

Official Minutes of the  
Oak Park Board of Education District 97  
260 Madison Street, Oak Park  
May 14, 2024 Regular Meeting

This meeting was held in-person and virtually using Livestream. Board members met in person along with Administration.

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

Present: Kearney, Moore, Ross Dribin, Kim, Burns, Hurd Johnson Spurlock

Absent: None

Also Present: Superintendent Dr. Ushma Shah, Assistant Superintendents Dr. Luis De Leon & Patrick Robinson, Assistant Superintendent of Finance & Operations Dr. Sheila Johnson, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources & Equity Dr. Natacia Campbell Tominov, Chief Technology Officer Michael Arensdorff, Senior Director of Communications Amanda Siegfried, Senior Director of Data Analytics Anna Colaner, Senior Director Human Resources Dr. Christine Zelaya, and Lonya Boose Director/Board Secretary.

ROLL CALL

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Spurlock moved, seconded by Kearney that the Board move into executive session for the purpose of Appointment, Employment, Compensation, Discipline, Performance, or Dismissal of Specific Employees, Collective Negotiating and Litigation.5 ILCS 120/2(C)(1)(2)(11) at 6:04 p.m.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

**OPEN SESSION**

President Kearney motioned that the Board move into Open Session at 6:58 p.m. All present members of the Board were in agreement. The Board convened in Open Session at 7:04 p.m.

OPEN SESSION

**5. PUBLIC COMMENT**

**Stephanie Suerth and Debbie Tomalis**

The Oak Park Teachers Association represents 550 educators. 40% of our members are Oak Park residents; many of whom have children in District 97 schools. We have 275 early career educators who are seeking a foundation in their skills, and 235 teachers who have been here for ten or more years seeking to share their expertise. Our members have 423 masters' degrees, 127 are National Board-Certified Teachers and the equivalent. We support a diverse population of teachers, including black, Hispanic/Latinx, Asian and Pacific Islander, and teachers of the LGBTQIA+ community. We serve 5, 699 students who receive 504, IEP, speech services, MTSS services, OT/PT services, social work services, Multi-Lingual services with over 30 languages represented. The 550 educators comprising OPTA provide enriching programs and education in the arts, sports, PE, Adaptive PE and a multitude of languages in our classrooms every day.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The OPTA represents classroom teachers form early childhood, PKP through 8<sup>th</sup> grade, special education teachers and case managers, co-teachers, teacher librarians, media specialists, social workers,

psychologists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, speech-language pathologists, speech therapist, student success coaches, enrichment specialists, language arts/reading specialists, instructional coaches, curriculum coordinators, nurses, student support specialists, MTSS specialists, ULD coordinators, interventionists, new teacher mentor, art teachers, music, choir, band, orchestra teachers, world language teachers, bilingual/multilingual/immersion teachers, design/robotics teachers, instructional, resource, multi-needs teachers, multiage teachers, PE and adapted PE as well as health teachers.

We are the professionals in the classrooms and the hallways, in the lunch rooms and on the playgrounds and all throughout the Oak Park community. We could list all the responsibilities that our educators do for District 97 from teaching their classes, to after school clubs and weekend coaching, but we'd never be able to adequately list it all in the allotted time. We do it all for our students. And yet we are only human and we are tired.

Teacher morale and retention is low. We have 120 new OPTA members since 2021. That's 40 per year, close to 10% of our membership. OPTA wants to have an open dialogue with the Board and administration. We want to collaborate. Collaboration does not mean one group relinquishes power and authority to another. Collaboration means working together for student success. Shared decision making toward shared goals. Effective collaboration partnerships rely on mutual respect, transparency and trust to provide the psychological safety necessary for effective shared problem-solving.

These qualities have been lacking in District 97 for many years now. Many members do not feel same at school. Many do not feel respected. Many do not trust our administration. Many didn't even feel comfortable coming to speak before the board tonight. Fortunately, our members share with us, and so we will share with you just come of their statements form the last two weeks. They say:

*"This uncertainty does not set us up for successful beginning to the 2024-25 school year"*

*"It was all very nonspecific, the rationale for the moves, said we will hear soon, and that they're going to keep discussion moves for this district. No real info was shared"*

*"When will announcements be made regarding staffing? Will we really need to wait until the end of May to get updates?"*

*"I just don't understand. This seems absurd at this point. So confusing. We eliminate the MTSS roles and now suddenly bring them back? Along with a million other confusing things. Make it make sense because this math does not math."*

*"I'm hearing words like I need to update my resume almost daily. We're not only going to lose new teachers because they have nothing to lose and they have a front row seat to the complaints, but we're also going to lose more veteran teachers that we desperately need."*

*"Seems like we always get the short end of the stick."*

*"Teacher leadership is exceptionally important but not the expense of services for our students."*

*"The district is not being upfront."*

*"Kicking the can down the road isn't going to make change impactfully. Something has to give at our schools regarding systems and actual implementation of the behavior handbook."*

When these qualities are achieved in our district, our educators and our students will thrive. Our educators hold up this district. We are an integral part of it. We cannot continually ask more of our educators without taking duties away. We cannot continue to place more value on some than others. We cannot continue to function in and with a broken system where decisions are made for us and not with us. We believe it is the right of every student to have an excellent and equitable educational experience. How do we accomplish this without all of our OPTA educators?

OPTA nurtures the potential, provides high level learning, a sense of belonging, ensures all students graduate ready to succeed, sustains our great schools and does the work. Work with us.

#### Paul Packer

Good evening, My name is Paul Packer. I am a member of OPTA and I've been teaching at Irving school for 31 years, two years as a 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teacher, four years as a 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher and twenty-five years as a Gifted education teacher then differentiation resource teacher and current enrichment specialist. I and so many of my colleagues moved into this role thanks in part to the recognition of our talent as educators where principals, mine at the time was Dr. Felicia Starks Turner. Dr Turner and other principals in the district over time have recognized the importance of providing support and services to students who are quick learners and who can acquire skills and concepts quickly and need to be challenged and enriched over time. Our titles may have changed and through the vision of our last five superintendents and former/current principals, the program has expanded to include not only providing services to an identified population of students but also to providing enrichment opportunity through our critical thinking programs.

Enrichment specialists challenge and grow work with small groups of students within the classroom. In addition to being a resource for staff and parents when questions and concerns arise. I ask you to reread the district's own Equity policy particularly the implementation sections A and B which states among other things, District 97 shall provide every student with equitable access to high quality instruction culturally relevant curriculum, grade appropriate with high expectations. Existing policies, practices, procedures and programs are found to contribute to the inequities the district shall eliminate them in a transparent and timely manner. The portrait of an eighth-grade graduate states that it will serve as the district's new strategic plan and will articulate a collective vision of our community. It also states envisioning a racially inclusive design process that will tap the expertise of our staff, the experiences of our students and the hopes of or families. To choose which resources we keep and which we lose, this portrait will neither be inclusive nor will apply to all students in Oak Park. The portrait should not look different based on your address. In closing, I would just like to add that it is a bit ironic for the board to have a bullet point on their board protocols about no surprises at any time in the meetings, there should be protocol adopted to include all District 97 employees in honor of equity.

