

Okemos Board of Education
Okemos, Michigan 48864
SPECIAL MEETING JULY 13, 2020

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The special meeting of the Okemos Board of Education was called to order by President Bolton at 7:04 p.m.

Members Present: Dean Bolton, Katie Cavanaugh, Mary Gebara, Melanie Lynn, Vincent Lyon-Callo, Tonya Rodriguez and Sarah Wohlford

Administrators: Superintendent John Hood; Assistant Superintendent Cheri Meier, Assistant Superintendent Stacy Bailey; and Finance Director Elizabeth Lentz

Call To Order

Attorney Gordon Van Wieren provided an update regarding the proposed Cell Tower on Bennett Woods Elementary property that would amend the lease previously approved and impact the parceling of the property, including a recent meeting with Meridian Township to review zoning issues. The proposed tower will be moved to the north in the latest property diagram. The next step is to have a review by Meridian Township.

Cell Tower
Proposal

Superintendent Hood and Assistant Superintendent Stacy Bailey provided an update as it pertains to the development of the 2020-2021 continuity of learning plan. They also reviewed the district's communication plan, a summary of the Governor's recommendations, policy implications and recent parent survey data. Specific safety protocols were outlined for each of the Governor's phases in the MiSafe Start Plan. Superintendent Hood explained how many of the recommendations would be implemented and numerous recommendations would be required elements in the district's plan. Phase 4 recommendations and requirements were addressed at length and specifically outlined the areas of personal protective equipment; hygiene; spacing; movement and access; screening of students and staff; testing protocols; responding to positive test; food services; extra-curricular activities; athletics; cleaning; transportation; and medically vulnerable students and staff. Phase 5 recommendations were also reviewed. Members determined that masks should be a required element in Phase 5 as well.

Continuity of
Learning Plan
& 20-21 School
Year

Members inquired about the following: social distancing considerations and limitations; funding; enforcement; grading; outdoor learning opportunities; online school enrollment; NHS membership; demographics of survey results; elimination of transportation; restroom use; open air and safety issues; contact sports; flexibility of plans; teacher safety and sick policies; enforcement policies; contact sports and MHSAA guidance; and remote learning options.

Assistant Superintendent Bailey reviewed the proposed instructional recommendations from surrounding counties including Ingham, Clinton, Eaton, Shiawassee and Gratiot which all call for 5 full days of face-to-face-instruction. The superintendent will present his recommendation to the board and community at the July 23rd meeting.

Members inquired as to how the safety protocol plan integrates with the various instructional scenarios the committee is developing; and communication with the community.

Superintendent Hood reported on the following: Meridian Senior Center; food service summer meal distribution; budget update; and hiring update for the Director of Transportation and Director of Media and Technology.

The following individuals addressed the board: Dayna Christians, Nathan Mahn and Rosemary Possanza regarding return to school plans and online learning; Rishabh Mahale regarding virtual learning opportunities; and Natalie Anwar regarding mask usage.

Citizen Address
Agenda & Non-
Agenda Items

President Bolton acknowledged correspondence from the following: Joy Ferguson, Peggy Frisch, Mary Ann Martin, Theo Debnar, Debra Calder, Theresa Melendez Barbara O’Kelly and Jane Vander Haagen concerning Meridian Senior Center; Collective Letter from OPS Alumni, Parents, Students, Teachers and Community Members, and Berelian Karimian concerning addressing systemic racism and racial injustices. Sunmee Han, Neal Fortin, Elanna Haywood, Brian Gilmore, Christine Sermak, Nicole Sammartino, Jamie Yeomans, Julie Keith and an anonymous community member concerning graduation and health and safety protocols; Gina Farnelli regarding Zoom versus Google Classroom; Michael Robinson, Tina Roberts-Hicks, Keyan Roberts concerning back to school plans; Kylie Khan regarding an interview for a news story; and Anna Kieliszewski regarding masks.

Board Reports
& Requests

Vincent Lyon-Callo inquired as to when the district would address the community regarding graduation.

MOVED Tonya Rodriguez, SUPPORTED by Sarah Wohlford that board approve item 1 for immediate implementation and appropriate action.

Consent Agenda

Item I: Approval of the minutes of the regular meeting of June 22, 2020

Roll Call Vote

Dean Bolton	Yes	Vincent Lyon-Callo	Yes
Katie Cavanaugh	Yes	Tonya Rodriguez	Yes
Mary Gebara	Yes	Sarah Wohlford	Yes
Melanie Lynn	Yes		

AYE: 7 NAY: 0 ABSENT: 0 **MOTION CARRIED**

MOVED Sarah Wohlford, SUPPORTED by Katie Cavanaugh that board approve the employment of Rachel Knox, 3rd Grade Teacher at Bennett Woods Elementary, at Step 1, Division I; Olivia Becker, Math Teacher at Okemos High School, at Step 1, Division I; and Brian Murphy, Math Teacher at Okemos High School at Step 8, Division II of the teacher salary schedule, effective August 24, 2020 in accordance with sections 1230 (2) and 1230 a (2) of the Revised School Code conditioned upon receipt of acceptable criminal history checks and criminal records checks.

