

Okemos Board of Education
Okemos, Michigan 48864
REGULAR MEETING DECEMBER 13, 2021

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

Call To Order

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

Members Absent: Melanie Lynn

Administrators: Superintendent John Hood; Assistant Superintendent Stephen Keskes; Assistant Superintendent Stacy Bailey; DEI Director Lara Sleen; and Finance Director Elizabeth Lentz

Security Update

Superintendent Hood and Detective Sergeant Ed Bensonen, Meridian Township Police presented an overview of OPS security measures including how threat assessments are approached and communicated to the community. The process for consideration of additional security measures was also shared with the Board and community as part of a potential November 2022 bond. Examples of security measures include: electronic locks, cameras, radios, panic buttons, locked buildings, professional development and training, OK2SAY program, regular drills, shatterproof 3M window film etc. In addition, more proactive measures were also described and include relationship-building, communication, social-emotional learning curriculum and initiatives, regular safety and threat assessments. Mr. Hood further addressed the following: ALICE training program and similar components with the OPS system; the relationship with Meridian Township Police; process for threat assessments and determining credibility; investigations and interventions that include home visits; student discipline including the 7 factors law and what must be considered before suspending or expelling a student; communication with families; planning and future considerations to be included in the 2022 bond recommendation; as well as community involvement and responsibility.

Members discussed the following: metal detectors; measures that could be implemented before the bond process; legislative advocacy; funding; police familiarity with buildings; turnaround time on threat assessments; OK2SAY program; the investigation process; decision-making; including law enforcement in the security portion of the bond discussion; secure vestibules; enforcement of policies and procedures; how to improve the feeling of security; and the cell phone policy.

Superintendent Hood and Jason Novotny or Tower Pinkster provided results of the reconfiguration survey as it pertains to the district's planning for the proposed 2022 bond. Assistant Superintendent Bailey reported on configuration research including transitions and grade configuration. A summary of the survey data analysis was shared. Feedback from the survey indicates a need for stability; current peer groupings are preferred; and the biggest concern is over crowding in buildings. Administration is recommending that the district maintain the current configurations but consider flexibility and future configurations.

2022 Bond
Update

Members inquired about the following: breakdown of who responded; consider transitions through an equity lens; recess at the 5-6 level; assessment data and its correlation to grade configurations; parent, student and staff involvement; how to build in flexibility; and what is the ideal building capacity/size.

Members Phelps and Cavanaugh will serve as representatives to the bond committee.

Operations Director Mark Fargo provided an update regarding facilities, cleaning and operations including staffing, wage increases, overtime and next steps. Concerns with the district's third-party cleaner were addressed and it was reported that the contract with that company is ending. The district will engage in a partnership on a short-term basis with a new 3rd party. This contract will be put out for bid in Spring 2022.

Members inquired about a possible breach of contract; and using volunteers.

Frank Ochberg addressed the board regarding the Covid vaccine mandate. Nathan Mahn addressed the board regarding the recent clean up event at OHS, community involvement, and volunteers.

Citizens Address
Agenda & Non-
Agenda Items

Student representatives Amulya and Nupur reported on the following: campus clean up event; ACTION volunteers cleaning at lunch and after school whiteboard cleaning; no homework policy during winter break; the Oxford shooting and impact on students; and upcoming fine arts performances.

High School
Student Report

Superintendent Hood reported on the following: mascot update and response rate to recent survey; transportation update and planning; recent Covid funding town hall meeting; expresses appreciation to Covid clinic workers, administrative team, and staff for their continued work as a result of the pandemic; and emotional support animals. Assistant Superintendent Keskes provided a hiring update and timeline for the Cornell principal position and reported on an upcoming 3rd party assessment.

Superintendent's
Report

President Bolton acknowledged correspondence from the following: Xavier DeGroat regarding autism resources; Laura Bell concerning school safety; and Sue Tucker and Charles Thomas regarding the mascot.

Board Reports &
Requests

Member Lyon-Callo requested discussion regarding school start times; inquired about the sub shortage and timelines, utilizing volunteers; and mental health.

Member Taylor suggested a presentation regarding school funding; and reported on the pressure and responsibility placed on teachers.