#### Leanne Scaro

I am here to advocate for the students of Longfellow and for myself to begin, I am unclear as to how the decision was made for Longfellow, Beye and Hatch schools to lose their Enrichment Specialists while five other schools retained theirs. In the message I received, it indicated that the district had to reduce non-student facing positions based on needs of individual schools. This put Principals in a very difficult position. Equity as emphasized in numerous staff development and District 97 means providing students with what they need which is not always the same. Longfellow has many students who need enrichment just as the other five schools.

While I appreciate the delay in making these cuts, I am concerned about the future resource inequities Longfellow students deserve the same access and resources. I have been part of this district for 28 years working under five different superintendents. Each has assessed and made changes but this time Enrichment Specialists and stakeholders were excluded from the process. I always support change and have seen how change evolves. In the past we were part of the discussion and wish to be part of the process and collaborate with you to continue moving District 97 forward. I must advocate for myself. For weeks there were rumors about position elimination, when I asked my principal, she had no answers. Our team leader contacted the administration. I followed the board meetings closely but heard only about the need for bold systematic transformation not specific position cuts. Why the secrecy, when the district had known for weeks, I thought all positions were being eliminated and was shocking to realize only three positions.

There is a communication gap between the district office and principals. I am relieved that the enrichment positions is safe for one more year, I remain concerned therefore I have two questions, Can stakeholders be included in the process and can there be a better way of communicating with staff whose positions are being eliminated, a clear communication plan for understanding the path forward would greatly help. I look forward to brighter days ahead.

#### Jim Hayward

My name is Jim Hayward, OPTA member speaking on behalf of the Mann OPTA. A lack of trust between teachers and staff, building admin and district-level admin has been an ongoing concern. The hiring of a new superintendent gave our staff hope that this would be an opportunity for growth and change. However, recent events have only continued to degrade the relationship between staff and admin. In your role as Superintendent, you have consistently promoted the partnership between us, but we have not felt like our input, as partners, has been heard, valued or used in the decision-making process. And yet, we are still here with a desire to mend this partnership, committed to the future of our district and our students.

Our question for the Board of Education and Dr. Shah is this; As policymakers of this district, what plan is in place and what additional steps are needed to remedy the hard done by a lack of transparent, two-way communication?

#### Corynne Romine

Good evening, I am a member of OPTA, as well as a member of the Oak Park community and a former D97 parent. I am proud to live and work in a district that cares about ensuring racial and educational equity enough to have a policy to address it. However, the policy was written in March before the COVID pandemic rocked everyone's world. In this policy, we were promised "ongoing professional development" including specific training on the use of the tools used to review practice through a racial equity lens.

Since this policy has been in effect, I have experienced a one-hour session in trauma informed care and voluntary PD on restorative practices. So, my question is, what tools is this administration planning? Additionally, I would like to know what specific data and research behind adding more non-student facing positions. How does this quantity of non-student facing positions fit into an overall equity plan? While I realize they have been put on hold for next year, I am still asking because a postponement is not a cancellation. Further, what is the role of the student-facing teachers in creating and implementing racial and educational equity? Also, equity means that everyone should be reading and comprehending fluently by 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. To the extent that is not happening, we need more interventionists, no less. I find it shameful that a school the size of Lincoln approximately 575 students, has only one Language Arts Specialist for

struggling students. Last, I would appreciate a response to my questions and I thank you for your careful consideration.

### Erin Fruth

My name is Erin Fruth, I am a parent of two children at Hatch and I am one of the leaders of a coordinated effort on behalf of over 500 community members who are concerned about our schools. Tonight, I will be reading a statement reflecting some of those concerns. I think it is important to give context to my words and actions. I want to be clear that I am not standing here tonight demanding anyone's resignation.

Emotions can be a powerful motivator, but I feel it must be paired with information. I have read the district and board policies, reviewed research, publicly available school data and sought clarification from educators. I have listened to the last 31 board meetings which makes me appreciate the board members who volunteer a significant portion of their time to our schools. If anyone feels that the concerns of our group are misinformed due to lack of public knowledge, I can confidently say this is because you have failed to provide adequate information.

I have been a nurse for 20 years in healthcare. Informed consent is critical, we must discuss both the benefits and the risks. As I watched the meetings, I saw many presentations from the administration, touting the benefits of a plan, but often leaving out what is being sacrificed in exchange. Going forward, I would ask the board further examine the issues brought forth tonight, particularly with those outside of the administration.

Group statement: Over the last few weeks, concern and dissatisfaction has swept through our community not just about the issues facing our schools today, but about the path that our leadership is laying before us. Together, hundreds of us from across the district with representatives from each of the ten schools have come together. We are a united front, a collective voice hopeful that today, you will hear us out. We've reached out through emails, we're connecting virtually and come of us are right here wearing red, standing in solidarity with our educators.

We've seen our classrooms grow increasingly crowded and watched as our resources have dwindled. No satisfactory plan to reverse this trend was offered at the March board meeting. Come April, we heard talks of reallocating support staff, some schools would gain, others would lose. These shifts seemed to finance new positions. It's deeply concerning that our teachers, the very heart of our schools feel they cannot speak openly. Their voices come to us through whispers, carried by concerns relatives, neighbors and anonymous notes. Although this was upsetting news to some, it should not come as a surprise to the board or administration who publicly acknowledged reports of these sentiments back in December 2022. There is genuine fear echoing from every school which reveals some sad truth about the state of affairs. In our elementary schools, there's a fear that any reduction in support hits hardest those who can least afford it, our children. The research is clear, larger classes and fewer resources disproportionately affect our most vulnerable students, undermining our district's professed commitment to equity. And from our middle schools, a resounding sentiment that the new roles being filled out are of sync with actual needs. This begs a critical question, if those working in the trenches see no value in these changes, who exactly are they benefiting? If we are to make new hires, let's focus on roles that directly impact our children's learning. Many of us here are not educators, we're parents, community members who might not grasp every educational nuance. But we do understand that to support our teachers, we must first ensure they feel safe to speak and are supported to teach.

The email received from Dr. Shah on May 4<sup>th</sup>, had a tone that many parents feel was condescending. If this is the disrespect shown to concerned parents, what does it say about the dialogue with our teachers? This is not the respect or the leadership our schools deserve. Teachers, much like nurses are often heralded as heroes. While there is nobility in their dedication, this label should not be a silencer. It should not mean enduring more with less, or facing systemic issues along. Calling someone a hero should not mean sacrificing them for the so-called greater good. We come here just after teacher appreciation week, to say that the appreciation must go beyond words. It must be shown through actions.

Today, I ask our district leadership, are you ready to lead us forward? Dr. Shah, do you have the courage to listen, to truly hear and act on the concerns of those who teach our children? We are watching closely, ready to support a direction that honors our teacher's voices and value. Let us move forward, not with dictates, but with genuine collaboration. Not with silence, but with dialogue. Our children, our teachers and community deserve nothing less.

