

Okemos Board of Education
Okemos, Michigan 48864
REGULAR MEETING JANUARY 25, 2021

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The regular meeting of the Okemos Board of Education was called to order by President Bolton at 7:06 p.m.

Call To Order

Members Present: Dean Bolton, Katie Cavanaugh, Mary Gebara, Melanie Lynn, Vincent Lyon-Callo, Andrew Phelps and Jayme Taylor

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

I, Dean Bolton am attending this regular meeting of the Okemos Board of Education on January 25, 2021 and I am participating remotely. I am physically located in Ingham County in the State of Michigan. I am able to have two-way communication for this Board meeting. Contact information was provided sufficiently in advance of this Board meeting so that members of the public could provide input to me on any business that comes before the Board.

I, Katie Cavanaugh am attending this regular meeting of the Okemos Board of Education on January 25, 2021 and I am participating remotely. I am physically located in Ingham County in the State of Michigan. I am able to have two-way communication for this Board meeting. Contact information was provided sufficiently in advance of this Board meeting so that members of the public could provide input to me on any business that comes before the Board.

I, Mary Gebara am attending this regular meeting of the Okemos Board of Education on January 25, 2021 and I am participating remotely. I am physically located in Ingham County in the State of Michigan. I am able to have two-way communication for this Board meeting. Contact information was provided sufficiently in advance of this Board meeting so that members of the public could provide input to me on any business that comes before the Board.

I, Melanie Lynn am attending this regular meeting of the Okemos Board of Education on January 25, 2021 and I am participating remotely. I am physically located in Ingham County in the State of Michigan. I am able to have two-way communication for this Board meeting. Contact information was provided sufficiently in advance of this Board meeting so that members of the public could provide input to me on any business that comes before the Board.

I, Vincent Lyon-Callo am attending this regular meeting of the Okemos Board of Education on January 25, 2021 and I am participating remotely. I am physically located in Ingham County in the State of Michigan. I am able to have two-way communication for this Board meeting. Contact information was provided sufficiently in advance of this Board meeting so that members of the public could provide input to me on any business that comes before the Board.

I, Andy Phelps am attending this regular meeting of the Okemos Board of Education on January 25, 2021 and I am participating remotely. I am physically located in Ingham County in the State of Michigan. I am able to have two-way communication for this Board meeting. Contact information was provided sufficiently in advance of this Board meeting so that members of the public could provide input to me on any business that comes before the Board.

I, Jayme Taylor am attending this regular meeting of the Okemos Board of Education on January 25, 2021 and I am participating remotely. I am physically located in Ingham County in the State of Michigan. I am able to have two-way communication for this Board meeting. Contact information was provided sufficiently in advance of this Board meeting so that members of the public could provide input to me on any business that comes before the Board.

The board recognized the following employees who have attained 24 years of service: Nichole Berridge, RTI Coach at Cornell Elementary School; Deelane Camling, Childcare Director at Edgewood; Joy Chase, Phys Ed Teacher at Cornell Elementary; Dean Coppens, Custodian at Bennett Woods Elementary; Tina Harmon, Custodian at Okemos High School; Tamera Hetfield, Science Teacher at Okemos High School; John Hood, Superintendent; Tyler Hursey, Math Teacher at Okemos High School; Kathleen Martin, Special Education ParaPro at Okemos High School; Amy Wild, Spanish Teacher at Chippewa Middle School; and Marie Wolfe, Kitchen Supervisor at Okemos High School.

24 Yrs of Service
Recognition

Operations Director Mark Fargo presented information regarding measures the district is taking to improve air quality including MERV filters and ionization. Air quality improvement is part of the district's mitigation measures. The district is upgrading to MERV13 filters with installation expected in mid-February; as well as ionization units for each HVAC system to further clean the air with installation expected no later than April.

Air Quality
Improvements

Members discussed the timelines for installation and possibly expediting the process; separate systems; possible higher rated MERV filters; when the systems run; and HEPA filters in classrooms.

The board continued its discussion regarding the Safe Return to School Plan. Superintendent Hood described current realities and reviewed the Governor's recommendation and vaccine roll out process. The district is transitioning from a metrics approach to one of mitigation. Mr. Hood reviewed the lens that has guided the district's thinking, as well as the values considered in the recommendation.

Safe Return to
School

Administration is recommending the implementation of Model A with a potential roll out date of March 1st. The goal of the plan is to control student density, by splitting students into 2 or 3 groups and alternating in-person instruction. This is accomplished by having no less than four half-days of live and in-person instruction with 1 day of higher level cleaning and sanitization. Mr. Hood described what families can expect for in-personal learning, for example safety protocols, social distancing, masking, transportation, food service, childcare etc. AS well as what families can expect for those who remain online, including keeping current teachers in most cases. Several structures within Model A were explained. The particular structure depends on family selection. It is assumed that staff wanting to be vaccinated will have at least their first dose before returning. Families will be asked to make their commitment the week of January 27-31st for the remained of the school year. Next steps, timelines and communication were outlined.

