

**Official Minutes of the  
Oak Park Board of Education District 97,  
970 Madison Street, Oak Park, Cook County, Illinois  
Meeting December 6, 2016**

President Gates called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Present: Gates, O'Connor (participated by phone until arrival at 7:47 p.m.), Spatz (6:08 p.m.),  
Spurlock, Felton, Brisben, and Datta (6:08 p.m.)  
Absent: None  
Also Present: Superintendent Dr. Carol Kelley, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations  
Dr. Alicia Evans, Assistant Superintendent of HR Laurie Campbell, Chief Academic and  
Accountability Officer Dr. Amy Warke, Senior Director of Special Services Mike  
Padavic, Senior Director of Policy, Procedures and Communication Chris Jasculca, Sr.  
Director of Administrative Services Dr. Felicia Starks Turner, Senior Director of  
Technology Michael Arensdorff, Director of Curriculum and Instruction Carrie Kamm,  
and Board Secretary Sheryl Marinier

ROLL CALL

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Felton moved, seconded by Brisben, that the Board of Education move into Executive Session at 6:00 p.m. to discuss (Appointment, Employment, Compensation, Discipline, Performance, or Dismissal of Specific Employees or Legal Counsel for the district 5 ILCS 120/2(C)(1), Pending or Probable Litigation 5 ILCS 120/2(C)(11), Set Price for Sale of Real Estate 5 ILCS 12/2(C)(6), Purchase or Lease of Real Estate 5 ILCS 120/2(C)(5)). Roll call vote.

EXECUTIVE  
SESSION

Ayes: Felton, Brisben, Spatz, Datta, Spurlock, Gates, O'Connor (by phone)  
Nays: None  
Motion passed.

**OPEN SESSION**

Felton moved, seconded by Datta, that the Board of Education move into Open Session at 6:56 p.m. All members of the Board were in agreement. The meeting reconvened at 7:02 p.m.

OPEN SESSION

**PUBLIC HEARING – PROPERTY TAX LEVY**

Alicia Evans came to the table. She reported that an estimated levy has already been approved by the Board; however, the levy has been revised. She explained that under PTELL (a school district's property tax extension), the amount of property taxes the school district receives in tax revenue can increase annually up to five percent or the rate of inflation as measured by the All Urban Consumer Price Index (CPI-U), whichever is less. She reminded the Board that a referendum is planned for April, 2017. In order to gain access to the additional revenues that would be generated by a successful referendum, the district must levy (request) the funds now. This year, the levy must be greater than CPI or five percent of the previous year's extension. This is known as a "balloon levy". The balloon levy will include allocating the maximum allowable proceeds into all the funds including working cash and tort funds. If the Board elects to do an amended levy after the referendum results, the Cook County Tax Extension office will have the authority to only allocate the additional referendum proceeds into the education and operations and maintenance funds.

PUBLIC HEARING  
– PROPERTY TAX  
LEVY

Evans explained that the district does not have enough capacity under the fund limitation in those two funds to capture all the additional revenues that would be generated from a successful referendum. The Truth in Taxation publication notice is still applicable, but it can be done after the approval of the final levy adoption. The notice must be published no later than fifteen days after the approval of the final levy adoption. If the referendum does not pass, the Clerk will reduce funds down to statutory maximums as needed, regardless of the levy request.

Evans was acknowledged for following up on this with the Cook County Clerk's Office. It was noted that in 2011, when the last referendum was passed, this step was not necessary. It was noted that this amount is a "not to exceed" number controlled by the amount identified in the referendum.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

**Anthony Clark**, an Oak Park resident, and member of the Suburban Unity Alliance and teacher, expressed concerns regarding equity. He reported that he is hearing that many families make the choice to live in Oak Park because they are making an investment in their children. Sadly, he believes that families are not seeing the return

PUBLIC  
COMMENT

**PUBLIC COMMENT** (Continued)

on their investment. Title I is a necessity and he is seeing so much that he considers a luxury. He asked the Board to be cognizant in the investment that so many are taking for granted, and asked them to consider the value if the community is not seeing a return. He suggested that the community needs to be diverse. If our schools do not see returns and are not purposeful, then we are not getting a return. We are here to hold you accountable. We are losing families because they are being underserved.

**John Duffy**, an Oak Park resident, has six children who attended Longfellow, and is the chairperson for CEEE – the Committee for Equity and Excellence in Education, explained that CEEE is a network of parents and citizens from Oak Park and River Forest that has focused its racial equity work in service to District 200. He explained that members of the group are here tonight as part of an ongoing effort to build a coalition of organizations who share similar goals around equity in general and racial equity in particular.

He explained that they are also here in support of the proposal for action being presented by the community. We are deeply concerned that recent decisions by District 97 regarding allocation of Title I funds is not supportive of racial or socio-economic equity and we seek answers to the question being proposed tonight.

Duffy explained that as District 97 moves forward, the group invites all stakeholders to consider two initiatives that District 200 is reviewing –

The first is to sponsor an open community inquiry into what role tracking plays in contributing to achievement disparities. He noted that tomorrow Oak Park River Forest High School is sending a large team to see and learn about the remarkable de-tracking process that has been underway at Evanston Township High School for over six years.

