

**Official Minutes of the  
Oak Park Board of Education District 97,  
970 Madison Street, Oak Park, Cook County, Illinois  
Meeting January 8, 2013**

President Barber called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

Present: Barber, Gates, Felton, Sacks, Traczyk, Spatz, and O'Connor  
Absent: None  
Also Present: Superintendent Dr. Al Roberts, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations  
Therese O'Neill, Assistant Superintendent of HR and General Counsel Joanne Schochat, Director of  
Policy, Planning and Communications Chris Jasculca, and Board Secretary Sheryl Marinier

ROLL CALL

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Traczyk moved, seconded by Sacks, that the Board of Education move into executive session at 6:33 p.m. Roll call vote.

EXECUTIVE  
SESSION

Ayes: Traczyk, Sacks, Gates, O'Connor, Felton, Barber, and Spatz  
Nays: None  
Absent: None  
Motion passed.

**OPEN SESSION**

Gates moved, seconded by Traczyk, that the Board of Education move into open session at 7:02 p.m. All members of the Board were in agreement.

OPEN SESSION

The meeting was reconvened at 7:08 p.m. with all Board members in attendance.

**SPECIAL REPORTS**

**COLLABORATION FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD (ECC) DISCUSSION**

Carolyn Newberry Schwartz and Eric Gershenson introduced the Collaboration's strategic plan and explained how it will impact the children of Oak Park. Schwartz reported that the strategic plan is based on Dr. Heckman's findings, and noted the importance of early parenting support. She highlighted the need for early detection screening, parent information and support, professional development and coordination with the public schools. Schwartz reported that the Collaboration created a voluntary database that includes all children birth to five years of age and monitor program participation, service usage and program impact. She reported that all at-risk preschool children who reside in Oak Park are being serviced.

SPECIAL  
REPORTS

Schwartz noted that due to state fiscal woes and changes in grant making priorities of regional foundations that have provided funding in the past, Oak Park is unable to garner significant operating support from outside sources. Viable funding streams identified in 2009 to support the full implementation of the Collaboration's strategic plan are no longer available.

Member Traczyk explained the work plan and goal of the work concept for sustainable funds. It was reported that the cost of the system is \$1.5M for three years, and that some of the expense can be funded by grants, etc. A resolution of intent to work with other governing jurisdictions was proposed. This agreement would be to develop and put forward for adoption an intergovernmental agreement to establish a comprehensive, fully integrated early childhood system of high-quality programs and services that foster physical, cognitive, and social-emotional development during the critical first years of life, as contemplated in the strategic plan in 2009. It was noted that the formula must be clearly stated within the agreement and the district will have the ability to withdraw if it does not feel

## COLLABORATION FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD (ECC) DISCUSSION (Continued)

that the goals are being accomplished. Schwartz reported that the proposed contribution amounts for each governing board would be proportionate, with the District 97 share being \$248,000 for this year. The formula for funding was discussed. The group also discussed making sure that the costs do not increase dramatically over time and is looking at a cap that is tied to the PTEL law (CPI or five percent whichever is lower).

Schwartz noted that there is a lot of interest outside of Oak Park in the P20 initiative. The Collaboration has been working to ensure that they are in sync with District 97 so the data can be shared when the time is right. She reported that the Board will be updated annually until the plan has been completed.

Dr. Roberts noted that so often school systems get stuck in programs that are not effective. All the studies show that if the schools get the kids earlier, they stay on course better. It was noted that the program may help with the school district's bottom line as well as the individual children.

President Barber noted that no one jurisdiction represents the birth to four year old children. This initiative will impact the children and will have a positive financial impact on the school districts. We are looking at this being a community effort. He reported that the Library and Park District have expressed interest in hearing more about the partnership.

Board comments and concerns included interest in knowing what will happen to children who come into the district when they are older. The Board congratulated the Collaboration on winning the Villager of the Year Award.

The Board was asked to review the resolution and submit changes to President Barber or Secretary Marinier prior to the next meeting. The Board will take action on this item at that time.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

PUBLIC  
COMMENT

### **ACTION ITEMS**

#### **4.1.2 Approval of Minutes of December 12, 2012**

Traczyk moved, seconded by Sacks, that the Board of Education, District 97, accept the revised minutes from the December 12, 2012 meeting. Roll call vote.

Ayes: Traczyk, Sacks, Felton, Gates, Spatz, O'Connor, and Barber

Nays: None

Motion passed.

ACTION ITEMS

#### **2.2.1 Approval of Bill List**

Traczyk moved, seconded by Felton, that the Board of Education, District 97, accept the Bill List as presented. Roll call vote.

Ayes: Traczyk, Felton, Spatz, Sacks, O'Connor, Gates, and Barber

Nays: None

Motion passed.

