

## **SWEET HOME SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 55**

Sweet Home, Oregon

Board Chairman Jason Redick called the Board **Work Session** for the Board of Directors of the Sweet Home School District No. 55 to order at 5:00 p.m. on November 21, 2024.

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### **Board Members in Attendance**

Jenna Northern, Jason Redick, Mike Adams, Mary Massey, Jim Gourley, Dale Keene, Amanda Carter, Sara Hoffman: Absent: Floyd Neuschwander

### **Staff Members in Attendance**

Superintendent: Terry Martin Board Recording Secretary: Julie Emmert

#### **1. Call the meeting to order/pledge**

#### **2. Introduction of Jennifer Nelson, OSBA**

#### **3. Board Training** - Jenn Nelson from OSBA led a board training on board roles.

Board Governance Essentials professional development workshop focused on improving board effectiveness, building connection, clarity, and focus. The training addressed the district's strategic goals, vision, and mission, emphasizing the importance of governance alignment with student outcomes. Participants reviewed the 12 Standards of Effective Boardsmanship, clarified the roles and responsibilities of board members and the superintendent, and engaged in activities that reinforced their shared values and commitment to student success. Key takeaways included the importance of clear communication, strategic planning, and effective collaboration in supporting the district's mission.

The workshop was structured to provide board members with essential tools for enhancing their effectiveness. The presentation outlined key concepts such as the 12 Standards of Effective Boardsmanship, the distinction between the roles of the board and superintendent, and strategies for running productive meetings. Additionally, the session celebrated the district's strengths, particularly in the areas of CTE, forestry, and arts programs, demonstrating the positive impact of strategic governance on student success. The presentation concluded with a focus on building strong operating agreements and aligning the board's work with the district's long-term strategic plan beyond 2025.

#### **12 Standards for Effective Boardsmanship Standard Description**

1. Vision-directed planning Engage staff and community in development of a shared vision focused on student learning
2. Community engagement Recognize that all members of the community are invested partners. Support collaborative partnerships.
3. Effective leadership Establish focus, direction, and expectations that foster student learning. Align authority and responsibility so decisions can be made at the most local level.
4. Accountability High expectations for the learning of every student and holds the school accountable for reaching those results. Policy and resources align with the strategic vision and goals.
5. Using data for continuous improvement Use meaningful, quality data from multiple sources to set priorities and monitor improvement and progress.
6. Cultural responsiveness Recognize cultural diversity in many facets: race, gender, geography, sexual orientation, gender identification, socioeconomics, students with special needs. Reduce and eliminate barriers to access for all students. Apply diverse perspectives to policy and program approvals.
7. Culture and climate Create a climate of expectations that all students can learn. Support policies and procedures that foster a positive and safe learning environment. Model professional and respectful relationships.

8. Learning organization Ensure the school functions as a self-renewing professional community that supports reflection, discovery, improvement, and success at all levels. Encourage professional development and nurture leadership capabilities across the organization.
9. Systems thinking: Practice an integrated view of education within and across systems and levels. Seek out collaborative local, state, and national partnerships, coordinated programs, and shared resource models to improve student experience.
10. Innovation and creativity Encourage innovation and creativity as assets to the development of positive change leading to new types of thinking.
11. Board member conduct, ethics, and relationship with superintendent Have a clear, mutual understanding of the respective roles and responsibilities of the board and superintendent.
12. Budgeting and financial accountability Align the strategic goals of the school to budget priorities and ensure the school is fiscally sound. Allocate resources based on student needs, school policy, and strategic initiatives and priorities.

#### SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

Discussions centered around the district's values and how they align with the vision of creating a learning environment where every child feels valued and inspired. The group participated in a values exercise, with board members identifying their top shared values in order from the top as ethics, community, accountability, giving back and future generations. Other values identified by the group were safety, growth, knowledge, learning, and making a difference while prioritizing student focus and discussing how these values align with the district's mission to ensure that every child achieves their potential. Role clarity between the board and superintendent was another focal point, with scenarios illustrating when board members might overstep their responsibilities and how to ensure that governance remains strategic and aligned with district priorities.

#### Strategies

1. Improving Board Communication: Enhance board member communication through structured meeting agendas, clear role definitions, and effective collaboration with the superintendent.
2. Strengthening Board-Superintendent Alignment: Develop clear operating agreements that outline the roles and expectations of both the board and superintendent, fostering a trusting and transparent working relationships.
3. Strategic Focus on Student Outcomes: Align board discussions and decisions with the district's strategic goals, ensuring that every action taken is in service of the district's mission and vision.
4. Celebrating District Strengths: Build on successful programs like CTE and the forestry program by maintaining strategic oversight and ensuring these programs align with the district's goals for student achievement.

#### Priorities and Next Steps

1. Update Strategic Plan: Initiate discussions for updating the district's strategic plan, including long-term goals that ensure student success and district growth.
2. Create Board Operating Agreements: Develop a clear set of operating agreements between the board and superintendent, establishing expectations for communication, decision-making, and mutual respect.
3. Board-Superintendent Goals: Work together to set board-specific goals that will strengthen the collaboration between board members and the superintendent, ensuring the superintendent has the necessary support to meet district objectives.
4. Mentoring Program for Board Chair: Create a succession plan and mentoring program for the Board Chair role to ensure leadership continuity and stability.

#### **4. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

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*Signature, Board Chairman*