

Official Minutes of the
Oak Park Board of Education District 97
260 Madison Street, Oak Park
March 19, 2024 Business Meeting

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

Vice President Ross Dribin called the meeting to order at 6:08 p.m.

Present: Kearney, Moore, Ross Dribin, Hurd Johnson (left at 9:02pm), Spurlock

Absent: Kim, Burns

Also Present: Superintendent Dr. Ushma Shah, Assistant Superintendents Dr. Luis De Leon & Patrick Robinson, Assistant Superintendent of Finance & Operations Dr. Sheila Johnson, Chief Safety Officer, Dr. Felicia Starks Turner, Director of IT Services William Brackett, 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 of the Public Business Meeting at 7:01 p.m. All present members of the Board were in agreement. The Board convened in Open Session at 7:05 p.m.

OPEN
SESSION

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

Robin Glover

Hi my name is Robin Glover; I am an Alum of the district and parent. I am here again today to voice my concerns over the achievement gap for black students. To be frank and honest, we are failing black children in our community. I would like to highlight a few data points that stand out to me, 79% of our black student do not meet proficiency standards in language arts and 86% in math. This is the type of problem we need to solve for our teachers and parents. We need everyone to come together in the community. I ask that we create a comprehensive plan that everyone review much like we have done with the Portrait. This demands our full attention and resources. I am asking for this body to act. I want to be part of the solution. I am ready to get to work to help us get there.

Thank you very much.

Candace Ward

I am Candace Ward, me and my kids been in the district a few years now, I came here a little less than a year ago practically begging for someone to hold Amy Jefferson accountable for the way that her and Felicia Starks have been treating me and my kids. I have a few points I would like to touch on that made the most traumatic impact on my family. Back in May 2022 I had the police called on me at Longfellow saying I was threatening. They called the police and 911 told the principal the situation did not require

PUBLIC
COMMENT

police presence. Another situation with the former assistant principal, Faith Harris, who gave my daughter an in-school suspension that I was not informed about, they had her closed off in a room that was not a designated room. I expressed my concerns to be totally transparent, I was aggressive by the time I heard what had happened. I was having concerns and issues every other month. I was led to believe that Dr. Starks was going to handle this problem. She never handled the problem, I was instead issued a no-trespassing notice and told to provide 48hrs notice to come to the school that my children attend.

Middle School Student

Correct me if I am wrong, but all of you appear to be adults. Do me a favor and think back to 5th grade. Imagine being locked in a room or small space by your principal and assistant principal all because they don't like the way your mom handled them. Mind you she speaking out of anger because she expects better from someone with degrees, acting as the leader of a school. Imagine the school nurse telling you they our of pads but she will stick a tampon in your vagina in 5th grade. I know that is inappropriate. Dr. Starks was made aware, did nothing. Dr. Shah was made aware did nothing. Fast forward to the beginning of 6th grade. I watched Amy have my mom arrested, me and my sister humiliated all because she has been taunting us. Once again Dr. Starks aware and Dr. Shah made aware. I have thoughts of harming myself because of anxiety. My Family has not been the same since I told my mom how Amy and Faith mistreated me.

Why is it ok for people that I suppose to feel safe with mistreat me? Why is my mom the villain for just being a mom? My mom can't even get a job because Amy and Felicia lied on her in court, I watched them do it, I was there.

6. SUPERINTENDENT UPDATE

6.1 Portrait of an Oak Park 8th Grade Graduate Update

Dr. Ebony Lofton and Amanda Siegfried provided an update on the Portrait of an Oak Park 8th Grade Graduate. The updated included:

- Timeline/Feedback Check-in
- Community Engagement Strategy Update
- Video: Overview of our Portrait
- Next Steps

The complete presentation is available by viewing the livestream on our district YouTube channel, or by viewing the board packet materials.

7. OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE

7.1 Safety Update

The third quarter update was provided by Dr. Starks Turner, Chief Safety Officer for the District. The update included:

- Review of the Guiding Values and Beliefs
- Alignment
- Safety Data
- Current work and Timeline

- Additional Safety Topics
- Future Work

The Tri-Agency partners will have a table at the June 2, 2024 Day in Our Village, here in Oak Park. Additional information is available by viewing the livestream on our district YouTube channel, or by viewing the board packet materials.