Members discussed the following: definition of acceptable risk; air quality installation and other mitigation measures; waiting for a 2nd dose of the vaccine; KN95 mask for staff; band and music classes; possible rapid testing available; the sub shortage; timelines; gym classes; not a return to normalcy; vaccine does not stop the spread, only protects staff; transition support; screening tool for families; community impact; traveling; Model A structure at the elementary level; addressing staff concerns; PPE for staff; snack and drink breaks; recess; Plexiglas barriers; technology needs; masking requirements and enforcement; Montessori-specific concerns; passing times at secondary level; hiring

additional student supervisors; can families later choose to return online; communication from buildings; and changing the return date.

MOVED by Dean Bolton, SUPPORTED by Mary Gebara that the board waive policy 8344.1 Adequate Information to Proceed and add the Return to School Plan as an action item later in the agenda.

Adequate
Information to
Proceed

Roll Call Vote

Dean Bolton	Yes	Vincent Lyon-Callo	Yes
Katie Cavanaugh	Yes	Andrew Phelps	Yes
Mary Gebara	Yes	Jayne Taylor	Yes
Melanie Lynn	Yes		

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

High School
Student Report

High School Representative Lauren reported on the following: start of 2nd semester; quarter 3 kick start activities; upcoming AP application deadline; upcoming virtual diversity assembly and auditions; upcoming virtual spring performance; clubs that have been active; girl's lacrosse virtual workouts; and recent student council fundraiser.

The board took a 5-minute recess.

Assistant Superintendent Bailey provided an update to the Board and community regarding updates and revisions to the District's Extended Learning plan. The district continues to be 100% online including special needs populations which were previously in-person. A summary of the two-way interaction rates and averages was given.

Discussion:
Extended
Learning Plan

The board continued its discussion of a district building and site sinking fund and operations millage with a proposal to pursue voter approval of these funding sources in May of 2021. Superintendent Hood reviewed the previous sinking fund election and explained headlee roll back erosion. Recent changes to allowable uses now include technology and security. Examples of past and future projects funded by the sinking fund were given and include asphalt, HVAC, roofing, carpet, floors, electrical, athletic facilities and fields, playgrounds, fencing etc. Administration is recommending a renewal of the sinking fund and proposed ballot language was provided.

Building & Site
Sinking Fund

Superintendent Hood also provided a brief description of the district's current operating millage that is set to expire and will also appear on the May ballot.

Operating
Millage

The following individuals addressed the board regarding the Return to School plans: Chad DeKatch; Nathan Whitehorn; Tom Hopper; Elizabeth Heath-Heckman; Burcu Tasoluk; Felicia Wu; Nathan Mahn; Malcolm Mead-O'Brien; Kristin Thomas; Ashley Doop; Dayna Christians; Kim Ward; Lori Mazzullo; Jody Moffit; George Carter; Jennifer Ronan; Nicole Heathcock; Dan Peabody; Erynn Merchant; Patti Sanchawala; John Lambert; Melissa Terry; and Carmelita North.

Citizens Address
Agenda & Non-
Agenda Items

Superintendent Hood reported on the following: follow-up regarding athletic assistant coach stipends; upcoming report on summer school and programs opportunities; equity work and upcoming survey; and acknowledged 24 years of service recipients.

Superintendent's
Report

President Bolton acknowledged correspondence from the following: Yingxin Zhou, Cory Gahsman, Patrick Edger, Ashley Latinen, Burcu Tasoluk, Valerie Good, Sarah Douglas, Kim Ward, Jasmine Blythe, Kim Wells, Kevin Elliott, Nathan Whitehorn, Nancy Wright,

Board Reports &
Requests

Kelly Joldersma, Geneva Vanlerberg, June Hicks, Stephanie Sheffer, Beth and Malcolm Mead-O'Brien, Kate Stevenson, Courtney Shubel, Adam Clements, Jocelyn Mankowski, Holly Heie, Susan Black, Erin Gould, Lauri Johnson, Erika Parsons, Melissa Samluk, Kara Kurzeja, Erin Gutierrez, Erin Kanitz, Caitlin Pemble, Maria Austrins, Cynthia Duda, Robert Stephenson, Kristie Howart, Tim Case, Kristin Phillips, Jen Harnick, Ashleigh Fesko, Susan Mlaker, Christina Schuesler, Chris and Stacy Tapscott, Kristin Brooks, Tracy Fleming, Tom Buffett, Rosemary Possanza, Teresa Mayes, Zac Stone, Jenelle Rawlins, Tom Hopper, Brittany Magsig, Tracey Pickard, Lori Mazzullo, David Pruden, Kris Schoen, Kim Ouellette, Melissa Sainz, Ashleigh Doop, Laura Bell, Victoria Alchin, Elizabeth Reed, Christine Skoutelas, Emily Feehery, Dayna Amboy, Deborah Clay, Caity Biermann, Marcia Morehead, Eric Meyer, Elena Mapley, Lori Mazzullo, Megan Stadt, Sheree Jungwirth, Fiore Leo, Angela Hussain, Julie Mittan, Jennifer Holcomb, Melissa Marks, Sheri Gunns, Susan Williams, Rebecca Fedrigo, Tiffany Murray, Emily Edger, Marsha Kilpea, Amanda Hall, Megan Lloyd, Tasha Rader, Ashley Anderen, Jean Lee, Gabriella Jungwirth, Jennifer Baker, Diane Dockus, Jessica Geyer, Karen Sanders, regarding the return to school planning; Amy Lothamer regarding summer school opportunities; Felicia Wu regarding public comments at board meetings; Vivian Leung regarding pass/fail grades for students taking MSU classes; and Austin Holcomb with thanks for use of the football field.

