

**Okemos Board of Education
Okemos, Michigan 48864
REGULAR MEETING AUGUST 15, 2023**

The special 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, Melanie Lynn, Andrew Phelps and Jayme Taylor

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

Closed Session

MOVED by Katie Cavanaugh, SUPPORTED by Shulawn Doxie that the board adjourn to Executive Session pursuant to Section 8(a) of the Open Meetings Act for the purpose of discussing a personnel matter.

Roll Call Vote

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

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

The board adjourned to executive session at 6:32 p.m.

Reconvene

The board reconvened from executive session at 7:32 p.m.

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; Finance Director Elizabeth Lentz; Director Mario Martinez

Superintendent Hood and representatives from Secure Education Consultants Jason Russell and David Pass provided an update regarding a safety and security grant to fund a Safety and Security Director position for the district. After assessing the possibility of a school resource office, the district determined it had needs throughout the district that could be met with a broader, district-wide security manager with expertise in that role. A job description was developed that would support the needs of the district as well as allowing administrators to get back to instruction and learning. A grant from the state would fund this security position to start. Administration is seeking consensus from the board regarding whether to pursue the position or not. The position would be responsible for threat assessment, crisis management, facility needs and bond work as it relates to safety and security, would act as liaison with Meridian Township Police, and would be an extension of SEC's consultant services. It was noted that the position would be filled with someone who previously served as police officer or secret service agent, and they would not be armed.

Safety &
Security Director
Position

Members discussed the following: potential candidates and what kind of background they usually have; where would they be housed within the district; grant fund would cover 2 to 3 years before reassessing the general fund budget to include the position.

Representatives from TowerPinkster, Christman, and Veridus Group provided an update on regarding design milestones, current construction underway and communication planning. Currently construction is underway with pressing needs at Central Montessori, secure vestibules at Cornell, Central, Edgewood and Bennett Woods; and work at the soccer and

Bond Update

football field complex. Bid package #4 details were reviewed as well and include additional pressing needs at Central Montessori; pressing needs at Hiawatha Elementary as well as a secure vestibule there; and pressing needs, a secure vestibule and office renovations at OHS. Communication efforts were described including newsletter, website, and video update for the staff. Community impact was also noted.

Members inquired about the following: secure vestibules and impact on families; timelines for the high school stadium; Hiawatha addition timelines; and timelines for bid package #3 which includes CMS and Kinawa.

Building Administrators presented the proposed changes to the elementary, Kinawa, Chippewa Middle School, and Okemos High School student-parent handbooks.

Student-Parent
Handbooks

Proposed Okemos High School revisions include but are not limited to: removing redundancies when policies or information can be found elsewhere, removing language regarding facility usage that doesn't pertain to students, textbook fines, changes to the attendance policy and consequences, and language in academic integrity to address chat gpt. Proposed Chippewa Middle School revisions include: athletic eligibility and participation fees, as well as language in academic integrity to also address chat gpt. Proposed Kinawa revisions include: clarification language and consistency with the other levels and their approach as to the use of chat gpt. Proposed Elementary level revisions include: clarifying language regarding the attendance policy, temperature that is considered a fever, head lice policy etc.

Members discussed the following: testing out timeframe and materials; removal of building maps; consistency with board policies; cell phone policy; and attendance policies. Members commented on the accessibility of the high school handbook specifically.

Food Service Director Emily Swirsky provided an update regarding the legislation providing free breakfast and lunch for all students. She also reviewed the requirements to qualify as a reimbursable meal. Families are still asked to complete the free and reduced lunch paperwork if applicable.

Food Service
Update

Members inquired about share tables.

Citizens Address
Agenda & Non-
Agenda Items

No one addressed the board.

Superintendent Hood reported on the following: June 1st graduation date and conflicts with sport schedules. Administration is proposing Wednesday, May 29th instead; resignation of Hiawatha Principal Nicole Beard, as well as addressed administrative turnover; Opening Day assembly on Monday, August 21st; solar car racing team success; and the Okemos Outreach student service project in Chicago.

Superintendent's
Report

President Gebara acknowledged correspondence from the following: Stacy Tapscott regarding school grounds; Isabel Wang, Dr. Hoffman, Theresa Rice and Xiaoshi Li concerning school start times; and Stacy Erwin regarding the school of choice process.

Board Reports &
Request

Members reported on the following: requested a building and grounds update; and back to school activities.

MOVED by Andy Phelps SUPPORTED by Katie Cavanaugh that the board approve items 1 through 3 for immediate implementation and appropriate action. Item 1: Approval of the

Consent Agenda

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of June 26, 2023; Item 2: Approval of the Minutes of the Special Meeting of July 20, 2023; Item 3: Approval of the Minutes of the Executive Session Meeting of July 20, 2023.

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

MOVED by Shulawn Doxie, SUPPORTED by Tom Buffett that the board the delegation of school plan review and inspections to Meridian Charter Township.

Delegation of Authority

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

MOVED by Tom Buffett, SUPPORTED by Jayme Taylor that the board approve the employment of Laura Seydel, 4th Grade Teacher at Bennett Woods Elementary at Step 6, Division II; and Kassie Van Dusen, Kindergarten Teacher at Bennett Woods Elementary at Step 5, Division I of the teacher salary schedule, effective August 15, 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.

Employment - Certified

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

MOVED by Andy Phelps, SUPPORTED by Shulawn Doxie that the board waive the reading and adopt first reading of board policies 1101 General Policy Statement; 1201 Mission Statement; 1301 Creation, Amendment and Posting of Policies; 1401 Definitions; 2101 Roles of the Board and Board Members; 2102 School District's Legal Name and Status; 2103 School District Boundaries; 2104 Student Representative on the Board; 2201 Board Powers/General Powers; 2202 Authority to Enter Into Contracts; 2406 Board Officers' Duties; 2505 Board Committees; and 5511 Secret Organizations.

Board Policy: First Reading

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

Director of Finance Elizabeth Lentz provided an update regarding enacted state aid budget highlights, including increased foundation allowance, increased enrollment, increased special education funding, universal breakfast and lunch, increased transportation and mental health funding, increased at-risk funding, and increased staffing due to enrollment. Director Lentz also addressed budget priorities at level 1.5 that will be implemented and include additional student supervisors, club funding, cyber-security staff and additional early childhood staff.

2023-2024 Budget Update

Members inquired as to what is included in the mental health funding.

There were no other matters.

Other Matters

President Gebara adjourned the regular meeting at 9:36 p.m.

Adjourn

Jayme Taylor, Secretary