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District Office – 471 NE Ochoco Plaza Dr., Prineville, OR 97754 (541) 447-5664

April 9, 2012

Public Hearing – Insight Online Charter School

Minutes

1.0 CALL TO ORDER

Board Chair, Patti Norris, called the meeting to order.

2.0 INSIGHT ONLINE CHARTER SCHOOL

2.1 Presentation

Executive Director, JD McMahon, reported on the proposed Insight Online Charter School.

Highlights included all teachers meet or exceed the TSPC requirement for teaching. The proposal is for a K-12 charter school. They hope to open the school September 4 and would run through June 15 for the first year, to match CCSD school calendar. The school is asking for a five-year agreement. Mr. McMahon added that they have addressed all required statutes in the proposal.

Mr. McMahon answered questions from the board and audience.

2.2 Public Comment

Board Chair Patti Norris opened the floor to public comment.

A parent expressed concern about what would happen if the school district did not approve Insight as a charter school. Her daughter is currently enrolled in Insight as an alternative program offered by CCSD. She was assured that the current Insight School of Oregon as an alternative program for CCSD would continue.

Doug Smith stated that if the board approves this proposal, the district hopes this would offer even more opportunities for our students.

There were questions regarding the difference between the Insight alternative program vs. an Insight charter school. Mr. McMahon commented that the alternative program requires a large workload for CCSD staff because all students entering the program must be evaluated by CCSD. With the charter option the charter school would take all responsibility of paperwork and processing, relieving CCSD from that piece.

Darlene Harpster asked if Insight would be offering high quality classes for history, science and math. Mr. McMahon stated that all courses offered meet or exceed the Oregon state benchmarks for common core standards. She then asked how this program would affect CCSD current teaching staff. Dennis Kostecky indicated that currently the district has 15 students in the program. They do not anticipate having a large number of kids participating as fulltime students in the charter school.

There was discussion about the possibility of a large number of CCSD students transferring to the charter school and how that would affect the district. Mr. McMahon stated there is no evidence of a mass exodus from any school district that has sponsored a charter school. Most students select individual classes to

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complete their current program in their current school. He added that for a home school parent, this allows a vehicle for students to register with the charter school and be eligible for a state diploma, which is now not an option for home schooled students. If the student plans to attend a public college, a state diploma makes it easier for enrollment.

Doug Smith expressed a concern about the district's test scores. The district has worked hard to get state test scores up to match the requirement of NCLB. If the district sponsors the charter school, will this tend to drag scores down?

Mr. McMahon stated that if the district sponsored the charter school, the district would be creating another school in the district. If they cannot get the students to perform, it would go against the district, but not against the current high school. Currently they do pre and post testing of students to see where they stand. They have not had a problem with students earning A's and B's. They try to place students who are struggling into the correct classes and grade level.

There was discussion regarding enrollment numbers. The charter school is estimating an enrollment of 855. He added that if the enrollment were only 250, the charter school would still be successful and would not be in the red, nor would the district find themselves losing money because of the charter school.

There was continued discussion regarding the financial piece of the proposal. Mr. McMahon added that they have been operating a charter school in the state since 2007 and have been successful. His goal is to run the best charter school in the state. He added that an online charter school is not the right decision for every child, but for some it is the perfect match.

3.0 ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:10 p.m.

Patti Norris, Board Chair

Jan Martin, Board Secretary

May 14, 2012
Date Minutes Approved