#### Joel Blecha

Hi I'm Joel Bob, a D97 parent and D97 teacher. I teach kindergarten at Irving and I'm a proud member of the OPTA. I am shocked by the cuts to the language art program specialist position from our district. I will explain to you why this is a bad decision, as it is a student facing position. They work daily with students unlike the nine coach positions proposed for middle school. The need for LAS is particularly dire right now, we need LAS monitoring this program. Learning how to read is a civil right. We must send kids to middle school with the ability to read as this represents equity. I am grateful that the district is putting positions on hold, but please, take this into consideration before you put LAS on the chopping block. We can't steal this support from our children.

Thank you for your time.

#### Diana Kotis-Hauber

I am a mother of two students at Irving and one at Julian, so I have had children in District 97 for seven years. I first have to say that I have heard from so many members of the Oak Park Teachers Association Union, as a former federal union president. The fear of retaliation, the lack of openness that they feel even to have communication with board and administration is just devastating to hear as a parent. I have felt this myself as I have tried to navigate the system and approach administration with some imminent things that have happened in my children's academic experience. Without teachers and staff at the schools, my children would have been lost somewhere along the way without some type of cohesion and without a community focused on diversity and commitment. All individuals are supposed to be supported and valued. I feel like there are a lot of various and different roles within our schools especially that are familiar with administration issues. They stem up and down from administration, a lot of things are being handled by support staff. Student Success coaches are handling things social workers should handle. We are trying to increase administration within our schools when they are not doing what they were hired to do.

Over the past few weeks I learned about the MTSS proposed cuts, all the things mentioned, highlighted by many people here as well as parents have children who fall on both sides of the learning extremes. I have a student who will be a sixth grader, middle schooler next year who first was evaluated for MTSS services at the end of fourth grade last year. That is very sad because they were already understaffed without support. At least at Irving, we do have a team, now these teams are being threatened. I don't know the exact data but sure someone in this room could probably support that our students are not reading like 60% of them at grade level. These teachers have faced a pandemic, have been at home teaching, pay taxes and live in this community along with sending their children to our schools. They are

basically paying into their own paychecks. They are trusting their peers to provide their children with an education. Oak Park attracts many people, how do we retain not only our community but get them involved to support all our staff. From lowest to highest, how do we retain these roles if they don't feel supported. How do we say sorry?

#### Tameka Abney

Hello, my name is Tameka Abney. I have a daughter at Longfellow. I come from a family where education has changed the trajectory of our lives. I'm the descendant of a grandfather who couldn't read or write. My parents grew up in housing projects and were so poor that sometimes they didn't eat yet, they raised a daughter who graduated from Harvard with honors. I say this not to brag, but to exhibit that I know what it takes to be educated at the highest level. Every school I attended prior to Harvard was a public school. And part of the reason I was able to excel was because of small class sizes and individual attention.

That's what I'm here to speak to today, the impending increase in class sizes and the reduction in the number of classes at some schools. I speak on behalf of myself and also on behalf of over 500 parents who have banded together over this concern.

Here are the issues:

1. Sections are being eliminated at some schools. The FAQ released by the board is vague on this issue.
2. Class sizes are increasing. The FAQ states that class sizes are not increasing which doesn't make sense. If you remove a class from 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, the remaining classes will have more students. Going from five classes to four is a 20% reduction. The claim that class sizes are not increasing is not true. I have personally spoken to two principals and over ten teachers who all told me class sizes are increasing.

Maybe you don't have young kids in the district so you don't understand. My daughter is in first grade, and already I see how hard it is for her teacher to manage 19 kids with no teacher's aide. The fact that our teacher missed it is not her fault. She spends quite a bit of time doing classroom management which leaves less time for individual attention. We appreciate the work and dedication it takes to plan for a district and we thank the school board for your services. That said if you move forward with any plan that hurts our kids by increasing class sizes, we will organize to vote you out and call for resignations. We will march, make noise and run against you. We will not remain silent.

#### Clare McDermott

I am a parent of two kids at Longfellow. I am also here on behalf of the group of over 500 parents in the community, specifically, we want to know the research that shows kids in tier 3 and 3 receive adequate support in the classroom versus being pulled out into smaller groups. There has been much research proving that small group interventions are effective at moving kids back into grade level performance. During the 9/26/23 board meeting, the approach to literacy was introduced. You stated that MTSS Specialist and Instructional Coaches meet regularly and are constantly assessing measuring student progress yet at the 4.23.24 board meeting, it was stated that we currently don't really know if support staff is helpful nor have measuring. This seems contradictory, we would like clarity around this and what metrics are you using, please make them publicly available. It would be much clearer if the phasing of student facing staff and non-student facing staff were not all lumped together. Can we pull these apart in the future it is disingenuous. Should the budget not be allocated to student-facing staff. Can you commit in SY25 to creating a system to make it better versus changing the people. Have you met with

interventionist, specialist if not now would be a great time. You should be having ongoing dialogue. We have heard many times tonight about funding and how we compare. What is the ration of what we spend on Administrators versus on student-facing positions. Student Support Specialists have been helpful in getting the classrooms back on track. These roles help build and foster social and emotional learning why remove them.

#### Adrienne Court

My name is Adrienne Court and I am speaking as a member of OPTA. Oak Park used to be the golden ticket district. Securing a job for District 97 was seen as the golden ticket, similar to winning the lottery. Unfortunately, in today's current environment staff retention has decreased dramatically, and we need to ask why? This year marks my 14th year at Julian Middle School. During this time I have worked under 3 different Superintendents, 6 HR directors, countless payroll and finance coordinators, 5 building principles, 13 assistant principals, and 33 of our best teachers, 12 of which were teachers of color. These teachers didn't leave due to normal circumstances. They left due to being ignored, and undervalued. APs have left for similar reasons, one main reason being tired of decisions on compliance with the student behavior handbook being overturned by Board or District leaders. This vast amount of turnover has hurt our systems and structures to support our students.

6 years ago I asked the board for an implementation of a system to support our students, instead it has gotten worse. We have seen an uptick in students cutting class, more violence both student to student and student to teacher. It is normal for middle schoolers to push boundaries, but our lack of support systems is failing our students, therefore Oak Park Families. While we do have a handbook and BIR system, there is rarely follow through due to the lack of administrative support to address the high number of issues daily. Due to this, behaviors continue to escalate. Our students need accountability systems and structure to help them thrive here at school.

I truly believe we have amazing staff and students at Julian, but our voices are ignored. We are always quick to say we need to grow teacher capacity, but our teachers cannot do it alone. We need to build in all practices to ensure everyone is on the same page to support each other.

Last year we eliminated an assistant principal, culture & climate coach, & instructional coach. While we are gaining 3 student success coaches, we lost a large amount of supporting staff to help run our building successfully. I am excited to see more teacher leadership roles at the middle school, that can lead to meaningful change. However, support for our buildings cannot be at the expense of services for our students. We cannot keep kicking the can down the road, Oak Park deserves actionable change now. I am pondering if we need to have the courage to rethink how things are being done at our middle schools. Are we ready to come together to create systems, boundaries and accountability for all? Not a year from now but today? I am excited to welcome Mr. Filipowski to our Julian team, but if changes are not made to our admin team, we will not give him the structure needed for his success. With that I ask that we consider bringing back a third assistant principal at each middle school and create multiple dean positions to oversee discipline. Please lean into teachers' voices, support building administrators, and make systems that will allow our students to feel safe, engaged, and feel like they belong in school.

