

**Meeting of the School Board  
David Douglas School District No. 40  
May 15, 2008**

The regular meeting of the David Douglas School Board was held on Thursday, May 15, 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	Donn Gardner
Bruce Burton	Mike Price
Frieda Christopher	

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** – Bruce Burton attended the “Celebrating Student Success” banquet last Friday, where the Gilbert Park staff was honored for their work in closing the achievement gap. 1,000 people attended the event, representing schools from across the state. Frieda Christopher said she was sorry to miss the budget meeting but assured board members she enjoyed her recent cruise. She attended yesterday’s meeting of the Portland Development Commission with Superintendent Rommel. The commission voted to approve annexation of the Deardorff property into the River District. There will likely be a legal challenge. Representatives from Portland Public Schools expressed opposition to the David Douglas portion of the plan. Board Chair Mattson attended the budget committee meetings and the “Celebrating Student Success” event organized by ODE. She noted that this is the second year a school from David Douglas has been recognized. She suggested that board members and district patrons take time to send messages to City Council members to thank them for supporting the urban renewal satellite district, as they are taking a tremendous amount of heat for their support of this proposal.

**Student Body President’s Report** – Stacy Chao reported that the Scots will take part in the State tennis tournament this weekend. Softball playoffs are underway at Oregon City. Senior Recognition Night will be held Monday, June 2 at the PAC. Seniors will go to Oaks Park on May 30 and are looking forward to graduation on June 4, followed by the All Night Party.

**Superintendent’s Report** – Mike Stout reported that thanks to the encouragement of American Legion Post 1, eleven David Douglas High School students will be attending Boys and Girls State this summer. Girls will meet at Willamette University and the boys will be at University of Oregon. Sherrie Barger contacted a representative of “Hands on Portland”, a volunteer group she has worked closely with, regarding the opening of the North Powellhurst Early Childhood Center. They met with her yesterday and plan to get involved in painting as well as working on the grounds, doing some planting and spreading bark dust to get the building ready for the start of the school year. Kindergarten Roundups were hosted by all of our elementary schools on Friday. 283 families attended. A DVD tour of the North Powellhurst campus was presented to introduce parents to that facility. Information on kindergarten is displayed on the district website. Police were involved in an incident this morning near SE 126 & Holgate. They were very helpful in coordinating access to

Gilbert Heights as traffic was diverted. Our school resource officers remained in the Gilbert Heights parking lot until all children were delivered to school. Superintendent Rommel sent a message via FlashNews this morning to let parents know the school remained open. That information was also posted on the district and school websites. Susan Summers reported that the next bargaining session is scheduled for May 22, 1:30-4:00pm. She looks forward to continued progress. Three sessions have been scheduled for June 2, 9, and 16, 4:00-8:00pm. Barbara Kienle announced that three district students had their ads selected for publication in today's *Oregonian* as part of the newspaper's "Design an Ad" contest.

Barbara Rommel was pleased to announce that David Douglas School District has just been recognized as one of the best communities in the nation for music education by the National Association of Music Educators. She thanked Gilbert Park Music Teacher Val Ellett, who completed the application and won that recognition for the District. The Ron Russell Middle School marching band will perform during this Saturday's Gateway Fun-O-Rama Parade, as will a group from the high school. Board Chair Mattson said she will fill in as a judge for Superintendent Rommel, who is being honored by the Gateway Area Business Association as this year's "Citizen of the Year". She will be the Grand Marshall of the parade. The superintendent notified board members that they will soon be receiving letters from the district's auditors as part of newly established auditing requirements. They will be asked to complete a brief questionnaire and return it to the auditor. The superintendent extended her appreciation to Metro for providing additional funding for the Outdoor School program. Two principals have been recognized recently by Portland State University. West Powellhurst Principal Allen Browning has been recognized for his assistance with the administrator education program. Menlo Park Principal Brooke O'Neill was featured in a nice article from the PSU Alumni Links newsletter. Superintendent Rommel announced that City Commissioner Randy Leonard took the time to come to the PDC meeting and spoke very forcefully in support of the satellite district proposal. He also reprimanded PPS board members for their opposition. Ms. Rommel expressed her thanks to Commissioner Leonard for his staunch support.

**Citizens Advisory Committee Reports** – Three subcommittees from the Citizens Advisory Committee presented reports on this year's areas of study. Mr. Stout introduced Eric Nelsen, CAC chair for the second year. A number of CAC members in the audience were also introduced. Mr. Nelsen said it has been his pleasure to act as chairperson. He said it is always a challenge to determine which topics the group wants to discuss each year. The CAC will be adding a planning month next fall to look at key elements of district organization, in hopes of being better advisors to the Board. He expressed hope that tonight's remarks would be helpful and relevant.

**• Nutrition Explorations**

Tina Owens, second year member of CAC, said this subcommittee's interest in looking at nutrition gradually evolved into the broader topic of sustainability. After receiving background information from Nutrition Services Manager Jodi Taylor, they turned to questions regarding where food items are coming from; what is wasted; and what trays and utensils are made of and whether they are reusable. Ms. Owens noted that Holly Wolfe was very helpful to the group. The subcommittee recommends that the board establish a policy regarding sustainability. The policy could incorporate environmental stewardship and would show students, staff, and community members that these issues are important to the district. Several of our schools are 'green certified' and the district has established an energy conservation program. Having policy in place would encourage more continuity across the district and contribute to student learning, teaching students practical ways to be involved in their schools. It would provide the framework on which to build the district's efforts.

