

**Official Minutes of the  
Oak Park Board of Education District 97,  
970 Madison Street, Oak Park, Cook County, Illinois  
April 26, 2011**

President Traczyk called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: Barber, Clouser, Reddy, Gates, Harton, Spatz and Traczyk  
Absent: None  
Also Present: Superintendent Al Roberts, Human Resources Director Trish Carlson, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations Therese O'Neill, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning Kevin Anderson, Director of Special Education Mike Padavic, Communications Coordinator Chris Jасulca, and Board Secretary Sheryl Marinier

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Reddy moved, seconded by Barber, that the Board of Education move into executive session at 6:30 p.m. Roll call vote.

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

**OPEN SESSION**

OPEN SESSION

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

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

**SPECIAL REPORTS**

SPECIAL REPORTS

**FUN RUN**

Special Education teacher John Gann promoted the 19<sup>th</sup> annual Fun Run scheduled for Saturday, May 7. Deardre Rias from Longfellow was introduced as the winner of the poster contest. Jimmy Dishin from Hatch, Claire Von Ebers from Lincoln, Addie Clark from Whittier, Elizabeth Morales from Holmes, Marcos Staccos from Irving, Ella Haas from Mann, Isabel Stiener from Beye, Zachery Kaiser from Julian, and Annabel Huber from Brooks were also recognized.

**ETHNIC FESTIVAL**

Lynn Allen updated the Board on the Ethnic Festival to be held at Julian Middle School on Saturday, May 7. She reported that the cost of the event has been cut drastically. The parade route will be different; the same food vendors will be participating, and the Multicultural Center will host an open house during the event. President Traczyk thanked Allen for her efforts to continue the festival on a reduced budget.

**TECH PLAN – YEAR 2**

Dr. Anderson and Cao Mac came to the table. Mac reported that topics addressed this year included a district wide technology inventory, the tech plan budget for the second year, and professional development.

Mac suggested incentives for next year that might include a special piece of equipment awarded to classrooms when the teachers complete training. Two additional technology integration specialists were recommended.

## **TECH PLAN – YEAR 2 – (Continued)**

Year-2 professional development will focus on teachers. A teacher proficiency track will identify the teacher's technical abilities, requiring the completion of a proficiency certification. Dr. Roberts shared that most of the required skills can be achieved within a year, with an expectation that the principals will see samples of technology within each classroom. Mac shared how reassigning the technical staff will assist in supporting the teachers with technical assistance so they feel comfortable using technology in their classrooms.

Mac, in response to a questions submitted prior to the meeting explained that the district's deadline for making technology purchase and get the products into the teacher and student hands for next year depends on the individual vendors.

Discussion took place regarding the teacher incentive. Dr. Roberts explained that the expectation is that all teachers need to progress in their understanding and use of technology in the classroom. The district is looking to develop professionalism by not always paying for staff to attend workshops. He suggested that presenting them with something to take back to the classroom and share with the students might encourage attendance at the workshops and spark an interest in using the skills they acquired. Concern was expressed regarding the effect the incentive might have on equity throughout the district and how that might affect the students. Interest was shared in making training during Year-2 a requirement without an incentive.

It was reported that the real equity piece is in getting the classrooms to participate in the technology tools, not just owning them. This discussion will take place in a couple weeks. Member Gates volunteered to participate in the discussion.

Board questions and concerns included an interest in inequities that may need to be addressed as soon as possible to level the playing field for the students and support the district's curriculum, and how a balance will be made between hand-held technology and laptops/Ibooks. How does the staff plan to get the maximum usability out of upcoming technology purchases and bridge the district into the next four or five years, was also asked. Assessment ideas were shared on how students might use their cell phones to respond to questions. It was suggested that the district consider ratios opposed to number when considering equity and making technology purchases.

Interests was expressed in hearing about teacher support when they reach the top level of training, and in how long it will take before the 21 century learning occurs within the district. Concern was expressed regarding the addition to staff, noting that staff is an ongoing expense. It was suggested that as teachers are trained, the district will not need as many technology specialists. Concern was also shared that the integrationist are not focused on mathematics. Pilot programs with the high school and universities were suggested as well as Midwest Counselors.