7.2 Enrollment Projections and Strategic Staffing

Dr. Anna Colaner and Dr. Christine Zelaya presented information tonight on SY25 Student Enrollment and Classroom Section Projections. This presentation included:

- District 97 Historical and Projected Enrollment
- Trends Impacting Enrollment
- Data-based Sections: SY23 Actual, SY24 Actual and SY25 Projected K-8 Sections
- Legal and Data Parameters for Staffing
- SY25 Staff Planning

Additional information is available by viewing the livestream on our district YouTube channel, or by viewing the board packet materials.

8. CORE INSTRUCTION

8.1 Early Literacy Update

Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Schools, Patrick Robinson, Dr. Tawanda Lawrence and Jennifer Logan presented, “In Love with Literacy” Oak Park’s Respect-the-Practitioners Approach to Early Literacy”. The presentation included:

- Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan 2024
- Where are we now?
- Where are we going?
- Questions from the Board

Additional information is available by viewing the livestream on our district YouTube channel, or by viewing the board packet materials.

9. ACTION ITEMS

9.1 Revised Consent Agenda

- 9.1.1: Approval of Minutes from the February 13, 2024 Board Meeting
- 9.1.2: Approval of Minutes from the February 27, 2024 Committee of the Whole & Special Business Meeting
- 9.1.3: Bill List
- 9.1.4: Revised Personnel
- 9.1.5: Approval to Donate and Recycle Outdated Materials
- 9.1.6: Approval: Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (IMRF) District Authorized Agent

Spurlock moved, seconded by Moore that the Board of Education, of Oak Park Elementary School District 97 moves to approve the revised consent agenda as presented.

Ayes: Kearney, Ross Dribin, Moore, Spurlock
Nays: None
Absent: Kim, Burns, Hurd Johnson
Motion passed.

9.2.1 Approval of SY25 Food Services and Student Registration Fees (2.13.24)

Moore moved, seconded by Spurlock that the Board of Education, of Oak Park Elementary School District 97 moves to approve the 2024-2025 food service and registration fees as presented.

Ayes: Kearney, Ross Dribin, Moore, Spurlock
Nays: None
Absent: Kim, Burns, Hurd Johnson
Motion passed.

9.2.2 Approval: 2023 Audit Results (2.13.24)

Spurlock moved, seconded by Moore that the Board of Education, of Oak Park Elementary School District 97, moves to accept the June 30, 2023 financial statement audit reports as presented and as prepared by the auditing firm of Baker Tilly Virchow Krause, LLP.

Ayes: Kearney, Ross Dribin, Moore, Spurlock
Nays: None
Absent: Kim, Burns, Hurd Johnson
Motion passed.

9.2.3 Approval: eRate (2.13.24)

Spurlock moved, seconded by Moore that the Board of Education of Oak Park Elementary School District 97 moves to approve the eRate award to CDWG for the Juniper Mist wireless project and Fortinet firewall and licensing for a total of \$1,084,385.36 before the anticipated eRate reimbursement and as presented at the February 13, 2024 board meeting.

Ayes: Kearney, Ross Dribin, Moore, Spurlock
Nays: None
Absent: Kim, Burns, Hurd Johnson
Motion passed.

11. BOARD ASSIGNMENTS

BOARD
ASSIGNMENTS

No information to report, additional information will be provided at the next public business meeting.

12. CONCLUDING ITEMS

CONCLUDING
ITEMS

- Board member Moore: Thank you Patrick Robinson and Dr. Shah and those that presented at the BETOP meeting that took place on Monday. This was a very productive conversation.
- Vice President Ross Dribin: Is there an interest in BETOP being a Board Committee assignment, something for us to consider, let us know your thoughts.
- Board member Moore: I have thoughts around lack of representation of Black and Brown students in our band programs at the Middle Schools. Questions around why French is not offered in elementary schools and is there space to introduce other languages in elementary school?
- Board member Spurlock: Students are currently in Washington DC. I have heard real excitement about this field trip and the overall experience.

6. ADJOURNMENT

ADJOURNMENT

All four 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 9:36 p.m.

Board President

Board Secretary