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Board Reports
Cont.

MOVED by Andrew Phelps, SUPPORTED by Vincent Lyon-Callo that the board approve items 1 and 2 for immediate implementation and appropriate action.

Consent Agenda

Item 1: Minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 11, 2021; and

Item 2: Approve the requested leave of absence for Stefanie Solce, Special Education Teacher at Chippewa Middle School for the period of March 25th through May 31, 2021.

Roll Call Vote

Dean Bolton	Yes	Vincent Lyon-Callo	Yes
Katie Cavanaugh	Yes	Andrew Phelps	Yes
Mary Gebara	Yes	Jayne Taylor	Yes
Melanie Lynn	Yes		

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

MOVED by Melanie Lynn, SUPPORTED by Andrew Phelps that the board approve the bids for the air conditioning, bathroom renovation, stage replacement and tennis court projects, not to exceed \$4,594,407 to be funded through the May, 2019 Bond and Building and Site Sinking Fund, be awarded to the following companies: Verlinde Pro Surfaces Levitt & Starck Excavating, Inc. LJ Trumble Group Grand River Interiors and Plaster Superior Floor Coverings, Inc. R & L Painting Myers Plumbing & Heating, Inc. Centennial Electric, LLC

Bond Projects

Roll Call Vote

Dean Bolton	Yes	Vincent Lyon-Callo	Yes
Katie Cavanaugh	Yes	Andrew Phelps	Yes
Mary Gebara	Yes	Jayne Taylor	Yes
Melanie Lynn	Yes		

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

MOVED by Vincent Lyon-Callo, SUPPORTED by Mary Gebara that the board approve the district's Extended Learning Plan as required by law.

Extended
Learning Plan

Roll Call Vote

Dean Bolton	Yes	Vincent Lyon-Callo	Yes
Katie Cavanaugh	Yes	Andrew Phelps	Yes

Mary Gebara	Yes	Jayme Taylor	Yes
Melanie Lynn	Yes		

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

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MOVED by Vincent Lyon-Callo, SUPPORTED by Melanie Lynn that the board waive the reading and adopt the resolution calling for a special election on May 4, 2021, and setting the matters to be voted upon as follows: Operating Millage Renewal to allow the district to continue to levy the statutory rate of not to exceed 18 mills on all property, except principal residence and other property exempted by law; and a Sinking Fund Millage levied at a rate of not to exceed 0.9861 Mill for 10 years for the construction or repair of school buildings, for school security improvements, for the acquisition or upgrading of technology and all other purposes authorized by law.

Resolution:
Matters to be
Voted Upon

Roll Call Vote

Dean Bolton	Yes	Vincent Lyon-Callo	Yes
Katie Cavanaugh	Yes	Andrew Phelps	Yes
Mary Gebara	Yes	Jayme Taylor	Yes
Melanie Lynn	Yes		

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

MOVED by Dean Bolton, SUPPORTED by Vincent Lyon-Callo that the board set the return date for in-person learning to begin the week of March 8, 2021.

Safe Return to
School Date

Roll Call Vote

Dean Bolton	Yes	Vincent Lyon-Callo	Yes
Katie Cavanaugh	Yes	Andrew Phelps	Yes
Mary Gebara	Yes	Jayme Taylor	Yes
Melanie Lynn	Yes		

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

The board discussed potential School of Choice openings to be advertised February 14th for the Pre-K through 8th grade Montessori program. The numbers being proposed will reflect available seats, while maintaining the district's ability to accommodate resident students. The number of available spots is as follows: PPK-K – 2 spots; 1st and 2nd grade – 0 spots; 3rd and 4th grade – 0 spots; 5th and 6th grade – 10 spots; and 7th and 8th grades – 8 spots.

Montessori
School of Choice

George Carter addressed the board regarding board decision making.

Public Comment

There will be a special meeting on Wednesday, February 3rd to discuss the District's participation in a closing agreement regarding the tax status of the 3% healthcare contribution to the Office of Retirement Services.

Other Matters

Melanie Lynn inquired about vaccine status and communication.

President Bolton adjourned the regular meeting at 12:43 a.m. on Tuesday, January 26th.

Adjourn

Katie Cavanaugh, Secretary