#### Robin Glover



My name is Robin Glover and I am a proud alum of the district and parent of current students at Whittier. I am here to highlight concerns over the opportunity gap of our black students. To be frank we are failing black children in our community

I know you've heard me say this a few times, but for new participants in the room - I'd like to highlight the following. 79% of black students fall below proficiency standards in Language Arts. 86% of black students fall below proficiency standards in Math. The issue here is about equity. Which I know is a key tenant Dr. Shah is trying to address. My career has been focused on changing organizations and there are a few things I'd like to recommend.

We need to all agree on the problem and have urgency to solve it. We all clearly know the issue, but do people really agree we have an equity issue in D97? I'd say that publicly laying that out for the stakeholders should be priority number one.

We need to be grounded in data - which we have in abundance and you and your team have done an excellent job of analyzing it. Define the outcomes we seek and be focused on driving accountability through inspection metrics. We must effectively manage changes, we need to clearly lay out what D97 gains from these changes, but also address and leave room for processing of perceived losses. We all need to agree on the problem, the strategy and the outcome Dr Shah: This problem needs everyone to come together to solve it. (Parents, Teachers, Administrators, Students, our community) It's clear we all care about our students, now let's mobilize together to help them.

#### Rob Anderson

I've been with D97 for 20 years, and I have two children in D97. These kids were supposed to be raised in a school district I can be proud of. I was told to come here and keep my emotion out of it, well good luck with that. I am not happy with the plan and the lack of communication, nothing here in part of this plan works. I don't understand the data, it's you just to make it make sense to me.

This is not acceptable. As a parent and member of the community, this is not it. We are not asking you, we are telling you, please listen to our voices. If you have any questions on our options, we are right here. Just ask us, we are not asking you, we are telling you.

#### Julie Spyrisson

Good evening, I am the parent of two boys at Mann. While I have concerns about all topics regarding D97, I'm here to mainly speak to the negative impact reduction of class sections had during the 2023 - 2024 school year has had on my 2nd grader. While I understand that D97 evaluates projected enrollment and associated staffing for each school year every spring, I feel that this process in itself last year was flawed. It didn't take into consideration each individual building's unique circumstances to ensure all students receive an equitable education. This has previously been said at many previous BOE meetings and is still being ignored. To date, the reduction of class sections has been based on whether the reduction is within the allowed teacher's contract maximum of 24 students. This approach is flawed with 2nd grade at Mann. This is due to the fact that 2nd graders are in a pod classroom that is divided into 4 "classrooms", resulting in poor acoustics and limited classroom space. Student chairs literally hit each other when a student pushes out to get up from their seat. These challenges are coupled with the social/emotional/behavioral/educational needs of this current 2nd grade class, which has:

- 70 total students
- 3 sections comprised of 23, 23, 24 students
- At least one 1st grade student that pushes into 1 of the classrooms for math enrichment
- 10 IEP students
- Additional students that require Tier 2/Tier 3 Supports
- Social/emotional/behavioral challenges from a cohort that was 3 years old when Covid started, limits opportunities to develop coping skills needed in educational settings with groups of peers

This has resulted in an un-equitable educational experience for these 2nd graders. Parents of 2nd graders have raised concerns to the principal when we observed that the 3 section set up is not working. The only supposed “solution” offered was to move 1 of the 3 sections to a different classroom this spring. To lessen the “noise”. In the BOE meeting on Mar 19, 2024. I was in dismay that some of the “data” presented was 10 years old, to further justify section reductions in March 2023. I was even more disappointed that no one in leadership brought up learnings from the last round of section reductions. No one asked: Did it go well? What didn't go well? What should we do differently this time around to mitigate issues?

Or even the question, do parents agree that the teacher’s contract allows for a maximum of 24 students? Is this what is best for our district? Is this best for our students, especially when we know a lot of challenges in our middle schools need to be addressed?

I implore the District and BOE to stop talking about “equality” as an approach to classroom sections and to take an “equity” approach that ensures small classroom sizes (16-18, max 20) and takes into consideration the special challenges of each building. Lastly, if certain schools are overcrowded, let's look at redistributing students. I know I mainly spoke about elementary schools, but I have the same concern about middle schools as well.

Thank you for your time.

Tim Walsh

Hello, I'd just like to say my name is Tim Walsh. I'm speaking on behalf of the OPTA. I've been working in D97 for 24 years. I never once said I am not happy, but I just wanted to tell you things are not going well. Once in Julian, every Monday there was a time when team leaders would sit down with teachers and ask about their input on current events. At Julian now, there is no way for staff to express concerns about the current environment. There's always going to be problems, and we have to embrace the problems and love the problems and work to solve the problems together. Listen to us and let the teachers have a say.

Hannah Boudreau

I am here speaking as the previous Co-President of the Oak Park Teachers Association and current member. I come here with heavy concern regarding the recent proposal to eliminate student-facing teachers’ roles, (interventionists and specialists) and replace them with pseudo-administrators within D97. We all know these roles have and will continue to serve and be treated as administrators. I find this idea disheartening but also deeply troubling.

Students in D97 deserve the best, which means strong teacher-student relationships and personalized instruction. This proposal to replace student-facing teachers with these admin type roles not only ignores the importance of these relationships, but also the quality of education our students receive.

Teachers play a vital role in shaping young minds. They are not mere robots of content delivery, they are mentors, guides, and role models who push students to reach their full potential. By eliminating student-facing teachers roles and possibly increasing class sizes, we risk depriving our students of the

individualized attention, support, and mentorship they need and deserve to succeed not only academically, but personally as well.

Please consider your own children. Imagine they were above grade level and thrive from challenging and enriching programs that are instantly taken away. What if your child struggles with reading and needs more one-on-one attention? How outraged and disappointed would you be if that was taken away? How would the child feel thinking that their school no longer cares about them?

Furthermore, the idea of replacing these teacher roles with pseudo-administrators sends a horrible message to educators within our district. Teachers are professionals who have dedicated their lives to the noble pursuit of educating and taking care of our youth. To suggest that our roles can be easily replaced is disrespectful and shortsighted.

As an educator I urge you to reconsider this proposal not only now, but in the future as well. Focus on ways to support and empower our teachers to excel in their roles. In conclusion, I implore you to listen to the concerns of our parents, educators, and community members. Our children deserve nothing less than the very best.

#### Katie Trathen

Good evening, my name is Katie and I am a OPTA member, a Julian staff member, and D97 parent. Five years ago, when I was hired in this district, I thought I had won the lottery. I have worked in the Elementary schools for 2 years, and have worked in the middle school for 3 years. The disparity between the elementary schools and middle schools is disheartening. I find myself thinking about how to manage the level of chaos at work, and if I should send my children to private school. I love my colleagues and I'm deeply committed to my students. For those reasons I am standing here today to speak to improvements needed to happen to improve our D97 middle schools.

