

**Official Minutes of the
Oak Park Board of Education District 97,
970 Madison Street, Oak Park, Cook County, Illinois
Meeting February 24, 2015**

President Spatz called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Present: Spatz, Brisben, Sacks, Gates, O'Connor, and Felton

ROLL CALL

Absent: None

Also Present: Superintendent Dr. Al Roberts, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations Therese O'Neill, Senior Director of HR Steve Cummins, Senior Director of Special Services Mike Padavic, Director of Technology Michael Arensdorff, Directors of Curriculum and Instruction Helen Wei and Carrie Kamm, and Board Secretary Sheryl Marinier

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE
SESSION

Sacks moved, seconded by O'Connor, that the Board of Education move into Executive Session at 6:30 p.m. to discuss (Collective Negotiations 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(2), Appointment, Employment, Compensation, Discipline, Performance, or Dismissal of Specific Employees 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1), Setting Price for Sale or Lease of Real Property 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(6), Selection of a Person to Fill a Public Office Vacancy 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(3)). Roll call vote.

Ayes: Sacks, O'Connor, Felton, Gates, Brisben, and Spatz

Nays: None

Absent:

Motion passed.

OPEN SESSION

OPEN SESSION

Gates moved, seconded by Sacks, that the Board of Education move into Open Session at 6:56 p.m. All members of the Board were in agreement.

SPECIAL REPORTS

SPECIAL
REPORTS

SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH – SUPERINTENDENT PROFILE

President Spatz noted that one of the local papers reported that the Board will be filling the interim position with one of the Board candidates. President Spatz noted that the Board never made such a statement; the Board checked with the district attorneys, who recommended not choosing one of the Board candidates, as it could be perceived as influencing the election. He read the legal statement.

Alan Leis and Lela Bridges-Webb from Hazard, Young and Attea (HYA) came to the table.

Leis reported that the district currently has 20 applicants interested in the superintendent position. The Leadership Profile was reviewed. Leis reported that 80 people were interviewed and 328 people filled out the online profile.

From those responses, HYA determined that the strengths of the district/community were identified as; diversity, well-educated community, very involved community and support systems for the children. Strong arts and early childhood programs, outstanding parent support, and embraces innovation and excellence.

Challenges, Concerns and Issues Facing the District were identified as: concern about the finances and the need for a referendum in 2017. Concern for the morale of the teachers, the

SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH – SUPERINTENDENT PROFILE (Continued)

implementation of state mandates while implementing IB at the Middle Schools, and the need for a new strategic plan.

Desired Characteristics for the new superintendent to possess were identified as; someone who will involve stakeholders in decision-making and makes the process transparent, someone who will listen but is ultimately capable of making decisions that he/she feels are in the student's best interest. Someone who will be an active part of the community, and who is visible, approachable, fair and caring. An outstanding communicator and listener who can represent fairly the District's needs and advocate for all children. Moreover, they want a leader with vision who can motivate staff and community support toward its realization.

The online survey results were reviewed and the top five items were recommended as being highlighted for candidates.

- Foster a positive professional climate of mutual trust and respect among faculty, staff and administrators
- Listen to and effectively represent the interests and concerns of students, staff, parents, and community members
- Lead in an encouraging, participatory, and team-focused manner
- Recruit, employ, evaluate, and retain effective personnel throughout the District and its schools
- Hold a deep appreciation for diversity and the importance of providing safe and caring school environments

It was noted that the Leadership Profile has already been posted online. The Board reviewed the document and the ad for the position. They agreed to send their comments regarding the Leadership Profile to President Spatz, member Brisben and Dr. Roberts by Thursday afternoon. Dr. Roberts, member Brisben and Chris Jasculca will review the changes and forward the revised document to the other Board members if necessary. It was noted that the statement "Ph.D, or Ed.D preferred" should be added to the bottom of the document.

Advertising was discussed. It was noted that the ad will run for 30 days and should be placed electronically by March 1, 2015.

STR UPDATE – ADMINISTRATION BUILDING

Jennifer Costanzo from STR came to the table. She reported that February 5, 2015 was the first community input meeting and the second will be held at Irving School this coming Thursday. February 10, 2015 was the kickoff meeting with the Village.

Costanzo reported that she has been meeting regularly with Cabinet during their Tuesday meetings. The meetings have focused on shrinking the footprint, and so far they have reduced the size by 3,000 square feet. She reported that the administrators have reduced the size of their offices and agreed to use common meeting spaces, and she noted that plans include the PrintShop in this space. File space and storage space alternatives are also being considered.

