

**Official Minutes of the
Oak Park Board of Education District 97,
970 Madison Street, Oak Park, Cook County, Illinois
Meeting – May 22, 2012**

This meeting was held at the Julian Middle School located at 416 S. Ridgeland.

President Barber called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

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

ROLL CALL

Absent: None

Also Present: Superintendent Dr. Al Roberts, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations Therese O'Neill, Director of Human Resources Trish Carlson, Director of Policy, Planning and Communications Chris Jasculca, Director of Special Education Mike Padavic, and Board Secretary Sheryl Marinier

EXECUTIVE
SESSION

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Felton moved, seconded by O'Connor, that the Board of Education move into executive session at 6:02 p.m. Roll call vote.

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Motion passed.

OPEN SESSION

OPEN SESSION

Traczyk moved, seconded by Gates, that the Board of Education move into open session at 6:57 p.m. All members of the Board were in agreement.

2.2.2 Appointment of Mann School Principal

APPOINTMENT
OF MANN
SCHOOL
PRINCIPAL

Sack moved, seconded by Gates, that the Board of Education, District 97, approve the appointment of Sam LeDeaux as the Mann School Principal, effective July 1, 2012 at a salary of \$100,000. Roll call vote.

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

Nays: None

Motion passed.

Dr. Roberts acknowledged the Mann Principal interview team. He explained that as an assistant principal, LeDeaux was identified as supportive, visible and a great leader. LeDeaux thanked the Board, and promised to make the most of this opportunity.

SPECIAL REPORTS**LIBRARY BOARD – GOALS THAT BENEFIT THE SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Matthew Froth and Deardra Brennan came to the table. They shared the background on programs offered by the library that are geared toward the elementary/middle school children. They explained that the library is looking for educational focuses that would compliment, not duplicate, what is already being offered by the school district.

Board members acknowledged the need for early literacy interventions, and noted that the Collaboration for Early Childhood has made this their focus. Interventions for early math and digital literacy were identified as areas where the library might consider support. Communication between the library and the school media centers was recommended to identify needs and not duplicate offerings. Homework support and a reading competition were suggested. The use of the Lexil scores at the library was suggested as a way to help children find appropriate reading materials. The ability for students to apply for a library card during the school registration process was suggested.

It was noted that in an effort to encourage summer reading, the school district will be giving out book marks during the Day in Our Village event.

President Barber acknowledged the library as a partner and suggested that the Board considering ways that the partnership could be identified in the Board goals for next year.

Dr. Roberts noted that the work the library is doing on the digital inclusion project is critical in the community. He shared that he will continue to work with the library on this project.

OAK PARK RIVER FOREST COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Sophia Lloyd was invited to the table. She explained the purpose of the 50 year old foundation, and identified its makeup. Lloyd introduced the Community Works initiative. This sub-committee consists of key community leaders, and is focused on three priorities; early childhood, childhood and pre-adolescence, and adolescence. The foundation offers grants for projects within the community that support the continuum of the child's growth, not just academic, but emotional, at home and at school. Lloyd reported that the foundation's advisory board identified District 97 as a strategic partner and will be asking the district to submit a grant proposal which could support the district with multi-year funding.

Lloyd noted the Community Score Card, and explained that it will look at the quality of life indicators. She stressed the importance of the district's participation in this initiative.

SCIENCE PRESENTATION

Lisa Schwartz, Phyllis Frick and Jason Morrell came to the table to explain the benefits of the Middle School Science Curriculum. They explained how the program offers the exact same experience to each child, and noted its importance. They shared ISAT data on the recent year's tests that demonstrated that the curriculum is teaching the children at a steady rate.

It was reported that 2012 is the first full year of implementation, with eighth grade teacher just finishing the curriculum for the first time. Implementation was difficult in the beginning, due to teacher concerns on how to teach the materials, and the need for training. It was shared that now, staff enjoys teaching the materials.

Frick reported that she would like to see more articulation between the middle schools and elementary, ensuring that all the necessary concepts are being taught. Additionally, teachers are just beginning to review alignment with the common core. Frick explained that the textbook is a guide and would not need to be replaced in order to keep the curriculum aligned. She explained that the district typically uses curriculum for six years before it is reviewed. That puts the middle school science curriculum at the midway point. She did not see any reason to adjust the curriculum or make any major course correction at this time.

