

**Official Minutes of the  
Oak Park Board of Education District 97,  
970 Madison Street, Oak Park, Cook County, Illinois  
November 13, 2010**

This meeting was held at Holmes School, 508 N. Kenilworth Ave, Oak Park, Illinois.

President Traczyk called the meeting to order at 10:06 a.m.

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 Services Mike Padavic, Communications Coordinator Chris Jасulca, and Board Secretary Sheryl Marinier

ROLL CALL

**WORKSHOP - REFERENDUM DISCUSSION**

REFERENDUM  
DISCUSSION

Dr. Roberts introduced a PowerPoint presentation that was compiled from data and feedback he received from the community and district staff. He explained that many of the suggestions shared at the community chats to improve the district might be easily implemented with little financial obligation.

Assumptions made regarding the district’s finances were shared. Dr. Roberts identified the steps the district needs to take to achieve the district’s mission, reporting that in order for the district to meet technology needs through 2018, an additional \$5 million would be needed. The amount would ensure that every child would have access to a computer, every teacher would have a classroom set of computers, SmartBoards would be installed in every classroom and tele-presence labs would be implemented. To meet the needs of foreign language, the administration is recommending that every child be bilingual by the end of 8<sup>th</sup> grade, and that daily instruction in a foreign language be part of the core instruction. To achieve this, the recommendation is to consider a new, less labor intensive strategy/program. In the music department, Dr. Roberts noted that the current budget allows for only \$6,000 for instrument repair. He reported that pianos and larger instruments have not been replaced in a very long time. The recommendation is to replace all pianos with digital devices, supply each school with MP3 players and replace many of the larger instruments. Dr. Roberts reported that the playgrounds at all the schools need attention which he estimates will cost \$2.8 million. Audio visual equipment was addressed by suggesting that each school receives one television on a cart. A cable hookup in each building was recommended. Additionally, one digital camera would be purchased for each school each year. LCD bulbs were also discussed as they are essential for supporting the AV equipment. Classroom furniture is in need of replacement at a cost of \$1.8 million. Administration is recommending that the district work toward a paperless environment at a cost of \$147,000.

A therapeutic day school option was suggested. Although the administration is interested in considering this option, the Board requested further study on the subject.

## WORKSHOP - REFERENDUM DISCUSSION - (Continued)

The team identified immediate ongoing savings. With the Board's support, the administration would recommend cutting the following expenses:

- Movie license agreement \$ 15,000
- Alternative ED teaching position \$ 70,000
- Reduce textbook adoption budget \$200,000
- Reduce Web producers by half \$ 5,000
- Multi-cultural center leave one staff member \$100,000
- Restructure tech integrationists (from 3 to 2) \$ 50,000
- Eliminate the CIL stipends \$ 16,800
- Superintendent's office clerical reduction \$ 77,000
- Restructure the GTD positions at the middle school \$ 70,000

One time savings were identified as:

- Restructuring the summer school program - \$75,000
- Salary freeze for all administrators - \$72,540
- Eliminate out of state travel - \$17,000

Reductions requiring further study include:

- Administrative reductions
- Revisiting student fees
- Playground supervision fees and introducing technology fees
- Review the one and a half mile standard for busing
- Restructure the SIT teams
- In house attorney
- Grade level attendance centers with increased class size
- Early Childhood Coordinator to half time
- Reduction of one Occupational Therapist and Speech teacher
- Redefine the needs for Teacher Assistants

If the referendum does not pass, the administration believes additional reductions may need to be made, and might include reduction of one district office administrator, reduction of district office support staff, and elimination of the support specialist positions.

Discussion took place regarding the presentation. It was suggested that the presentation shared during the upcoming forum identify enhancements to the core curriculum. The majority of the Board members were in support of the list of recommended reductions. Suggestions included a focus on Pre Kindergarten and Kindergarten, and instruction in the classrooms. Concern was expressed regarding the achievement gap and the need to meet AYP. The Board was reminded that the focus needs to be education and not infrastructure. The Board members were also reminded that District 97 is part of the eight percent of Illinois schools that earned the Bright Red Apple distinction.

Member Spatz updated the Board on the opinion/suggestions of the FORC committee, as well as Steve Miller and Liz Hennessey. It was suggested that the district consider adopting a policy that identifies the use of the working cash bond. This policy would be used to communicate the need to the community, document for future boards and communicate and articulate the district's plan to the bond rating agencies.

**WORKSHOP - REFERENDUM DISCUSSION - (Continued)**

Member Spatz shared a spreadsheet that detailed three working cash options. Discussion took place regarding the feasibility of the imbedded reductions. It was agreed that these models will be redefined for the Tuesday, November 16 meeting.

The Board was asked to email all questions regarding this presentation to Dr. Roberts by Monday, November 15. Administration will attempt to respond to all questions prior to the November 30 meeting. It was agreed that the questions and the answers should be posted on the Web site. The Board identified the community forum scheduled for Thursday, November 18 and agreed that it would be the appropriate place for the community to ask questions regarding the referendum.

Member Barber left the meeting at 12:55 p.m. and Member Harton left the meeting at 12:59 p.m.

**Public Comment**

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

**Adjournment**

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to conduct, President Traczyk declared the meeting adjourned at 1:01 p.m.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board will be on Tuesday, November 16, 2010, 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