The technology department was acknowledged for the presentation, and was instructed to move forward with their plans, reporting back to the Board at the end of the summer.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Noel Kuriakos, Oak Park resident, expressed his concern over a FOIA request denial. He reported that he represents the Students First of Oak Park committee. Kuriakos requested a list of teacher evaluation data, and was told that that information was not available. He called the software company and was told that information of that type should be available. He questioned the technology spending and how the spending will be assessed in relationship to learning and technical outcomes. He expressed concern over a lack of measures and accountability. Kuriakos asked if the teacher certifications would be available to the public, suggesting that they should be made public before the school year starts. He suggested that the district look at other schools with less technology to see what they are doing.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Karen Morgan Short, Oak Park resident, spoke in favor of the world language expansion in the district. She explained that she is a researcher at UIC, and shared some of the research that demonstrates that bilinguals perform better than monolinguals. She shared that learners are more likely to reap the benefits of being bilingual if they learn the second language early in life.

Dawn Deaton, Oak Park resident and staff member, spoke to acknowledge the Board and their efforts. She expressed thanks to outgoing President Traczyk, and acknowledged Rance Clouse and Michelle Harton, noting that she worked with Harton on many events.

**PUBLIC COMMENT** – (Continued)

PUBLIC COMMENT

Lynn Allen, Oak Park resident and staff member, read a letter written by past Board president Adekunle Onayemi, who paid tribute to Member Harton and her years of dedication.

Carolyn Newberry-Schwartz, Oak Park resident and past Board president, congratulated the Board, administration and faculty on the passing of the referendum. She acknowledged member Clouser for his service on the Board. She shared that she worked with him for two years, and reported that he was very generous with his time. Schwartz acknowledged member Harton, reporting that she came on at the time of staff reductions, and that Harton is the only Board member who started with the cuts and ended with the passing of the referendum. Harton participated in the change of superintendents, faculty, and her passions and loves include a deep love for education, and math. Harton always pushed the Board to instill their passion for learning as well. Additionally, Harton initiated the change of language used to identify minority achievement gaps to increasing achievement for all students.

**ACTION ITEMS**

ACTION ITEMS

**2.1.1 Approval of Minutes of April 12, 2011**

Gates moved, seconded by Reddy, that the Board of Education, District 97, approve the minutes from the April 12, 2011 meeting with revisions. Roll call vote.

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Motion passed.

**2.2.1 Consent Agenda**

Harton moved, seconded by Clouser, that the Board of Education, District 97, approve the consent agenda as presented in the Board packet.

2.2.1 Bill Lists and Related Reports

2.3.1 Personnel Action as presented

Roll call vote.

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Motion passed.

**2.2.2 Reemployment of Teachers on contractual Continued Service**

Spatz moved, seconded by Gates, that the Board of Education, District 97, approve and adopt the resolution to reemploy teachers on contractual continued service. Roll call vote.

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Motion passed.

**2.2.3 Reemployment of Fourth Year Probationary Teachers**

Gates moved, seconded by Harton, that the Board of Education, District 97, approve and adopt the resolution to reemploy fourth year probationary teachers. Roll call vote.

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Motion passed.

**2.2.4 Reemployment of Probationary Teachers**

Harton moved, seconded by Clouser, that the Board of Education, District 97, approve and adopt the resolution to reemploy first, second or third year probationary teachers. Roll call vote.

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

**2.2.5 Reemployment of Partial Assignment Teachers**

Clouser moved, seconded by Reddy, that the Board of Education, District 97, approve and adopt the resolution to reemploy partial assignment teachers. Roll call vote.

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

**2.2.6 Reemployment of Educational Support Personnel Employees**

Reddy moved, seconded by Barber, that the Board of Education, District 97, approve and adopt the resolution to reemploy educational support personnel employees. Roll call vote.

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

**2.2.7 Renewal of Administrative Contract and Reassignment**

Barber moved, seconded by Spatz, that the Board of Education, District 97, approve and adopt the resolution to renew an administrative contract and reassign said administrator. Roll call vote.

