



Regular Meeting of the Board of Education

Thursday, January 23, 2025 5:30 PM

Oakdale Middle School Room 230
815 S. Oakdale Ave.
Medford, OR 97501

Michelle Atkinson: Present
Lilia Caballero: Present
Kendell Ferguson: Present
Jeff Kinsella: Present
Suzanne Messer: Present
Michael Williams: Present
Cynthia Wright: Present

A video recording of the Board meeting can be found on the district website at [this link](#). The slide presentation can be viewed by clicking on Extras listed next to the meeting at [this link](#).

1. Call to Order / Pledge of Allegiance / Roll Call

Board Chair Cynthia Wright called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Roll was called.

2. Agenda Adjustments and Approval

Hearing no objections, the agenda was approved by unanimous consent.

3. Recognitions

3.a. School Board Appreciation

Superintendent Bret Champion acknowledged it was Board Appreciation Month and went on to commend the Board Directors for their tireless effort, as volunteers, to make things better for students. He directed attention to wooden plaques that were made for the Board by career and technical education students, and encouraged a round of applause for their unwavering dedication.

Board Director Michael Williams arrived at the end of the presentation.

4. Recess

The Board did not take a recess at this time.

5. Restructuring Board Meetings

Chair Wright explained in an effort to place greater emphasis on the work the Board was elected to do, the agenda had been reordered to place citizen comment after a focus on Board work. She encouraged Board Directors to let her know their thoughts on the reorder prior to the next agenda planning meeting.

6. Board Priority Discussion

Chair Wright conveyed the need to change the tone and narrow the focus of Board meetings. She spoke regarding the shared vision of the district, All are learning and learning is for all, and that she had learned a lot over the last month. She went on to share her intentions on setting a different tone and focusing more on improving student outcome than trying to control adult behaviors. Chair Wright emphasized the Board/District Goals and Priorities as the most important work of the Board and noted staff had been asked to provide a report on one of the goals, Students Graduate.

Board Director Lilia Caballero arrived during this part of the meeting.

Superintendent Champion spoke briefly regarding systems for student outcomes and that the former Multi-Roads to Graduation team, now called the Student Success-College Career team, provides high quality credit opportunities to meet the goal of graduating high school.

Deputy Superintendent Jeanne Grazioli spoke briefly regarding the district graduation rate, and shared the district would be recognized by the Oregon Department of Education for one of the highest graduation growth rates in the state for English Learner students.

Executive Director of Teaching and Learning Kirk Kolb provided information regarding the Primary Goals; Intended Outcomes; Creating a Culture of Purpose; Non-Traditional Credit; Expanding Career/Workforce Experiences; and College Credit Opportunities in an effort to provide multiple roads for students to graduate.

Board Directors put forth questions and comments regarding the value of learned experiences and project-based learning; making sure parents and the community are aware of opportunities; covering the cost of credits towards an associate degree; common reasons students do not graduate/tracking on-track to graduate; middle school advisory; concerns with credit inflation, not on grade level for literacy, and the value of a high school diploma; and credit retrieval.

7. Citizen Comments

Chair Wright spoke regarding the Board role, encouraged the public to direct concerns regarding district operations to staff and administration, and reminded the audience that the Board cannot hear complaints about individual staff members in a public setting.

Rob Schlapfer/Patron/Spoke regarding finding common ground and the Oregon Education Project.

Russ Kautz/Patron/Spoke regarding Parents' Rights in Education, expecting academics and not political activism and agenda of upcoming Town Hall meetings.

Taryne Saunders/Parent/Spoke regarding Oregon Department of Education Report Card data verses district funding spent.

Dale Sauer/Grandparent/Spoke in support of Parents' Rights in Education and the Oregon Education Project and restoring the American education.

Kevin Christman/Patron/Spoke in support of the Oregon Education Project.

Nathanael Swan/Parent/Freedom of Speech rights and where to direct staff grievances.

