

**Official Minutes of the  
Oak Park Board of Education District 97,  
Meeting held at Beye School, 230 N. Cuyler  
January 26, 2010**

President Traczyk called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: Gates, Spatz, Clouser, Reddy, Harton, Barber, and Traczyk  
Absent: None  
Also Present: Superintendent Constance R. Collins, Director of Human Resources Trish Carlson, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations Therese O'Neill, Communications Coordinator Chris Jasculca, Director of Special Education Mike Padavic, Principals Tom Sindelar and Vicki Sharts, Building and Grounds Director Norman Lane, and Board Secretary Sheryl Marinier

EXECUTIVE  
SESSION

**Executive Session**

Gates moved, seconded by Reddy, that the Board of Education move into executive session at 6:00 p.m. Roll call vote.

Ayes: Gates, Reddy, Clouser, Spatz, Barber, Harton, and Traczyk  
Nays: None  
Motion passed.

OPEN SESSION

**Open Session**

Gates moved, seconded by Reddy, that the Board of Education move into open session at 7:01 p.m. Roll call vote.

Ayes: Gates, Reddy, Barber, Spatz, Harton, Clouser, and Traczyk  
Nays: None  
Motion passed.

APPROVAL OF  
MINUTES OF  
JANUARY 12, 2010

**1.1.0 Approval of Minutes of January 12, 2010**

Harton moved, seconded by Spatz, that the Board of Education approve the minutes from the January 12, 2010 meeting with revisions.

Roll call vote.

Ayes: Harton, Spatz, Gates, Clouser, Reddy, and Traczyk  
Nays: None  
Abstained: Barber  
Motion passed.

## **Public Comment**

PUBLIC COMMENT

Linda Francis, an Oak Park parent, expressed concern over how the issues of race, equity and standards are handled in District 97, as well as the number of unmanageable initiatives and activities that are in the Strategic Plan and the School Improvement Plans. Francis shared several items of concern that she observed over the past year, and encouraged the District to explore the role of race and inclusion in the District. She recommended that the District model the behaviors, policies and procedures shown to aid in the eradication of the achievement gap, and unite the District in a commitment to obtain workable district-wide goals and principles that include the eradication of the achievement gap.

Karen Su, an Oak Park parent, expressed concern over the minority hiring practices within the District. She is unaware of any formal communication with the Diversity Leadership Network (DLN) regarding the hiring process, which she feels is against the DLN's recommendation. Su recommends including teachers in the hiring process, setting guidelines throughout the District, and allowing the process to become transparent. Su also suggested that the District consider not using the term "high-caliber" to define candidates, as she is concerned that the term implies that the candidates need to be Caucasian.

ACTION ITEMS

## **Action Items**

### **4.1.1 Approval of Bill list and Reports**

Closer moved, seconded by Gates, that the Board of Education of Oak Park approve the Bill List and Reports as presented.

Roll call vote.

Ayes: Clouser, Gates, Harton, Barber, Spatz, Reddy, and Traczyk

Nays: None

Motion passed.

### **3.1.2 Approval of Administrative Salaries**

Spatz moved, seconded by Reddy, that the Board of Education of Oak Park approve the 2010-2011 administrative salaries as presented.

Roll call vote.

Ayes: Spatz, Reddy, Clouser, Barber, Gates, Harton, and Traczyk

Nays: None

Motion passed.

### **3.2.2 Approval of Administrative Support Salaries**

Clouser moved, seconded by Gates, that the Board of Education of Oak Park approve the 2010-2011 administrative support salaries as presented.

Roll call vote.

Ayes: Clouser, Gates, Reddy, Barber, Harton, Spatz, and Traczyk

Nays: None

Motion passed.

### **3.3.1 Acceptance of Percussion Equipment and Supplies for the Brooks Band**

Barber moved, seconded by Harton, that the Board of Education of Oak Park accept the donation of percussion equipment and supplies for the Brooks Middle School band program donated by Donorschoose.org. Jonathan Ellwanger updated the Board on the history of Donorschoose.

Roll call vote.

Ayes: Barber, Harton, Clouser, Gates, Reddy, Spatz, and Traczyk

Nays: None

Motion passed.