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

**2.2.8 Renewal of Administrative Contract**

Spatz moved, seconded by Gates, that the Board of Education, District 97, approve and adopt the resolution to renew an administrative contract. Roll call vote.

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

**2.4.1 Bid Award: Custodial Supplies**

Barber moved, seconded by Reddy, that the Board of Education, District 97, award its 2011-12 Custodial Supplies contract, in the total amount of \$79,966.98 to the following companies, as delineated in the memorandum to the Superintendent dated April 12, 2011.

The buildings and grounds staff members were acknowledged for their consistent ability to save the district money.

Roll call vote.

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

**2.4.2 Bid Award: Summer 2011 Capital Projects – Asbestos Abatement**

Reddy moved, seconded by Harton, that the Board of Education, District 97, award a contract to Carnow, Conibear & Associates in the total amount of \$15,875 for project management and air sampling services associated with the summer 2011 Capital Projects asbestos abatement work, as delineated in the memorandum to the Superintendent dated April 23, 2011. Roll call vote.

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

**2.4.3 Policy Adoption**

Clouser moved, seconded by Gates, that the Board of Education, District 97, adopt the following policies: 0167.3, 0168.1, 1430.01, 2260, 2260.01, 3121, 4121, 3122, 4122, 3437.01, 4437.01, 5111.02 and 5111.04. Roll call vote.

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

**2.5.1 Certification of Official Results of April 5, 2011 School Board Election** – Tabled due to the lack of election certification.

President Traczyk reported that the district has not received the official certificate of results from the April 5, 2011 consolidated general election and therefore would not be able to seat the new Board members during this meeting. A special meeting will be scheduled in the near future for this purpose. Several items on the April 26, 2011 agenda will also need to be tabled.

**2.5.2 Certification of Election to Make Limiting Rate Increase Effective for Prior (2010) Levy Year** – Tabled due to the lack of election certification.

**2.5.3 Proclamation of Newly Elected Board Members** – Tabled due to the lack of election certification.

**Swearing in of the New Board Members** - Tabled due to the lack of election certification.

**BOARD MEMBER FAREWELLS**

Peter Traczyk read the proclamation for Rance Clouser. Clouser responded by sharing how thankful he is to have had the experience of sitting on the Board and participating in the decision making process. His goals as a member of the Board were to increase the level of education in the classrooms and increase the level of accountability in the district. He is pleased that the district is moving in that direction.

Vice President Barber read the proclamation for Michelle Harton. Harton responded by sharing thoughts from her experiences during her 8 year tenure. She encouraged the Board to continue discussions regarding student achievement and student excellence, noting that achievement gap is a term for researchers. She reminded the Board that parents need strategies to reach for excellence. She asked them to help the parents unravel the k-2 maze, noting that she is excited about the Early Childhood Task Force is taking on this charge. She shared that a parents ability to navigate the district is a huge concern for her. She implored the Board to continue on this quest. Additionally, Harton encourage the district to maintain a focus on math, as it is a gateway and more needs to be done in this area.

Harton shared a lovely story about the district needing to go on a diet when she came on the board. She explained how a vision was created, cuts were made and the district was rebuilt from the ground up. She is proud to say that the Board has always been dedicated to all the children and that a school district that makes dreams come true has been built. Harton expressed her thanks to those who supported her during the time when she served as president and vice president. Finally, Harton shared that she is pleased that she is leaving the Board in very capable hands.

Dr. Roberts spoke on behalf of Clouse and Harton noting that they are kind, passionate speakers and expressed thanks on behalf of himself and the administration.

President Traczyk acknowledged Kevin Anderson on his new position as Superintendent of Elmwood Park.

**BREAK** – The Board took a break to recognize the outgoing Board members at 8:55 p.m. and resumed the meeting at 9:21 p.m.