Costanzo noted that the current plan has the Multicultural Center remaining in the building, however; concern has been expressed about the inability for students to visit this site.

A site diagram was shared. It was noted that 30 parking spaces will be required, but the site only allows for 27 spaces. Costanzo noted that she has been in communication with the Village and is requesting a zoning ordinance to allow the administration building to utilize the spaces along the north side of Julian Middle School. It was reported that the Village is currently trying to amend

STR UPDATE – ADMINISTRATION BUILDING (Continued)

the zoning ordinance that would assist the district with its parking needs. The ordinance should be approved on March 16, 2015.

Two and three story building design layouts were shared for consideration. The two story option would require the second floor to overhang over the parking lot. It was noted that a separate sprinkler system would need to be installed for the overhang. The second floor option would be slightly less space than the three floor option and all departments would be on the same floor.

The partial three floor option would add 5,361 square feet to the extra floor. The building mechanics would be located on the third floor, and a green garden could be added to the roof over the remaining second floor. Costanzo reported that the two options have been reviewed by the Facilities Advisory Committee (FAC) and they recommend the two story plan, although they did not recommend the overhang in the parking lot. She reported that the difference in price between the two alternatives would be about \$170,000.

Costanzo reported that the next step will be to convert the diagrams into plans. STR will present the plans to FAC and work with the Village regarding the timeline.

Discussion took place regarding the two options and the possible inclusion of the Multicultural Center (950 square feet) in this facility. Alternatives for the Multicultural Center were discussed. Suggestions included reducing the size of the Center at Julian to open up some space, or considering a location that would encourage its use. It was agreed that this topic will be discussed in more detail during the March 17, 2015 Board meeting.

Board comments included concern about splitting up the departments on different floors and concern about the columns that would need to go through the second floor to support the overhang. Interest was expressed in finding another option for the Multicultural Center, and in asking FORC to engage and prepare a clear message about the cost of the building.

Dr. Roberts reminded the Board that the architects have been asked to design an aesthetically pleasing building that is functional within the amount that the district can afford.

PUBLIC COMMENT

PUBLIC COMMENT

Karen Yarbrough, an Oak Park resident and parent, expressed concern regarding the procedures around the opt-out of the PARCC assessments. She noted that the district is supporting the sit and stare policy where children will not be able to entertain themselves during the testing period, and she noted that the State is sharing misleading information. Yarbrough reported that her children have opted-out of the ISAT testing in the past. She feels that the sit and stare policy is intimidation toward the young children. She asked the Board to intervene and make sure there is a clear policy to protect the children.

ACTION ITEMS

ACTION ITEMS

2.1 Approval of the Consent Agenda

Felton moved, seconded by Sacks, that the Board of Education, District 97, approve the consent agenda as presented.

2.2.1 Approval of Bill List

2.2.2 Personnel Action

Ayes: Felton, Sacks, O’Connor, Gates, Spatz, and Brisben

Nays: None

Motion passed.

COMMITTEE / WORK GROUP REPORTS
2014 – 2015 PRIORITIES**COMMON CORE AND IB IMPLIMENTATION**

Carrie Kamm and Helen Wei came to the table. They reported on the current Common Core standards implementation process for both Math and English Language Arts (ELA).

It was reported that during the summer of 2014-15, it was determined that the district would purchase My Math for K-5 teachers for the 2014-15 school year. Although My Math is the elementary core math instructional resource, teachers continue to use other resources to compliment the program. Kamm reported that the district plans to continue using the My Math materials for the 2015-16 school year. With assistance from our UIC Math consultants, the district will review published math curriculums during the 2015-16 school year and determine if publishers have met the need for embedding higher quality assessments and performance tasks (a weakness of the My Math curriculum).

Kamm reported that K-5 teacher teams met during the summer of 2014 and created grade-level Math calendars. These calendars were designed to support elementary grade-level teachers with having common pacing, common summative assessments, and references to support resources.

Kamm noted that units of study are averaging between 20-35 days. Common summative assessments tend to be given at the unit midpoint and at the end of the unit. Grade level teams are using platforms such as Weebly to house the calendars and link to resources. This spring and summer, the teams will convene to review the calendars, make revisions, and share their findings with teachers at the beginning of August.

