

**School District No. 1J, Multnomah County, Oregon  
Board Work Session of May 10, 2017**

**INFORMAL MINUTES**

A Work Session of the Board of Directors came to order at 5:06pm at the call of Chair Tom Koehler in the Wy'east Conference Room at the Blanchard Education Service Center, 501 N. Dixon Street, Portland, Oregon, 97227.

There were present:

Board of Directors:

Tom Koehler, Chair  
Amy Kohnstamm, Vice-Chair  
Pam Knowles  
Paul Anthony  
Steve Buel  
Julie Esparza Brown  
Mike Rosen  
Aliemah Bradley, Student Representative

Staff:

Bob McKean, Interim Superintendent  
Chris Russo, Assistant Superintendent, Teaching and Learning  
Kevin Crotchett, Jackson Middle School Principal  
Rosanne Powell, Board Office Manager

**MIDDLE SCHOOL IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

Chris Russo, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning, provided a PowerPoint presentation. Mr. Russo stated that staff had two charges from the Board: open two middle schools (Tubman and Roseway Heights), and envision an exemplary PPS middle grade model for students grades 4-10. Mr. Russo explained the work that had been to date for Tubman and Roseway Heights, and also explained the work that lies ahead. Mr. Russo listed the possible course offerings at Tubman and Roseway Heights: Language Arts, Social Studies, Math, Science, World Language/Native Language, PE, Health Education, Counseling Services, CTE program options, Library/Technology Research, and Exploratory (two options for each student per year), ESL, Special Education, International Baccalaureate (IB-Specific Tubman), Dual Language, and interventions in math and literacy for students in need of Tier II and III interventions. Mr. Russo reviewed the key next steps on middle grade programming, the community engagement plan, and the communications plan.

Director Buel questioned what type of art classes would be offered at Tubman. Mr. Russo responded that the course catalog would define the art classes offered. Art was defined under "Exploratory" and could be music, visual arts, or performing arts. Director Buel asked if Tubman would have a band. Mr. Russo responded that that was to be decided. Kevin Crotchett, Jackson Middle School Principal, added that there were many ways it could be decided: we would first need to know what the community wants, what the feeder high schools offer, and what the feeder elementary schools offered; alignment would be needed. Mr. Russo commented that it was not a free-for-all; there were parameters. At this time, it has not been confirmed what will be offered in feeders to/from Tubman. Director Buel stated his concern that this could be a bait-and-switch deal. Director Esparza Brown questioned if there was a timeline when the feeder schools would be considered. Superintendent McKean responded that the feeder conversation was currently happening, and that staff will meet with D-BRAC to receive their recommendations.

Director Knowles asked how much of the middle school implementation plan was contingent on the amount of money we will have. She did not want the public to think we will be providing all of the plan if we will not have the money. Mr. Russo responded that staff is hoping it will be cost neutral. It will take years to bring the schools to exemplary status; the Board will have a series of budget choices to make as they do every year. Director Esparza Brown questioned what the exemplary model would look like. Mr. Russo indicated that staff would have to come back at a later time with that information.

Director Buel stated that the following items were basic for a middle school: solid schedule of subjects; engaging activities and classes; radical principal who is not into constructs of how one works; obtaining solid teachers with room to move; wraparound services are solid; and, clear expectations and disciplinary procedures. Director Esparza Brown recommended working with Oregon RTI to develop one framework and system for disciplinary procedures.

Director Esparza Brown questioned ELL, culturally responsive, etc, and asked if they were mapped to grade level standards. Mr. Russo responded that what the Board has before them was an executive view; staff was not at that level yet. Superintendent McKean mentioned that if Board members had specific comments on additional things staff should look at, to please let them know.

Director Anthony commented that it was a mistake to consider student demand on whether or not to include a course at the school. In the past, the District sent out a list of possible art courses, and if they didn't receive student demand, it was not offered. It takes time to build interest in an art class; we need to see what kind of interest we can build. Mr. Russo stated that there needs to be some process and guidelines for determining what is offered.

Director Buel asked if Exploratory classes were locked in at nine weeks. Mr. Russo responded no. Director Buel stated that there should be daily PE in middle schools.

Director Esparza Brown mentioned that staff had performed a great amount of work and developed a great plan for a first step.

Director Anthony questioned how many periods were being proposed for the middle schools. Mr. Russo responded that, minimally, staff was looking at six periods, but they were encouraging a flexible schedule, so it could look different.

## **ADJOURN**

Chair Koehler adjourned the meeting at 6:32pm.

Submitted by:

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Caren Huson-Quiniones, Board Clerk  
PPS Board of Education