The second proposal CEEE has before District 200 is the adoption of an equity impact policy. Such a policy can provide an instructional lens and review process that would determine in advance whether decisions like the reallocation of District 97 Title I funds was equity aversive, equity neutral or equity supportive.

Duffy suggested that in the future, the CEEE will share more details on these two initiatives that we believe can help Oak Park Schools realize our shared goals for the highest quality racially integrated education and success for all Oak Park students. We respectfully wait for your response to the concerns CEEE and others have raised tonight.

**Jeff Kraft**, a Chicago resident, explained that for six years, he was the volunteer who picked up and sorted the fruit that Trader Joe's donated to District 97 to feed the second through fifth grade children at the Power of Partnerships after-school program at Holmes School. He explained that the program serves children scoring in the 0 to 25<sup>th</sup> percentile of math and reading scores. Until 5 p.m. every day, Monday through Thursday, September through May, they are tutored by teachers and community volunteers, mostly Oak Park River Forest High School and Dominican University students. Teachers are paid for their time through a Township grant that Holmes' teachers write and submit. All volunteers are screened and receive training as needed. The kids complete their homework, extra work targeted to their needs, and develop a positive relationship with their mentors.

In its first year alone, the program dramatically improved MAP test scores for more than 90 percent of those students. The program was credited by the principals as an integral part of the success when Holmes was the only District 97 school to achieve adequate yearly progress for the No Child Left Behind Act.

Kraft recommended that the Board consider offering a similar program at all of the District's schools. He asked that the School Board be more vigilant and demanding, and expand free after-school support to all schools and students. He reminded the Board that we are one community, the achievement gap is the same problem facing us and there is a fierce urgency of now.

**Misti Pepler**, an Oak Park resident and parent of three middle school students, explained that she has been a special education teacher and is currently an occupational therapist in a nearby school district. She explained that her family moved from the city when the children were young, noting that the two oldest children are black. They chose Oak Park because of its diverse racial makeup, strong school system and proximity to the city.

She explained that during the first fall, her son's MAP scores plummeted. He scored eight points lower than he had at the beginning of his previous year. Transitions have always been harder for him so she gave him some time to adjust. She noticed decreased rigor around reading and writing, and described the math curriculum as a disaster.

**PUBLIC COMMENT** (Continued)

When she met with her son's teachers, they all assured her that he was progressing. He had a great way of thinking about things, and he was bright, and learned quickly. She sensed a distinctly lower expectation for his abilities than when he went to school in the city, a school that was majority black with a 67 percent poverty rate.

Peppler expressed concern about rigor, curriculum and motivation and shared that the achievement gap is not just about bringing the lower students up to average/passing. It is about recognizing and nurturing black students who are smart and gifted. She explained that her families experience is that there is very little support for moving up into these programs. Extended learning opportunities in an after school are needed to allow all students the opportunity to move up at all of the schools.

Peppler asked how the districts Title I funds are being used this year, and what the District is doing to financially offset the loss of said funding status from several schools. She noted that as the need and the gap is still there regardless of Title I status, this situation needs to be addressed. Additionally, she suggested that a committee be formed in the next 30 days to address these issues. She recommended that the committee be called the Diverse, Inclusive Family and Engagement committee.

She noted that there are very distinct ways to bring equity to our educational system here in Oak Park, very district actions that need to be taken. This does not need more study or more conversation. It needs a cohesive action plan that addresses systemic racial bias head, led from the administration with goals for quantifiable changes. She asked that this be the School Board that takes action on this.

**Jameel Abdur-Rati**, an Oak Park resident, expressed concern about money being taken away from the colored kids. He asked if Oak Park is different than Englewood. He expressed concern about the repeated problem and asked if black lives matter? He suggested that the Board follow through with what they said they would do in writing. If Oak Park is supposed to be different, then we need to show it. He expressed concern about the cost of the new administration building.

**Celeste Blackwell**, an Oak Park resident, shared that after having very disappointing experiences with the Chicago Public Schools, her family made the decision to move to Oak Park. She shared that she is here as a parent who is in full support of parent, teacher, and community working together for the success of the children. She shared her son's experiences at Holmes School. She noted that although he was struggling, the support her son received there was awesome.

She shared that Mrs. Frances Kraft approached the family about a program called POP and they jumped at the opportunity for their son. The results of him attending POP were seen at every level and he is currently in freshmen advanced math at the high school.

As a parent that has experienced both sides, the nonsupport and the support in the school systems, she felt that if these types of programs start to diminish in our Oak Park community then the District will lose your community because this community of parents, teachers and tutors are trying to make a difference. This group of people is what makes Oak Park schools the schools everyone wants to go to, and Oak Park the place to be and raise our families. It's not a teacher's job alone or a parent's job alone or the districts job, but the whole community coming together to help our future generations succeed.

