whether it is effective. He said this change would replace other professional development early release days. If approved, the word will go out immediately to parents via several formats. Mr. Centoni moved approval of Superintendent Grotting's proposal as outlined, seconded by Mr. Price. The motion carried in a unanimous vote.

Audience Participation / Break – Chair Barberis opened the meeting for public comment.

Greg Becker, OSEA Ch. 40 President, said that the Classified Employees group is the only one actually losing employees to layoffs. He said they have lost four employees, one of whom is currently on unemployment. He requested that the Board find the funds within the current budget to save the position of High School Library Assistant, which has been eliminated, saying that in addition to the necessary service provided in the high school library, maintaining this position would prevent a layoff as the bumping process proceeds.

Deb Wheelbarger, Mill Park librarian, spoke on behalf of the librarians to thank the superintendent and board for saving their jobs. She remarked that research shows that with full time certified librarians in every school, test scores are higher. She said the librarians will continue to report this year on how they are supporting student achievement in their buildings.

As there were no further remarks from the audience, the chair declared a brief recess. The meeting was reconvened.

Marshall Site Discussion – Superintendent Grotting announced that when he met the PPS superintendent, she requested that he speak with our board to determine their interest in discussing with their board the possibilities for use of the Marshall campus. In talking with Dr. Osburn, Mr. Richardson and Mike Stout, he understands that there have been very informal meetings to this point. The superintendent said he specifically asked if PPS was willing to consider boundary adjustments; she said that was out of the question. He said he does not know if they have specific ideas or motives, but districts are doing everything they can to make the best use of their facilities to provide opportunities for students.

Concerns were expressed about PPS's reluctance to articulate a specific proposal. It was also noted that PPS and David Douglas have very different cultures. Dr. Osburn said her sense is that what PPS is looking for is what we would want from them, so they can determine if a partnership would be possible. It was remarked that the general public doesn't understand why we aren't looking at that building to ease our overcrowding. Although there are many unanswered questions, most were in favor of continued dialogue. Chair Barberis concluded by saying our board has many concerns, but there are some possibilities which might save us money if they fit our needs for our students. She said the administration should continue the discussion and bring back some specifics.

Deardorff Elementary Site Discussion – Superintendent Grotting said he and Superintendent Rommel attended a meeting in June with the Mayor, and his office indicated there may be a possibility to revisit the proposed development of the Deardorff property through the Lents Urban Renewal District. No specific details were provided, however, their office indicated they would remain in contact with us. Ms. Mattson said that at the Lents meeting she attended, there was a

rumor that there is conversation going on regarding satellite annexation of the site into the Lents Urban Renewal District rather than the River District. About half of the Lents URA is within David Douglas boundaries. She said if the idea does come before the Lents Urban Renewal Advisory Commission, it would be controversial discussion. Nothing has been made public at this time.

Gateway Education Facility Discussion – Superintendent Grotting recently attended a meeting with Ms. Christopher to hear about the Gateway Urban Renewal concept plan which includes an education center. Ms. Christopher said that unlike Lents, education was one of their group’s three top priorities. Mt. Hood Community College and Portland State University gave their initial verbal support when discussions began several years ago, but their participation waned; the new presidents of those institutions have expressed renewed commitment. The concept plan is a “cradle to grave” model, sharing resources between the four partners (MHCC, PSU, David Douglas and Parkrose). They have a piece of land and a developer who supports an education center, and received a grant to develop conceptual ideas, although at this point nobody has money to build it. They would also consider a partnership with the private sector to develop a concept that would be used all days, all hours, using private money and grants to build it. Ms. Christopher said Barbara Rommel has committed to continue to serve on the committee. Even though the committee realizes the project is several years out, it offers an exciting possibility.

Consent Agenda – Mr. Gardner moved approval of the following consent agenda items, seconded by Ms. Mattson. The motion carried in a unanimous vote.

- **Resolution to Select a Workers’ Compensation Insurance Carrier for the 2010-11 School Year**
- **Personnel Recommendation**
- **Approval of June Board Meeting Minutes**

Other Business / Future Agenda Items – Chair Barberis requested additional input from board members about their preferences for committee assignments. As a future agenda item, Mr. Centoni requested an update on the status of the Azbuka appeal. He also asked Ms. Essenberg about the timeline on the opening of the health center at the high school. She said the facility should be ready shortly after the start of the school year. A modular unit is being installed near the breezeway on the east side of the pool building.

Adjournment – There being no other business, Board Chair Barberis announced that she would be convening an executive session immediately following the regular meeting, in accordance with ORS 192.660 (2)(d) Collective Bargaining. The regular meeting was adjourned.



Dawn Barberis, Board Chair



Don Grotting, Superintendent / Clerk