



Ontario School District 8C
Regular Session of the Board of Directors
November 17th 2025 at 5:00 PM at the Ontario School District Board Room

This meeting was broadcasted via Zoom to the public, the Board of Directors met in person at the Ontario School District Boardroom, with an audience of about 40

Board Members Present:

Abby Apodaca
Mike Blackaby
Jenna Mejia
Lisa Reeser
Bret Uptmor

Administrators in Attendance:

Superintendent Nicole Albisu
Director of Nutrition Pam Suyematsu
Director of Personnel Eric Norton
Director of Public Relations and Communications Taryn Smith
Director of Student Services Melissa Williams
Director of Federal Programs Anabel Ortiz-Chavolla
Director of Facilities Bob Bennett
Director of Technology Kenneth Monson
Director of Finance Devin Collins
Director of District Improvement Initiatives & Grants Jodi Elizondo
Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent/Board Andrea Salazar

Call to Order/Welcome to Visitors

Chair Uptmor begins the meeting and welcomes everyone in the room and on Zoom, then leads the room in the flag salute.

Agenda Change

Chair Uptmor states that we will need to make one agenda change, which will be to add the Oregon School Board Association (OSBA) Election as a business item. The Board will need to formally vote on the OSBA election for Eastern Governance. Vice-Chair Apodaca makes a motion to add the OSBA Election to the agenda, as business item number six. Director Mejia seconds the motion.

Chair Uptmor votes yes.
Vice-Chair Apodaca votes yes.
Director Blackaby votes yes.
Director Mejia votes yes.
Director Reeser votes yes.

Consent Items



Director Mejia makes a motion to approve the consent items, Director Reeser seconds the motion.

Chair Uptmor votes yes.

Vice-Chair Apodaca votes yes.

Director Blackaby votes yes.

Director Mejia votes yes.

Director Reeser votes yes.

OMS Student Report – Aylin Ayala

OMS Student Aylin Ayala shares some of the updates going on at Ontario Middle School. Latinos in Action students are providing arts and crafts for children, and are collecting donations for the district food pantry. Spirit Week is going great at OMS, but there hasn't been too much going on since the last Board Meeting.

OHS Student Report – Dana Hernandez

The ASB Secretary Peyton Erlebach is here today to present instead of Dana Hernandez. The ASB is collecting cans for Help to Them to Hope. The senior class had a pumpkin painting event, the junior class have been working on fun events for Prom. The sophomore class had a pumpkin hunt event, and are working on a class-wide assembly. For the freshman class they finished up their door decorating contest, it has been a fun time at OHS.

November Student Recognition – Responsibility

Principal at Ontario High School Ken Martinez honors Mercedes Cuevas-Cuna, “Mercedes consistently demonstrates a strong sense of responsibility and initiative. Even in advisory, she is often the first to volunteer and take on tasks when others are hesitant. Her willingness to step up and ensure things get done sets a positive example for her peers and contributes to a supportive classroom environment.”

Teacher at Ontario High School Ms. Hochstrat honors Mercedes Mireles, “Mercedez demonstrates a high level of responsibility through academic commitment, athletic discipline, and personal integrity. She balances rigorous coursework while she is in leadership, FHLA, and Sources of Strength. She is a varsity soccer, basketball, and softball player. These require strong time management, teamwork, and perseverance. Her dedication to both her academics and athletics shows a consistent work ethic and the ability to perform under pressure.”

Teacher at May Roberts Primary Ms. Ingalls honors Paige Turner, Paige Turner is a very responsible student in my class. She is always on task and helps her friends too, if needed. She takes good care of her supplies and helps keep the room straightened up. Paige listens when the teacher is talking and follows directions quickly and quietly. Mrs. Ingalls.”

Principal at May Roberts Primary Mr. Capps honors Milo Paulsen, “Milo demonstrates responsibility throughout his school day. He keeps his supplies tidy, comes to every lesson prepared to learn, and is a great example to his classmates. Working hard every day, he truly leads by example. In addition, Milo can always be trusted to run errands for his teacher and to make the right choices. Mrs. Davis.”

Principal for Alameda Intermediate Mrs. Buchholz honors Brady Sweet, “Brady is an amazing, hardworking, and strong leader inside and outside of the classroom. Brady is always positive and trying to help others out in need. Thank you for being an incredible and spectacular Alameda Intermediate student.”



Teacher at Alameda Intermediate Ms. Contreras honors Abby Soto-Martinez, “Abby is a hard worker that never gives up! She is always trying her best and fighting through hard things. She is responsible all the time, and is a very amazing young lady. I can count on her to do her best, and help her teacher do her best! I would love to have 25 students as responsible as Abby! I'm proud to have her in my classroom!”

