

Official Minutes of the
Oak Park Board of Education District 97
260 Madison Street, Oak Park
April 23, 2024 Committee of the Whole Meeting

This meeting was held in-person and virtually using Livestream. Board members met in person along with Administration.

President Kearney called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

Present: Kearney, Moore, Ross Dribin, Burns, Hurd Johnson,

Absent: Kim, Spurlock

Also Present: Superintendent Dr. Ushma Shah, Assistant Superintendents Dr. Luis De Leon & Patrick Robinson, Assistant Superintendent of Finance & Operations Dr. Sheila Johnson, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources and Equity Dr. Natacia Campbell Tominov, Chief Learning Innovation Officer Dr. Ebony Lofton, Chief Technology Officer Michael Arensdorff, Senior Director of Data Analytics Dr. Anna Colaner, Senior Director of Communications Amanda Siegfried and Lonya Boose Director/Board Secretary.

ROLL CALL

OPEN SESSION

President Kearney motioned that the Board move into Open Session at 6:04 p.m. All present members of the Board were in agreement. The Board convened in Open Session at 6:04 p.m.

OPEN
SESSION

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

Amelia Mutso

Hello, I am a parent of a first grader at Lincoln and a preschooler who will be a future Lincoln Lion. I am speaking on behalf of some concerned parents. Today I am incredibly disappointed, apprehensive and concerned about the right size classroom initiative by the district. Small class sizes are essential to an equitable and inclusive learning environment and getting our students to meet the district portrait of an eighth-grade graduate. In reviewing what was presented at the last board meeting, and discussing with other Lincoln parents, there seems to be no consideration of how important keeping small class sizes is to students' equity and success. Increased targeted classroom sizes should not be the goal. Equitable and Inclusive learning environments should be the goal in Oak Park.

I moved here because this school district had smaller class sizes. I think that is something we should be proud of, not trying to increase class size. Smaller class sizes allow teachers to successfully differentiate within the classroom to meet student needs, not burn out teachers. In talking to others, the district is planning to remove three teachers from Lincoln in the fall, while Lincoln reports 18 per class room, this may be skewed. Most classrooms are 20 students or more including kindergarten. Removing three teachers will be detrimental to student equity and success leading too low morale and teacher function.

Decreasing classroom sizes, we are already losing a principal next year then this email sent last evening to reinstate the principal search will lead to no hand off and training with the new principal. We have strong

PUBLIC
COMMENT

teacher involvement; our PTO is a strong link in the community. We have four teachers and staff that are board members on our PTO and we can see how that the unknown of losing teacher is affecting the morale of the school. Lastly, the data presented seems to make premature conclusions about enrollment in the district. We really are only a few years out of the height of COVID and have less than two full years with a feel of any return to normal in the schools. Citing data from the height of COVID and immediately after do not feel appropriate for right size. What support do you intend to provide the new Lincoln principal? Losing even one teacher at Lincoln is a disservice to all of Lincoln. I also hope you plan to include school stakeholders in these decisions, including principals, teachers, parents and other staff and students. Thank you.

4. SUPERINTENDENT UPDATE

SUPERINTENDENT
UPDATE

4.1 A Look into Out Portrait of a Graduate Feedback Review Process

Portrait design leads Dr. Eboney Lofton and Amanda Siegfried provided the Board and community with a look into the feedback data review process using the interactive tool Miro. The team is currently coding data and sorting hundreds of feedback data points from community, staff and students on the draft dimensions for the Portrait of an Oak Park Graduate. Once this process concludes, the team plans to circle back to the affinity spaces with an update on the final version of the portrait before Fall 2024.

*The entire presentation is available by watching the live stream of the board meeting on the District 97 YouTube channel.

4.2 SY25 Equity Leadership and Infrastructure: Staffing Update

Dr. Shah provided the Board of Education and the community with an update around equity leadership and infrastructure staffing. This presentation included details on the many factors that go into staffing across all school district. Specifically for District 97, those include, enrollment projections and also what the district's equity policy outlines for equitable access and outcomes for all students.

*The entire presentation is available by watching the live stream of the board meeting on the District 97 YouTube channel.

5. STATE OF THE DISTRICT

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5.1 Illinois State Report Card: Deep Dive - District Finance Data

Dr. Anna Colaner presented the next installment of the Illinois State Report Card, a deeper dive into district finance data. These presentations have provided data and reflection into teacher and administrator data, student data and district environment data. The framing questions through this process have been, 1. What is; 2. What should be, 3. How do we compare; and lastly, What is demonstrably possible. The district goal is to progress both Excellence with Equity. Tonight's focus is on equity leadership and infrastructure and metrics for district school finances.

The presentation looks to gain insights into the following questions:

- What accounts for lower spending at our middle schools?
- How does our spending compare when we look at administrators?
- How do we compare to other districts?
- Are we comparing ourselves to the right districts?

Lastly, the district will be looking into partnering with and outlining some longer-term research questions in its future forward work. More information to come.

*The entire presentation is available by viewing the board packet materials or watching the live stream of the board meeting on the District 97 YouTube channel.

6. NOW/NEXT SYSTEMS CHANGE

NOW/NEXT
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CHANGE

6.1 Data Governance: Systems Reporting and Automation

Michael Arensdorff, Chief Technology Officer for the district provided an update on Data Governance. The district goal is to deliver secure, precise, timely and actionable insights to support informed decision-making while promoting trust and credibility in data reporting. There are three areas of work that the team was focused on, including:

- State Reporting
- Onboarding and Automation
- Registration and Student Information Systems

Future work in these areas include training and support for staff, SY25 scheduling and annual cycle data.

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7. ADJOURNMENT

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All five present members of the Board were in agreement that the meeting be adjourned. There being no further business to conduct, President Kearney declared the meeting adjourned by voice vote at 8:08 p.m.

Board President

Board Secretary