Employment –
Certified

Roll Call Vote

Dean Bolton	Yes	Vincent Lyon-Callo	Yes
Katie Cavanaugh	Yes	Tonya Rodriguez	Yes
Mary Gebara	Yes	Sarah Wohlford	Yes
Melanie Lynn	Yes		

AYE: 7 NAY: 0 ABSENT: 0 **MOTION CARRIED**

MOVED Tonya Rodriguez, SUPPORTED by Sarah Wohlford that board establish the dates of regular meetings of the board of education to generally be the second and fourth Monday of each month, adjusted for Mondays with no school; the time of each

20-21 Regular
Meeting
Dates

meeting to begin at 7:00 p.m., with no new discussion after 10:00 p.m.; and the place of meetings to be the Community Conference Room at Central School; and that the board direct administration to publish the date/time/location of these meetings on the district's web site.

Roll Call Vote

Dean Bolton	Yes	Vincent Lyon-Callo	Yes
Katie Cavanaugh	Yes	Tonya Rodriguez	Yes
Mary Gebara	Yes	Sarah Wohlford	Yes
Melanie Lynn	Yes		

AYE: 7 NAY: 0 ABSENT: 0 **MOTION CARRIED**

MOVED Melanie Lynn, SUPPORTED by Vincent Lyon-Callo that board designate the superintendent of schools or designee to post all regular or special school board meeting notices for the 2020-2021 school year in accordance with the Open Meetings Act.

Meeting Notices

Roll Call Vote

Dean Bolton	Yes	Vincent Lyon-Callo	Yes
Katie Cavanaugh	Yes	Tonya Rodriguez	Yes
Mary Gebara	Yes	Sarah Wohlford	Yes
Melanie Lynn	Yes		

AYE: 7 NAY: 0 ABSENT: 0 **MOTION CARRIED**

MOVED Sarah Wohlford, SUPPORTED by Melanie Lynn that board retain Thrun Law Firm, P.C. as legal counsel for the 2020-2021 school year.

Selection of
Legal Counsel

Roll Call Vote

Dean Bolton	Yes	Vincent Lyon-Callo	Yes
Katie Cavanaugh	Yes	Tonya Rodriguez	Yes
Mary Gebara	Yes	Sarah Wohlford	Yes
Melanie Lynn	Yes		

AYE: 7 NAY: 0 ABSENT: 0 **MOTION CARRIED**

MOVED Melanie Lynn, SUPPORTED by Vincent Lyon-Callo that board retain Maner Costerisan P.C. as auditor for the 2020-2021 school year.

Selection of
Auditor

Roll Call Vote

Dean Bolton	Yes	Vincent Lyon-Callo	Yes
Katie Cavanaugh	Yes	Tonya Rodriguez	Yes
Mary Gebara	Yes	Sarah Wohlford	Yes
Melanie Lynn	Yes		

AYE: 7 NAY: 0 ABSENT: 0 **MOTION CARRIED**

MOVED Tonya Rodriguez, SUPPORTED by Katie Cavanaugh that board designate Michigan School District Liquid Assets Fund Plus, Fifth Third Bank, and PNC Bank as depositories for school funds for the 2020-2021 school year, which includes Accounts Payable, Payroll, Debt Retirement Activity, and Building & Site Sinking Fund.

Approval of
Depositories

Roll Call Vote

Dean Bolton	Yes	Vincent Lyon-Callo	Yes
Katie Cavanaugh	Yes	Tonya Rodriguez	Yes
Mary Gebara	Yes	Sarah Wohlford	Yes

Melanie Lynn Yes

AYE: 7 NAY: 0 ABSENT: 0 MOTION CARRIED

MOVED Sarah Wohlford, SUPPORTED by Melanie Lynn that board open the meeting to the Breakfast Program Hearing to present information on the 2020-2021 Breakfast Program including financial and participation data, and receive questions and comments from the public.

Breakfast
Program
Hearing

Roll Call Vote

Dean Bolton	Yes	Vincent Lyon-Callo	Yes
Katie Cavanaugh	Yes	Tonya Rodriguez	Yes
Mary Gebara	Yes	Sarah Wohlford	Yes
Melanie Lynn	Yes		

AYE: 7 NAY: 0 ABSENT: 0 MOTION CARRIED

The breakfast program hearing was opened at 10:16 p.m.

Food Service Director Lynna Hassenger presented information regarding the district's participation in the breakfast program.

There was no public comment.

The breakfast program hearing was closed at 10:22 p.m.

MOVED Tonya Rodriguez, SUPPORTED by Katie Cavanaugh that board elect to offer a school breakfast program at the elementary, 5-6th, 7-8th and 9-12th grade levels, with the option to discontinue as permitted by state law.

Breakfast
Program

Roll Call Vote

Dean Bolton	Yes	Vincent Lyon-Callo	Yes
Katie Cavanaugh	Yes	Tonya Rodriguez	Yes
Mary Gebara	Yes	Sarah Wohlford	Yes
Melanie Lynn	Yes		

AYE: 7 NAY: 0 ABSENT: 0 MOTION CARRIED

The board decided to postpone its discussion regarding equity concerns and opportunities, and instead established a special meeting for July 20th at 6:00 p.m. to discuss this item.

Discussion:
Equity

There was no public comment.

Public Comment

Members Katie Cavanaugh, Mary Gebara and Sarah Wohlford will remain the representatives to the Policy Committee through June, 2021.
Dean Bolton will remain the representative to the Ingham School Officers Association.
Mary Gebara will remain the representative to the Okemos Education Foundation.

Other Matters

President Bolton adjourned the special meeting at 10:02 p.m.

Adjourn

Mary Gebara, Secretary