Principal at Aiken Elementary Mrs. Huddleston honors Kasey Carrejo, “It is my pleasure to celebrate the hard work and character of one of my students-Kasey Carrejo. Kasey, you have consistently shown what it means to be a responsible member of our classroom community. You always are ready to learn and willing to help any friend who needs a little extra help. I've seen you complete tasks with care and dedication. You are always someone I can count on, whether it's for a class job, group project, or working independently- I know you will get the job done with care and effort. You are an amazing role model and inspiring friend in our classroom. Keep up the fantastic work! Mrs. Chambers, 2nd Grade Teacher.”

Principal at Aiken Elementary Mrs. Huddleston honors Madelynn Bunn, “We are so proud to honor this third-grade student for their outstanding Responsibility! This student consistently shows what it means to be dependable, from always turning in their homework on time to remembering to return classroom equipment and playing fair with their classmates during activities. In the classroom, they set a wonderful example by actively listening, participating in discussions, and always trying their very best. This dedication to doing the highest quality work possible, no matter the task, truly shines through in everything they do. Congratulations Madelynn Bunn! Mrs. Rost, 3rd Grade Teacher.”

Teacher at Ontario Middle School Mr. Buck honors Daryl Harris, “Daryl is the 6th grade nominee for Responsibility. Daryl holds himself and others accountable for school expectations and routines. He is consistently one of the first students to volunteer to help in the classroom or with other students. Daryl will help around the classroom without being asked, and always comes in with a positive attitude. He is a pleasure to be around and demonstrates all the attributes of a responsible citizen.”

Associate Principal Ontario Middle School Mrs. Judson honors Tannon White, “It is a pleasure to nominate Tannon White for this month's Tiger Award for Responsibility. Tannon is a kind, respectful and responsible student who can always be counted on to do the right thing. He completes his work on time, follows directions, and helps create a positive classroom environment. Tannon greets everyone with a smile and gives his best effort every day. His dependability and great attitude made him a wonderful role model. Great job, Tannon!”

Associate Principal Ontario Middle School Mrs. Judson honors Tahlia Kokkeler, “Tahlia is an exemplary student with a deep sense of responsibility, especially for her own education. She comes to class with a positive attitude, consistently goes above and beyond basic expectations, and is known for her helpfulness and kindness. Tahlia demonstrates remarkable self-awareness, always asking questions to ensure success. She takes full ownership of challenging material, puts in maximum effort, and is a force to be reckoned with in the band room.

Board Bits

Director Reeser states she attended the OSBA training at the Malheur ESD, it was a lot of great information. Also Director Reeser attended the Trunk or Treat at OHS, and lastly attended the OSBA conference in Portland. The conference in Portland was great, and it had a variety of people from different districts in attendance. There was a lot of communication on what's working great for school boards and what isn't working for them. Overall, it was great to talk to different school board members, and there was so much support available, Director Reeser states. Vice-Chair Apodaca states she also attended the OSBA training at the Malheur ESD, and attended some awards assemblies at the schools. Vice-Chair Apodaca states that she also attended the OSBA conference in Portland, and there was a lot of great information there. There was an Eastern Oregon Group at the conference, it was great to note how Ontario excels in utilizing resources.



Director Blackaby states the OSBA training at the Malheur ESD was great, and he also got to speak with some OHS alumni about their careers after OHS. Chair Uptmor states he also attended both OSBA conferences, and throughout those trainings, it was great to see Ontario shine bright in its work. We also have a lot of good partners who are willing to help us on the Eastern Oregon side. Chair Uptmor states that policy BDDDB/BDDC helps guide the Board in adding items to the agenda. There is also a Bonds and Ballots Conference coming up in February; maybe that could be something to add to the agenda at the next meeting.

Finance Report – Devin Collins

Director of Finance Devin Collins states that he would like to talk about the current bond we have and possible future bonds. The current bond for the Ontario School District is 18.5 million, and it started in 2010 and ends in 2027. The district has reached out to the Piper Sandler, which is an agency that works with getting bonds passed. There is a bond available for us to do in 2026 and 2027, and we are high up on the list for a bond, Director of Finance Devin Collins states. There is a potential to go for a bond, and there is a match available as well. There are a lot of facilities that need to be updated, and a lot of requirements that schools need for safety. Over time, this bond could help our district with school improvements a tremendous amount. Director of Finance Devin Collins shares with the Board some predictions of what the bond would do for the district, and how community members would pay for it over time. Superintendent Albisu states that if the Board does want to look at going for a bond in 2027, we would have to file the paperwork by December 2026. The Board and the Superintendent discuss how OSD is in a better position than other Oregon districts during these budget changes. This bond will help our building reserve for the years to come.

November Student Recognition – Responsibility

During the November Student of the Month recognition, one student at OMS was not able to make it during that time. Chair Uptmor asks for OMS administration honor the last OMS student. Associate Principal at Ontario Middle School Melissa Judson honors Tahlia Kokkeler, “Tahlia is an exemplary student with a deep sense of responsibility, especially for her own education. She comes to class with a positive attitude, consistently goes above and beyond basic expectations, and is known for her helpfulness and kindness. Tahlia demonstrates remarkable self-awareness, always asking questions to ensure success. She takes full ownership of challenging material, puts in maximum effort, and is a force to be reckoned with in the band room.”