### **3.3.2 Acceptance of National Geographic Magazines for Julian Media Center**

Harton moved, seconded by Barber, that the Board of Education of Oak Park accept the donation of National Geographic magazines from 2005 through 2008 to the Julian Middle School Media Center donated by Mr. Robert Steit.

Roll call vote.

Ayes: Harton, Barber, Reddy, Clouser, Gates, Spatz, and Traczyk

Nays: None

Motion passed.

### **3.3.3 Acceptance of Books for School Libraries/Media Centers**

Reddy moved, seconded by Harton, that the Board of Education of Oak Park accept the donation of the following hardback books to the school library/media centers donated by Mr. James Gates.

Two copies of The Last Olympian, by Rick Riordan, (one for each middle school)  
Eight copies of Robot Zot, by Jon Scieszka, (one for each elementary school)

Mr. Gates intends to make annual contributions to all the school libraries/media centers.

Roll call vote.

Ayes: Reddy, Harton, Barber, Clouser, Gates, Spatz, and Traczyk

Nays: None

Motion passed.

Member Harton left the meeting at 7:29 p.m.

**Academic/Instruction**  
**BROOKS SCHEDULING PROPOSAL**

Tom Sindelar, in an attempt to move toward RtI and address the needs of the students, recommended modifying the student scheduling process for the 2010-2011 school year by incorporating 90 minute block scheduling. Sindelar cited the change as an opportunity to include math in the team environment, and combine reading and language arts into a double period experience. Sindelar reported that a unique aspect of this schedule is the manner in which it can meet the social and emotional needs of all of the middle school students. Academically, this schedule fully supports the middle school philosophy of creating interdisciplinary units. Students would benefit because they would be able to make connections across content areas due to an increase in the time allotted to examine the objectives of each lesson. Differentiating according to the needs of all students would also be more fully met.

Sindelar continued by reporting that the response by staff regarding this scheduling change has been overwhelmingly positive across grade levels and content areas. The plan is also being supported by the School Improvement Team (SIT), and the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO). He assured the Board that every attempt will be made to ensure that students are not tracked. However, due to the nature of the elective classes, some students will spend a portion of the day together.

The Board, in support of the plan, acknowledged that it acts on four of the five items identified by the Middle Level Oversight Committee (MLOC). Interest was expressed in how the gifted/talented teachers and the RtI interventionists will be folded into the program. Interest was also expressed in viewing data that would document the effect that the scheduling change has on student achievement, as well as viewing projections of the anticipated outcome over a period of time. Principal Sindelar was asked to return in one year with an update on the program and to share statistics.

**STUDENT PERFORMANCE / ACADEMIC & BEHAVIORAL REPORT**

Dr. Anderson, Dr. Baird and Harla Hutchinson presented a summary of the first trimester information from the common assessments, including a first look at the prediction capabilities of PASeries to ISAT scores, and the discipline reporting systems (SWIS and PowerSchool). Also included in the presentation were performance information from the recent summer school programs and student comments regarding their summer school experience.

The data showed consistent progress in math and reading with slight losses in math during the summer. Subgroups showed scores for African American and low-income students lagging in math and reading at all grade levels.

Middle school data demonstrated a wide variable in math scores. The team was pleased to report that less than one in 10 students scored below 50 percent. It was reported that 159 students did not take the testing. Hutchinson will review the data and determine why these students did not participate. A discussion took place on the importance of introducing students to Algebra.

## **STUDENT PERFORMANCE / ACADEMIC & BEHAVIORAL REPORT – (Continued)**

The discipline data featured information about daily referrals to the school office, broken down by school and time of day. The data demonstrated that late morning showed a higher number of incidences. It was also noted that 11 acts of serious misconduct have been reported, as well as seven students who have had duplicate offenses since the beginning of the school year. It was suggested that reports in the future expand the data beyond single digits.

Anderson shared that the team will report to the Board again in March.