Schwartz shared that state standards are just being shared with the school districts. Although the alignment of the common core with inquiry based learning is important, a timeline could not be shared at this time. Dr. Roberts shared that if the district is truly inquiry based, children will master the materials regardless of the content. He reminded the Board that the curriculum is not the textbook. Teachers must use their creativity. Additionally, he noted that there seems to be a decrease in the number of children who struggle.

Board suggestions and comments included compliments on the use of data. Interest was expressed in knowing the use and frequency of technology in the curriculum. Interest was expressed in hearing how the district knows that it is preparing the children for high school and understanding the plan for communication with parents.

PUBLIC
COMMENT

PUBLIC COMMENT

Katherine Liebl, an Oak Park parent, expressed her concern about teacher aides being RIFed. She noted the importance for the social and emotional needs of the children, and expressed concern for the lack of transparency by the Board. Liebl met with Mike Padavic and Chris Jasculca and was dissatisfied with their response. She asked the Board to explain why so many teacher aides and Title I positions are being eliminated and to identify which classrooms will be affected. Additionally, Liebl asked how many call backs should the teachers expect? How will the cross category classrooms be affected by the cuts? How is the district justified eliminating teacher assistants in the PKP program? She explained that her children are adopted and attachment is important. She noted that the children have special attachments with the assistants. In

PUBLIC COMMENT (Continued)

closing, Liebl asked how and what is the district doing to retain the highly qualified staff?

Kelly Simkauski, an Oak Park parent, agreed with the statement from Liebl and shared that she believes that removing aides from the special education classrooms would be a drastic mistake.

Cate Reedling, a Beye, Whittier and Longfellow parent, thanked the Board for the environment in Oak Park schools and shared that it lives up to her expectations. She also acknowledged the early childhood program (PKP) at Whittier. She explained that in the PKP program, it may look like a lot of adults in the room, however, they are providing required needs to each of the children. The aides are not superfluous at all. She asked for a better understanding as to why the aides are being removed. Reedling volunteers frequently, and sees how important the positions are. She reminded the Board of the importance of consistency in the program.

Jodie Schroeder, an Oak Park resident and a district teacher's assistant, shared the need for teacher assistants in the classroom. She noted that there are times in the day when a second set of hands are important and helpful. She identified math, Slant and Dibels as areas that need extra support.

Barbara Metric, an Oak Park parent and member of the Irving Schoolyard project, addressed the Board. She reported that the team has a master plan, working budget and solid community support. She acknowledged that the district has demonstrated its concern for safety. She requested information on incidents and head injuries be shared with the committee.

Claudette Bravo, an Oak Park parent and member of the Irving Schoolyard Project reported that the team was astounded to see that Irving accident numbers exceeded those from the other schools combined. Therefore, the committee can no longer pursue the project in the same patient manner.

Laura Crawford, an Oak Park parent and Irving School PTO co-president, explained that most injuries occur on blacktop. She reminded the Board that Irving only has blacktop play areas. She asked the Board to continue to build strong and creative partnerships with the Park District and all other appropriate taxing bodies, to use the committee's master plan as a basis for design, and to start construction work by the summer of 2013, as Irving is the highest priority safety concern in the district.

ACTION ITEMS**2.1.1 Approval of Minutes of May 8, 2012**

Traczyk moved, seconded by Spatz, that the Board of Education, District 97, accept the minutes from the May 8, 2012 meeting with revisions. Roll call vote.

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

Nays: None

Motion passed.

2.2.1 Approval of Consent Agenda

President Barber read the items on the consent agenda. Gates moved, seconded by Sacks, that the following items be approved on the consent agenda.

2.3.1 Bill Lists and Related Reports

2.2.1 Personnel Action as presented are revised

Roll call vote.

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

Nays: None

Motion passed.

2.2.3 Approval of the Staffing Plan

Gates moved, seconded by O'Connor, that the Board of Education, District 97, approve the 2012-13 staffing plan as presented to the Board on May 8, 2012. Roll call vote.

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

Nays: None

Motion passed.

2.4.1 Approval of Asbestos Abatement

O'Connor moved, seconded by Sacks, that the Board of Education, District 97, award a contract to AMW Environmental in the total amount of \$63,900 for the asbestos abatement work for the summer 2012 Capital Project work at Mann and Whittier Schools and repair work at Lincoln School as outlined in the memorandum to the superintendent dated May 22, 2012. Roll call vote.

