

**Meeting of the School Board  
David Douglas School District No. 40  
October 5, 2017**

A special meeting of the David Douglas School Board was held on Thursday, October 5, 2017 at 7:00pm in the David Douglas School District Board Room, 1500 SE 130, Portland, OR 97233.

School Board Members present were:

Christine Larsen, Board Chair

Bryce Anderson  
Frieda Christopher  
Ana del Rocio

Kyle Riggs  
Stephanie D. Stephens

Also present were Ken Richardson, Superintendent/Clerk; Candy Wallace, Assistant Superintendent; Patt Komar, Director of Administrative Services; Derek Edens, Director of Assessment & Technology; Brooke O'Neill, Director of Curriculum; Kelly Devlin, Director of ESL & Equity; Andy Long, Director of Education, and Laurie Brunelle, Board Secretary.

The agenda which will not include public testimony (written testimony is always accepted), will include consideration of the following:

**Call to Order/Flag Salute**

Board Chair Christine Larsen read the following statement:

*We all know that schools are a place that children come to learn. Our schools also provide children with a place where there are expectations, routines, and acceptance among so many other things that create a welcoming, stable and safe place for our children. In this last week, four of our elementary schools have been a target of criminals that have destroyed school property and put racist graffiti on our buildings. This hateful behavior is unacceptable and is not tolerated by the David Douglas Community. Our schools are committed to our students and their families in providing school climates that are welcoming, inclusive and affirming of differences across race and ethnicity, and giving our children that stable safe place to learn and be kids.*

Mr. Richardson shared that Menlo Park Elementary School was a victim of racist graffiti and vandalism. The police were called right away and our custodian cleaned this up before most of the students arrived. A few days later Ventura Park, Lincoln Park and Mill Park were vandalized with the same racist graffiti. The elementary principal's put together a letter of communication in conjunction with the Communications Director and sent it to each building community. The District sent a letter to the entire community, posted it on Facebook and emailed families. Mr. Richardson said we have shared all of our video and resources with the police and media and we believe it's the same two individuals who have committed these acts of vandalism. He said we've contacted our security company and the East Precinct Police Department to request added security and patrol efforts in our District. On Monday evening Menlo Park put on a community event hosted by Unite Oregon where the community was invited to come together to have a dialog, and to stand up and say we will not tolerate this.

Ms. del Rocio said she realizes there were expenses incurred with the destruction of property and increased security. She thanked Ms. Stephens for taking the initiative to raise funds for the District so we don't have to use general fund dollars. She requested the security cost be added

to the fund raising goal. Ms. del Rocio said she would like to keep an open communication with directly impacted communities to determine what is needed.

Ms. Stephens said she would ask if the security costs could be added to the fund raising goal. She said her and Ms. del Rocio would like to have a conversation with impacted community members away from the district where they may feel safer. They would like to facilitate a more internal dialog to people who felt they were directly impacted.

Mr. Richardson informed the Board of the crowd funding website that is up and running and on our Facebook. This will help to replace the damaged light pole caused by the burned port-a-potty at Menlo Park.

Ms. Christopher requested we get the message out to the neighbors of what events are taking place in the schools to get them more involved.

**Consent Agenda** – Mr. Anderson moved approval of the following consent agenda items, seconded by Ms. Stephens. The motion was approved in a vote of 6-0.

- Superintendent's Goals 2017-18
- Board Committees 2017-18

### **Visiting Delegations**

Elleanor Chin, Vice President and Michelle Ganow Jones, Executive Director of Oregon Chapter, National Organization for Women gave a presentation on the Oregon NOW Model student dress code.

Ms. Chin said their goal was to create a code, which could be incorporated into a school guide book or disciplinary scheme that would meet all normal requirements and does not create any risk of discrimination. When looking into the dress code issue they noticed in the warmer school months girls were continually being dress coded and it was being targeted towards their bodies. This makes girls feel shamed and feel like there is something wrong with their body. Ms. Chin said the process for coming up with a draft was challenging. They looked at model codes and the issues and tried to come up with umbrella objectives without creating unnecessary fear, anxiety, and shaming of students. Ms. Chin said they want to make it clear that they are reinforcing and validating the specific objective of a school environment. They want students to maintain a safe learning environment and wear the specific clothing needed for their class, be able to wear clothing that is comfortable, and minimize opportunities for discrimination on the basis of race, religion, gender identity or any other protected class.

Ms. Chin said they understand that there are ways that people express themselves through their attire. This may be O.K. for adults but is not appropriate for a school setting to have clothing with offensive language, explicit sexual images, or anything drug and alcohol related. She said the freedom for expressing themselves ends when it creates a hostile or menacing environment for anybody else. The Oregon NOW Model Dress Code says that districts should set the dress code and enforcement policies for the entire district because too often individual schools create their own student dress codes and enforce them in different ways. Ms. Chin said we want the students to come to school so why restrict clothing unnecessarily, and if you're going to have limitations you want to be able to do it consistently and quickly. Another challenge was to figure out what we want children to learn out of this process and what it means to go out into the world to interact and present yourself in a way that creates a favorable impression. Ms. Chin said

they understand that part of what children are learning when they come to school is how to be citizens of the wider world. Educators have said that we have many children with such intense needs such as no food, clothing, and not being safe at home so this is the place where they are learning how to be people. The home rule says that the primary responsibility for a student's attire resides with the student and parents or guardians. Where it becomes a problem is when it interferes with the health or safety of a student or when it contributes to a hostile or intimidating environment for anyone.

Ms. Chin said when it came down to writing out the dress code, they divided it up into what you have to do, what you can do and what you cannot do. She said the code should not suggest something is wrong with girl's bodies and everyone should cover certain parts of their body. Students must wear a shirt, bottoms and shoes. If there is an attire component to the student's class, they need to abide by this. Students may wear hats, hoodies, leggings, midriff shirts, pajamas, ripped jeans, tank and halter tops, athletic attire, and commercial or athletic logo. Students cannot wear clothing with language and images that is violent or relating to drugs, alcohol, hate speech, profanity, and pornography. Visible waistbands on undergarments under clothing is not a violation.

The training of school staff is essential and students should have the dress code clearly conveyed to them. Ms. Chin said students should never lose class time or be forced to wear extra clothing that isn't their own as a result of a dress code issue. They can be asked to put on their own onsite clothing. School administrators and teachers should enforce the district dress code consistently with their discipline plan. If a school is going to create a progressive disciplinary plan around attire it should be consistent with the severity of the infraction.

### **Board Discussion**

Ms. Stephens said making it a district wide policy that is consistent across all of our schools is something to consider. She would like to hear from the students about how they feel about the dress code rules and have a study of other district wide dress codes.

Ms. del Rocio said it should be a district wide policy and would like to redirect our attention to the task of educating our children. If there is attention being taken away from this task because of teachers having to enforce dress codes, then it is our job to fix it. She would like to collaborate and come up with language specific to this district.

Mr. Richardson said he would like to offer his administrative team a chance to present the current policy, explain what we've been doing and how it plays out in practice.

Ms. Christopher said the Oregon NOW Model Dress Code is good common sense and she thinks we could have a nice merge with this dress code and our own.

Mr. Anderson would like to hear from students, teachers, parents and administrators before we begin a draft of any kind.

Mr. Riggs said the Oregon NOW Model Dress Code has common sense and is very structured. He said if we know the reason for the dress code then he is certain it will all fall into place. He is open to a district wide policy pending hearing from the administrators.

Ms. Larsen would like an updated dress code policy that is long term.

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



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Christine Larsen, Board Chair



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Ken Richardson, Superintendent / Clerk