**Jason Wolkowicz**, an Oak Park resident, expressed support for the district embarking on vision planning. What we have heard includes equity at the top. We need to put it in action and practice. His African American daughter is challenged in math, and her support services did not begin until November. They did not know that Title I was cut and PTO would need to make up for the funds. He questioned how the Title I funds are spent and expressed interest in knowing what needs to be in place to make up for the shortfall to ensure equity. He shared that he is involved with the Longfellow Diversity committee. He expressed the need for teacher training on equity. He explained that the Longfellow PTO offered to pay for training last summer (to train the trainers), but no one took the offer. He requested a plan for teachers and administrators to deal with racial incompetence's. On another note, Wolkowicz shared that he spoke to Lynn Allen about the Multicultural Center's relocation. He expressed sadness about the move and asked if there is a plan for the District to take advantage of the resource?

**Sheree Johnson**, an Oak Park resident and has three children who attended schools in both District 97 and Oak Park River Forest High School (OPRF), shared that she is also the president of OPRF's PTO (Parents for Student Success). She explained that the group's name is different because beyond their traditional PTO type activities, they engage with issues of achievement, accessibility of resources and navigating the school.

**PUBLIC COMMENT** (Continued)

She shared what happens academically with the District 97 students when they move on to the high school. She suggested that the Board read the annual student achievement report created by Oak Park River Forest's Director of Assessment and Research, and noted that this year's report, titled "2016 GPA and ACT Report: Key Indicators of Student Achievement" can be found on the OPRFHS website in the agenda for the October 27, 2016 Board meeting.

She reported that according to OPRF's latest achievement data for 2016 graduates, 45 percent of black boys have not met any of the three benchmarks that signify college readiness compared to just 5 percent of white boys who have not met the benchmarks. 22 percent of black girls have not met any of the benchmarks while no white girls fall into this category. On the other end of the spectrum, just 20 percent of the black boys have met all three benchmarks compared to 64 percent of white boys who have met all three benchmarks. Only 17 percent of black girls have met all benchmarks as compared to 80 percent of white girls.

She suggested that District 97, OPRF High School and the Oak Park River Forest community have to begin to take on some of the traditional parental responsibilities of our most vulnerable students whose families cannot advocate for them. We have to ensure that the academic and structural supports are available for ALL children in our community from pre-Kindergarten and upward. She suggested that this means providing daily caring and high quality interactions with adults who have high expectations of them. It means not just checking off if a student completed the homework, but making sure they have high quality support to get it done. This means reaching out to families, understanding what they need and linking them with available community resources, and creating a true environment of continuous improvement at District 97 that does not ignore issues and complaints, but truly invites them because they are the key to solving our problems.

Johnson shared that she has read the Vision and Goals for District 97 which looks great and seems to get at what she has spoken about. She was unable to locate the more detailed goals to accomplish the vision with staff ownership and measurement criteria, and expressed interest in receiving that data.

She noted that she was here today because a significant portion of the high school outcomes for our Oak Park students begin with their experiences at District 97. Limited Title I services to District 97's grammar school students without explanation directly contradicts the District's vision and leaves a concern that the eventual high school outcomes of these students may be even worse than the academic outcomes of OPRF's 2016 graduates.

**Katherine Liebl**, an Oak Park resident and parent of four African-American children, three of whom are District 97 students, spoke to the Board in support of the initiatives of the equity team and also to ask District 97 to take concrete, immediate steps to provide all District 97 students with an equitable and diverse learning environment. She suggested that the immediate steps should include a closer look at what is going on in our classrooms. In order to assess the situation, she believes that District 97 should be recording data related to how our students are grouped in their classrooms, when grouped by ability. This data should at the very least include data about race and gender.

She suggested that Oak Park must be able to provide diverse, mixed-ability, inclusive learning experiences that send the message to our children and to our community that when we work together, when we learn from each other, when we pull together and recognize how our differences are strengths, that things get done. Progress is made and everyone benefits. We need to believe in the concept of a growth mindset that we are trying to teach our children – that anything is possible and that we can always achieve much more than we can imagine. She shared Dr. Kelley's quote from the bottom of her emails;

"You are capable of so much more than you can even imagine. I believe in you and your capabilities; and I will set up the conditions for you to develop and amplify that same belief in yourself."

She shared that she believes that as a district we want to provide an equitable education for all and close the achievement gap. However, she expressed concern about if the District is having the conversations that will possible lead to solutions.

She expressed concerns about her fifth grader and occasionally her third grader being grouped for reading and math in groups of mostly other African-American students, and shared that she believes that if the district is not taking into consideration the perceptions and impressions that we are creating in our classrooms – perceptions of who can succeed and who cannot, we are doing every child a great disservice. These perceptions are ones they will carry with them into higher education, into their workplaces and into their communities. She believes that in Oak Park we have the tools and desire to close the achievement gap, and to help students develop a growth mindset.

**PUBLIC COMMENT** (Continued)

Leibl asked that the district put systems in place to monitor how our children are grouped in their classrooms, suggesting that if the district actually created the diverse classrooms that it wants to believe it has, the achievement gap would start to close.

