

**Okemos Board of Education**  
**Okemos, Michigan 48864**  
**REGULAR MEETING NOVEMBER 8, 2021**

PAGE 8893  
11-8-2021

The Regular meeting of the Okemos Board of Education was called to order by President Bolton at 7:02 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 Stephen Keskes; Assistant Superintendent Stacy Bailey; and Finance Director Elizabeth Lentz

Assistant Superintendent Stacy Bailey provided information regarding data recently collected through the MySAEBRS universal screener of student risk for social and emotional health; as well as fall screener data in math and literacy through Fastbridge. Further, data was reviewed for subgroups which include black or African American, economically disadvantaged and special education. Fall Screener Data

Mrs. Bailey also explained how the district will use this data to inform instruction, as well as develop strategies to close gaps. Examples include: new curriculum; additional staff; summer learning opportunities; student advisors at the elementary level; DEI efforts; professional development; data days; possible new screener software and data collection system; and the Academic Learning Center.

Members inquired about the following: how economically disadvantaged students are identified; connectivity at the high school level; longer term trend data; establishing more specific goals; how the district is addressing gaps; and changes to curriculum as a response.

No one addressed the board.

Citizens Address  
Agenda & Non-  
Agenda Items

Student representatives Uma and Amulya reported on the following: connecting with various high school groups and clubs to introduce themselves and explain their purpose; creation of an e-mail account for students to contact them and to submit feedback and inquiries; the Academic Learning Center; the no major projects or test on religious holidays policy; mask usage; and how students are adjusting. High School Student Report

Member Lyon-Callo acknowledged recent athletic accomplishments; reported on the upcoming drama production; and inquired about the general perception of students' stress level.

Superintendent Hood reported on the following: Veteran's Day acknowledgment; upcoming policy committee meeting; food service department and increase in breakfast and lunches served; upcoming Covid vaccine clinic at Kinawa; nursing support from Ingham County Health Department for Covid response; Covid testing for athletics and fine arts to waive masking requirements; Andrea Hallead as Interim Principal at Okemos High School; facilities and grounds survey has been extended; recent parent-teacher conferences; and the upcoming OEF banquet. Superintendent's Report

Members discussed the following: student representatives and their approach to include more student voices; status of maintenance concerns; and possible increased violence at the High School.

President Bolton acknowledged correspondence from the following: Rachel Freeman-Baldwin concerning facilities and cleaning; Mohammad Al-Ostaz regarding assistance with a college paper; and John Hawkin regarding the mascot.

Jayme Taylor expressed gratitude to administration for their approach to Covid response. Mary Gebara reported on the upcoming OEF banquet. Dean Bolton reported on members attending the upcoming MASB conference.

MOVED by Mary Gebara, SUPPORTED by Katie Cavanaugh that the board approve items 1 through 5 for immediate implementation and appropriate action:

Item 1: Approval of the minutes of the Regular Meeting of October 11, 2021.

Item 2: Approval of the minutes of the Special Meeting of November 2, 2021.

Item 3: Minutes Approval of the minutes of the Executive Session Meeting of November 2, 2021.

Item 4: Acknowledge receipt of the October financial statement and approve payment of bills for October.

Item 5: Approve the request for a Leave of Absence for Kristi Bicy, Special Education Teacher at Kinawa for the period of October 18, 2021 through November 26, 2021; Elizabeth Gauthier, Kindergarten Teacher at Bennett Woods Elementary for the period of November 18, 2021 through February 14, 2022; Jen Harnick, 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher at Cornell Elementary for the period of November 3<sup>rd</sup> through November 18, 2021; Kristie Howart, 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher at Kinawa for the period of April 9, 2022 through June 10, 2022; and an intermittent leave for Jodi Totte, Social Studies Teacher at Okemos High School, beginning November 1, 2021.

Consent Agenda

AYE: 7 NAY: 0 ABSENT: 0 MOTION CARRIED

MOVED by Katie Cavanaugh, SUPPORTED by Mary Gebara that the board endorse the OHS Spanish student trip to from June 21st through July 1, 2022 with the understanding the students will abide by all school policies and procedures while abroad.

Student Trip

AYE: 7 NAY: 0 ABSENT: 0 MOTION CARRIED

MOVED by Jayme Taylor, SUPPORTED by Melanie Lynn that the board appoint the following individuals to serve three-year terms on the district’s Personal Health and Sexuality Education Advisory Board: Reverend Neal Anderson, Sabrina Avripas, Stephanie Nawyn and Martha Nokken.

PHASE Board

AYE: 7 NAY: 0 ABSENT: 0 MOTION CARRIED

MOVED by Andy Phelps, SUPPORTED by Mary Gebara that the board employ Tempie Brown as Athletic Director effective November 22, 2021 through June 30, 2023 at level one of the administrative salary schedule 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 –  
Admin

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 the district's effort to enhance its organizational capacity and remain a destination district for employees and students alike. Organizational capacity was identified as a critical area in the district's strategic plan. Mr. Hood reviewed the values that inform the strategies to be used to support increasing organizational capacity. Strategies include: interviews; wage and benefit studies; reviewing the hiring and evaluation processes; mentoring; at-work supports; and wellness planning; as well as being mindful of this critical area in board governance and the budgeting process.

Members inquired about the following: competing with the private sector; evaluating the culture at OPS; investing in a 3<sup>rd</sup> party audit; regular interviews; and creating connections.

DEI Director Slee discussed the current status of projects related to the district equity plan's four focus areas: authentic selves and relationships, cultural competence, instruction/curriculum/assessments, and policies/practices/procedures. Dr. Slee reported on the following: a new initiative to mentor new students to the district; a monthly cultural competence overview shared with staff and students; recently contracted interpretation service; data collection cycle; justice leaders collaborative staff training; mascot lessons being presented to students as well as available on the website; Native American curriculum at OPM; culturally responsive PBIS work; upcoming DEIAC meeting; and completion of the preferred name policy and process.

DEI Update

Member Lyon-Callo reported that it is Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Month. Member Lynn inquired about more incorporation into curriculum.

Finance Director Elizabeth Lentz provided an update regarding budget revisions, including timelines and potential considerations. The proposed revisions include but not limited to the following: decrease of 42.5 students; changes to the non-resident foundation adjustment; special education reimbursements; retirements offsets; staffing increases; and reduced childcare revenue. The district will not meet the provisions of the negotiated trigger language. Impending budget items and timelines were also described.

Budget Revisions

Frank Ochberg addressed the board regarding school start times.

Public Comment

There were no other matters.

Other Matters

President Bolton adjourned the regular meeting at 9:34 p.m.

Adjourn

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Katie Cavanaugh, Secretary