

**Okemos Board of Education  
Okemos, Michigan 48864  
REGULAR MEETING OCTOBER 26, 2020**

PAGE 8808  
10-26-2020

Call To Order

The regular meeting of the Okemos Board of Education was called to order by President Bolton at 7:01 p.m.

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

Member Absent: Vincent Lyon-Callo

Administrator: Superintendent John Hood; Assistant Superintendent Stacy Bailey; Finance Director Elizabeth Lentz

President Bolton and Superintendent Hood took a moment to honor the passing of Food Service Director Lynna Hassenger and express condolences to her family.

Moment of  
Remembrance

The board continued its discussion regarding the Safe Return to School Plan. Superintendent Hood provided additional, clarifying information as well as updates on specific committee work.

Safe Return to  
School Plan

Mr. Hood addressed the implications of the recent Supreme Court ruling on the Governor's Phases and sought direction from the board regarding what the district might use in place of them. It was noted that the Ingham County Health Department or Michigan Department of Health may develop their own phases. It was determined to use a matrix approach using multiple sources of data, using the Ann Arbor Public Schools model as an example.

Members discussed using a science-based, rather than an economics-based matrix; communication and transparency with the community.

Assistant Superintendent Bailey presented comprehensive information regarding the different instructional models the committee developed. She reviewed the considerations and criteria the committee used to develop the models and spoke to educational equity. Challenges and Benefits for each model were discussed.

Model A includes one OPS teacher instructing both in-person and virtual students at the same time. Model B includes one OPS teacher teaching virtual students, and a different OPS teacher instructing in-person students. Model C would have a 3<sup>rd</sup> party responsible for virtual students and in-person students taught by an OPS teacher.

It is the committee's recommendation that the district choose Model B as the model for the majority of student's and classes allowing for flexibility and exceptions to use the other models as necessary and especially at the secondary level.

Preparations for implementing model B were described and focused on connections; relationships; department and level meetings; pace of the curriculum; and supporting the transitions.

Members discussed the following: additional switches after the transition; switching teachers; potential for online students to fall behind in-person students; the Montessori program; potential for teachers from other buildings; balancing classrooms; timelines and timing of commitment; equity among programs and documenting it in the plan itself; running different scenarios to help plan for them; and updated CDC requirements.

Mrs. Bailey described the common assessments, data and department meetings, and other strategies the district will utilize to address any gaps between programs. In addition, Montessori representation on the Instructional Committee; point of no return; and creative programming were reported. It was reiterated that the district believes there is no wrong choice for parents as it is committed to quality programming both online and in-person students. The board will discuss again during the November 9th meeting.

PAGE 8809  
Return to School  
Plan Cont.

Assistant Superintendent Stacy Bailey provided an update on the District's Extended Learning Plan, as by law reconfirmation of the instructional mode must be done monthly. The district continues to be 100% online. Data regarding two-way interactions, reading and math benchmark assessments were reviewed. She discussed upcoming feedback surveys and a social-emotional screener.

Extended  
Learning  
Plan

Members discussed the data screeners; and evaluating the online learning.

Citizens Address  
Agenda & Non-  
Agenda Items

Wei Li addressed the board regarding future cell phone towers, social distancing, sports, and a gradual transition to return to school.

Superintendent Hood reported on the following: Public Act 228 allows the board to conduct remote meetings through December 31<sup>st</sup>; recent policy committee meeting; GSRP slots available; status of food service programs contracted services; possible Diversity, Inclusion and Human Resources position; recent designation as 4<sup>th</sup> Best School in the State by Niche; and a music app to create a virtual performance introduced to the strings program.

Superintendent  
Report

High School Representative Lauren reported on the following: recent Boys Tennis, Boys Soccer and Football accomplishments; recent band performance; upcoming asynchronous days due to testing for sophomores; upcoming virtual drama performance on November 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>; and feedback on the online learning experience.