Mori Samel Garloff/Patron/Spoke in opposition of the Oregon Education Project agenda.

Nicole Suetos/Teacher/Provided an overview of a current lesson plan, following the Oregon state standards, and desire for kids to be kind, thoughtful, and caring.

Brad Russell/Executive Director of YMCA/Spoke regarding partnerships with school districts, opportunities for students, and non-profit/non-partisanship.

Jeanne Chouard/Patron/Encouraged the district to continue providing a place for all students to feel safe and respected.

Lauri & Stephen Eisenhauer/Parent/Former Student/Spoke regarding students with disabilities and encouraged the district to continue providing inclusive programs.

Kevin Stine/Teacher/City Counselor/Spoke regarding the City-District partnership and the importance of the community working together.

Thomas Romano/Patron/Encouraged continued support for students with disabilities.

Logan Vaughn/Patron/Freedom of Speech rights and plan to run for school board.

Mindy Wamack/Patron/Spoke in support of revised Board agenda order, school board role, and legal definition of a weapon.

Debbie von Wesyr/Patron/Spoke regarding separation of church and state and treating all students with dignity and respect.

John Frohmayer/Patron/Spoke regarding First Amendment protections and intent, the important of teaching students to be self-learners, and commended the Board for their public service.

Chair Wright acknowledged the Board received 20 written comments prior to the meeting from district patron(s) Dee Perez, Razia Hayden, Leyla Balouch, Debbie Fitzpatrick, Marti Johnston, Shannon Cornish, Ruth Rabinovitch, Thomas Treger, John Howell, Barbara Schack, Mary Hills, Meghan DeAngelo, Angela Cruthirds, Mandy Capehart, Jennifer Van Wettering, Michelle Vasquez, Kim Gabriel, Joshua Courter,

Shayna Christensen, and Ann Magill. She noted that online registration for citizen comments closes at noon on the date of the Board meeting and if a name was not acknowledged for written comments, the email was most likely received after this time, and they would be reviewed by each Board member.

Chair Wright thanked everyone who participated in citizen comments and asked to pause the meeting for a brief recess.

The meeting resumed at 7:09 PM.

Items for Information & Discussion / Board Action Items

7.a. Appoint Budget Committee Applicants

MOTION: I move to reappoint Lupe Murillo to Budget Committee Position 1, term ending June 30, 2027, Amanda Olson to Position 2, term ending June 30, 2027, and Brooke Lazzari to Position 7, term ending June 30, 2026. This motion, made by Kendell Ferguson and seconded by Jeff Kinsella, Passed.

Roll call vote:

Kinsella: Yea, Williams: Yea, Caballero: Yea, Messer: Yea, Ferguson: Yea, Atkinson: Yea, Wright: Yea

Yea: 7, Nay: 0

Motion carried unanimously.

7.b. Budget Calendar Adoption

MOTION: I move to approve the Budget Calendar for the fiscal year 2025-26 budget as presented. This motion, made by Jeff Kinsella and seconded by Suzanne Messer, Passed.

Atkinson: Yea, Messer: Yea, Kinsella: Yea, Williams: Yea, Caballero: Yea, Ferguson: Yea, Wright: Yea

Yea: 7, Nay: 0

Motion carried unanimously.

7.c. 2025-2026 School Year Calendar Adoption with Board Meeting Dates

MOTION: I move to adopt the 2025-2026 school year calendar as presented. This motion was made by Suzanne Messer and seconded by Kendell Ferguson.

Discussion: A discussion took place regarding moving grading days to Fridays and presenting the calendar to staff, parents, and families before adopting.

Roll call vote:

Kinsella: Yea, Williams: Yea, Atkinson: Yea, Caballero: Yea, Ferguson: Yea, Messer; Yea, Wright: Yea

Yea: 7, Nay: 0

Motion carried unanimously.

7.d. School Board Policies - *second & third readings*

MOTION: I move to approve the January 23rd policy packet as presented. This motion was made by Suzanne Messer and seconded by Jeff Kinsella.