### **District Activity VIDEO CAMERAS**

DISTRICT ACTIVITY

Principals Vicki Sharts, and Tom Sindelar, joined Norm Lane at the table to discuss the preliminary draft of a policy regarding video cameras in the middle schools. It was agreed that the discussion of this document should not be considered a first reading of the policy, but only a preliminary review. Keeping in mind that the purpose of the cameras is to guard the safety of the students/staff as well as the security of the building, those preparing the document were asked to consider language regarding:

- Discipline action against those who intentionally block the cameras
- Defining the length of time a staff member will be allowed to sit and view the cameras
- Identifying the location of the cameras
- Ensure the policy differentiates between video recording and video surveillance
- Defining acceptable reasons for reviewing the tapes
- Determine who can request to review of the videos
- Consider limitations on the use of the cameras

The posting of signs identifying the use of video cameras was suggested. Dr. Collins will post a cover letter on the Web site along with the preliminary policy that introduces the video camera proposal and outlines the purpose of the document.

Concern was expressed regarding camera installation, questioning the cost and the need for the project. Administration was asked to identify the benefits and clearly articulate the need for the cameras, as well as identify which fund will finance the project.

Administrators were asked to look into the possible use of cameras on school buses. Interest was expressed in how FERPA and FOIA interact regarding video cameras. It was also suggested that administration look at the locks on the middle school lockers and ensure their safety.

## **Board of Education Priorities**

### **BOARD MEETING MANAGEMENT PROTOCOL**

The revised Board Meeting Management Protocol document was reviewed. A brief discussion took place regarding when straw polls are allowable during Board meetings. The document will be revised and brought back to the Board for approval on February 9.

## **Superintendent's Report**

### **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

A memo from Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations Therese O'Neill regarding an additional SELF payment was distributed to the Board. As stated in the memo, it will be necessary to overspend the budget line to pay this invoice, but the money needed is available in the Tort Fund balance. The District is clearly still saving money through the \$25,000 deductible program as outlined in the memo. Additionally, the District has been assured by SELF that future invoices will be sent in a timely manner.

The joint institute day with Oak Park River Forest High School and River Forest District 90 was successful. The keynote speaker, Dr. Pat Quinn, focused on Response to Intervention. Administration will obtain feedback from staff to use in future institute planning.

The student surveys will be completed at all schools on February 18.

In an effort to respond to all Board members' questions and concerns regarding reports and presentations, the Board members were asked to contact Cabinet members as far in advance of the Board meetings as possible. Administration wants to respond to all the Board's questions, however, they are finding it difficult to accomplish when the questions are submitted on the day of the Board meeting, especially if the request requires extensive data gathering.

Since the change in the FOIA law on January 1, 2010, District 97 has received four requests.

The State of the District address will be held at Julian Middle School on Thursday, January 28 at 7 p.m. The agenda is as follows:

- 7:00 p.m.-7:02 p.m. Welcome/Introduction of Dr. Collins by Chris Jasculca
- 7:02 p.m.-7:20 p.m. State of the District presented by Dr. Collins
- 7:20 p.m.-7:35 p.m. Financial Picture presented by Peter Traczyk
- 7:35 p.m.-8:30 p.m. Questions from audience submitted on cards

## **Board Concerns / Announcements**

BOARD CONCERNS/  
ANNOUNCEMENTS

An update was requested on TIF, the high school forum, and the crossing guards. There was nothing reported at this time.

Appreciation was extended to Beye School for hosting this meeting. A request was made to hold a future meeting at Lincoln School.

An update on the full-day Kindergarten program will be shared at the end of the school year.

All members confirmed attendance at the State of the District event scheduled for Thursday, January 28, with the exception of member Harton who was not present at the time of the discussion. It was suggested that e-mailed questions for the State of the District event should not be given priority over questions submitted during the event.

The Illinois-wide P-20 Council met in December and will meet again on January 27. The council is still in the organizational stage.

## **Board Response to Public Comment**

BOARD RESPONSE TO  
PUBLIC COMMENT

Dr. Collins will meet individually with both parents to address their concerns and update the Board.

## **Upcoming Meeting**

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Thursday, January 28 at 7 p.m. is the State of the District address. The event will take place at Julian Middle School.

The special finance meeting scheduled for February 18 was discussed. It was reported that Steve Miller from PMA would not be available to meet on that date. After a brief discussion, February 22 was identified as an option. President Traczyk will check member Harton's availability prior to confirming the meeting date.

There being no further business to conduct, President Traczyk declared the meeting adjourned at 10:46 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board will be on Tuesday February 9, 2010 beginning at 7 p.m. at the Administration building located at 970 Madison Street.

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Board President

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Board Secretary