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

Nays: None

Motion passed.

2.4.2 Acceptance of 10-Year Life/Safety Survey

Traczyk moved, seconded by Spatz, that the Board of Education, District 97, approve the 10-Year Life/Safety Surveys for Brooks and Julian Middle Schools, and authorize the District's architect, DLA Architect, to submit a report to the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), as delineated in the memorandum to the superintendent dated May 8, 2012. Roll call vote.

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

Nays: None

Motion passed.

2.4.3 Approval of Playground Upgrade Bid

Sacks moved, seconded by O'Connor, that the Board of Education, District 97, award the playground update work for the summer of 2012 at Beye, Holmes and Longfellow Schools to George's Landscaping, Inc., the second lowest responsible bidder, in the total base bid amount of \$1,081,675.15, and as outlined in the memorandum to the superintendent dated May 22, 2012.

O'Neill shared that the memorandum delineated everything clearly. She recognized the three principals who mobilized their staffs, and communities. She acknowledged Altmanu on expediting the conceptualized plans, and the PTOs from the three schools for their support. O'Neill thanked the Board of Education for coordinating a committee in the fall of 2010 to address the schoolyard needs, supporting the process and identifying funding. Dr. Roberts recognized O'Neill for shepherding the process from beginning to end.

O'Neill reported that Altmanu was the second lowest bidder. She explained that the lowest bidder had questionable solvency and only recently began playground construction. Additionally, the lowest bidder is not licensed as an installer of playground equipment.

The Facilities Committee (FAC) was acknowledged for their work on this project, as was Rob Kelly, a member of the Facilities Committee who helped with the design. It was noted that Kelly passed away recently.

A brief discussion took place regarding rubberized surfaces. O'Neill noted that the amended amount of the project is \$1,124,346.05.

Roll call vote.

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

Nays: Traczyk

Absent: None

Motion passed.

2.4.4 Approval of the Oak Park Youth Township Intergovernmental Agreement

Gates moved, seconded by Felton, that the Board of Education, District 97, approve the intergovernmental agreement for the Youth Interventionist program and to participate in the funding of the program for FY 2012-13 and FY 2013-14 at a maximum estimated amount as follows: FY 2012-13 - \$27,992.00 and FY 2013-14 - \$28,480.00. Roll call vote.

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

2.4.5 Uphold/Overtake Suspension of Student 20120408

O'Connor moved, seconded by Sacks that the Board of Education, District 97, uphold the suspension of student 20120408. Roll call vote.

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

2.4.6 Approval of Overnight Field Trip – Julian to Odyssey of the Mind

Felton moved, seconded by Traczyk, that the Board of Education, District 97, approve an out of state field trip to Ames, Iowa on May 23-27, 2012 for the Odyssey of the Mind competition. Roll call vote.

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

TOPIC REPORTS

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APPOINTMENT OF DISTRICT TREASURER

President Barber reported that the Board must annually appoint a district treasurer. He reported that Therese O'Neill has been acting in this capacity, but the Board is not required to appoint O'Neill just because she is the head of the district's financial department. Barber noted that it is, however, a benefit having O'Neill in both roles.

CUSTODIAL SUPPLY BID

O'Neill reported that the annual custodial supply bid will come to the Board for approval on June 12, 2012. The bid will be for \$96,180, which is \$28,000 less than what the district was spending three years ago.

O'Neill and Norm Lane were acknowledged for their efforts in preparing separate bids. It was noted that this process requires extra work on their part, but saved the district \$56,000 to date.

APPROVAL OF IMRF RESOLUTION

O'Neill reported that this is a laundry item, comparable to TRS earnings. An audit was conducted, and it was noted that the district had not adopted a resolution that supported the IMRF fund. A resolution will be brought to the Board for approval on June 12, 2012.

CLAIM UPDATE

Member Gates thanked member Spatz and Carolyn Newberry Schwartz for their support of the KIDS initiative. A letter was sent to the state detailing why Oak Park would be a good site for a pilot program.

Ray Johnson and Maradith Schott from the CLAIM committee came to the table. They reported that the committee will be presenting three resolutions to the Illinois Association of School Boards that focus on state budgeting. The resolutions were read to the Board. The Board was asked to review them and make changes. They noted that the deadline to submit the resolutions is June 20, 2012. The Board agreed to approve the resolutions at their next meeting.