#### **2.3.1 Acceptance of Donation - Julian**

Gates moved, seconded by Sacks, that the Board of Education, District 97, accept the donation of eight books to the Julian Middle School Library from James Gates. Roll call vote.

Ayes: Gates, Sacks, O'Connor, Felton, Traczyk, Barber, and Spatz

Nays: None

Motion passed.

## **TOPIC REPORTS**

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### **CALENDAR ADOPTION DISCUSSION**

Joanne Schochat came to the table. She referred to the proposed district calendar for the 2013-14 school year. She reported that a waiver was in place for Lincoln's Birthday and Veteran's Day, allowing the district to celebrate those holidays on days other than the designated ones. She noted that waivers are no longer necessary; districts have the ability to adjust holiday recognition by simply holding public hearings addressing the need. The preliminary calendar identified Veteran's Day celebrated on the day before Thanksgiving. The actual Veteran's Day would be an institute day. Pulaski Day would be moved to March 21, which is right after spring break. She noted that District 90 approved its calendar for 2013-14; however, District 200 has not adopted their calendar. Schochat recommended a public hearing be placed on the next Board agenda to address this need prior to approval of the calendar.

Schochat reported that she spoke to the person in charge of the state calendar. She noted that Good Friday is not a legal school holiday, although it is identified as one in the school code. She reported that other school districts give that day off because of poor school attendance by both students and staff.

It was reported that the committee did their best to remove four day weeks from the calendar whenever possible, allowing for larger blocks of learning time. Concern was expressed that a conversation had not occurred with District 200 and that their calendar may not coincide with District 97's.

Board comments and suggestions included consideration of a combined institute day with Districts 200 and 90. It was suggested that future employee contracts not refer to the holidays by name, giving the district more flexibility. Concern was expressed regarding the consistency with election days. A detailed discussion on this topic was recommended prior to the next presidential election. Concern was expressed regarding the Jewish holidays not being recognized and the fact that Good Friday is being recognized. Concern was express regarding the commuting of Veteran's Day.

Administration was asked to consider the Board's concerns, make a determination regarding the Board's recommendations and return to the Board with a final calendar recommendation.

### **BUDGET AUTHORITY / RESOLUTION**

O'Neill came to the table. She reported that the budget authority/resolution item comes to the Board annually. She explained that this item expresses the Board's support for the beginning of the budget preparation process for the next school year.

### **TECHNOLOGY UPDATE**

Dr. Roberts reported that the Technology Advisory Committee (TAC) had a very successful first meeting. The community members are reviewing the technology plan and helping to bring it up to date. Julie Mullen prepared a draft recommendation for infrastructure, increased bandwidth, wireless network enhancements, PowerSchool server upgrades, and management licenses.

The district is looking to supplement the schools with an additional (Mac) laptop cart at each school to assist with the overload of use in the labs. The technology team is looking at ways to make every classroom in the district capable of interactivity. A list of recommendations will be presented to the Board later this week with approval in the near future. An updated report will be shared with the Board on January 22, 2013.

## **BOARD GOALS TIMELINE**

### ***3.1 – Playgrounds and Irving – Review estimates***

O'Neill came to the table. She referred to the handouts presented at the table. She reported that the formalized cost estimates for each of the schools are;

Hatch	\$253,863
Mann	\$285,789
Whittier	\$ 255,954

For Irving School, three options were given for the Board for consideration. It was reported that the FAC members strongly encourage the district to include liquidation damages (\$1,000 a day) in the bid specifications. The intent will be to have the work done before school opens in the fall. FAC agreed to hold a meeting prior to the next Board meeting, allowing FAC to review and comment on the proposal prior to the Board. O'Neill reported that the goal will be to approve the bids at the March 19, 2013 meeting.

O'Neill reported that the proposals are the best estimate prior to going to bid. She shared that the Park District has not indicated the amount of financial support they are willing to give to the Irving project. The FAC committee was acknowledged for their efforts regarding this project.

Board comments included concern about moving the Irving parking lot. Dr. Roberts will mention this concern to the Village Manager. Dr. Roberts also shared that he would be more comfortable with the field on the south side of the space where there is more room. This item will return to the Board for approval on February 22.

### ***2.2 – Proposed dates and order of the presentations for the three “community reports”***

It was recommended that the Common Core discussion take place in February or March; the Teacher Evaluation discussion in March, and the Student Growth discussion in May. It was noted that the March Common Core discussion would tie into when teachers are renewed/nonrenewed. A role play evaluation conference could be shared. Small groups could be formed to help everyone figure out their roles and support better evaluations.

Board comments included noting that the teacher evaluations and student growth could impact the budget, and a suggestion was made that the district needs to think about various ways to make the evaluation ratios more reasonable.

