

Board Votes Unanimously for Conversion to Charter District

by **Dr. Randy Trani**
Superintendent

AFTER MORE THAN two years of careful consideration, dozens of public meetings, consultations with the Oregon Department of Education, trainings and work sessions with the Oregon School Boards Association, and commensurate with the recommendations of the independent consultant Rob Saxton, the Corbett School Board voted unanimously to convert to a district with a single charter school, more commonly known as a charter district. Unlike traditional charter schools that have a separate board with a separate administrative structure, the conversion to a charter district is essentially just a name change. In a charter district the school board is still an elected body of the residents of Corbett, and the board continues to set board policy, enrollment targets, etc.

The primary reason for this conversion is to allow the school board the flexibility to control our student population without needing to ask for releases from surrounding districts in order for Corbett to accept non-resident students. As one of the lowest funded districts in the state of Oregon, it is critical to supplement our student population with non-resident students, each of whom brings significant state funding with them when they enroll at Corbett. These non-resident dollars allow the district to better serve resident students. Without the conversion to a charter district Corbett School District would be facing a long painful series of yearly reductions in services to resident students.

For the past seven years the district has worked to “right size” the district by reducing the student population while working to maintain educational services for resident students. With an

anticipated influx of state dollars in the form of the Student Investment Account dollars, the board and district are targeting further “right sizing” over the coming years. Although it is impossible to predict financial realities years into the future, we are currently

targeting a student population of about 81 students per grade level based upon today’s funding and expense estimates. The graph below illustrates the reduction in population over the last seven years as well as the targeted population over the next five years.



Visions and Values Meeting Summary

by Reprint of meeting summary as prepared by Michelle Vo and approved by committee members.

BEFORE THANKSGIVING the Visions and Values committee held their final meeting. A summary of the meeting follows.

Visions and Values Meeting Summary: The Visions and Values Committee met on November 25, 2019, facilitated by Kristen Miles from OSBA. Thirteen of the twenty members were present. The group reviewed results of the community survey, which gathered feedback at the Student Success Night (community open house) held in October, and by sending an invitation to participate to every mailing address in the District’s boundaries. The survey asked for feedback in two areas: concepts that might support a vision statement, and six draft values statements. Statistical results were compared and all written comments from participants were read aloud. The group agreed that the six Values statements had received sufficient support from 4/5 of the community (as recommended in the Saxton Report) to move forward with the Values statements as written.

Next the committee broke into three smaller groups, and using the survey feedback as a guide, the committee collaborated to compose a Vision Statement. The group also agreed on a minor edit to the six value statements to wrap in important concepts not included in the draft Vision Statement.

The proposed Vision and Values will be presented to the School Board at the December 18th, 2019 meeting with a recommendation for adoption at the January 15th, 2020 board meeting (both meetings will be held at 7:00pm in the Multi-Purpose Building). The proposed Vision and Values which will be presented are:

Our Vision...

The Corbett School community connects, engages, inspires and collaborates to support every student.

We Value...

1. Personal Responsibility

Modeling personal responsibility, commitment, and ethical decision making.

2. Advocacy

Advocating for students so they learn to advocate for themselves.

3. Resilience

Personal development through resourcefulness and resilience.

4. Inclusive, Collaborative Relationships

Creating a community based on inclusiveness, equity, and building collaborative relationships.

5. Innovation

Nurturing curious, passionate, creative, and innovative minds.

6. Continuous Learning

Fostering student engagement in continuous learning, building on their personal strengths.

Attendance Matters!

by **Kathy Childress**,
Assistant High School Principal

WE ALL HAVE THAT FRIEND WHO IS ALWAYS LATE, that you tell to meet you at 7:30 when the event starts at 8:00. Some of US are the ones who are always late. Do you set your clock ten minutes ahead so that you will leave the house on time? This is an example of a strategy that we have learned to use as adults, because we understand the importance of timeliness. Being punctual is respectful of the work that you do and the people you are with. The same holds true in school. Teachers have many things they are trying to accomplish so students get the most value out of their time together. A classroom that can start on time is respectful of the importance of each student’s education



Attendance Team: Mrs. Prince, Mrs. Childress, Mrs. Gibbs

With some staff special assignments in the high school, students are being held more accountable for being on time to all seven classes. While it may feel like a daunting task to get four hundred and fifty 8th-12th grade students to twenty different classrooms in a three minute span seven times a day, Corbett is experiencing a remarkable improvement this year. The attendance focus has been to decrease the number of tardy students as well as the number of students with unexcused absences. Students who have an unexcused absence or tardy are assigned a 20 minute lunch detention. Kathy Childress, assistant principal, follows up with each student personally to insure compliance. Jennifer Prince maintains the lunch detention space where students are asked to either work on school work, or sit quietly without their phones. With Erin Gibbs as acting attendance secretary, parents have been encouraged and reminded to inform her of their student’s attendance, so that students do not have an unnecessary lunch detention.

Last year, in the first two months of school 90% of our student body had at least one unexcused tardy or absence. This year, only 45% of our student body had an unexcused tardy or absence in the first two months. Holding students accountable and making personal connections has made a difference in our attendance, which we believe will translate into higher achievement for all of our students.