The Board responded positively to the resolutions. It was noted that the CLAIM committee is an example of what makes Oak Park unique. It was reported that the committee is planning a lobbying day in Springfield and the resolutions become a primary lobbying tool.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

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REPORT

Dr. Roberts shared that it is a pleasure to be part of the Community Leadership Program. He finds the information that he gets from this organization to be helpful. He noted that from a demographic view point, this year, the newborn Caucasian babies were outnumbered by other races for the first time in history. The social point has changed since 20 years ago. How we deal with the political and social side of these changes presents challenges to the district.

Dr. Roberts shared his pride for the students and community this evening for the many awards received. He expressed his gratitude to the art, athletic and academic successes that were recognized. He reported that the eighth graders at Julian met with Governor Quinn today. Question asked of him by the students were complex, and deeply rooted. The Governor commented on how impressed he was with the children.

Duane Meighan is preparing an update on the implementation of the Fast ForWord program. Preliminary results indicate that the average gain in reading after completing the nine week program is a year.

The district is looking into technology as the great equalizer, noting the need to be vigilant on equity and excellence. A tracking tool will be created for this purpose.

Dr. Roberts noted that another fine hire was approved this evening. The quest for assistant principals will begin in the near future.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT (Continued)

Administration is working with districts 90 and 200 to create a better coordination when moving students to the high school.

Longfellow School was acknowledged by PBIS as an exemplary school in that program.

The district is looking at PKP programs and how they fit into the premise with the Collaboration for Early Childhood.

BOARD CONCERNS

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It was noted that the Board calendar requires two meetings in September. It was recommended that the October 3, 2012 meeting be changed to September 27, 2012. The Board will approve the revised calendar during the June 12, 2012 meeting.

It was noted that IGOV will need ten minutes on the June 12, 2012 meeting agenda.

It was noted that the awards ceremony was wonderful. Everyone was encouraged to double their efforts to make recognition a year long process and to continually look for ways to recognize staff and students at the Board level.

Member Sacks updated the Board on PING. She reported that the organization supplies musical instruments to children who cannot afford them, mentors, parent support and funding for the summer music camp. The organization has been asked to other school districts to provide an outline on how to create a similar program.

The plans for the Day is Our Village are all set. A brochure will be distributed; book marks promoting summer reading will be available for children to color; logs will be available for kids to sign in by school, with a contest to see which school has the highest attendance at the event. Board members will come to the winning school to read in classes, work in the office, greet buses and assist in classrooms. School personalized pencils will also be given away. It was noted that the taxing bodies will participate in a dunk tank in the future.

Concern was expressed about the implementation of the science program and the need to get the right teachers into the program. Concern was also expressed regarding the science curriculum and the need for additional resources for professional development.

It was reported that Rob Kelly passed away last week. A moment of silence was held in recognition of his support for the district.

A signing ceremony will be held on June 1 for the Youth Interventionist Intergovernmental Agreement. The Board was asked to let the secretary know if they wish to attend.

It was reported that Julian Middle School received its second Blue Ribbon award for PE programs. There are only 28 schools in Illinois receiving this award.

BOARD RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENT

Mike Padavic explained that he met with some of the parents regarding the RIF process, and explained the process to them. He noted that they believed that the district should keep the best people in each position. Padavic explained that the bottom line is, if the student needs services, they will get the services. He also noted that research is clear; part of the school's responsibility is to help the children become independent.

President Barber suggested that parents review the Teacher Assistant contract which is posted online. He shared that he participated in the contract negotiations for the last Teacher Assistant contract. He has a great appreciation for their role, but the Board cannot discuss their employment in public.

It was reported that a Pre-Kindergarten Program (PKP) update will be presented to the Board in the near future.

In response to the Irving Schoolyard parents, interest was expressed in having the district review the incident data for this year and last year. Concern was expressed on the staging of the schoolyard repairs. It was noted that the blacktop surface has always been a concern.

It was reported that the Board has been working closely with the Irving schoolyard committee for years. It was noted that Irving is part of the last phase in because of a mutual agreement to help raise more funds.

ADJOURNMENT

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to conduct, President Barber declared the meeting adjourned at 10:28 p.m.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board will be held on Tuesday, June 12, 2012 beginning at 7 p.m. at 970 Madison Street, Oak Park.

Board President

Board Secretary

Attachment
Science PowerPoint