

Minutes of Workshop Meeting

The Board of Education Jenison Public Schools

The Board of Education of Jenison Public Schools held a workshop meeting on Monday, March 24, 2025, beginning at 6:00 pm in the Jenison Center for the Arts Boardroom.

Call to Order:

President of the Board of Education, Dr. Hartman, called the Jenison Public Schools Board of Education Workshop meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

Members Present:

Eric Hartman, DC,
President

William Waalkes,
Vice President

Chris Reed, PhD,
Treasurer

Jen Postema,
Secretary

Jennifer Griffin, DPM
Trustee

Shannon Hogan,
Trustee

Donna Mooney
Trustee

Others Present:

Brandon Graham, Ph.D.,
Superintendent

Leslie Philipps,
Assistant Superintendent /
Title IX Coordinator

Christine Marcy,
Director of Finance and
Operations

Thom Danckaert,
GMB Representative

Tom VanDeGriend
GMB Representative

Katie Moy,
Executive Manager of
Superintendent, BOE, &
Communications

Public Comment:

Rich VanderKlok (2057 Pinewood, Jenison) - The President of JEA and High School Language Arts Teacher, expressed concerns about the public comment policy, specifically regarding the lack of enforcement of the time limit. He requested that the board ensure consistency in applying its policies.

Dr. Hartman addressed the public comment process, explaining that he intended to make a statement to remind speakers of the 3-minute time limit. He mentioned that he would alert speakers when 30 seconds remained. He emphasized the importance of being mindful of everyone's time.

Avery Obregon (6412 Bauer Rd, Hudsonville) - She provided the board documentation about the Wilderness Academy expansion proposal and highlighted some concerns from parents they wanted to present to the board, including issues related to space, staff retention, and academics. A group of parents from the Wilderness Academy had collaborated to form an Advancement Committee. She urged the board to carefully consider the proposal and make an informed decision about reinstating the 3rd and 4th grades at the Wilderness Academy.

Adrian Viersen (7353 Iron Dr, Hudsonville) - He continued the discussion about the Wilderness Academy's Advancement Committee and addressed the space concerns. He mentioned that he met with representatives from Fair Haven to discuss space and boundaries, noting that there are additional opportunities available. He added that the parents are eager to assist with outdoor cleanup and other projects. The parents expressed their willingness to support the district in any way they can, including addressing any existing deficits.

Megan Nollet (7619 Chickadee Dr, Jenison) - She continued with the Advancement Committee proposal presentation, focusing on teacher retention concerns. She shared some statistics with the group and discussed potential opportunities for Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). She ended her comments by sharing about an experience on a bus ride for a class field trip in which the teacher spent time listening to students read. The teacher was able to take the time travelling on the bus to give each student individual attention.

Katie Santos (2130 Sandcrest St, Jenison) - She shared that she has experience in education and encouraged the district to consider more data, rather than focusing on a few graphs on reading scores. She shared that many questions come to mind, and acknowledged even if the data may be concerning, the Director of Curriculum, along with building leadership, is actively working on a plan to improve student learning and will address any identified weaknesses. She added that the academic subcommittee from the parent proposal is eager to offer resources and support to help with academic improvements.

Ashley Rottman (11078 56th Ave, Allendale) - She shared that the Wilderness Academy parents are passionate about the program and urged the board to review the Advancement Committee proposal, which includes the strategic vision, fund development, grounds and maintenance, marketing and communication, curriculum and faculty support, and family engagement. She concluded by reading a letter from a Wilderness Academy student.

Mary Mapes (7260 Coconut, Jenison) - She expressed concerns about the visibility of building signs, particularly at night. She noted that the signs are difficult to read in the evening, as they are too low when following traffic. Additionally, she mentioned that some signs are angled in a way that makes them less noticeable.

Dr. Hartman thanked the public for their time and comments provided to the Board of Education

Approval of Agenda:

Mrs. Postema motioned to discuss the agenda as prepared. Dr. Griffin seconded the motion. The Board of Education voted to approve the agenda as presented with a vote of 7-0.