She noted that elementary teachers were surveyed in January 2015 to identify their top two CCSS (ELA and Math) implementation challenges. The top three challenges to implementing CCSS (by grade level band) were identified. Plans are being put in place to address these concerns.

Kamm shared the need to review the middle school math curriculum as it was adopted prior to the CCSS implementation. Part of the process will include a middle school math teacher CCSS Common Core implementation survey this month.

Kamm reported that District 97 partnered with the Suburban Cook County Mathematics Initiative (SCCMI). Through this partnership, the district has worked with professional development providers and coaches from UIC. Twenty-two elementary teachers and eight middle school math teachers are participating in this year-long professional learning and linked instructional coaching opportunity. She noted that the district's participation in SCCMI has also created space for collaboration with Districts 90 and 200.

Wei reported that the 2013-14 ELA calendars were tweaked, and some common assessments were added. She reported that Treasurers and the Greek & Latin Roots program (vocabulary) are the current materials being used by the teachers. She reported that interventions are used differently from school to school, selecting from a bank of lesson plans aligned with Treasurer's that support Common Core. She reported that the middle schools use mainly novels and other texts to support the curriculum.

Wei noted that the challenge is having more aligned textbooks and materials. She expressed the interest in purchasing *Thinking Core* by Dr. Diana Carry, who is scheduled to return to the district in the spring to work with teacher leaders. Additionally, she noted the need to create text sets around units or themes, and to determine purchasing needs and research curricular resources for writing instruction.

COMMON CORE AND IB IMPLIMENTATION (Continued)

Wei noted that one of the current goals for this school year is to deepen elementary teachers' and administrators' understanding and implementation of Close reading in their classrooms. The need to review and organize the teacher intranet was also expressed.

Board comments included interest in the collaboration with Districts 90 and 200, and the size and composition of the summer teacher teams. Interest was also expressed in the teacher training.

EVALUATIONS

Dr. Roberts reported that the administrators are on track with the teacher evaluations at all schools.

FINANCIAL STABILITY

Member Brisben will replace member Traczyk on this committee. Member Brisben and President Spatz will be meeting with Steve Miller to review the forecast assumptions on March 10, 2015. That information will be shared with FORC on March 23, 2015 and be submitted to the Board for review in April, 2015.

ADMINISTRATION BUILDING AND FACILITIES

It was noted that this topic was discussed earlier in the meeting. The Board was reminded that they will discuss options for the Multicultural Center, and reconsider the two story versus three story options for the administration building during the March 17, 2015 Board meeting.

The Board was reminded that a community meeting will be held at Irving School this coming Thursday at 7:00 p.m.

The Board also reviewed options regarding the sale of 541 Madison Street.

EQUITY AND EXCELLENCE IN STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

There was nothing to report on this topic.

ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE

It was reported that Hazard, Young and Attea is working on the Superintendent Search.

Carrie Kamm, Helen Wei and Dr. Roberts will share an update on the job descriptions for teacher leaders during a future Board meeting.

CONTRACT IMPLEMENTATION AND MAINTENANCE

It was agreed that the applications for the interim Board position will be reviewed during a special meeting on March 4, 2015 and interviews will be held on March 9, 2015 beginning at 8:00 p.m.

STANDING BOARD COMMITTEES

FACILITIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE (FAC)

O'Neill recommended that the Board approve the bid from Pasche and Sons Construction Company for the summer capital projects. This proposal will be reviewed by FORC on March 10, 2015, and return to the Board on March 17, 2015 for approval. She noted that the Cap-Ex was shared with the Board this afternoon and will be shared with FAC during their meeting on March 10, 2015. She noted a saving of \$50,000 over the original estimate.

FINANCIAL OVERSIGHT AND REVIEW COMMITTEE (FORC)

This committee will be meeting again on March 23, 2015.

STANDING
BOARD
COMMITTEES

COMMITTEE FOR LEGISLATIVE ACTION, INTERVENTION, AND MONITORING
(CLAIM)

President Spatz reported the need to meet with Greg Smith prior to the committee's next meeting.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

ADMINISTRATIVE
ITEMS

CALENDAR COMMITTEE UPDATE

Steve Cummins reported that the Calendar committee met today and shared a draft two-year calendar for consideration. He noted that the winter break aligns with Districts 200 and 90 and the last day of school for both years would occur on a Wednesday.

Additionally, Cummins noted that two new teacher institute days were added in accordance to the teachers' (OPTA) contract. He noted that the Professional Development Committee will need to weigh in on the additional institute day at the beginning of the year. He recommended a statement from the OPTA stating that they are in support of the flexible day being placed so early in the year. It was suggested that the union be made aware of the changes in writing with a copy to the Board.

