

Good evening members of the board and Superintendent Vandercar. My name is Sabrina Gordon and I am president of Eugene Education Association.

In just a few weeks we'll launch into a new school year - one that is likely to be filled with challenges given the current COVID reality in our community. You are about to ask the educators of 4J to continue performing miracles in order to provide the school experience students deserve. And they will - educators are always willing to go above and beyond for our students.

Tonight I ask you to consider whether you are doing everything possible to set students and educators up for a successful year. Some questions to consider:

Are you providing enough time for teachers to plan, prepare, and collaborate each day throughout the year to respond to student needs? As discussed at the beginning of this meeting, a key way the Board can do this is by examining the daily schedule. Are you utilizing the state allowances for professional development, parent communication, and recess? Not using this tool offered by the Oregon Department of Education would mean missing an opportunity to positively impact student success. I think I heard some board members express concern that adding an extra item for discussion would lengthen this meeting. But the realities of COVID continue to require educators to work through a multitude of additional issues; it's just our reality right now. We all have a role to play in getting through this, including this Board.

Another schedule consideration: the placement of weekly professional development in the schedule. Communication released to parents this week shows Friday as the early release day for students, so that staff have time to engage in critical professional learning. But is Friday afternoon the best time to expect teachers to mindfully engage in new learning? A survey of EEA members conducted last spring shows that $\frac{2}{3}$ of licensed educators prefer mid-week for these activities over Friday afternoon.

Is the district including educator voice in planning for this year? It hasn't happened with the schedules yet - and school begins in 3 weeks. And is the Board aware that EEA has requested to bargain with the district over COVID safety and working conditions, with the goal of keeping our students learning safely and with the least possible interruption as the pandemic continues?

And finally, 4J will receive nearly \$37 million dollars in the third round of Elementary and Secondary Emergency Relief funds. Federal law requires union engagement for the purpose of ensuring educator voice in the spending of these funds. How will 4J engage with EEA on this?

I encourage the Board to pay attention to whether authentic educator voice is being included in decision making and insist that it happen.

We are indeed facing another year of challenges. 4J is very fortunate to have a talented, professional staff, committed to student success. Knowing the huge lift you will be handing them

in a few short weeks, now is the time to ask yourselves if you're doing all you can to help with this lift.

We all have an important role to play. Educators and students are counting on you to play yours. Thank you for doing so.