

**Redmond School District
School Board Work Session
September 12, 2012**

In Attendance: Chair Cathy Miller, Vice-Chair AJ Losoya, Directors Jim Erickson, Ric Little, Bob Perry, Superintendent Mike McIntosh, RSD Staff; Trish Huspek, Gina Blanchette, Linda Seeberg, Martha Hinman Media, Leslie Pugmire-Hole (*Spokesman*), Community Member, David Foote

Board Chair Cathy Miller called the meeting to order with a quorum of five at 3:00 p.m.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Superintendent Updates

- Last year the district projected a 60 student increase in enrollment for the 2012-2013 school year. At this time the district is seeing an additional increase of 60 students for a total of 120 up from last year. The district budgeted and staffed based on the initial 60 student increase. Based on that increase there are several “hot spots” that are being addressed. Superintendent McIntosh reported they are working on adding a .50 kindergarten teacher at Vern Patrick Elementary. Average class sizes are currently at 25-26 students at the elementary level, 30 at the secondary level and 34-35 at the high schools.

- The Maximum number of students a teacher will see at the high school level per day will be between 150-160 students. The average will be approximately 120.

Superintendent McIntosh provided an overview of what he hopes to accomplish today during the work session.

- Define/Agree on:
 - Vision
 - Mission
- Goals
 - RSD
 - Superintendent

Superintendent McIntosh stated that he believes the Redmond School District needs a vision. “We have talked at length about the core beliefs we have established. From there we must identify goals because that is what drives outcomes. I don’t believe all goals are measurable. We need to establish how we will measure if we have gotten to where want to go. We need to define who we are and that should dictate what we do. Just as important in defining who we are is to establish what the expectations are of everyone.”

Superintendent McIntosh reviewed with the board a draft goals worksheet that he had prepared as a starting point for the discussion on goals. “This is the year to put into motion a system that will not change regardless of who sits in the superintendent seat.”

Superintendent McIntosh spoke to the organization chart that has been created. “I think we have a sustainable organization chart but it is more contingent on having key people in key places than I had originally anticipated. We need to keep in mind that none of us will be here forever.”

Cathy Miller stated, “It will be critical that we build the system and then be able to afford it. That then needs to be clearly communicated to the community.”

Jim Erickson reported that he believes that research shows you commit to a mission or purpose and identify core beliefs and values. Among those is the growth of each individual person. “To the degree that we are designing curriculum around a specific person is a problem. The mission grows the individuals for the sake of the student. Our job is to create the changes that nurture that. We shouldn’t tweak the system to support people who aren’t willing to grow. It is the job of the people to accomplish the vision. It is the systems that we put into play that will grow people. The schools need to be defined by the systems and not the people.”

Superintendent McIntosh stated that we cannot build a system around specific people. We must own the mission and vision and create opportunity for ownership. “You get far better results from people who are happy to be marching than when we are forcing them to march. They need to see the benefit of working hard for the benefit of the students. We are dangerously close to building a system based on “people.” We need to build a system that regardless of who the people are, the system floats.”

Cathy Miller stated the vision and mission will define the expectations of the superintendent. Defining who we are will give us the foundation for the rest of the conversations.

Superintendent McIntosh stated, “A vision is where you are going, the mission is the “what”. The goals define the “how.”

Cathy Miller, in reference to the Redmond Educational Vision that was established several years ago, stated that this was never meant to be static. “It was meant to be a living, breathing document. This is a foundation and there are still strong pieces of it that reflect the district’s philosophies and desires. I don’t believe we throw it out completely. What we need to do is determine if it is still consistent with where we are going.”

Jim Erickson stated that this document was created from solid research. “This is a great indictment on what we have not achieved in the last five years toward our vision and mission.”

Cathy Miller stated, “The expectations have not been consistently clarified or enforced. That has been part of the problem.”

Jim Erickson stated, “Our primary mission is to instruct students with rigor and relevance in every standard. That is what would get kids prepared for the 21st Century. Our systems are not requiring our students to reach rigor and relevance. The systemic breakdown is in the realm of what we ask kids to do.”

Superintendent McIntosh stated that the system has allowed kids to believe that learning is “doing something.” “Rubrics and learning guides perpetuate that they must do something and there is a minimum standard for that. However, we need to change the system to teach students to become the teacher. Until the student knows their strengths and weaknesses they haven’t learned anything rigorously.”

AJ Losoya reported that he believes that we are all committed to the mission. The job is to now determine where the breakdowns are.