**Liz Goss**, an Oak Park resident and teacher on the west side, noted that kids sitting in the same classroom are getting different educations. She noted a 30 percent gap between white and African-American children, and reported that six out of every 100 African-American kids in math are meeting or succeeding. She suggested that there are ways that it can be changed. There are levers that can fix this. She suggested early intervention, welcoming schools and teacher training, and suggested that the District focus on coaching and professional development. She questioned where the lens of equity fits in with this. She noted that none of the plans shared tonight are easy or cheap, but suggested that the community needs to think about that.

**George Bailey**, an Oak Park resident, who had two sons go through the District, expressed concern about creating programs and processes based on things that are not interrogates especially around testing. He suggested that the district needs to get better at getting better. He expressed interest in people beginning to look at the traditional evaluation culture in Oak Park. Bailey shared that he wrote curriculum in Language Arts and grammar, and sought to bring that outlook here. He expressed concern about what he believes is a catastrophe here when young African-American men are reading at 1.9 to 2.7 and expected to engage. He asked the Board to not kill the will and intellect of young men.

**Frances Kraft**, a Chicago resident and District 97 teacher on leave, shared her perspective on equity as a teacher in this District. She shared that from her experience; all families have hopes and dreams for their children and want the best for them. She suggested that the Board has a lot of power because they have the ability to affect the lives of thousands of children. She explained that she knows that the Board members are all good people, and encouraged them to be fearless.

Kraft noted that all the teachers she works with are professionals who are squarely focused on student achievement. She noted that for the past seven years, a small team of teachers at Holmes has put in countless hours to support students with the Power of Partnerships after-school program and the Rising Readings Summer Reading Program. They have written grants totaling more than \$120,000 from the Township and relied on strong partnerships with District 200, the Oak Park Public Library, Dominican University, Triton College, the Collaboration for Early Childhood, and Trader Joe's. She noted that the data shows strong academic growth in students every year. The district has never funded this program and our funding has even been threatened. During that same time, the Board of Education approved millions of dollars in spending of which, none of the expenditures addresses gaps; however, the District continued to promote a message of diversity, inclusiveness, and equity. And now we are told to once again trust that these "big rocks" will address the gap. She expressed concern about the messages the children are receiving when they see white gifted classes and mostly students of color in resource and remedial instruction.

Kraft urged the Board to;

- 1) Immediately restore full Title I hours for Kindergarten – fifth grade students so they have services for the full school year.
- 2) Immediately move forward with a family and community engagement initiative funded by the District and created by families. This is a requirement in the new Every Student Succeeds Act. It is the Districts' responsibility to initiate personal relationships, honor families for their valuable knowledge about their own children, and make them partners in education.
- 3) Create a consistent "discipline policy" across all 10 schools that incorporate restorative practices.
- 4) Within 60 days, create a plan to offer free, data-driven after-school academic support in all 10 schools for all students.
- 5) Schedule on-going, frequent professional development on cultural competency.

**Sarah Sevenson**, an Oak Park resident shared that she also grew up in Oak Park, and attended Beye, Julian and Oak Park River Forest High School. She shared that she has two small children who will attend Lincoln in a couple years. Sevenson shared that she is also the principal of a high school on the south side of Chicago where she works daily to close the achievement gap and ensure educational equity for the students at her school. She noted that there is much work to be done. Being at this meeting, it is clear that everyone here acknowledges what a big problem this is for Oak Park. She suggested that there are two key areas that need to be acted upon now with relatively minimal expenditure of resources and could have a powerful impact on student achievement.

- 1) The first action step is to ensure that everyone is engaging in honest, ongoing, and frequent conversations with educators, parents, students and the community about race and how it shapes our interactions with each other.

**PUBLIC COMMENT** (Continued)

2) The second action step is to reshape the District 97 discipline systems.

**Elizabeth Jayse Rather**, an Oak Park parent shared that her son, a first grader at Lincoln, was recently asked what he wanted to be when he grows up. He said: “I want to be a police officer when I grow up. But I am not going to carry a gun. That way I will not kill people with dark skin who are not doing anything wrong.”

Rather suggested that the District needs to disrupt this cycle. White families have the responsibility to talk about race with their children and they also need to talk about it in the classroom. They need to see their peers of color treated fairly so as to prevent the seeds of implicit bias from taking root inside of them. They need to be exposed to a curriculum that values and honors all voices throughout history as well as all those represented in the classroom. We need a systematic approach that addresses not only the academic achievement gap but entire the school environment, school practices, and structures.

Rather shared that she is a researcher at the University of Illinois in Chicago School of Public Health, and has been doing school-based research for over a decade. She shared that research shows that teachers have been found to have implicit bias (even preschool teachers) and training has consistently been recommended as one step to address this. We cannot un-inherit this reality. That was yesterday. But we can do everything we can today to do better for our children.

**Brad Griffith**, a soon to be an Oak Park resident and new father, shared that it is because of the people tonight that he is interested in this community. He is looking for a place where his son can walk to school, and if someone asks him what was so great about the district’s school, he needs to be able to say that even the kids who were struggling found what they needed to be successful. He asked the Board to make up the gaps in Title I funding.