Discussion: Board Directors discussed the updated language to policies EBBA – Student Health Services and JFCEB – Student Use of Personal Electronic Devices and Social Media.

Roll call vote:

Messer: Yea, Caballero: Yea, Kinsella: Yea, Atkinson: Yea, Ferguson: Yea, Williams: Nay; Wright: Yea

Yea: 6, Nay: 1

Motion carried.

7.e. October 2024 Complaints Against Board Member

Board Vice Chair Kendell Ferguson led the agenda item and began with asking Director Williams if he had a statement regarding the October 2024 complaints.

Director Williams distributed hard copies of a statement prepared by his attorney addressed to district counsel Thad Pauck and Board Chair Cynthia Wright. He went on to provide his own statement and read the attorney prepared statement. Following the conclusion of the statements, Director Williams exited the meeting.

Vice Chair Ferguson led the Board through the process of resolving the complaints and reminded the Board if determined valid, a decision would need to be made to censure or not, and/or add additional restrictions to the current restrictions in place.

A discussion followed regarding the allegations in the complaints and other evidence presented to make a determination as to whether or not the conduct in the complaints occurred.

MOTION: Based on preponderance of evidence standard, I move that the Board adopt the following findings of fact:

--During a Board meeting with Superintendent Champion at his office on October 15, 2024 Board Director Williams told Superintendent Champion,

"Let me be clear. I'm for the kids and their safety. If you don't react to the things I tell you, then you are complicit and I will take care of business."

--During the meeting with Superintendent Champion, Board Director Williams stood nose-to-nose with Superintendent Champion, refusing to step back.

--While in the District office for the meeting with Superintendent Champion, Board Director Williams engaged in disruptive conduct, including slamming doors, swearing loudly in the halls, and loud yelling. This motion, made by Cynthia Wright and seconded by Suzanne Messer, Passed.

Roll call vote:

Kinsella: Yea, Ferguson: Yea, Messer: Yea, Atkinson: Yea, Caballero, Yea, Wright: Yea; Williams: Absent

Yea: 6, Nay: 0, Absent: 1

Motion carried.

Vice Chair Ferguson led the discussion regarding Board policies that may have been violated. Policies suggested for consideration included:

BBAA – Individual Board Member’s Authority and Responsibilities;

BBF – Board Member Standards of Conduct;

GBNA/GNBA-AR –

Hazing/Harassment/Intimidation/Bullying/Menacing/Cyberbullying - Staff; and

KGB – Public Conduct on District Property.

MOTION: In light of the Board’s findings that the conduct of Board Director Williams, as alleged in the complaints filed against him in October 2024, occurred and that such conduct violated Board Policies BBF, BBAA, and KGB, I move that the Board publicly censure Board Director Williams because his conduct did not meet the standards of professionalism and competence required and expected of a Board member, has caused harm, impeded the work of the Board, and interfered with the work of District administrators and staff. This motion made by Cynthia Wright and seconded by Suzanne Messer, Passed.

Roll call vote:

Atkinson: Yea, Messer, Yea, Caballero, Yea, Ferguson: Yea, Kinsella: Yea, Wright: Yea, Williams: Absent

Yea: 6, Nay: 0, Absent: 1

Motion carried.

8. Consent Agenda

- 8.a. Staff Assignment Report**
- 8.b. Minutes from previous meeting**
- 8.c. Financial Audit Firm Change**

Hearing no objections, the consent agenda was approved by unanimous consent.

9. Announcements

9.a. February 6 - Work Session at Oakdale Middle School - 5:30 PM

Chair Wright acknowledged the next work session scheduled for February 6 at Oakdale Middle School. She recommended specific books around conflict and how school boards could be more effective with student outcomes.

10. Adjournment

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 8:10 PM.

Chair of the District School Board
Medford School District

ATTEST:

Superintendent-Clerk