

Okemos Board of Education
Okemos, Michigan 48864
REGULAR MEETING JANUARY 22, 2024

PAGE 9067
1-22-2024

The regular meeting of the Okemos Board of Education was called to order by President Gebara at 7:02 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; Assistant Superintendent Stacy Bailey; Finance Director Elizabeth Lentz; HR Director Mario Martinez; DEI Director Lara Slee

The board recognized the following employees who have attained 24 years of service: **Kelly Carrier**, Science Teacher at Okemos High School; **Stacy Christensen**, Art Teacher at Chippewa Middle School; **Jennifer Eddy**, Gifted & Talented Coordinator for the District; **Rachel Freeman-Baldwin**, English Teacher at OHS; **Susan Gidner**, Food Service Worker for the District; and **Marie Smith**, 2nd Grade Teacher at Bennett Woods Elementary.

24 Years of Service

Superintendent Hood provided an overview of facility upgrades to Okemos Public Montessori at Central Elementary funded through the district's sinking fund, 2019 bond, and 2022 bond. He explained that a priority was placed on addressing the warm, safe and dry needs of the building, as well as the funding sources available to make these improvements. Examples of improvements include: carpet replacement, roof repairs, gym floor refinishing, parking lot sealing, security window film, HVAC and air conditioning, bathroom renovations, new flexible furniture, new lockers, audio system upgrades, installation of a secure vestibule, and office renovations. Improvements currently in-progress were described and include: additional security cameras, additional wireless access points, sewer and drainage improvements, additional gym renovations, and a new health room. Upcoming upgrades include a new roof scheduled for summer of 2025 or 2026, as well as repairs as they are needed. The improvements equate to an approximately \$3.8 million investment.

OPM Facility Improvements

Mr. Hood reiterated that the bond citizens committee did evaluate OPM, and determined further consideration for the Montessori program and enrollment was needed. He also reported on the implementation of an OPM facilities committee and upcoming meeting; a new website regarding testing; communication plans; lessons learned; and next steps.

Members discussed the following: another bond to build a new building, what's involved, and impact on taxes; status of improvements and timelines; repairs needed as a result of testing; testing schedules; mitigation efforts; prevention strategies; and legislation regarding testing requirements.

Technology Director Tom Isom presented information regarding a technology purchase to be funded through the 2022 Bond, including network switches and wireless access points. CISCO products are preferred due to longevity, service, and availability. The equipment can be moved and reused.

Technology Purchase

Member Phelps inquired as to which buildings will be upgraded.

Citizens Address Agenda & Non-Agenda Items

Haley Blake, Kelly Bertilrud, Courtney Block, and Sue Hallman addressed the board regarding OPM facility concerns.

High School Student Representatives reported on the following: recent final exams, Powerschool shut down during break, AP applications upcoming deadline, winter dance on February 3rd, 7th grade camp, upcoming diversity assembly, upcoming fine arts performances, Spaghetti Dinner fundraiser, athletics update, and Niche rankings.

Superintendent's
Report

Superintendent Hood reported on the following: provided clarification regarding teachers' negotiations; recent Hiawatha carline community forum, school zone request and next steps; field relocation due to construction; 7-8 Montessori enrollment; revised common calendar for 24-25; Quizbowl team compliments; and school board appreciation month.

Director Isom reported on upcoming cybersecurity update and upgrades.

Members reported on the following: marketing the Montessori program to increase enrollment; data collection to determine the why and trends; student input; and recent Hiawatha community forum.

Board Reports &
Request

President Gebara acknowledged correspondence from the following: Chad and Amanda Dekatch; Sally Wiggins; Judy Leibinger; Marlene Stover, Howard Chang; Lynne Page; Valerie Levitt; and Robin Jolly concerning the proposed Hiawatha carline design; Laura Bell regarding OPM facility needs; Siddhi Choubey regarding requesting an interview; and Hanne Hoffmann regarding school start times.

Members reported on the following: recent parent council meeting; volunteer opportunities; board operating procedures; board involvement in bond projects; and Midwest school security conference.