BROOKS / JULIAN FIELD

Dr. Roberts reported that he sent a memo to the Board in support of the upgrades to the middle school fields. He noted that the improvements will support the wellness of the students and support the Park District. He noted that as they exist now, both fields are usually out of use during the rainy season. He suggested a partnership with the cost of 2/3 paid by the Park District. He requested Board direction for the creation of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to work with the Park District on this initiative.

Discussion took place regarding the cost of the project and the timing at Julian Middle School in relation to the construction of the administration building. Interest was expressed about delaying the installation of the turf at Brooks Middle School for one year. It was suggested that the turf option be vetted through FAC.

The Board supported Dr. Roberts' request to move forward with the MOU and to reach out to other entities regarding funding. It was suggested that the timing of this project be shared during the March 17, 2015 Board meeting.

CONCLUDING ITEMS

CONCLUDING
ITEMS

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Roberts and member Felton attended the PTO Council meeting last night where they heard a presentation on the SAY project and participated in a discussion on the IB program and highly effective teaching. He noted that the council is pleased with the teachers' response to the IB program.

Dr. Roberts reported that the PARCC test will be administered to third through eighth graders on March 9, 2015 through March 20, 2015. All students present must have the assessment offered to them and there is not an opt-out choice. He explained that Federal law and No Child Left Behind requires the schools to participate. A school allowing an opt-out option would be breaking the Federal and State law. He noted that ISBE does not provide any guidance to teachers for students who chose to not take the test. The law is being considered, but will not be approved in time. The testing environment must be maintained by having the students wait until the first student completes the test. He noted that if a student is absent, the student will be offered the test when they return to school. It is clearly a no win situation, but the district needs to meet its responsibilities.

SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT (Continued)

The Board discussed the PARCC testing law and considered options. It was suggested that teachers position students in a classroom so it is not obvious that they are not participating. The Board agreed that the law needs to be upheld.

BOARD CONCERNS / ANNOUNCEMENTS

Vice President Gates and member Brisben attended the IGOV meeting and reported that notes from that meeting will be forthcoming.

Member Brisben updated his report on how much time it takes to be a School Board member. He noted that he averaged eight hours per week, but during negotiations, the average was 10 to 11 hours per week. He shared that one month, he put in 70 hours. He suggested that this information be shared in the candidate’s briefing.

The PTO Council will be hosting a candidate forum on March 10, 2015 at Brooks Middle School from 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

The Collaboration for Early Childhood IGA Governing Board meeting will be held at the District 97 office tomorrow evening at 7:00 p.m.

It was requested that the facilities data be included in the board packet moving forward.

The IDOT CTA plan for the Eisenhower expansion is forthcoming.

The next IGOV forum is being considered.

The Historical Society is hosting an Antique Road Show at Julian Middle School on Saturday.

The Collaboration for Early Childhood held their annual Symposium last Saturday. The Symposium was titled, “Dance for Diversity”, and was attended by approximately 350 people. The Julian Middle School custodial team, CAST and tech support were acknowledged for their assistance.

BOARD RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENT

It was noted that response was provided during the meeting and will be posted on the Website. Additionally, it was suggested that parents be provided with a contact at the state level. Discussion took place regarding the PARCC assessment and why parents would choose to opt-out. The Board directed Dr. Roberts to send a response to the parent.

PREVIEW AGENDAS

The draft agenda for March 17, 2015 was reviewed and modifications were recommended.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Sacks moved, seconded by O’Connor, that the Board of Education move into Executive Session at 10:54 p.m. to discuss (Appointment, Employment, Compensation, Discipline, Performance, or Dismissal of Specific Employees 5 ILCS 120/2/(c)(1)). Roll call vote.

Ayes: Sacks, O’Connor, Felton, Gates, Brisben, and Spatz

Nays: None

Absent:

Motion passed.

EXECUTIVE
SESSION

OPEN SESSION

Sacks moved, seconded by O’Connor, that the Board of Education move into Open Session at 11:18 p.m. All members of the Board were in agreement.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to conduct, President Spatz declared the meeting adjourned at 11:18 p.m.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board will be held on Tuesday, March 17, 2015 beginning at 7 p.m. at the district Administration building located at 970 Madison Street, Oak Park, Illinois.

Board President

Board Secretary