

**Okemos Board of Education  
Okemos, Michigan 48864  
REGULAR MEETING APRIL 24, 2023**

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4-24-2023

The regular meeting of the Okemos Board of Education was called to order by President Gebara at 6:30 p.m.

Call To Order

Members Present: Tom Buffett, Katie Cavanaugh, Shulawn Doxie, Mary Gebara, Andrew Phelps and Jayme Taylor

Members Absent: Melanie Lynn

Administrators: Superintendent John Hood; Director Elizabeth Lentz

MOVED by Andy Phelps, SUPPORTED by Katie Cavanaugh that the board adjourn to Executive Session pursuant to Section 8(a) of the Open Meetings Act for the purpose of discussing contract negotiations.

Exec Session

Roll Call Vote

Tom Buffett	Yes	Mary Gebara	Yes
Katie Cavanaugh	Yes	Andy Phelps	Yes
Shulawn Doxie	Yes	Jayme Taylor	Yes
Melanie Lynn	---		

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

The board adjourned to executive session at 6:33 p.m.

Melanie Lynn arrived at 6:38 p.m.

The board reconvened at 7:10 p.m.

Reconvene

Members Present: Tom Buffett, Katie Cavanaugh, Shulawn Doxie, Mary Gebara, Melanie Lynn, Andrew Phelps and Jayme Taylor

Administrators: Superintendent John Hood; Assistant Superintendent Stacy Bailey; Director Elizabeth Lentz; Director Lara Slee

The board reviewed the Ingham Intermediate School District proposed 2023-2024 General Fund Budget as required by Michigan law to determine its action at the next meeting to support or not support the budget. Ingham Intermediate School District Superintendent Mr. Jason Mellema presented the budget information including a brief overview of the ISD's general fund budget pointing out increased substitute teacher costs; programs and services supported by the ISD; early childhood education; and staffing. Next steps and responsibilities were also provided.

2023-2024 IISD  
Budget

Members inquired about the following: number of schools served by the ISD; PowerSchool support; special education reimbursement timing; and the Beekman Center.

Early Childhood  
Education

In honor of Celebrate the Young Child week, Childcare Coordinator Kim Burchman, and teachers Carolina Giraldo and Minda Derby presented an update regarding early childhood education programming offered by the district. They also described curriculum used; demographic breakdown of who attends; and research on the impact of early childhood education.

Members discussed the following: how do we market our programs to reach a diverse population; push in to general ed classes for ECSE students; difference in what is offered to the tuition-based preschool versus GSRP; how many GSRP students are residents; cost

for families; and suggested being a pilot for other school districts.

Locker  
Replacement  
Project

Director of Operations Mark Fargo presented information regarding the purchase of replacement lockers for Okemos Public Montessori at Central Elementary. Bids were sought for this project to be funded through the 2019 Technology, Security, Transportation, Capital Outlay, and Facilities bond. It was noted that the project would not just replace, but also add lockers when possible, and some lockers will be able to be repurposed.

School Start Times

The board continued its discussion regarding school start times. Superintendent Hood reviewed the results of the board's homework which included questions for follow up with Dr. Hoffman and administration. He also reported on items the board had consensus on, and those it did not. There was no consensus on which model to pursue. Superintendent Hood responded to questions regarding athletics participation; transportation; and described areas of concerns. Members agree that the board and administration need to review all priorities before proceeding. A work session to review all board, district and strategic goals including school start times was scheduled for May 15<sup>th</sup>.

Members discussed the following: other districts also moving start times; childcare capacity; research regarding younger students; administrative capacity; policy committee work regarding homework; and upcoming work session.

Citizens Address  
Agenda & Non-  
Agenda Items

No one addressed the board.

High School  
Student Report

High School Representatives reported on the following: upcoming prom on May 13th; upcoming graduation on May 21; school safety presentation; recent state testing; recent pep assembly; NHS induction ceremony; upcoming extortion presentation for families; upcoming production of the Wizard of Oz; athletic update; and upcoming band concert.

Superintendent  
Report

Superintendent Hood reported on the following: recent HR Director interviews; update regarding class offerings and scheduling at OHS; bond update and timing for approving bids; recent parent council meeting and playground accessibility; recent training regarding active crisis response with Security Consultant Jason Russell.

Board Reports &  
Request

Members asked administration to follow up on the course offering changes at OHS.

President Gebara acknowledged correspondence from the following: Peilei Fan with an invitation to a Chinese cultural event; John Ellsworth regarding board policy 7000 series; Bridget and Joe Potchen requesting more garbage cans at Kinawa and Chippewa; and Laura Belisle concerning safety at Cornell Elementary.

Members reported on the following: Chinese culture event at the Okemos Library; MASB Behind The Scenes Legislative event; recent gun safety legislation; policy committee update; and work session items versus discussion items.

Staff  
Appreciation  
Day

MOVED by Tom Buffett, SUPPORTED by Katie Cavanaugh that the board read and adopt the resolution establishing May 2, 2023 as Staff Appreciation Day in honor of the employees of the Okemos Public Schools.

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

Operations  
Purchase

MOVED by Andy Phelps, SUPPORTED by Melanie Lynn that the board award the purchase of a 2023 Chevy HD Truck to Berger Chevrolet through the MiDeal bid process in an amount not

to exceed \$33,488 to be funded through the General Fund.

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

MOVED by Katie Cavanaugh, SUPPORTED by Shulawn Doxie that the board waive the reading and adopt the resolution in support of the Meridian Cares about You Health and Safety Expo and encourages students, families, and staff to participate.

Resolution:  
Meridian Cares  
About You Event

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

Assistant Superintendent Stacy Bailey and Principal Dr. Nicole Beard presented information regarding flexible furniture purchases for Hiawatha Elementary to be funded through the 2019 bond.

Flexible Furniture

Members inquired as to what happens with the old furniture.

The board continued its development of the 2023-2024 budget, including GASB 96 and its impact on budgeting for textbook subscriptions Director Lentz also followed up regarding special education reimbursements from the ISD.

2023-2024 Budget  
Development

The board reviewed the recommendation for School of Choice openings to be advertised through the Ingham Intermediate School District for the 2023-2024 school year. The proposed openings are as follows: Beginndergarten/Kindergarten = 1 opening; 1<sup>st</sup> grade = 8 openings; 2<sup>nd</sup> grade = 5 openings; 3<sup>rd</sup> grade = 4 openings; 4<sup>th</sup> grade = 8 openings; and 5th - 12<sup>th</sup> grades = 1 opening per grade.

School of Choice  
2023-2024

The board discussed their approach to board work sessions versus discussions at a regular meeting. The board has proposed a variety of work session topics including budget priorities, governance, policy, start times, data and assessments, and district priorities. The board scheduled a work session regarding district planning and prioritizing on May 15th at 6:00 p.m. Members Cavanaugh and Buffett will assist administration with planning this work session.

Board Work  
Sessions

A board presentation calendar planning session and a superintendent committee to address and plan data presentations were also discussed.

No one addressed the board.

Public Comment

There were no other matters.

Other Maters

President Gebara adjourned the regular meeting at 9:37 p.m.

Adjourn

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Jayne Taylor, Secretary