**Kelly Flemming**, an Oak Park Resident, acknowledged everyone for coming out this evening. She shared that her family chose this community because it has a good reputation, but she started to see inconsistencies and begin to compare the community to Elmhurst, etc. She suggested that the District is on the right path, but has a lot of work ahead of it. She noted that she is the co-president of the Brooks PTO and was on the principal search committee. She complimented Principal Khan and described her as amazing. Flemming expressed her compassion for community family engagement, and noted that she was involved at Holmes School and aware of the Power of Partnership program and amazed at its success. She suggested that the District replicate the program at the other schools in the District, and expressed the need to restore the Title I funding.

**Thontia Williams**, an Oak Park resident and parent of a daughter who graduated from Julian Middle School, expressed concern about the elementary school system. She explained that she is a believer that both sides (schools and parents) must be partners in a child’s education and she feels that is lacking in District 97. She asked the Board to explain what the District is doing to prioritize communication with parents of children who are struggling academically, and how what they are doing to improve and augment how educators communicate and partner with parents? She expressed concern over the size of the achievement gap and the fact that the commitment to narrow the gap appears to be present on paper, but not an authentic pledge toward change. She asked for some tangible actionable items around community engagement and academic monitoring.

**Saria Lofton**, an Oak Park resident, expressed concern about the achievement gap as it relates to the gifted program. She referenced a New York Times article citing that black and brown students are skipped in gifted programs. She noted that there are gains made by looking at admittance from a different advantage point. She expressed concern that entrance into the gifted program in Oak Park is backed on achievement tests. She expressed concern about the difficulty in finding information on the District’s Website regarding the gifted program. When speaking to her daughter’s teacher about the gifted program, she noted that the teacher defined them as the “smart” kids. Lofton noted that 80 percent of the students in the gifted program are white with limited African-American children in the program at the middle school level. Lofton suggested that these opportunities should be extended to all children and asked the District to think about new solutions and new ways to get them into the program.

**Yoko Terretta**, an Oak Park resident thanked the Board for listening to the concerns this evening and for their continued service to the community. She suggested that children need to feel like they count. If that occurs, they will become engaged members of the community. She suggested that confidence comes from one’s own perceived ability. She asked the Board to sport a number of measures.

- Full restoration of Title I for Kindergarten –fifth grade. How can kids catch up if they have to wait until November for help? Full disclosure of where the funds are being used
- Family and community engagement that actively involves all families

### **PUBLIC COMMENT** (Continued)

- Engage the Title I families in creating proactive workshops, etc. – can this be done in 30 days?
- Discipline policy consistency. Take ownership of own behaviors. Access for all student in all 10 schools
- Free and data driven after school academic support in all schools, a consistent collaborative learning program in the next 60 days
- Can we support teachers further creating cultural competency in the next 60 days? Is there a way to support teachers by created a professional development plan in the next 60 days?

**Christina Waters**, an Oak Park resident, born in the community and raising her children here, asked the following questions:

- Why is there still an achievement gap grossly effecting black male students?
- Why were Kindergarten – fifth grade Title I dollars decreased?
- How do we restore the much needed hours?
- How is the gifted program support still intact?
- We request full disclosure of where Title I funds are being spent and full restoration of the program for Kindergarten –fifth grade students
- Every school should have a free program after hours to help with homework for at least an hour every day
- She requested a plan for consistent collaborative extended learning programs across the District in the next 60 days
- How are we actively working to achieve a positive learning environment at all schools? She requested a diverse inclusive family engagement committee in the next 30 days. Make information accessible and in a friendly and engaging way
- What kinds of trainings are taking place for the teachers and are they ongoing?
- How will the restorative justice professional development information being shared with staff members who did not attend the professional development? Request a plan for ongoing staff in the next 60 days
- How many of the schools are still using “shaming” techniques? What are we doing to decrease the detentions / suspensions at the middle schools?
- Why does the data on the most recent Illinois report card show a disproportionate amount of black and low income, non-English speaking and special needs students below the rigorous mark of white and Hispanic students and what are we doing to change this?

### **REPORTS**

REPORTS

#### **CLAIM UPDATE**

Chairperson Rick Boultinghouse and Theresa Jurgus came to the table. Boultinghouse reported that there has been little activity in Springfield this year, so the committee has been focusing on their five workgroups (Early Childhood, Equity and Excellence in Student Achievement, Events, Finance and Legislative Monitoring).

He reported that the committee successfully hosted their fourth annual Legislators Forum, refined and ratified five internal workgroup mission statements, held eight open meetings since January, 2015 and hosted six guest speakers.

He reported that the 2016 Legislators Forum was very successful, with all four elected legislative representatives in attendance and hosting approximately 75 guests.

The guest speakers this year included Therese O’Neill who shared an overview of the District’s finances, Ralph Martire who shared an overview of State finances and education funding in Illinois, Dr. Felicia Starks Turner who shared an update on diversity and parent engagement, Carolyn Newberry Schwartz who shared an update on early childhood education funding, Bob Spatz who shared the ED-RED education funding model for SB 231 and Ben Boer who shared the Funding Illinois Future’s education funding model.