1. **Cleanliness:** In the midst of many challenges, we faced at Julian in the last few weeks, our school is filthy. Piles of garbage in corners of the stairwell are still there the next day. Garbage cans full of food from last week were still full on Monday morning. Please speak to our amazing custodial team to find what support they need.
2. **Safety:** Last year during the restructure, we moved from having three assistant principals to only two. The disciplinary responsibilities for our school size is way too much for one person; the high turnover for this role is proof that it's not working. I am asking that you bring back having a 3rd assistant principal role. It's an administrator's job to investigate bullying, intervene with student behavioral situations, and issue consequences. Since Julian doesn't have enough administrator support, many of these issues are not being addressed. We need adequate admin support so students don't feel as if they can get away with skipping class or chronic tardiness. I am asking to move back to having one AP or Dean assigned to each grade level so behavioral and safety concerns can be addressed in a timely way.
3. **Phones:** Teachers at Julian are begging you to support us in an enforceable phone policy starting day 1 of next school year. On paper our "Away for the Day" policy doesn't work. Julian students are allowed to be on their phones during lunch and recess, which is inconsistent with the rules of the other schools in D97. If you look around the lunch room, you don't see many students engaging socially with each other. What we do see is students glued to their screens, watching pornography, scheduling times to meet to fight, posting videos and images of teachers and other students on social media without their knowledge. Teachers have no recourse for this and can't take phones away. As stated before, we don't have administrative support to follow up on phone violations. Panorama data shows only 20% of our students are engaged at school. If we as a community value education, the number one thing we can do is remove smartphones away from our students during the school day.

4. Adequate Supervision: My final concern is supervision, behavioral concerns in many areas lack adult supervision. (Lunch room, Hall ways, and Recess.) We only have 3 hall monitors who supervise 4 floors, and during half the day they are not in halls because they must supervise lunch and recess.

All I ask is that you first meet our basic needs of cleanliness, safety, and adequate supervision before moving to other goals.

#### Cathy Kiriakos

Hello, I am Cathy Kiriakos, I am a parent of a child with a disability. I understand it is hard to get our children the support that they need. I have a few things I would like to highlight.

The reduction in support staff with students with needs impacts them the most. Most of these individuals will fall behind as their educational careers move along. They might hit a point in learning where they no longer want to learn. I personally experienced this with my own daughter. It was really hard to be heard, we really need boots on the ground staff to help these kids. Children with learning disabilities come from different socioeconomic backgrounds (growing up poor). These students will be even more left behind if this support staff leaves D97. We need to keep a lens on this. We are taxpayers; with that, there was no transparency about these positions being cut. You are representative of our tax dollars, so I urge you to be transparent about the data so we as a community can understand and support the decisions that you have made. Last, let us have the ability to give you feedback. We need to meet our core needs of the community. We should have a say, and leadership needs accountability as a taxpayer. What are you going to do to show that to us?

#### Brian Dailey

My name is Brain Dailey, I am a parent of two children in D97. I am concerned that the administration's staffing plan did not raise more scrutiny from this board. As a parent, I am asking you to please look further into the details and ask the hard questions.

School logic models and school improvement plans have been cited in support of staffing reallocations. Looking at Beye's improvement plan, I have to applaud Mrs. Sullivan and her team. Simply put, the data indicates the no pillar of logic model shows strong enough results to support reallocation of staff. Instead of elementary positions moving elsewhere, D97 needs to offer resource support to both literacy and math. We cannot let up when data shows that over half of students are below reading grade level before they even enter middle school.

According to D97 IAR results, 86% of 5 graders who identify as black and 37% of 5th graders who identify as white are reading below grade level. Imagine entering middle school and you now must read to learn. Feelings of insecurity, doubt, and fear are inside you from the years of going through elementary school reading below grade level. And now we expect the middle schools to somehow alter the trajectory for these students.

Let's imagine a staffing plan that takes into account racial equity and early elementary support that sends students into middle school better equipped.

We must improve literacy curriculum, instruction, and support as early as possible in elementary school. The plan should add instructional coaches, specialists, and interventionists to use scientifically backed methods that teach students how to read and write. Not only should we focus on phonics and decoding, but language comprehension skills. Add an enrichment specialist focused on increasing vocabulary and background knowledge. Dyslexia and language-based learning differences impact 20% of our population.

That is over 1,100 D97 students. We should be able to identify struggling readers earlier. Bottomline, the plan should target 95% of all students entering middle school to be able to read and write at grade level, regardless of race and class. For key areas like math, we must follow data to address root concerns and inequities as early as possible in the elementary years.

Moving staff to middle schools is reactive, just a small bandage on a large wound. The original staffing plan presented implied that staffing funds must come from reallocation. But who is to say that there are not FTE and administrative positions that could be more effectively used to impact students? For one, it gives me pause how much money is being spent on the portrait of an 8th grader project. The hiring of an outside firm to help with this strategic plan should be coupled with clear ROI expectations from this board. This money might be better spent for specific student enrichment.

It is my understanding that Dr. Shah helped with the development of Elgin School district U46. I have spoken to a family member who has worked at U46 since 2017, and shared with them the proposed changes to D97. (Centralizing the MTSS system, and creation of the non-student facing positions.)

They immediately stated that Dr. Shah did the same things to U46 during her tenure there. And currently schools there are performing worse now. Information in the the Illinois Report Card shows that from 2015 to 2019 there is a big decline in 3rd and 8th grade metrics describing how well students met the expectations for their grade level/course:

They also warned against a program called “Instructional Empowerment”, which was rolled out in U46 in 2021. Their feedback is that the program implementation is problematic in that there is no supporting data on its effectiveness. I re-read Dr. Shah’s May 4th communication where she mentions “Sharing power in dynamic and unprecedented ways, including elevating student voice and agency.” In light of this, it suggests she's looking into implementing a similar program here in D97. My greatest concern is that the mistakes in U46 will be used in D97, and I worry that leadership has arrived at D97 with a prescribed solution designed for another district. I would like clarification on whether leadership wants a development plan similar to U46.

#### Laura Barlich

Good evening, my name is Laura Barlich, and I am speaking as a OPTA member and a D97 parent. This is my 2nd year at Julian and I am already expecting big staffing changes in the environment I work in. Over five VP’s, three principles, and a numerous number of TA’s, and too many Hall monitors to count. This is concerning to me, and it should be to all Oak Park parents and D97 staff. We need leadership to model what support and respect looks like and listen to teachers, because otherwise we will keep seeing high turnover rates.

We have been talking to leadership about the problem of class size, and nothing has been done. More students get dumped in our class throughout the year and usually this is out of the blue with no communication at all. This is not acceptable, especially when classrooms have 30 students or more, some of which need more assistance since some students have special needs. Please listen to our feedback as educators. This is not safe for anyone, we need a classroom cap.

We also need more admins to assist with behavior issues. We had a student throw scissors at another student and face no repercussions for this action. At Julian we have found broken toilets and trash in rooms that haven't been properly cleaned in weeks. Why haven't we seen job openings for custodians? Also, why haven't we seen job openings for any essential staff like call monitors, lunchroom supervisors and Subs? Stop asking teachers every day to sub, this takes away from the work we do in the classroom. I hope you are hearing what I'm saying.

Thank you very much.