They recommend forming a committee of board members, staff, and parents to frame this policy. Board Chair Mattson said that recommendations could be considered when the board meets for a retreat this summer. She thanked the committee for their work.

• **Community Voice**

Completing his eighth year on CAC, Mike Ewald reported that discussion on this topic began last school year. Discussions sought to explore ways to improve the City's service to the district and community. City Hall and Multnomah County now seem well aware of David Douglas and communication is vastly improved. The group decided to look at this topic differently this year. They propose that on a rotating basis, principals or school improvement coordinators be asked to recruit someone from their community or school to attend a City Council meeting, signing in as a David Douglas community member so they know district patrons are there listening every week. There would be no requirement that the volunteer speak at the meeting unless moved to do so by a particular topic. The volunteer would later complete a very brief questionnaire about any topics discussed which were relevant to David Douglas, and return it to CAC. Each school could be represented every 14 weeks.

They further propose that the district do some positive promotion via "City Council Kids" program begun by Mayor Potter in which student groups perform or present prior to Council meetings. If the new mayor continues the program, each school could be asked to come up with an idea for a presentation. CAC would coordinate and work on scheduling with the City. Mr. Ewald said it would be a visible way to share some of the good things going on around the district. He noted that as a volunteer without students currently in our schools, he has appreciated the frequent email communications from Dan McCue about district news.

It was suggested that CAC consider tackling the challenge of increasing voter registration in our area. Low voter turnout here has been a chronic issue. A CAC member asked whether voter registration is supported at the high school. The superintendent said Multnomah County has in the past sent birthday greetings with voter registration cards to students reaching age 18. Mr. Stout noted that City Commissioner Randy Leonard attended a meeting of the CAC last school year to answer the groups' questions and hear their concerns.

• **Parent Survey**

Kyle Riggs, parent of two Gilbert Heights students, reported that a CAC subcommittee was formed prior to approval of funding for a new school building on Deardorff, to consider the possibility of a K-8 configuration and possible uses of a school-based community center. The group conducted a survey of parents which asked about options for the new school.

After reviewing the survey responses, the subcommittee does not recommend a K-8 format. The survey was sent home with all elementary students in the district. More than 1,400 responses were received. 1,366 responses strongly believe in separation of younger from older students. Parents do not support the K-8 format. There were also functional concerns raised, including types of program available to K-5 that might not be available to K-8 due to space and time constraints. Parents believe that kindergarten readies students for elementary; elementary readies students for middle school; middle schools ready students for high school; and high school prepares students for life. Taking some students out of that model caused great concern among parent responders.

In looking at possibilities for a magnet school, 75% of 1,325 survey respondents supported the concept, with 25% in opposition. However, the subcommittee does not recommend this option. They have concerns regarding transport; families with multiple children wanting all to attend the same school; and don't see how a school more focused on environmental science would be more

beneficial than a school focused on any other area of science. They also noted that Earl Boyles did not remain a magnet school. In taking responses into account, combined by visits to each school during CAC meetings over the year; they found that people don't want an environmental magnet school as much as they want a district that is environmentally responsible. The subcommittee views the site as a possibility for an in-district outdoor school type of format, with student groups visiting for special lessons.

Respondents to questions about possible uses of a community center recommended modeling after the SUN program. At the core would be a multi-use space where people can gather and be a community. Suggestions included meeting rooms for local clubs and organizations, evening adult and family classes, use of the gym, family movie nights, and community concerts.

The board chair thanked members of the CAC for their efforts to make our district a better place.

**Audience Participation / Break** – Board Chair Mattson opened the meeting for public comment. There were no remarks from the audience. A brief recess was declared, after which the meeting was reconvened.

**Construction Update** – Gary Haase reported that only one day of wet weather has slowed progress on construction projects. They remain on schedule. Planning, permitting, and bidding are underway for the Ron Russell expansion. Prices of any of products having to do with metal or steel are rapidly increasing. It is difficult to find suppliers and they are charging a premium. Paul Arzt presented photos showing progress on the Floyd Light wing and offices and the High School track and field. Superintendent Rommel noted that at last board meeting it was announced that the hearings officer had approved a conditional use permit for the Deardorff site. That decision has been appealed by the Pleasant Valley Neighborhood Association. The appeal will go before the City Council on June 5th.

**Consent Agenda** – Mr. Gardner moved approval of the following consent agenda items, seconded by Mr. Burton. The motion carried in a vote of 6-0.

- **Construction Excise Tax Fund Resolution**
- **Approval of Special Revenue Fund / PERS Unfunded Liability**
- **Personnel Recommendations**

**Other Business / Future Agenda Items** – Superintendent Rommel announced that a facilitator has been booked for the board retreat on August 2. The location has not yet been determined. The facilitator believes the day's activities can be completed in a half-day session.

**Adjournment** – There being no other business, Board Chair Mattson declared the meeting adjourned.



Annette Mattson, Board Chair



Barbara Rommel, Superintendent / Clerk