Boultinghouse reported that the committee’s 2017 internal goals include revising the C.L.A.I.M. Charge as directed by the Board of Education and revising the workgroup mission statements relative to the new District 97 goals and mission statement. External goals for 2017 include producing a public forum with communities united, anticipating the busy legislative session in Springfield, Continuing to host guest speakers and outreach to legislators.

Board comments included gratitude to the committee for using public meetings to inform and educate on the many topics listed above. It was noted that out of 890 school districts in the State of Illinois, only a handful of them have a legislative committee.

LEAP PILOT NETWORK PROGRAM (BROOKS MIDDLE SCHOOL)

Amy Warke and LeeAndra Khan, came to the table with Kristen Howel and Chris Liang-Vergara from LEAP Innovations

Khan explained that she participated in a school review in the past and thought it would be well received by the Brooks staff. The school she reviewed consisted of 100 percent African-American and Latino students who entered Kindergarten with little English or Spanish skills. The core beliefs and the values of the school were no boundaries to your learning. Teachers believed that if students are not learning, it is the teachers fault, and students can be active participants in their own learning. After sharing the concept with the Brooks faculty, the sixth grade team volunteered. She noted that the LEAP program goes well with International Baccalaureate (IB) model.

Liang-Vergara explained that LEAP is a non-profit organization working primarily with Chicago schools instilling the core program which creates self-ownership. He reported that seven schools were chosen to receive funding last year to pilot the program. He explained that LEAP is very intentional about finding very diverse schools for the program and helping them co-design a program that will work well within that environment. He explained the importance of 100 percent school support of the program that is learner connected, learner focused, learner demonstrated and learner led.

He reported that students in the pilot network are gaining an additional 1.07 test-score points. Students using Lexia CORE5 gained an additional 1.42 test-score points above what the control group gained and students using ThinkCERCA gained an additional 6.29 test-score points above what the control group gained.

He reported that the process requires extensive professional development during the pilot period of 18 months. During that time period, LEAP employees will visit the school on a bi-weekly basis to support growth.

Dr. Kelley explained that the next step will be to find out if Brooks has been accepted into the program. At that time, the Board will be asked for their support. She noted that the funding for the program is available for this year and could be built into the budget for next year. She noted that this is a systemic change.

Liang-Vergara noted that many schools have a lot of technology without purpose. He reported that technology is a minimal part of the LEAP experience. Additionally, he noted that 100 percent of the schools who piloted the program would recommend the program to friends and colleagues, and a lot of them have expanded the program to the full school.

Board comments included interest in knowing if there are any schools currently using the program that are demographically similar to Brooks. Concern was expressed that the program might be so successful that everyone wants to roll it out too quickly. Interest was expressed in knowing if LEAP is working with any of the District 97 cohort group members.

ACTION ITEMS

**2.1.1 APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE NOVEMBER 15, 2016 BOARD MEETING**

Spatz moved, seconded by Gates, that the Board of Education of Oak Park District 97, approve the revised minutes from the November 15, 2016 Board meeting. Roll call vote.

Ayes: Spatz, Gates, Datta, Felton, O’Connor, Brisben, and Spurlock

Nays: None

Motion passed.

**2.2 APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA**

Spatz moved, seconded by O’Connor, that the Board of Education, District 97, approve the consent agenda as presented.

2.2.1 Approval of Bill List

2.2.3 Approval of Supporting Organizations

2.2.4 Policy Adoption

Policy 6:50 (School Wellness)

Policy 8:80 (Gifts to the District)

Disappointment was expressed in the receipt of Mike Padavic’s retirement letter.

Ayes: Spatz, O’Connor, Felton, Datta, Gates, Brisben, and Spurlock

Nays: None

Motion passed.



**2.3.1 ACTION ON PROPERTY TAX LEVY**

Gates moved, seconded by Brisben, that the Board of Education of Oak Park District 97, approve the amended resolution (\$68,000,000 changed to \$70,000,000) to adopt the final 2016 levy and the resolution authorizing the reduction of certain fund levies for the 2016 levy year as presented. Roll call vote.

Ayes: Gates, Brisben, Felton, Spatz, O’Connor, Datta, and Spurlock

Nays: None

Motion passed.

It was noted that this is an “up to” amount. The Board does not anticipate the need to utilize the full amount of the levy.

**2.3.2 APPROVAL OF SUCCESS FOR ALL YOUTH (SAY) DATA AGREEMENT**

Datta moved, seconded by O’Connor, that the Board of Education of Oak Park District 97, enter into an agreement with Success For All Youth regarding data sharing for the purpose of building a community dashboard. Approval of this motion is contingent on review by the District’s legal team. Roll call vote.

Ayes: Datta, O’Connor, Spurlock, Felton, Spatz, Brisben, and Gates

Nays: None

Motion passed.

**2.3.3 RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR THE ISSUE OF APPROXIMATELY \$6,050,000 GENERAL OBLIGATION LIMITED TAX SCHOOL BONDS**

Gates moved, seconded by Spatz, that the Board of Education of Oak Park District 97, approve the Resolution providing for the issue of approximately \$6,050,000 General Obligation Limited Tax School Bonds, Series 2016, for the purpose of increasing the District’s Working Cash Fund, providing for the levy of a direct annual tax to pay the principal and interest on said bonds, and authorizing the sale of said bonds to the purchaser thereof. Roll call vote.