Dave Wells

Hi, I'm Dave, I am a permanent sub at Julian with children who are D97 alums. I am aware in the last month or so I've sent the board, the administration, and the OPTA leadership unanswered emails regarding the professionalization of the district 16 permanent substitute positions.

I am going to do a classroom exercise so you can get my point and see how I work in the classroom. Raise your hand if you would like to fly. Ok, the real first question is: If you were being offered a really great job where you could meet students and make an impact, but were told upfront that you would be working at the same basic rate of daily pay for the next four years, would you take it?

How about if for two of those years you didn't have health benefits? Raise your hand if you have a more or less good idea of what your job situation will be like this coming year. Now raise your hand if you've been told that the details of your job three months from now will be terminated.

We must find ways to align our resources with what is needed for the district. Raise your hand if you think permanent Subs should not be given the same rights as full-time employees. Teachers, raise your hand if you got an email to sub this week. Raise your hand if you are interested in seeing our students be fully supported. Do you think having full time teachers being asked to sub 3 times a week helps us?

Nora Flynn

Hello, my name is Nora Flynn, I am a D97 parent and part of the OPTA. I'm asking the district and the board to consider how our cut scores for intervention services could better serve our students and how a shift in cut scores could impact our staff. The district looks at aggregate data to determine how our students are performing and how our curriculum and instruction is or is not serving them, when large groups of students, including a disproportionate amount of minority students, don't meet academic expectations. In order to assist with this issue, we need student-facing positions., not the opposite. Our scores are too low at the current moment, we can do better. And data support this, we can review our local cut scores to understand how our curriculum is or isn't serving our students while making long-term shifts, and we can appropriately resource. For the last two years, 70% to 80% of the seventh graders I have served in tier three reading support have exited with scores above the 35th percentile. This is doable, but it's not doable if we ignore the students. I deeply urge the District board and community to reconsider our low cut source for intervention services and staff for student needs at this moment.

We need long term planning, but we cannot overlook the current students with us right now

Chey Talyor

Hello board and superintendent, my name is Chey Taylor. I am the concerned parent of two children at Lincoln. It is my understanding that Dr. Shah worked with the school district U46, in which she is known for centralizing the MTSS system and creating the non-student-facing positions. I spoke to a family member who has ties to U46. They immediately nodded and stated that these were all things similarly done at U46 during her tenure there. Currently, students in U46 are performing worse academically. Information available at the Illinois report card data from 2015 to 2019 shows that there is a noticeable decline in the third and eighth grade metrics describing how well students met expectations. 31.6% the 2019 I Illinois assessment of Readiness shows a decline to 16.6% in third graders. Level five declined from 2.8 to 1.1 in math, level four declined from 9 29.2 to 28.2 and level five declined from 5.6 to 5.0%. The 8th grade level in 2015 went from 36% to 27.6%. Level five went from 7.9 to 4.4%. Math level four went from 29.6 to 22.8% and the students' performance expectations was 5.7% and dropped to 3.4%. The

methods used in U46 are not solving the issue at hand. Leadership has arrived at D97 with a prescribed solution designed for another.

I'm asking the board for clarification on whether the superintendent and the board are planning to present a district development plan similar to U46?

Emily Brynelsen

I'm the parent of a kindergartener, single mother, living with a disability, and am also blind and cannot drive. I am unable to walk due to complications with a surgery I had in my past. My daughter has had an IEP since preschool due to a developmental delay. I was recently told she has progressed and is no longer developmentally delayed. Sadly, this also meant she is no longer eligible for busing to and from school. I cannot walk her myself and she wears braces on her feet, so walking 7 blocks to school isn't possible for her.

Denying her busing is denying her access to education. She should not be denied an education because her mother is disabled. I have talked to countless people in D97, but no one seems to have an answer. This is not equitable, this isn't fair. What kind of community would deny a six-year-old child access to an education?

I'm sure everyone here would be happy to have some tax dollars to provide door to door transportation for a 6-year-old girl who wants to attend the 1st grade badly. Please make door to door transportation available for my child.

Fernando Carrillo

Learning my position was ending at Longfellow was devastating. I first thought it was all enrichment specialists at D97. It was shocking to learn that only 3 positions were being eliminated. Although this was heartbreaking, I am happy that my position is safe for one more year. Therefore, I have 2 questions tonight.

Can stakeholders be included in this process as D97 moves forward? Teachers have valuable insights that could benefit the district's goals. Can there be a better way of communicating with staff whose positions are being eliminated? These past few weeks have been challenging, I look forward to brighter days ahead.

Rohini Dsilva

I won't take too much of your time, I have spoken to the board before in regards to my daughter, and the issues I had with Amy. I've had other minority parents reach out to me who seem to be worried that if they speak up, they're going to experience some sort of retaliation or discrimination the way me and my kids have. On April 23rd, I sat for about a 2-hour meeting with Dr. Shah in regards to all of these issues that I already spoke of at previous meetings that same day. As I got out of that meeting, I got a call from my daughter that Mr. Morel is pushing her up against a rail at Julian and antagonizing her, and not one teacher intervened to diffuse the situation. It took four students to try to pull her apart from the teacher. I'm still waiting to get the video. I told you all about this 3 years ago, and I am still not getting responses.

Also, I am just trying to figure out how we are taking away bus services, but we have admin staff making six figures while teachers are underpaid for everything they deal with. The people that are supposed to be able to support the teachers are making all of this money; you are taking away resources and making their jobs harder.

Candace Ward

Good evening, I am Candace Ward. I won't take up too much of your time because you all are pretty much aware of many of my concerns and mistreatment that me and my family has faced. Even though there hasn't really been any resolution to much of it, I was thinking as I listened to everyone else, I felt like I was going to come up here and change the tone of everyone else concern. They all kind of tie in together because I spoke in April about my daughter at Longfellow and the issues with Amy, and about the teacher giving my baby and a few other black students, a bag of cotton. I have had a number of people contact me to have meetings about this and the years of discrimination me and my family have endured. I've been asking for years to discuss these incidents and to work together with the principal and to resolve my concerns and ongoing incidents. Ironically, today a few weeks away from the end of the school year, Principal Jefferson asked me to have a restorative conversation. I don't know restorative it can be seen that my daughter is in fifth grade and in less than a month will be leaving her school. I really just don't understand the logic.

I know a lot of stuff don't just affect my family, I have had other minority parents reach out to me who seem to be worried if they speak up, they are going to experience the same retaliation or discrimination me and my kids experienced. I have looped them with admin staff and board members in hopes that we can see some light at Julian for other students that are still there. I also want to bring to the Board attention, I had a long meeting with Dr. Shah, and Mr. Kearney on April 23. I sat for about two hours in a meeting with them regarding all of these issues. The same day I get a call from my daughter that Mr. Morel is pushing her up against a rail at Julian and antagonizing her and not one teacher intervened to diffuse the situation. It took students to try to pull her apart from the teacher. I am still waiting to get the video. I got an email saying I will get a meeting about the video; I don't know what the rules is on getting the video. I was told that Dr. Shah is in charge of safety. So, I don't know if I am supposed to be waiting for her, but Dr. Shah is the same person I told three years ago, what Amy did to my daughter and I didn't get a response.