High School  
Report

President Bolton acknowledge correspondence from the following: Katie McKenna, Amy Petersburg, Kris Schoen, Vanessa Stephen, Yingxin Zhou, Christina Severin, Christena Sinila, Jennifer Ronan, Scott Schopieray, Danielle and Eric Merckling, Matt Diemer, Jennifer Harnick, Casey McCardle, Chris Dana, Anna Krystyniak, Christine Mason, Sara Lluberes, Ashleigh Fesko, Susan Mlaker, Erin Gutierrez, Christina Scheusler, Kimberly Wells, Amy Basal, Chandra and John Juarez, Lindsay Heinzelman, and Kristin Brooks regarding the Safe Return to School Plan and timelines; Melissa Erikson and Nathan Mahn regarding online learning; Julie Taiber regarding MISchool Data; Chantal Rose regarding opening the pool for athletes; Jenny Wise regarding an article on moving; and Joy Liu, Dan McCole, Yingxin Zhou and Jan Casey concerning potential future cell towers.

Board Reports  
& Request

Mary Gebara reported on the work of librarians across the district and new Bookokemos program.

Melanie Lynn reported on a recent MASB workshop regarding public participation at virtual meetings and suggested a discussion item regarding that topic.

MOVED by Tonya Rodriguez, SUPPORTED by Katie Cavanaugh that the board approve items 1 through 4 for immediate implementation and appropriate action.  
Item 1: Approval of the minutes of the Regular Meeting of October 12, 2020;

Consent Agenda

Item 2: Approve the request for a Leave of Absence for Erica Harris, 2nd Grade Teacher at Hiawatha Elementary School for the period of March 14th through June 11, 2021;

Item 3: Approve the renewal of a Personal Leave of Absence for Lexie Starnes, Speech & Language Pathologist for the period of January 17, 2021 through January 17, 2022;

Item 4: Approve the extension of a requested leave of absence for Anne Feldpausch, Special Education Teacher at Okemos High School through December 7, 2020.

Roll Call Vote

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

AYE: 6      NAY: 0      ABSENT: 1      **MOTION CARRIED**

MOVED by Sarah Wohlford, SUPPORTED by Tonya Rodriguez that the board appoint the following individuals to serve three-year terms on the district's Personal Health and Sexuality Education Advisory Board: Sondos Al-Hachim, Stephanie Shafer, Brett Meteyer, and Pauline Ashton.

Roll Call Vote

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

AYE: 6      NAY: 0      ABSENT: 1      **MOTION CARRIED**

MOVED by Mary Gebara, SUPPORTED by Katie Cavanaugh that the board approve employment of Mary Dieterly, 3rd and 4th Grade Teacher at Okemos public Montessori at Central at Step 1, Division II of the teacher salary schedule, effective October 27, 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.

Roll Call Vote

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

AYE: 6      NAY: 0      ABSENT: 1      **MOTION CARRIED**

MOVED by Sarah Wohlford, SUPPORTED by Mary Gebara that the board approve the district's Extended Learning Plan as required by law.

Roll Call Vote

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

AYE: 6      NAY: 0      ABSENT: 1      **MOTION CARRIED**

The superintendent and board of education continued their discussion regarding the approach to winter sports and extracurricular activities. Mr. Hood reviewed the safety expectations and activities allowed in the previously known Phase 4, including waivers, health screeners, safety plans, and protocols. The district plans to offer winter sports with the exception of wrestling, as more information and guidance is needed.

Members discussed testing for athletes; and the feasibility of offering wrestling.

Finance Director Elizabeth Lentz provided for board discussion information regarding the 2020-2021 budget revisions. Preliminary revised budget assumptions included increased special education funding and decreased lease agreement revenue, to result in an approximate positive impact on the general fund of \$2.5 million. Impending budget items and discussions were reviewed, as well as a list of recommending budget priorities as determined by administration. The board is asked to provide feedback on their support of the potential add-backs.

2020-2021  
Budget  
Revisions

Member Lynn inquired about the add-backs and their comprehensive impact on the budget.

No one addressed the board.

Public Comment

Members Lynn inquired about the number of available educators; opportunities available for students; and extra-curricular activities.

Other Matters

President Bolton adjourned the regular meeting at 10:28 p.m.

Adjourn

---

Mary Gebara, Secretary