Ayes: Gates, Spatz, Datta, O’Connor, Spurlock, Felton, and Brisben

Nays: None

Motion passed.

**SUPERINTENDENT’S UPDATE**

**SUPERINTENDENT’S  
UPDATE**

Dr. Kelley reported that she shared a written report in the board packet for this evening that includes a status update on her goals and shares a few highlights.

Interest was expressed in knowing if National Equity Project (NEP) would offer analysis or advise on being more equitable, making sure that all kids receive what they need. Dr. Kelley responded by explaining that NEP is contracted to run a professional development program for the staff. She suggested that the District could entertain the idea above if that is the will of the full Board. Interest was expressed in wondering if the District could do a better job of looking through that lens on a regular basis.

Interest was expressed in hearing that Emily Fenske will lead in the creation of a transformation dashboard. Administration was reminded that a committee was charged with a similar task and did a lot of fact finding. Member Datta offered to meet with Fenske to share the results from the committee work. Dr. Kelley offered to share the CAB-VAAT dates with member Datta for this purpose.

A list of the administrator’s activities, including costs was requested.

**BOARD ASSIGNMENTS**

**BOARD  
ASSIGNMENTS**

**STANDING BOARD COMMITTEE LIAISON REPORT FOLLOW UP  
FORC**

This committee will not be meeting again until January, 2017.

**CLAIM**

President Gates and Vice President Felton will be meeting with Rick Boultinghouse and Therese Jurgus to finalize the committee charge.

**FAC**

President Gates and members Spurlock will attend the FAC meeting scheduled for December 8, 2016.

#### INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND LIAISON REPORT FOLLOW UP

It was reported that IGOV met last Saturday to recap the recent public assembly. It was noted that Oak Park is the only community in the State of Illinois whose governing bodies meet on a regular basis. During the last assembly, feedback was received suggesting that IGOV host a candidate's forum for all candidates seeking office. January 21 or 28, 2017 have been identified as possible dates for this two hour program. The meeting would focus on sharing information regarding finance and explaining the extent of the intergovernmental collaboration within the community. President Gates asked for support from the District 97 Board to move forward with this concept. Board members expressed interest.

#### CALENDAR COMMITTEE

The Calendar Committee will be meeting tomorrow. The committee is planning to share a draft 2018-2019 District calendar for consideration at the next Board meeting. A liaison report will be sent out in the near future.

#### BENEFITS COMMITTEE

It was reported that the health care costs are still tracking higher than expected. Laurie Campbell is monitoring them and reporting to the committee regularly.

#### CITIZEN'S COUNCIL

Vice President Felton will attend this meeting. It appears that the main focus of this group is the high school.

#### COG

It was reported that this group will be meeting tomorrow. Chris Jasculca will be attending this meeting in Dr. Kelley's absence.

#### REFERENDUM DISCUSSION

Members Brisben and Spatz reported along with Alicia Evans, Saad Bawany and Chris Jasculca.

The Board was brought up to speed regarding the status of the Referendum committee work, noting that familiarity with these materials will be necessary to continue the discussion during a special meeting scheduled on December 19, 2016.

The history of the process was reviewed and the Board was reminded that if no action is taken, the district will be running a negative fund balance by 2018. It was noted that PTELL and the surge in enrollment explains why the District is where it is today financially.

Hypothetical referendum sizings were shared. It was noted that administration has reviewed the current finances and identified items that can be cut or limited. They indicated that to maintain the current educational opportunities, the District would need to receive about a \$3,000,000 reallocation. Three scenarios were shared for consideration along with their pros and cons and will be revisited during the December 19, 2016 special meeting. It was noted that if the District made all of the identified reductions, additional reductions and none of the investments, it would only allow the District to function for two additional years.

The capital expenditure needs were discussed, noting that even the non-mandated maintenance (boilers, roofs, etc.) is necessary. A second referendum was suggested for this purpose. It was noted that the last time the District ran a CapEx referendum was in 1999.

The Board was asked to send any questions they might have to member Brisben and to come to the December 19, 2016 special meeting with an opinion on the sizing of the referendum.

The referendum committee members were acknowledged and members Brisben and Spatz were thanked for their leadership and hard work.

#### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT DISCUSSION

President Gates and member Spurlock recently suggested the creation of a fourth standing Board committee to focus on communications. A draft charge was reviewed and the need to identify the number of committee members was still outstanding. After a brief discussion, the Board agreed to seven members as that number appears to work well with the other committees. The next step will be to prepare a description of the potential candidates noting the need for them to be professionals and have expertise in this field. President Gates requested that the previous descriptors be sent to member Spurlock and himself. This item will be added to the December 20, 2016 Board agenda for action and the positions will be posted after winter break.

## PARKING LOT AND LONG-TERM CALENDAR

The next steps for Board approval on the recommended Parking Lot and Long-Term Calendar protocols were discussed and it was agreed that president Gates will share an update as information only for review by the Board.