I been coming at this in a nice way, at some point I was a bit aggressive, I'm not getting any response. Either way, I stand up here and I listen to all the teachers and other family complain about resources and things taken away. I am just trying to figure out how are we taking away bus services but we have admin staff making six figures. The teachers are underpaid for everything they deal with, taking away resources making their job harder. I have been to the Board, the Superintendent, we are almost at the end of the school year, where do it end. I know Robin has been here saying the same thing, a lot of the teachers I know saying the same thing. I am still waiting on an email, to find out why my daughter grade dropping with no explanation. I have been waiting on an email, Dr. Whitfield has a whole school thinking my daughter is the problem just because I shed light on Amy and Felicia. Sorry I didn't wear a red shirt. I don't have many people standing behind me, hopefully before the end of the school year, we get better results. I am tire of coming to talk. Thank you.



## **6. SUPERINTENDENT UPDATE**

\*Please note that the Board President and Superintendent determined that agenda item 6.1 Celebrations will be moved to a future Board Meeting.

### **6.2 SY25 Equity Leadership, Infrastructure and Staffing Alignment Update**

Dr. Shah provided the Board of Education and the community with an update regarding Equity Leadership, Infrastructure and Staffing. The entire presentation can be viewed by accessing the presentation in the board packet materials, or by watching the livestream of the meeting on the district YouTube channel.

## **7. CORE INSTRUCTION**

\*Please note that the Board President and Superintendent determined that the agenda item 7.3 E-Learning presentation will be moved to a future Board Meeting.

### **7.1 In Love with Literacy: District 97 Respect-the-Practitioners Approach to Early Literacy Update**

(Presented by: Patrick Robinson, Dr. Tawanda Lawrence and Jennifer Logan)

District leaders provided the Board of Education and the community with an update on:

1. What was the outcome of District 97's review of K-5 ELA resources.
2. What are the next steps to prepare for the pilot of selected resources.

K-5 ELA Pilot Next Steps

- Ordering pilot materials
- Schedule training
- Prepare committee and pilot schools

The entire presentation can be viewed by accessing the presentation in the board packet materials, or by watching the livestream of the meeting on the district YouTube channel.

### **7.2 Middle School Connection**

Dr. DeLeon and members of the middle school leadership team presented on middle school transition planning for SY25 school year. The presentation provided background information on the Fall 2023 Panorama Student Survey Data, overview of Developmental Changes, and details of the Transition program.

In the Fall, there will be a 3-day transition program for sixth-graders, designed to ease the transition from elementary to middle school. This will take place at both Brooks and Julian Middle Schools on August 13-15, 2024. The purpose is to foster, provide opportunities, equip students with strategies, introduce students to academic expectations, and address any anxieties students may have as they head into middle school.

Approximately 460+ incoming sixth-graders have signed up for this program. The Administration for both schools are excited about this program and looking forward to planning this experience over the summer ahead of Fall.

**8. ACTION ITEMS**  
**8.1 Consent Agenda**

Spurlock moved, seconded by Moore that the Board of Education of Oak Park Elementary School District 97 moves to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

- 8.1.1 Approval of Minutes from the April 9, 2024 Board Meeting
- 8.1.2 Approval of Minutes from the April 23, 2024 Committee of the Whole and Special Executive Closed Session Meetings
- 8.1.3 Bill List
- 8.1.4 Personnel
- 8.1.5 Approval : Brooks and Julian Middle School Overnight Track and Field State Competition
- 8.1.6 Approval : Longfellow PTO Outdoor Education Field Trip Donation
- 8.1.7 Approval : Irving PTO 5th Grade Donation

Ayes: Kim, Kearney, Ross Dribin, Moore, Hurd Johnson, Burns, Spurlock  
Nays: None  
Absent: None  
Motion passed.

---

**8.2 Action**

**8.2.1 Approval of Contracts over 25K: Crossing Guard Contract Extension (2.13.24)**

Spurlock moved, seconded by Kim that the Board of Education of Oak Park Elementary School District 97 moves to approve administrations recommendation for a two-year contract extension with Andy Frain Services, Inc. totaling \$416,546.00 per year for the 2024-2026 school years.

Ayes: Kim, Kearney, Ross Dribin, Moore, Hurd Johnson, Burns, Spurlock  
Nays: None  
Absent: None  
Motion passed.

**8.2.2 O&M Fund to Capital Projects Funds Transfer (4.9.24)**

Spurlock moved, seconded by Hurd Johnson that the Board of Education, of Oak Park Elementary School District 97 moves to approve the attached resolution to transfer \$4,000,000 from the Operations & Maintenance Fund to the Capital Projects Fund.

Ayes: Kim, Kearney, Ross Dribin, Moore, Hurd Johnson, Burns, Spurlock  
Nays: None  
Absent: None  
Motion passed.

## **9. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### **9.1 SY25 OPTA Stipend Leadership Roles Committee Recommendation (action 5.28.24)**

(Presented by: Dr. Natacia Campbell Tominov, Dr. Luis DeLeon and Patric Robinson)

Teacher Leadership recommendation for the SY2024-2025.

#### **How will we ensure instructional equity and excellence in Oak Park D97?**

School-based teams will work collaboratively using logic models to demonstrate how effective instructional practices come together using the following concepts:

- collective teacher efficacy
- universal design for learning (UDL)
- competency-based education (CBE)
- the 2022 Danielson Framework for Teaching (FFT)
- Illinois Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards (CRTLS)

The transformational theory guiding this effort is as follows: If we change adult practices to support students' success in our current focal student cohort, we will meet short, medium and long-term outcomes for ALL students.

#### **How do teacher leader roles support this goal?**

The OPTA Collective Bargaining Agreement outlines leadership roles for District 97 teachers. These leadership roles are based on the recognition of teachers' expertise and belief in the importance of having practitioners in leadership positions. Specific roles are designed to achieve several purposes:

- Support increased student growth and attainment
- System development and program implementation
- Support the implementation of the district's Educational and Racial Equity Policy
- Establish and support collective leadership at the district and school level
- Maximize support for the classroom teacher
- Encourage Innovation
- Increase leadership and development opportunities

The OPTA Collective Bargaining Agreement established Leadership Roles for OPTA members within Article XVI: Section G of the agreement. In the Section G language, the parties agreed to establish the Leadership Role Committee consisting of two (2) OPTA members appointed by the OPTA Executive

Board and three (3) members selected by the Superintendent. The Leadership Role Committee that convened during the current school year consisted of the following individuals:

- Natacia Campbell Tominov - Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources and Equity
- Fernando Carrillo - Orchestra/Music Teacher, Brooks & Julian
- Luis Fernando De Leon - Assistant Superintendent of Middle School
- Patrick Robinson - Assistant Superintendent of Elementary School
- Gabrielle Rosebum - Music Teacher, Beye School

The OPTA Agreement states that the Leadership Role Committee shall annually meet, by no later than March 20th of each year, to discuss whether to recommend that the Board add, delete, or reduce the number of types of roles and whether to make any adjustments in the tiered pay level of a specific role based on new initiatives and/or whether the actual time commitments made by teachers in a specific leadership role exceeds or falls short of the initial estimated commitments.