Cathy Miller reported that when this document was created there was not an adequate evaluation process for teachers and administrators. “We now have those systems in place.”

David Foote stated that his recommendation would not look at it in terms of where we failed or there was a breakdown. “It is more of building a system and in the last few years you have been building an infrastructure. This is a five year path and we need to evaluate where we are at.”

Jim Erickson stated, “What hasn’t changed is what we have been asking students to do. Until we do that, nothing is going to change. I believe we need to say to Mike that we need unrelenting commitment to student achievement. This needs to be demonstrated through rigor, relevance and proficiency. Once you say that, it is up to Mike’s team to decide what the operational steps are.”

In a continued conversation regarding the Redmond Educational Vision (REV) Superintendent McIntosh asked the board to reaffirm if this is the direction the district is going in. Is what we are doing for kids where we are supposed to go and is the Redmond Blueprint for Action still current. If so, he would present this body of work to all of the employees and let them know it is the expectation to deliver on it.

Cathy Miller requested the document be updated reflect a K-20 system. “At some point the document needs to be revised and reproduced in a simplified form.

Superintendent McIntosh stated it was his number one job to be the agent that leads the mission of communicating to the community. “One of the things I am looking for is unprecedented support from the board for the system. When everyone understands the board is behind us there will be a shift of me being the big brother to the supporter. One of the things that I want is support for the systems that we employ. I would like that to be very visible.”

Bob Perry recommended developing a core group of teachers that will be “early adopters” of the mastery model so that when we are ready to implement in the entire district, that group will be the ones to lead the charge.

Superintendent McIntosh suggested changing the district vision to “Unrelenting commitment to student success.” He stated, “If that is the vision then the mission is connected to that. I like that our only job is to deliver relevant, rigorous curriculum. I can then say, “This is what the board said to me.” We will then go about the business of determining the “how.”

Key Components of Goals/Action (expectation of the superintendent and district)

Vision – “Unrelenting commitment to student achievement” /success

Mission – Ensure a rigorous and relevant education (instruction) that develops productive citizens (need to include language around proficiency/mastery)

Next Steps

- “One District, One Team”
- Staff /Team determines “The How” - How to implement the goals
 - Systemically understand “what and why”
 - High levels of growth
 - In a safe and accountable environment
- How best to simplify the “Branding Road Map”
 - Infrastructure already established/built – how it has been integrated
 - Application
 - Delivery - continuity to community
 - Synthesis – clarity of model defined over a period of time

Superintendent McIntosh reviewed with the board a list of things that the district is engaged in. He stated that leadership takes this list of things and weighs it to determine if it adds or takes away from the mission. Some of the things on the list are compliance issues. There are other things we do that we need to determine if they are meaningful. Everything on the list requires time.

Clarify Scope of Work and timeline for completion

Superintendent McIntosh stated the district is on a dangerous precipice. The most recent fiscal forecast from the state is a “mixed bag.” “Money does not drive the ability to deliver on the mission but it has an impact. We have been able to save close to \$1.6 million for the PERS reserve but that won’t last even a year. Our little reserve account is not going to mitigate our liability. It is my job to create a sense of hope. That is where I want to channel my energy. We will need to come up with sound logic to address what we do and how we will address the impending financial crisis.”

Bob Perry stated that staff needs to create a list of items and what the costs are. “The board then needs to prioritize what can stay and what will need to go away. It will come down to what we can afford. None of the decisions will be simple or painless. There won’t be able to be any “sacred cows.”

Cathy Miller stated that some decisions can have a dramatic impact to high school students. “We have a responsibility to create contingency budgets to address different funding scenarios. We need to have a strong plan for dialogue with the community. The sooner we start the dialogue the better.”

Superintendent McIntosh stated, “In my short tenure here we have implemented several methods of providing information regarding the budget. We are delivering every ounce of truthful information we have available. We don’t have a very clear picture of the budget until the end of June. There is a balance between time and resources in identifying when we start the budget conversations. I believe that the Redmond School District has an incredible product, facilities, and gifted instructors and what I propose that one of my projects will be to capture revenue by bringing kids back into our system. We need to take time and resources to recruit. To do that, we need to change the delivery model for some of our courses. I believe it is time for us to get an online component. Districts in our region are offering on-line components. We have the opportunity to get the home-school students back in the district.” He further reported that he doesn’t support a 100% online education for students.

Jim Erickson stated, “My concern is what the cost would be to a system that is already strapped for money. If offering an online program means cutting something else, then that isn’t the right thing to do.”