Consent Agenda

MOVED by Shulawn Doxie, SUPPORTED by Katie Cavanaugh that the board approve items 1 and 2 for immediate implementation and appropriate action. Item 1: Approval of the minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 8, 2024; and Item 2: Approval of the minutes of the Special Meeting of January 10, 2024.

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

Bond Resolution

MOVED Katie Cavanaugh, SUPPORTED by Tom Buffett that the board waive the reading and adopt the resolution authorizing the issuance and delegating the sale of the second series of bonds to be designated 2024 School Building and Site Bonds, Series II, which were approved by the voters at the November 8, 2022 election.

Roll Call Vote

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

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

OHS Course
Proposals

MOVED by Katie Cavanaugh, SUPPORTED by Tom Buffett that the board approve the following new high school courses to be offered beginning with the 2024-2025 school year: Music Appreciation (music elective); Exploring Songs as Poetry (language arts elective); World Languages & Culture (world language elective); Astronomy (science elective); AI Assisted-Programming (computer elective); Statistics (math elective).

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

MOVED by Andy Phelps SUPPORTED by Katie Cavanaugh that the board waive the reading and adopt first reading of board policies 3105 Visitors and Volunteers; 3108 Service Animals; 3109 Curricular Animals; 3209 Debit/Credit Cards; 3303 Gifts and Donations; 3308 Distribution of Printed Material and Advertising in School; 3401 School Cancelation, Delay, and Early Dismissal; 3402 Drills, Plans, and Reports; 3502 Record Retention; 4101 Non-Discrimination; 4108 Union Activity and Representation; 4207 Third-Party Contracting of Non-Instructional Support Services; 4404 Performance Based Compensation; 4407 Discipline; 4408 Termination; 4504 Performance Based Compensation for Administrators/Supervisors; 5102 Lockers; 5103 Search and Seizure; 5105 Collaboration with Outside Entities; and 5201 Investigations, Arrests, and Other Law Enforcement Contact.

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

MOVED Jayme Taylor, SUPPORTED by Shulawn Doxie that the board waive the reading and adopt first reading of board policies 4402-R Placement; 4403-R Performance Evaluation; 4405-R Reduction in Force and Recall; 4409-R Non-Renewal; 4503-R Performance Evaluation.

Board Policy –
First Reading 30
Day Effective

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

Assistant Superintendent Stacy Bailey presented information regarding proposed Personal Health and Sexuality Education curriculum for use by elementary special education students. The proposed curriculum has already been previewed and unanimously approved for use by the PHASE (Personal Health and Sex Education) board and is available for the community to review in the Assistant Superintendent's office.

PHASE
Curriculum

The board discussed potential School of Choice openings to be advertised (February 18th) for the Pre-K through 8th grade Montessori program. The numbers being proposed will reflect available seats while maintaining the district's ability to accommodate resident students. The number of available spots is as follows: PPK-K – 2 spots; 1st and 2nd grade – 1 spot; 3rd and 4th grade – 0 spots; 5th and 6th grade – 10 spots; and 7th and 8th grades – 10 spots.

Montessori SOC

Superintendent Hood provided an update from the start times committee regarding a potential model for consideration by the board and community. He briefly reviewed research and best practice considerations. The criteria used to evaluate each possible model was explained, as well as other barriers, considerations, concerns and the impact on athletics.

Start Times
Update

Three flip flop and slide options were presented, as well as a hybrid options. Superintendent Hood is seeking direction as to which option(s) the board prefers to pursue to inform next steps.

Directors Martinez and Karpinski provided information regarding wages, recruiting and retention, and current market conditions.

Members discussed the following: athletic impacts at CMS; cost; change management; equity concerns; missing class time; how many students are on each route; community forum, other district flexibility; and possible grant funding. Members recommended that Superintendent Hood and the committee focus their efforts on a hybrid A + B model.

Tom Lee, Lauren Swanson-Aprill, Barbara Forney and Susan Metcalf addressed the board regarding the Hiawatha carline design. Dana Bennett addressed the board regarding school start times and the Hiawatha carline design.

Public Comment

There were no other matters.

Other Matters

President Gebara adjourned the regular meeting at 10:45 p.m.

Adjourn

Andy Phelps, Secretary