### **How will schools monitor impact?**

To demonstrate their contribution to school improvement, each teacher receiving a teacher leader role stipend will submit visible work products demonstrating their contributions to student learning at the end of each trimester. Visible work products will vary depending on the purpose of the teacher's role and may include evidence and/or documentation of leadership, such as:

- Design and facilitation of agendas for teacher team meetings
- Develop action plans for classroom and/or school instructional improvement, including analysis of student data assessments
- Conduct instructional coaching rounds and provide supportive real-time feedback and suggestions to classroom teachers
- Partner with classroom teacher/s to identify student needs and bring forward solutions to be considered by grade-level and/or school-level teams
- Design and provide targeted professional development opportunities
- Identify innovative approaches to address a particular need and document the impact

### **What is the timeline for this process?**

The Committee has met to review and discuss the needed roles for the 2024-2025 school year and has engaged relevant district and school administrators in role review.

In order to have a timely teacher leader roles application process that supports planning for summer professional learning, the Committee proposes the following timeline:

- On 5.14.24: The district will committee presents the roles proposal to the Board of Education and requested funding
- On 5.21.24: The Board of Education acts on the funding request
- On 5.22.24: If the Board of Education approves funding, the roles application is launched via Frontline
- On 5.31.24: The roles application period ends
- By 6.3.24: Principals complete role selection
- By 6.4.24: The Teacher Leadership Role Committee meets to finalize roles
- On 6.5.25: SY25 Teacher Leader Roles are communicated to staff members

### Financial Impact

For the 2024-2025 school year, the projected financial impact of the proposed roles is \$637,5000.

## 9.2 Sports Field Maintenance IGA Renewal with Park District of Oak Park (action 6.11.24)

### Purpose

This memo aims to inform you of the changes to the IGA - Sports Field Maintenance agreement with the Park District of Oak Park. The current agreement is from 2019-2024. [Link to the new agreement](#)

### Overview of the IGA

- The Park District maintains our athletic fields including natural turf fields, artificial turf fields and our ball fields. Besides cutting the grass the Park District manages the rentals/use of the fields, conducts maintenance of the natural turf fields including, overseeding of the entire area, slit seeding of heavy use areas in need of repair, fertilizing using natural fertilizers, top dressing the turf and aerating the fields. For the ball fields, the Park District maintains the tuft as described above and also maintains the pitchers' mounds, infield ball mix and the mechanical weeding. For the artificial turf areas, the Park District

### Costs and Benefits to D97

- The cost of the agreement for the last calendar year was just under \$60,000.
- PDOP knows and understands the community and the shared expectations.
- PDOP provides expertise in ball field management which is not easy to find in a contracted landscaper

- PDOP understands the needs and care which must be taken when working around children
- PDOP is fully aware and in compliance with Village of Oak Park regulations and initiatives.

Changes to the new proposed IGA

There are two changes to the new proposed agreement; see below.

- 1) Date changes from 2019-2024 to 2024-2029 and
- 2) Lawnmower shared cost 50/50

In Section 8, Mower and Mower Maintenance of the current agreement A. Purchase of Mower. D97 purchased a lawnmower in 2014 for the Park District to use in the care of the Sports Fields. That mower is anticipated to last two more years of this agreement, and a new mower will need to be purchased. The two Districts agreed to buy a new mower in spring 2026 and will split the cost of the unit 50/50. The anticipated cost to D97 for the new mower in 2026 is \$22,600. The Park District may purchase at their sole cost, additional equipment for the mower to be used for snow removal. The repair costs of the mowing equipment will be shared 50/50 and the repairs of the snow removal equipment will be paid for by the Park District.

Recommendation

Administration recommends the approval of the revised and extended Intergovernmental Agreement with the Park District of Oak Park as presented.

9.3 District 97 Fuel Purchase IGA Renewal with Village of Oak Park (action 6.11.24)

Purpose

This memo aims to inform you of the Oak Park Fuel Purchase IGA.

Overview of the IGA

D97 purchases gasoline and diesel fuel from the Village of Oak Park. The fueling station is located at the Public Works building at 210 South Blvd. with fuel available 24/7. The Village calculates the average monthly cost of the fuel and adds an administrative and maintenance fee to the cost per gallon. The Village invoices the district for the fuel pumped and provides a breakdown of fuel use by vehicle.

Costs and Benefits to D97

The cost of fuel including the administrative and maintenance fee is less than the cost of fuel at retail outlets. As a government agency we pay less tax on the fuel. To dispense fuel from the Village fuel pumps you must insert a computer chip key, enter a PIN and the vehicle odometer reading. The pumps are also under constant video surveillance. These steps provide an audit trail.

Changes to the new proposed IGA

The Village of Oak Park is increasing the administrative and Maintenance fee from \$0.21 per gallon of fuel to \$0.22 per gallon of fuel. All other changes do not impact the cost nor the liability of the contract and include updated names and dates.

Recommendation

Administration recommends the approval of the Five-Year Intergovernmental Agreement with the Village of Oak Park for the purchase of gasoline and diesel fuel.

9.4 FY24 Audit Services (action 6.11.24)

Summary

Please find attached the engagement letter for auditing services from Baker Tilly Virchow Krause, LLP for fiscal year 2024. Also attached is the engagement letter to perform agreed-upon procedures related to payroll for the School Employee Loss Fund (SELF) for fiscal year 2024. Below are the auditing fee changes:

<u>Type</u>	<u>FY23</u>	<u>FY24</u>
Financial Statement audit	\$63,000	\$68,850*
Single Audit	N/A	N/A
SELF (AUP)	\$750	\$750
Annual Consolidated Financial Report	<u>N/A</u>	<u>\$6,000</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$63,750</b>	<b>\$75,600</b>

**\*District Financial Statement and Single Audit (up to 2 major programs)**

With the changes in ISBE requirements and GASB accounting standards, Baker Tilly will discuss the need for any revised fees as they come up. The number of single audit programs required for testing can vary yearly. For FY24, the auditing firm will test two major programs. Currently, our auditors provide basic financial statements. The auditors will assist the District with creating and presenting an Annual Consolidated Financial Report (ACFR). The cost for this service is \$6,000. Last year, the total cost for auditing services was \$63,750. For the upcoming services, the total cost is \$75,600.

Baker Tilly has conducted our annual audits for the past seven years. For the 2025 fiscal year, we recommend Request for Proposal (RFP) for audit services.

Motion

Administration is seeking a motion for the Board to engage Baker Tilly Virchow Krause, LLP to perform auditing services for the 2024 fiscal year per the attached.

**10. BOARD ASSIGNMENTS**

Update will be provided at the next meeting of the Board.

BOARD  
ASSIGNMENTS

**11. CONCLUDING ITEMS**

Board Remarks update will be provided at the next meeting of the Board.

CONCLUDING  
ITEMS

**13. ADJOURNMENT**

All Seven present members of the Board were in agreement that the meeting be adjourned. There being no further business to conduct, President Kearney declared the meeting adjourned by voice vote at 11:57 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

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

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