Cathy Miller stated that she is frustrated with the man hours that it takes to do a contractual negotiations and then the agreements that are ultimately made are a detriment to our kids. “I would like to see the budget committee be more vocal about what they are willing to support. We continually compensate to the detriment to our general fund and we can’t do it anymore. It is better that we are honest and transparent about what the board is willing to agree to.”

Bob Perry expressed concern that if the district cuts any more days then we will no longer be in a position to be a magnet district.

Goal is climate/culture – You don’t have enough people to delegate the other things to – what other resources do you need to sustain. What do you need and how can we support you.

In response to a question by Cathy Miller regarding what additional supports are needed to ensure sustainability within the system, Superintendent McIntosh listed the following areas that he believes need additional workforce:

- Communication
- Fiscal Department
- Human Resources
- Academics
- There are several areas where “project type work” would be meaningful but every time you take a teacher out of the classroom you are taking them away from the students.

“What I worry about is that I am burning people out already because of my ability to delegate. There are many people here all hours of the day, night and weekends. There is a high volume of work, a high level of expectation that is self imposed because of the kind of people they are. We must be mindful of working conditions and compensation. However, at some point we have to meet reality with philosophy.”

Cathy Miller stated that as a board they have a responsibility to the district to have a sustainable system that supports everyone, including leadership.

Superintendent McIntosh reported that he would like to meet with his team to review the list to determine if they are vital functions to the district. It would be the goal to identify if there are items that are not productive or required and then articulate the breath and narrowness in some cases that we can accomplish based on the time

and resources that we have available. “We need to get really good at what we know. We know a lot and we don’t necessarily need to be looking for a new solution because sometimes the solution is right in front of us.”

There was discussion regarding the superintendent evaluation and the criteria that will be used. Jim Erickson stated that the board needs to develop a rubric based on the priorities and goals they set for the superintendent. “It is possible that Mike’s identified areas would be the same as what the board sets.”

Superintendent McIntosh stated that he will provide the board with a one page statement of priorities.

Communication

Cathy Miller stated that she isn’t always clear on who she should be contacting in the district office. She asked for clarification regarding communications.

Superintendent McIntosh stated that Trish Huspek is the boards contact for board related items. From that point she will broker the information to who needs it. He further clarified that Gina Blanchette is continuing to handle his emails, correspondence and appointment scheduling. Questions regarding achievement compacts should be sent to Linda Seeberg with a copy to him.

Surveys

There was a discussion regarding the climate survey and the next steps in moving forward. Superintendent McIntosh stated that considering the limited time and resources the district has, creating a new tool does not seem like the best use of those resources. He would recommend making some adjustments to the questions asked and applying it to every school, every employee and to the largest parent population at conferences that we can. It is possible we would get better data with the same tool. Staff could take the survey during School Improvement Wednesday or staff meetings. Students would take the survey during a specified class. Parents would have access to the survey online and could also be available in the computer labs during PTC meetings or conferences.

AJ Losoya stated that it is imperative that staff know the survey is anonymous so that they feel comfortable providing honest answers.

Mike will talk with administrators regarding the importance of allowing a safe environment for their staff to be able to respond honestly to survey questions.

Bob Perry stated that he would hate to lose the nationally normed portion of the survey.

Jim Erickson stated that he would like the data broken out regarding national averages for high schools and elementary schools. He further stated that he would be willing to work on creating “the big eight” that the board spoke of before. He will also contact the survey company to see what adjustments can be made in both the questions and the data that is reported back.

Ric Little stated that the survey information is very important and that every administrator needs to be provided the data so they understand the climate in their buildings.

David Foote stated, “In line of this vision/mission the problem you will find is there will be a tendency for reality to overtake where you want to go. To that point the plan must drive the budget and the vision must drive the plan. It is really important that there is a clear plan laid out in terms of what you will need to do to achieve the vision. Then look at the reality of resources. The resource allocation this coming year cannot fit into the old model.”

Linda Seeberg provided an update regarding the School Improvement Team and the Achievement Compact Advisory Team. In an effort to be more efficient she is recommending of blending those two teams. She provided the following guidelines for the Achievement Compact Advisory Team:

- The superintendent and association leaders need to recommend membership to the board
 - Membership needs to be representative of the district,
 - Voting members need to be employees of the school district,
- The board either accepts the membership or makes other recommendations,
- Meetings are public,
- Minutes need to be taken,
- The public can attend the meetings
- The teams is encouraged to use collaborative consensus in their decision making process

ADJOURN

The work session was adjourned at 8:13pm

Cathy Miller, School Board Chair

Trish Huspek, Executive Assistant