

Okemos Board of Education
Okemos, Michigan 48864
REGULAR MEETING MARCH 8, 2021

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3-8-2021

The regular meeting of the Okemos Board of Education was called to order by President Bolton at 7:03 p.m.

Call To Order

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

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

I, Dean Bolton am attending this March 8, 2021 regular board meeting 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.

I, Katie Cavanaugh am attending this March 8, 2021 regular board meeting 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.

I, Mary Gebara am attending this March 8, 2021 regular board meeting 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.

I, Melanie Lynn am attending this March 8, 2021 regular board meeting 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.

I, Vincent Lyon-Callo am attending this March 8, 2021 regular board meeting 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.

I, Andy Phelps am attending this March 8, 2021 regular board meeting 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.

I, Jayme Taylor am attending this March 8, 2021 regular board meeting 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.

Okemos High School Orchestra Director Justin Valla presented for board discussion, information regarding a student trip to Hawaii proposed for March 24 – March 31, 2022. The trip would be a performing and cultural experience for the band, choir and orchestra student. Fundraising and scholarship opportunities are available. It was emphasized that students would abide by school rules while traveling.

Student Trip

The board continued its discussion regarding the Safe Return to School Plan. Superintendent Hood described current realities including the vaccine roll out, transition activities, recent professional development for staff, and communication with families. The district will continue to monitor and consider CDC guidance. Mr. Hood provided an update on the following: installation of the MERV13 filters, needlepoint and dynamic ionization system installation; PPE and cleaning protocols; transportation and video for families; HR and staffing including antigen testing; resources and information on the district's website; calendar impacts including standardized testing that may further impact it.

Safe Return to
School Plan

Members inquired about the following: PSAT testing and timelines; safety protocols while testing.

Citizens Address
Agenda & Non-
Agenda Items

Dayna Christians addressed the board regarding the return to in-person learning.

Superintendent's
Report

Superintendent Hood reported on the following: expressed gratitude to Christine Parkhurst who has been acting as the Interim Director of Food Service; provided a legislative update and its possible effect on federal funding; summer programming and opportunities; equity update including mascot committee and upcoming community forums on April 14th and 15th; upcoming presentation on equity in hiring; presentation and activities regarding an equity plan rewrite; and feedback on the 21-22 calendar. Assistant Superintendent Stacy Bailey provided an update on an elementary language arts curriculum review.

Member inquired about the following: community forums; federal funding and 20-hour requirement included in the recent legislation; summer learning opportunities; student recovery; teacher support as it pertains to meeting the social-emotional needs of returning students; and the basketball program.

High School
Student Report

Student Representative Catherine reported on the following: return to in-person transition and increased morale; and spring sports.

Board Reports &
Request

President Bolton acknowledge correspondence from the following: Sarah Rebol; Yingxin Zhou, Jason, Jennifer Soria, Rick Grillo, John Lambert and Chris Dana regarding the return to school planning; Yingxin Zhou concerning cannabis businesses; Jessica Mathiak regarding press releases; and Michelle Zimmerman regarding a news piece on the OHS Action club.

President Bolton reported that the organization offering scholarships for the music student trip is the Haslett-Okemos Rotary Club.

Consent Agenda

MOVED by Mary Gebara, SUPPORTED by Katie Cavanaugh that the board approve items 1 and 2 for immediate implementation and appropriate action.

Item 1: Approval of the minutes of the Regular Meeting of February 22, 2021;

Item 2: Acknowledge receipt of the February financial statement and approve payment of bills for February.

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**

Employment

MOVED by Jayme Taylor, SUPPORTED by Mary Gebara that the board employ Michael Wensel as Food Service Director effective March 22, 2021 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	Yes
Katie Cavanaugh	Yes	Andrew Phelps	Yes
Mary Gebara	Yes	Jayne Taylor	Yes
Melanie Lynn	Yes		

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

The Board of Education discussed the format of board meetings in April and beyond to remain accessible to the community and in compliance with state law. Telecommunications Coordinator Matt Ottinger described the preparations to the OHS Auditorium so that it can facilitate both in-person and online board meetings. Meetings will be held in-person, as well as streamed through Zoom. The board will still be able to receive public comment from online participants. Conducting meetings in the auditorium will allow the board and community to be socially distanced, and has the necessary technology.

Board Meeting
Place & Format

The board continued their discussion regarding the development of the 2021-2022 budget. Director Lentz provided preliminary assumptions. Updated projections include: increased expenditures due to health insurance rates and roll up costs; savings from retirements; HSA contributions; and enrollment, resulting in a negative impact on the general fund of \$556,349. Director Lentz also described impending budget discussions including staffing, negotiations, possible expenses if there is a mascot change and board priorities.

2021-2022
Budget
Development

Members inquired about most recent count day enrollment numbers and surveying families who left to see if they would be returning next year.

No one addressed the board.

Public Comment

The board plans to have a budget priority work session in late April or May.

Other Matters

President Bolton adjourned the regular meeting at 8:57 p.m.

Adjourn

Katie Cavanaugh, Secretary