Superintendent Report – Nikki Albisu

Superintendent Albisu states that some of the reports for the financial forecast have been released, but the data is still being reviewed. Overall, the guidance is showing that some of the grants, like SIA and Measure 98, are not as affected. Director of Finance Devin Collins states that a lot of grants were cut, but none that we qualify for and never have. There is one grant we are keeping our eye on, but we are still doing okay, Director of Finance Devin Collins states. Superintendent Albisu states that we still have reserves available, but we want to be cautious where we spend money. Director Reeser asks if the district has a ‘Plan A’ and a ‘Plan B’ of some sort in place, just in case. Some districts at the OSBA conference talked about their plans, and how they are on their ‘Plan B’, trying to navigate through it with budget changes. Superintendent Albisu states we are looking into the fine details, so we don’t get a surprise in funding in May. The district is adjusting as the school year progresses, but we don’t want to have to get to a point where we let go of people. At this moment, we are not hiring for any positions as they become available, but adjusting what we can do without that role filled, Superintendent Albisu states. Chair Uptmor asks if information comes back that shows we are not in that deep of a bind funding-wise, are we



going to back to a 'normal' year? Superintendent Albisu states she has not had those discussions yet, but we are going to do an overall adjustment on where we can afford to make changes. There is a lot of review, the enrollment drop and funding overall is going to change so we will adjust as needed.

Public Comment

Chair Uptmor reads the following statement: "To ensure that the scheduled business of the Board is conducted in a timely manner pursuant to the published agenda, each person must limit his or her comments to three minutes. The board asks that they be provided with a written copy of any testimony given. The public may not use videos or PowerPoint presentations to accompany their testimony. Speakers may offer objective criticism of district operations and programs but the Board will not hear complaints concerning specific district personnel. Speakers are not permitted to make comments or personal attacks on any district employee, individual students, board members, other testifiers, or members of the public. Although the Board welcomes public comments, it does not respond to citizens' concerns at its meetings. However, at the citizen's request and the Board's direction, the Superintendent, or a designee, will respond in a timely manner."

Teacher at Ontario Middle School Kirstin Wheeler is the only public comment for the November Board Meeting. Mrs. Wheeler discusses that through the state, OSA provided some grants that go to the food banks in Oregon. Also, we have the legacy award that is still in the planning stages. We hope to have submissions by February 1st, 2026.

Approval of the December Board Meeting Date

Chair Uptmor asks if the Board would like to have a December Board Meeting. If so, we would have to change the date since it falls during the holiday season. Superintendent Albisu states that there is nothing urgent going on in December that we would need a December Board Meeting. Director Mejia states that December is a crazy month, and is okay with skipping the meeting. Director Reeser agrees. Vice-Chair Apodaca states she is also to skip it, Director Blackaby states he may want a December Board Meeting. Vice-Chair Apodaca asks if it could be possible to have a work session in January, and Vice-Chair Apodaca makes a motion to remove the December Board Meeting, Director Blackaby seconds the motion.

Chair Uptmor votes yes.

Vice-Chair Apodaca votes yes.

Director Blackaby votes yes.

Director Mejia votes yes.

Director Reeser votes yes.

Second Reading of Policies, AC, JFCEB; Removal of Policy JHC; and First Reading of Policy EBBA

Director Blackaby makes a motion to approve the second readings of policies AC, and JFCEB and the removal of policy JHC, as well as the approve the first reading of policy EBBA. Director Mejia seconds the motion.

Chair Uptmor votes yes.

Vice-Chair Apodaca votes yes.

Director Blackaby votes yes.

Director Mejia votes yes.



Director Reeser votes yes.

OSBA Election

Director Mejia makes a motion that the Ontario School District Board vote for Bruce Kevan for the OSBA Legislative Policy Committee Position for position 01. Director Apodaca seconds the motion.

Chair Uptmor votes yes.

Vice-Chair Apodaca votes yes.

Director Blackaby votes yes.

Director Mejia votes yes.

Director Reeser votes yes.

Topics for Future Meetings

Superintendent Albisu states, hopefully, we will have the audit completed by then, so it will be on the January agenda. Director of Finance Devin Collins states that the audit firm states they are on track to complete the audit by January. Director Mejia asks if Director of District Improvement Initiatives & Grants Jodi Elizondo could present on the online school. There has been some feedback from the community about what is going with the online school. Director Blackaby asks if maybe something about the bond could be added. Chair Uptmor states we can have that discussion during the work session and get all those details in January 2026.

Adjourn

Director Mejia makes a motion to adjourn the meeting. Director Reeser seconds the motion.

Chair Uptmor votes yes.

Vice-Chair Apodaca votes yes.

Director Blackaby votes yes.

Director Mejia votes yes.

Director Reeser votes yes.

Meeting Ends at 6:24 PM

Chairman



Clerk