## AGENDA REVISION CONSIDERATION

The possibility of reporting Standing Board Committee Reports and Intergovernmental Liaison Reports by alternating each topic between meetings was tabled until a future meeting. It was noted that those two areas of the agenda this evening only took about five minutes total.

## SUPERINTENDENT'S EVALUATION

Members of the Superintendent's Evaluation team (members Spurlock and O'Connor) met with Dr. Kelley last week. It was noted that the Superintendent's report each week will include updates on her goals. The team reported that the complete rubric will not be used this year, instead, Spurlock and O'Connor will work with Dr. Kelley to identify the ones that best align with her goals for this year. Dr. Kelley shared that the creator of the rubric might be available to offer some training on the tool during the next executive session. Additionally, the team will be reviewing alternative rubrics for the future.

It was suggested that the evaluation process be completed in late April in order to complete the process prior to seating a new Board.

## ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

### DEPOSITORY AND SIGNATORIES

Evans reported that the Board has never approved accounts and signatories in the past, but she recommended that they take action on these items moving forward. She noted some of the accounts needed to be closed and reopened with new numbers due to fraudulent activity. This item will return to the Board for action on December 20, 2016.

It was suggested that the Collaboration IGA account be changed to have two signers, noting that it currently only has one.

### ILLINOIS ENERGY CONSORTIUM AGREEMENT

Evans noted that the 2008 agreement with the Illinois Energy Consortium was not approved by the Board; however she recommended that the Board take action on this item moving forward. This item will return to the Board for action on December 20, 2016.

### TRI-DISTRICT CONSORTIUM

Michael Arensdorff came to the table and recommended that the District partner with District 200 and District 90 for their technology needs, noting the benefit of shared resources, collaboration between the three districts, etc. He shared that this would be covered under eRate for now. This item will return to the Board for action on December 20, 2016.

### DONATION – OAK PARK EDUCATION FOUNDATION

Evans reported that the Oak Park Education Foundation (OPEF) expressed interest in an outdoor mural to commemorate Gwendoline Brooks' birthday. She reported that discussion has occurred to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to participate in the project. There will be no cost to the district. This item will return to the Board for action on December 20, 2016.

It was pointed out that the new administration building has some white space that could be considered as a canvas at a later time.

## CONCLUDING ITEMS

### BOARD REMARKS

It was reported that Bob George from Chapin Hall and Carolyn Newberry Schwartz from the Collaboration for Early Childhood present to the Illinois Early Learning Council Data Research and Evaluation Committee on December 1, 2016 and it was well received. The Collaboration is getting State wide recognition and awareness.

The Evidence Based Model was presented by Mike Jacobs and Ralph Martire to the Governor's Commission on Funding on December 1, 2016. Member Spatz will attend a meeting on December 9, 2016 with Kimberly Lightford's stakeholder group on school funding. He noted that the Evidence Based Model is moving forward, noting changes could still be made to the plan.

ADMINISTRATIVE  
ITEMS

CONCLUDING  
ITEMS

**BOARD REMARKS (Continued)**

Member Brisben attended the Triple I conference workshop on referendums and will be sharing the materials with the Board.

Member Felton attended a meeting hosted by Kimberly Lightford yesterday on the Every Student Succeeds Act. Felton offered to share information from that meeting with anyone interested.

Member Datta noted that since Dr. Kelley joined the district, there has been a lot of effort dedicated to reaching out to the community, and it was noted that she found this evening’s input valuable.

President Gates attended the Triple I conference workshop on Finance (with member Brisben) where he shared information on the District 97 transformational OPTA contract.

It was shared that during the IGOV assembly, it was reported that the State is underfunding public education and those in attendance were surprised that the Senators were surprised with this news as well.

Member O’Connor shared that he enjoyed the concert held last night.

Member O’Connor wondered if the District can get the money it would take to make the Title I tutors whole for the year, and the amount of money it would cost to expend the Power for Partnership program across the district. Administration was asked to respond to these questions along with the questions shared during public comment.

**BOARD RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENTS**

It was agreed that administration will respond to the 20 public comments shared this evening.

**BOARD MEETING AGENDA FOR FUTURE MEETINGS**

The draft agenda for the December 20, 2016 Board meeting was reviewed and modifications were recommended.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Spatz moved, seconded by O’Connor, that the Board of Education move into Executive Session at 11:11 p.m. to discuss (Appointment, Employment, Compensation, Discipline, Performance, or Dismissal of Specific Employees or Legal Counsel for the district 5 ILCS 120/2(C)(1)). Roll call vote.

Ayes: Spatz, O’Connor, Felton, Brisben, Datta, Spurlock, and Gates

Nays: None

Motion passed.

**OPEN SESSION**

**OPEN SESSION**

Datta moved, seconded by O’Connor, that the Board of Education move into Open Session at 12:09 a.m. All members of the Board were in agreement.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to conduct, President Gates declared the meeting adjourned at 12:09 a.m.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Board President

\_\_\_\_\_  
Board Secretary