

Board of Directors Meeting
School District 4J, Lane County
District Office
200 North Monroe Street
Eugene, Oregon 97402
Monday, August 4, 2025

NOTICE: The Board Retreat will be open to the public to attend in person and via Zoom Webinar at: <https://4J-lane-edu.zoom.us/j/96516386055?pwd=wjpcvmmABm8P5kFspA1Eg9RsIX0dRb.1>, Webinar ID 965 1638 6055

The board will not hear public testimony during the Board Retreat.

**8:00 AM
Board Retreat**

- I. Call Board Retreat to Order, Roll Call
- II. Agenda Approval
- III. Retreat Agenda: 2
 - 8:00 – 9:00 a.m. – Team Building Activity
 - 9:00 – 10:00 a.m. – What Makes a High-Functioning Board
 - 10:00 – 10:15 a.m. – BREAK
 - 10:15 – 11:30 a.m. – Superintendent Entry Plan
 - 11:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. – Superintendent-Board Communication
 - 12:00 – 12:45 p.m. – LUNCH BREAK
 - 12:45-1:15 p.m – Board Committees
 - 1:15 – 2:30 p.m. – Afternoon Working Session / Eugene School District 4J Governance Goal
- IV. Adjourn Board Retreat

INFORMATION FOR THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING:
Closed Captioning is available during Board meetings through a zoom live feed which is also displayed at in-person meetings.

Eugene School District 4J

What makes a school board great?

2



Research and Sources

- Lighthouse Inquiry, 2000
- Lighthouse Phase 2, 2008
- National School Board Association Center for Public Education, 2011
 - *Eight Traits of Effective School Boards*

What makes a high – functioning school board?

1. Shared Focus on Student Learning

- High-performing boards **prioritize student achievement and equity** in all decisions.
- They adopt a **strategic plan** with clear goals and regularly monitor progress.
- They focus on **outcomes, not operations**.

What makes a high – functioning school board?

2. Strong Superintendent–Board Partnership

- Clear roles and mutual trust are foundational.
- The board governs; the superintendent manages.
- Productive boards support and **evaluate the superintendent using established goals and metrics.**

What makes a high – functioning school board?

3. Collaborative, Respectful Board Culture

- Effective boards **build trust, manage conflict constructively, and maintain professionalism.**
- Members model civility and put **district needs above personal agendas.**
- They disagree respectfully and unite behind decisions once made.

What makes a high – functioning school board?

4. Use of Data and Accountability

- High-functioning boards use student performance, equity data, and financial indicators to guide decisions.
- They hold themselves and the superintendent accountable for progress.
- **Transparent data** sharing builds trust with the community.

What makes a high – functioning school board?

5. Continuous Learning and Development

- Boards regularly engage in professional development, equity training, and governance retreats.
- They conduct self-assessments to improve performance.
- They stay informed on education trends and best practices.

What makes a high – functioning school board?

6. Engage the Community on Decisions of the Board

- Engage the community strategically to inform priorities, support system-level decisions and build public trust.
- Use structured methods of engagement (community forums, surveys, advisory groups) aligned to board-level work.
- Are transparent with the community about decisions of the board.
- Create clear protocols for engagement and listening

What makes effective teams?

The Board – Superintendent is one team!

Patrick Lencioni's book *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team* outlines common barriers to team effectiveness. While originally developed for business teams, the model applies powerfully to school boards, where collaboration, trust, and a focus on student outcomes are critical

1. Absence of Trust

What it means:

- Team members are unwilling to be vulnerable or honest with one another, fearing judgment or conflict.

In a school board:

- Board members don't feel safe admitting mistakes or lack of knowledge.
- Superficial conversations replace authentic dialogue.
- Members may second-guess others outside of meetings rather than engaging directly.

Impact:

- Leads to guarded behavior, silos, and a lack of collaboration with the superintendent and cabinet.

2. Fear of Conflict

What it means:

- Teams avoid productive debate and disagreement, leading to artificial harmony and unresolved issues.

In a school board:

- Controversial topics (e.g., equity, curriculum, superintendent evaluation) are tiptoed around.
- Discussions are dominated by a few voices or avoided altogether.
- Frustration builds beneath the surface, often spilling out in unproductive ways.

Impact:

- Prevents the board from addressing real concerns or making courageous decisions.

3. Lack of Commitment

What it means:

- Without open dialogue and clarity, team members don't fully buy into decisions—even if they appear to agree.

In a school board:

- Members vote but then speak out against the decision publicly or on social media.
- There is inconsistency in following through on agreed actions or strategic goals.
- Superintendent gets mixed signals, undermining direction and progress.

Impact:

- Creates confusion in the district and erodes trust with staff and community.

4. Avoidance of Accountability

What it means:

- Team members are reluctant to call out peers on behaviors or performance that hurt the team.

In a school board:

- Members ignore breaches of board norms or ethics.
- Poor meeting attendance, lack of preparation, or grandstanding goes unchecked.
- The board avoids confronting its own role in governance failures.

14

Impact:

- Undermines the integrity of the board and weakens its ability to lead by example.

5. Inattention to Results

What it means:

- Team members put personal agendas, politics, or egos above collective outcomes.

In a school board:

- Focus shifts from student achievement to adult issues or local politics.
- Members pursue pet projects unrelated to strategic goals.
- Board meetings become performative rather than mission-driven.

Impact:

- Student outcomes stagnate or decline, and the board loses credibility with the community.

Discussions + Questions + Scenarios

A large group of graduates in black gowns and caps are celebrating, with many caps thrown into the air against a clear blue sky. The graduates are looking upwards with joyful expressions, and their arms are raised in the air.

Superintendent Entry Plan

Eugene School District 4J (8.4.25)

The 4J Way: Stronger Together

Values-Oriented Leadership

- Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging
- Collaboration
- Compassion
- Longevity & Sustainability



Equitable Student Outcomes - The Center of All We Do

- Equitable outcomes are the guiding purpose
- Current district work: MTSS, UDL, Science of Reading, Inclusion
- Superintendent's role: Create conditions for sustainability and scale



Key Focus Areas - Year One

- Strong Board–Superintendent Relationships
- Belonging-Centered Culture
- Systems Alignment & Calibration
- Leadership & Staff Development
- Financial Stewardship

Equitable Student Outcomes



Community Engagement and Learning

- Connecting & Learning Series (July 2025–June 2026)
- Community Coalition (Launch Fall 2025)
 - Superintendent search panels
 - Advise superintendent on strategic goals & strategic plan development



Deliverables and Timeline

- July 2025–June 2026: Connecting & Learning
- January 2026: First 100 Days Report
- February 2026: Adopt Strategic Goals & Priorities
- March–April 2026: Draft Strategic Plan Development
- June 2026: Year One Reflection & Draft Strategic Plan
- Summer 2026: Finalize Plan for Fall Launch



Reporting and Reflection

- First 100 Days Interim Report (January 2026)
- Year One Reflection & Strategic Plan Draft (June 2026)



Looking Ahead

- Entry plan launches the adoption of strategic goals and priorities and the implementation of a broader, more comprehensive strategic plan



Questions and Feedback



Communication Protocol

- Emergency communication
- As per board Policy BG/BGD - Board-Staff Communications, the basic line of communication between the board and district staff will be through the superintendent

