

**Okemos Board of Education  
Okemos, Michigan 48864  
REGULAR MEETING MAY 22, 2023**

The regular meeting of the Okemos Board of Education was called to order by President Gebara at 6:32 p.m. Call To Order

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

Members Absent: Shulawn Doxie

Administrators: Superintendent John Hood; Director Elizabeth Lentz; Director Mario Martinez

MOVED by Melanie Lynn, 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	---	Jayme Taylor	Yes
Melanie Lynn	Yes		

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

The board adjourned to executive session at 6:35 p.m.

Reconvene

The board reconvened from executive session at 7:29 p.m.

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

Members Absent: Shulawn Doxie

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

Reproductive Health Supervisor Jill Dehlin presented information regarding proposed Personal Health and Sexuality Education curriculum for use by students in 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grades. The proposed curriculum has already been previewed and unanimously approved for use by the PHASE (Personal Health and Sex Education) board. Supervisor Dehlin also reviewed the following: process used to arrive at the recommendation; curriculum for special education students; the consent process; upcoming parent survey; recent student survey; and open seats on the PHASE Advisory board. PHASE  
Curriculum &  
Co-Chairs

In addition, Supervisor Dehlin provided information regarding the recommendations from the district's Parent Council for two co-chair appointments to the district's Personal Health and Sexuality Education Advisory (PHASE) Board.

Finance Director Elizabeth Lentz provide information regarding 2022-2023 budget revisions. Updated revenue assumptions include grant funding to support learning loss, improving student mental health and improving safety and security; special education revenue; childcare stabilization; and GSRP funding. Updated expenditures include utility cost; safety improvements; staffing; operations expenditures; and childcare operations. The projected impact to the general fund is a positive approximately \$1,170,043. 2022-2023  
Budget  
Revisions

Director Lentz also reviewed the purpose of the general fund and how it impacts the district's financial standing and credit rating.

The board continued its development of the 2023-2024 budget including preliminary assumptions and priorities. Updated assumptions include enrollment projections and grant revenues. The projected impact on the general fund is a positive approximately \$1.6 million. Structural and one-time items, the carryforward impact on the general fund, and impending items such as negotiations, and the budget timeline were mentioned.

Members inquired about the recommended fund balance percentages and favorable financial scenario for the district; and board adoption of target fund balance amount.

Members then engaged in an exercise to determine their budget priorities. Administration presented and the board discussed a variety of items to be considered ranked according to needs, wants and dreams. Examples of items include: including grant-funded staff into the general fund; additional support staff for buildings, technology and HR; decreasing the athletics participation fee; funding for clubs; additional special education staff, counselors, ELA interventionist, decreased parking permit fees, adding communications support, and distribution of a community newsletter, field trip funding, professional development funding, supply budgets, and more. The board was asked to identify any other priorities and to rank all priorities to be discussed at the June 12<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Citizens Address  
Agenda & Non-  
Agenda

Isabelle Wang addressed the board regarding sleep and school start times; Mark Cauley addressed the board regarding the open ELA position.

High School Representatives reported on the following: student activities; prom, commencement, senior projects, and exams.

Student  
Representative  
Report

Superintendent Hood reported on the following: expansion of the Woofpack; Okemos Archery club success; Montessori student presentation regarding year-round vs. traditional school calendar; Hiawatha happenings; and recent commencement ceremony at the Breslin Center.

Superintendent  
Report

President Gebara acknowledged correspondence from the following: Lilliana Vandervennet concerning athletic facilities; Nyana Kavanaugh concerning parking permits at the high school; Keira Jutkowitz regarding messaging on school vending machines; Avin Xoshnaw regarding a personal finance class; Susan Vela regarding the SRO position; and Martha Kliebert regarding a web domain renewal.

Board Reports &  
Request

Members reported on the following: CMS Montessori trip to DC; senior project at the Okemos Library; recent orchestra concert; Orchestra Director Justin Valla awarded the Michigan Orchestra Teacher of the Year award; and the OEF golf outing.

MOVED by Andy Phelps, SUPPORTED by Tom Buffett that the board approve items 1 through 3 for immediate implementation and appropriate action.

Consent Agenda

Item 1: Approval of the minutes of the Regular Meeting of May 8, 2023;

Item 2: Approval of the minutes of the Special meeting of April 15, 2023;

Item 3: Approve the leave of absence request for Sara Baker, Math teacher at CMS for the period of May 15th through June 10, 2023.

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

MOVED by Katie Cavanaugh, SUPPORTED by Tom Buffett that the board waive the reading and adopt the resolution designating Melanie Lynn as its representative and Tom Buffett as alternate, to the electoral body for the June 5, 2023 Ingham Intermediate School District election of board members and instruct Member Lynn concerning the board's choice of John Wolenberg and Lori Zajac to fill two vacant six-year term on the Ingham ISD board of education.

Roll Call Vote

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

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

MOVED by Katie Cavanaugh, SUPPORTED by Melanie Lynn that the board endorse the OHS Spanish student trip to Ecuador and the Galapagos Islands from June 11th through June 18, 2024 with the understanding the students will abide by all school policies and procedures while abroad.

Student Trip

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

MOVED by Tom Buffett, SUPPORTED by Andy Phelps that the board extend the following administrator contracts through June 30, 2025 Nicole Beard - Principal at Hiawatha Elementary; Tempie Brown - Athletic Director at Okemos High School; Allison Cironi - Assistant Principal at Okemos High School; Dan Kemsley - Principal at Okemos High School; Jody Noble - Principal at Chippewa Middle School; Tracy Ojerio - Principal at Cornell Elementary; Heather Pricco - Director of Special Education; Andre Ridley - Assistant Principal at Chippewa Middle School; Sara Roland - Assistant Principal at Kinawa; Lauren Schefke - Principal at Bennett Woods Elementary; Joe Schmidt - Assistant Principal at Okemos High School; Steve Stierley - Principal at Kinawa; Kelly Sundeen - Principal at Central Montessori.

Administrator  
Contracts

Roll Call Vote

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

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

MOVED by Andy Phelps, SUPPORTED by Katie Cavanaugh that the board amend the contract of Assistant Superintendent Stacy Bailey to extend their dates of employment through June 30, 2026.

Amend Assistant  
Superintendent  
Contract

Roll Call Vote

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

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

Recess

The board recessed at 9:52 p.m.

Reconvene

The board reconvened at 10:00 p.m.

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

Employment –  
Certified

MOVED by Andy Phelps, SUPPORTED by Tom Buffett that the board approve the employment of Salvatore Antonucci, English Teacher at OHS at Step 2, Division I; Laura Kueffner, Math Teacher at CMS at Step 9, Division II; Jennifer Nanzer, Speech and Language Pathologist for the District at Step 2, Division II; Diane Smith, Science Teacher at CMS at Step 9, Division III; Kristyn Stierley, Spanish Teacher at CMS at Step 9, Division II; and Ryan Volz, PE Teacher at Hiawatha at Step 1, Division I of the teacher salary schedule, effective August 22, 2023 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.

AYE: 4    NAY: 0    ABSENT: 3    **MOTION CARRIED**

Discussion Items

The discussion item regarding the board's recent work session and school start times follow up is delayed until the June 12<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Public Comment

No one addressed the board.

Other Matters

There were no other matters.

Adjourn

President Gebara adjourned the regular meeting at 10:04 p.m.

---

Jayme Taylor, Secretary