Dr. Roberts explained that the goal will be to build the navigation system for teachers and parents helping them to understand the evaluation process. The next piece would need to come from the evaluation committee.

Dr. Roberts offered to create a draft agenda and rough plan for the Common Core and teacher evaluation discussions to be presented to the Board on January 22.

### ***2.2 – Initial written report only for communicating more effectively***

This informational report will be supplied during the next meeting and include initial ideas for discussion on communication strategies.

### ***3.3 – Madison Street properties –***

No Review was given at this time.

### ***2.3 Approved list of districts to be used for a variety of financial and academic comparisons, including a district database.***

Dr. Roberts expressed the need for a group to look at a comparison list.

### ***3.2 The official adoption of a 10-year capital improvement plan***

It was reported that one of the FAC members would like time to discuss acoustic options during a future meeting.

## **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

Dr. Roberts reported that the district's teachers are doing a great job with the Common Core. He expressed pride in their efforts. He reported that additional training will be offered.

**SUPERINTENDENT'S  
REPORT**

IB training continues to move forward. Dr. Roberts extended appreciation to the Community Foundation for their ongoing support.

Administration is looking at the evaluation system and how to evaluate in a consistent effective way. Dr. Roberts reported that this topic will be discussed during the next Education Council meeting. The team will consider which staff members still need to be trained, and how to train them. They will also discuss the rules that govern this need.

The Technology Advisory Committee (TAC) held its first meeting. It was reported that the recommendations were clear to the committee and the need to review some policies was expressed.

## **BOARD CONCERNS / ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**BOARD CONCERNS /  
ANNOUNCEMENTS**

It was noted that the Policy Committee needs to schedule a meeting.

Member Gates shared a document on poverty and noted that as the role of poverty in the achievement gap is clearly documented, he would like to see a dramatic reduction in the number of children living in poverty and the only way to achieve that goal is to reduce the number of adults whose earning capacity places them below the poverty level.

Member Gates ask Dr. Roberts:

- Is District 97 proactively educating its middle school students on the behaviors that will help them avoid a life of poverty as an adult?
- Could D97 middle school students identify the three to six statistically documented behaviors that will determine if they will live below or above the poverty line as adults?
- Could D97 middle school students identify the negative consequences of living in poverty as they relate to the impact on children, health, life-style, longevity, etc?

The Board was encouraged to attend the ED-RED dinner on January 22, 2013 and/or the IASB West Cook dinner on March 5, 2013. They were asked to let the Board Secretary know if they wish to attend.

It was reported that the Board will be submitting a presentation proposal along with the Collaboration to the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). The topic for the proposal would be "Collaboration". It was noted that the application deadline for presentation proposals for the November joint conference is in February. The topic for this presentation would be the success of the C.L.A.I.M. Committee.

Board candidate Graham Brisben was acknowledged and congratulated, noting that the April 9, 2013 election will be uncontested.

It was reported that the Illinois Pension Reform bill did not pass today.

It was noted that the Superintendent's evaluation needs to be discussed during the next executive session.

The Gates Foundation report was released today and will be shared with the Board.

**BOARD CONCERNS / ANNOUNCEMENTS** (Continued)

The Council of Governments (COG) met today. It was reported that interim Village Manager, Cara Pavlichek has been hired as the Village Manager. Rebecca Teasdale is the interim Library Director and a permanent person for that position should be identified by the end of March, 2013. Members of the COG expressed interest in hearing more about the IB program. The Village 5-year financial projections will be distributed this week.

It was reported that the thank you letter to the Editor will be shared for review. The cost to run the ad will be \$1,400, not \$700 as originally indicated. Member Gates will go back to IGOV with concern about the cost.

During the joint conference, President Barber saw a consolidated district with a lot of challenges. They referred to the feeder schools as partner schools. He reported that using this new term helped change the way the districts talked about each other. He suggested that it could work for us too.

The Board wished Therese O'Neill well and a speedy recovery as she will be going in for surgery on Friday of this week.

**BOARD RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

BOARD  
RESPONSE TO  
PUBLIC  
COMMENT

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Traczyk moved, seconded by Sacks, that the Board of Education move into executive session at 9:32 p.m. Roll call vote.

EXECUTIVE  
SESSION

Ayes: Traczyk, Sacks, Gates, O'Connor, Felton, Barber, and Spatz

Nays: None

Absent: None

Motion passed.

**OPEN SESSION**

Gates moved, seconded by Traczyk, that the Board of Education move into open session at 10:14 p.m. All members of the Board were in agreement.

OPEN SESSION

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to conduct, President Barber declared the meeting adjourned at 10:14 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board will be held on Tuesday, January 22, 2013 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