Action Items:

1. Approval of Minutes:

Mrs. Postema motioned to approve the meeting minutes from the March 11, 2024, Board of Education Meeting with the amendment to include the board policies that were missing from the board policy updates, along with other corrections for typos, minor grammar, and spelling errors, as well as the Closed Session Meeting Minutes. Dr. Reed seconded the motion. The Board of Education voted to approve the minutes as prepared with a vote of 7-0.

Discussion Items:

1. Bond Project Updates -

Dr. Graham briefly shared how the District determines when to go out for bonds and how it investigates projects that will have the most impact on the majority of students, while also identifying the district's

immediate needs. He then introduced Tom VanDeGriend and Thom Danckaert, GMB representatives, who presented updates on the district's bond projects and the current status of each.

Mr. VanDeGriend and Danckaert shared a presentation with the Board of Education. They began by providing some background on how the process started and expressing their excitement for the project. They highlighted the time spent with staff and gathering valuable feedback. The representatives emphasized that the staff have been a pleasure to work with and are excited about the updates. They also shared that they visited several districts across Michigan to explore similar projects to JPS and used insights from those tours to consider when designing the plans.

The presentation covered the Maintenance Storage Barn (located on the western edge of this campus), the Athletic Improvements (such as the relocation of tennis courts and the construction of a new concessions/storage/restroom building), the Maintenance/Transportation Center (having a nice but practical space for both; separate entrances), and the 5th/6th Elementary building.

2. Round Table:

- Theater Promotional Video: The district's marketing and communications team, Ben Huff and Jeremy Gonsior, have done an incredible job putting together a professional and high-quality promotional video for *Seussical, the Musical*.
- OASBA General Meeting: The Ottawa Area School Board Association (OASBA) would like to invite Board Members to the Spring General Membership Meeting on Wednesday, April 2, 2025, beginning at 6:00 p.m. at the Careerline Tech Center (CTC), 13663 Port Sheldon Street. *Hot Topics in School Governance: What's Keeping Board Members Up at Night*. RSVP by tonight.
- Upcoming Meetings: Mon, Apr 21, May 12, Jun 9, Jul 14
- Graduation is May 22, 2025.
- Wilderness Academy:
 - The time and energy the parents of Wilderness Academy invest in the program are appreciated. Their passion is admired, especially their effort in presenting a proposal from the Wilderness Academy Advancement Committee to the Board of Education.
 - There was discussion on the space for the program, teacher retention, and data shared. The board asked for more follow-up on the information and would appreciate further updates.
- Recording Board of Education Meetings: The board briefly discussed the option of recording meetings. It was noted that viewership tends to be low for the entire meeting, with the majority of views occurring at the beginning, typically during recognition and public comment. The board also acknowledged that factors such as the cost of storing the recordings, ensuring ADA compliance, and other considerations would need to be taken into account if the district decided to move forward with recording the meetings.
- Informing Community: The board briefly discussed ways to keep the community informed about district happenings. One thought was creating a "News and Events" page on the website. The district will also look into the possibility of a paper publication or newsletter. However, when this was last considered, the cost was significant (around \$30K to send a newsletter to the community). Families could help by sharing school information with those who want to stay informed, such as grandparents. A concern was raised about sharing too much information, particularly regarding events. The district would need to consider potential safety issues when sharing details about major events to ensure the safety of all attendees. Additionally, it was suggested that the community could access this information through the app that was created a couple of years ago.
- JHS Musical: It was encouraged to see the JHS Musical, *Seussical, the Musical*. It ends this weekend.

Adjournment:

The President of the Board of Education, Dr. Hartman, adjourned the Jenison Public Schools Board of Education meeting at 8:47 pm with acclamation.

Respectfully submitted,

Jen Postema, Secretary
Jenison Public Schools Board of Education

Future Meetings:

Month:	Regular Meeting (held at 6:30 pm):	Workshop (held at 6:00 pm)
April 2025	Mon, Apr 21	
May 2025	Mon, May 12	
June 2025	Mon, Jun 9	
July 2025	Mon, Jul 14	