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

Consent Agenda

Item 1: Approval of the minutes of the Regular Meeting of November 22, 2021.

Item 2: Approval of the minutes of the Special Meeting of December 1, 2021.

Item 3: Approval of the minutes of the Executive Session Meeting of December 1, 2021.

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

Item 5: Acknowledge receipt of the leave of absence report and approve the leave of absence for Gina Farnelli, ELA Teacher at Okemos High School for the period of December 6, 2021 through January 24, 2022; and approve an extension of the leave of absence for Jennifer Harnick, 4th Grade Teacher at Cornell Elementary School through December 22, 2021.

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

MOVED by Katie Cavanaugh, SUPPORTED by Mary Gebara that the board waive the reading and adopt the resolution for collection of summer property tax as appropriate from Alaiadon Township, Meridian Township, and the City of Lansing and to negotiate a reasonable expense for such collection of the district's tax levy.

Certify Summer
Taxes

Roll Call Vote

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

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

Supt. Eval

MOVED by Mary Gebara, SUPPORTED by Vincent Lyon-Callo that the board adopt the 2021 annual evaluation of Superintendent John Hood.

Roll Call Vote

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

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

Amend Supt
Contract

MOVED by Mary Gebara, SUPPORTED by Jayme Taylor that the board amend the contract of Superintendent John Hood to extend his dates of employment through June 30, 2024 and to include the contractual step increase for July 1, 2022.

Roll Call Vote

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

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

Supt. Stipend

MOVED by Jayme Taylor, SUPPORTED by Katie Cavanaugh that the board give Superintendent John Hood a one-time pandemic stipend in the amount of \$750.00.

Roll Call Vote

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

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

Technology
Purchases

MOVED by Andy Phelps, SUPPORTED by Katie Cavanaugh that the board award the following purchase, funded from the district's

Facilities/Technology/Security/Transportation and Capital Outlay Bond:

Up to \$1,280,000 submitted by Trox/Tierney for the purchase of ClearTouch Interactive Monitors.

Public Comment

Roll Call Vote

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

Other Matters

Adjourn

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

MOVED by Mary Gebara, SUPPORTED by Katie Cavanaugh that the board award the roof renovation project, funded from the district's Building Site and Sinking Fund to McDonald Roofing, for a cost not to exceed \$313,682.

Roll Call Vote

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

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

MOVED by Jayme Taylor, SUPPORTED by Mary Gebara that the board approve the employment of Kelly Bertilrud, 3rd & 4th Grade Teacher at Okemos Public Montessori at Central at Division III, Step 4 of the teacher salary schedule, effective December 15, 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.

Employment –
Certified

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

Finance Director Elizabeth Lentz provided information regarding proposed amendments to the 2021-2022 budget for board discussion. Proposed amendments include the following: enrollment; special education reimbursements; retirement offsets; rental revenue; Covid relief grants; MPSERS stabilization; staffing; the custodial contract; building substitutes; as well as community education and childcare stabilization funding. The amendments result in an impact to the deficit budget of \$275,868. Ms. Lentz provided a reminder regarding trigger language and that revenue continues to not exceed expenses.

2021-2022
Budget
Amendments

Operations Director Mark Fargo presented information regarding the purchase of cleaning equipment that is over the bid limit, including the process and how the purchase will be funded. The new equipment will replace inefficient and outdated equipment needed to properly sanitize buildings and keep up with demand. The equipment will be purchased using Covid relief grants.

Equipment
Purchase

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 including: name preference system and procedure; the OHS Social Justice team's goals and initiatives; 3rd & 4th grade curriculum regarding indigenous peoples and their partnership with the Nokomis Center; mental health pilot program opportunity; trauma informed practices and training; a new grief support group at Kinawa; and trauma support for staff.

Equity Update

Nathan Mahn addresses the board regarding the name change policy.

Public Comment

Reminder that the January 10th board meeting includes the semi-annual organization meeting, and a reminder of the January 31st work session to develop superintendent goals and board priorities.

Other Matters

President Bolton adjourned the regular meeting at 10:42 p.m.

Adjourn