**Roll Call**

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

Absent: None

**4.1 Election of Temporary President and Secretary** – Tabled due to the lack of election certification.

**4.2 Election of Board Officers** – Tabled due to the lack of election certification.

**5.1 Adoption of Resolutions on Outgoing Board Members** – Tabled due to the lack of election certification.

**TOPIC REPORTS**

CURRICULUM ADOPTION – Tabled due to the lack of election certification.

DISCUSSION ON COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS – Tabled due to the lack of election certification.

DISCUSSION ON BOARD RETREAT – Tabled due to the lack of election certification.

DISCUSSION ON BOARD CALENDAR DATES – Tabled due to the lack of election certification.

TOPIC REPORTS

**SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

Isabella Reish, Claire Allen and Morgan Varnado, fourth grade students from Lincoln School, and Spencer Abbott, a third grade student from Longfellow School, will have their work published in the annual student anthology Award-Winning Young Writers of America.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

On April 20, students enrolled in kindergarten through fifth grade at Lincoln Elementary School in participated in the school's second annual Great Lincoln Spell Check fundraiser. The event was based upon the Great American SpellCheck program, which helps schools raise money while also promoting good study habits and the importance of knowing how to spell. The program was created by the E.W. Scripps Company, sponsor of the Scripps National Spelling Bee.

Unlike a typical spelling bee, this event featured a written spelling challenge with students collecting monetary pledges for each word they spelled correctly from a predetermined list of grade-appropriate words. Several local celebrities were recruited to serve as guest word readers for the event, including:

- Matt Crook, a student-athlete who plays hockey for Fenwick High School
- Dan Haley, publisher of the Wednesday Journal
- Lisa Parker, reporter/anchor for NBC5 Chicago
- Kyle Robbins, a student-athlete who plays basketball for the University of Illinois at Chicago
- Oak Park Police Chief Rick Tanksley
- Jarvia Thomas, a retired District 97 teacher

We are continuing to conduct the re-verification process at each of our 10 schools.

Sarah Rose, a special education resource teacher from Holmes, will be among the 100 teachers from the Chicago area who will participate in the Teacher Town Hall being hosted on May 1 by NBC News in conjunction with its Education Nation initiative. All other teachers are invited to watch the event via a live Webcast.

On April 29 and 30, the CAST program will wrap up its 25th anniversary celebration with a presentation of "SILVER," which will offer a look back at the first 25 years of musical theatre at Julian.

On April 28 to 30 and May 5 to 7, BRAVO will be presenting its production of The Wiz, which won the Tony Award for Best Musical and is the classic retelling of L. Frank Baum's The Wonderful Wizard of Oz.

**SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT** – (Continued)

The Elmwood Park school district will be in great shape with Dr. Kevin Anderson at the helm. Our central office will be reorganized to cover his absence. Dr. Roberts will meet this week with all members of the teaching and learning team. Dr. Roberts reported that he is honored to have worked with Dr. Anderson this year.

During the May 10 Board meeting, Dawn Deaton will present the proposed FLES program for the coming year. Dr. Roberts requested that Ed Council review the proposal prior to it being presented to the Board.

**BOARD CONCERNS**

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New changes to FERPA are in the draft stage. Some changes may greatly enhance the district’s ability to get data back from the high school.

Member Spatz shared his regrets that he will miss the Ethnic Festival.

The IASB Governing Board delegate’s documents will be sent to the Board via email. The Board has until June 22 to submit their input.

The Board members expressed their compassion toward Members Harton and Clouser, acknowledging their dedication to the Board.

The special meeting date and time will be posted after the results of the April 5, 2011 election have been certified. Board members were asked to send their availability for next week to the Board Secretary.

**BOARD RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENT**

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President Traczyk requested that Dr. Roberts and Chris Jasculca compile the data identified in the Kuriakos FOIA request along with answers to his questions regarding technology and teacher certification.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Gates moved, seconded by Barber, that the Board of Education move into executive session at 9:31 p.m. Roll call vote.

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

**ADJOURNMENT**

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to conduct, President Traczyk declared the meeting adjourned at 9:51 p.m.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board will be held on Tuesday, May 10, 2011, beginning at 7 p.m. in the Administration building located at 970 Madison Street.

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Board President

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Board Secretary