

**Official Minutes of the  
Oak Park Board of Education District 97,  
970 Madison Street, Oak Park, Cook County, Illinois  
Meeting September 28, 2015**

President Gates called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

Present: Brisben, Gates, O'Connor (6:39 p.m.), Spurlock, Datta, and Spatz  
Absent: Felton  
Also Present: Superintendent Dr. Carol Kelley, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations  
Therese O'Neill, Senior Director of HR Steve Cummins, Senior Director of Special  
Services Mike Padavic, Senior Director of Policy, Procedures and Communication Chris  
Jasculca, Senior Director of Administrative Services Felicia Starks Turner, Director of  
Technology Michael Arensdorff, Director of Curriculum and Instruction Carrie Kamm  
and Helen Wei, and Board Secretary Sheryl Marinier

ROLL CALL

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Brisben moved, seconded by Datta, that the Board of Education move into Executive Session at 6:33 p.m. to discuss (Purchase or Lease of Real Property 5 ILCS 12/2(c)(5)). Roll call vote.

EXECUTIVE  
SESSION

Ayes: Brisben, Datta, O'Connor, Spatz, Gates, and Spurlock  
Nays: None  
Absent: Felton  
Motion passed.

OPEN SESSION

**OPEN SESSION**

Datta moved, seconded by O'Connor, that the Board of Education move into Open Session at 7:00 p.m. All members of the Board in attendance were in agreement. The meeting reconvened at 7:02 p.m.

**SPECIAL REPORTS**

**STUDENT GROWTH AND EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE**

Senior Director of Administrative Services Felicia Starks Turner, Senior Director of Special Services Mike Padavic, Principals Angela Dolezal, Jonathan Ellwanger, and LeeAndrea Khan, came to the table with ECRA representative Dr. John Gatta.

SPECIAL  
REPORTS

The team provided information regarding the role that the ECRA model has and will continue to play in fostering and furthering the district's student growth and evidence-based practices. They shared examples of how the administrators are using these practices to help ensure that the district remain mindful of, and focused on the progress and development of every student. Additionally, they highlighted how the district will utilize the ECRA portal to evaluate existing programs, assess their impact on student learning and determine their overall return on investment.

Dr. Gatta explained that school districts have a lot of challenges that require accurate information to make critical decisions. The ECRA data helps the district stay laser focused on individual students, making sure that all students are noticed and monitored. The first step is to adopt a conceptual framework, and create a personal monitoring system along with the standard benchmarks. Additionally, the data shows how much is being spent on the programs and if they are successful.

It was reported that the partnership with ECRA began in 2013, and has been implemented gradually. This year, the district will be expanding its data group and a plan is in place to review some of the programs and determine impact and return on investment. Data chats are being held three times a year to look for trends and determine how to group the students for interventions and determine the impact of the interventions.

It was noted that there is a story about each one of the schools and a school wide story to be told. The portal allows administrators to look at students who are underachievers and not meeting their potential, so they can focus on them earlier than in the past. For the Special Education students, the tool allows

## STUDENT GROWTH AND EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE (Continued)

administration to identify who has not met benchmarks, so meetings can be coordinated, IEPs can be reviewed, and personalized instruction can be developed to ensure growth. It was noted that the portal allows administration to export data into an excel file, allowing staff to have a full picture of the student's history including attendance, etc. Additionally, it was noted that ECRA data is being used as a tool for the evaluation process.

Dr. Gatta reported that the portal has a variety of reports. Some are a derivative of the growth model. Users of the data would see this information separately, along-side of the other data.

Dr. Kelley shared that the partnership with ECRA is about building the capacity of the life-long learner. She acknowledged the benefits of the partnership and recommended bringing ECRA in several times a year. She noted that the PERA joint committee is just being formed and will begin meeting in mid to late October. It was noted that part of the original plan was to use the ECRA data as a tool for PERA.

It was reported that the next step will be to perform a program analysis to identify which interventions are helping the children the most, and to determine if the interventions are being used correctly.

Board comments included concern about the understandability of the data. Interest was expressed in considering a way to do multi-year levels per student. It was noted that if the district was not using something like ECRA, the transition to PARCC would be problematic.

It was reported that during a June meeting, the Board agreed that members Spatz and Datta would prepare a document that would identify the years that were used as a baseline and if the data includes demographics.

## REVIEW OF DRAFT AUDIT

Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations Therese O'Neill came to the table along with Kelly Kirkman from McGladrey, LLP. It was reported that the auditors came out in August for three weeks. The 2015 audit was very successful with no significant open issues, and no single audit findings. Kirkman walked the Board through the reports, and noted a few new line items.

O'Neill acknowledged the Business Office staff for their continued diligence and detailed work ethics. She noted that this report will be shared with FORC.

Board comments included noting that the pension items are new, and the Board was assured that the district has met all the requirements to the pension plans. It was pointed out that the term "unmodified" replaced "unqualified".

This item will return to the Board for action on October 13, 2015.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Rick Boultinghouse, an Oak Park resident, expressed concern about two free research proposals submitted by member O'Connor. He noted that although it is advertised at no cost to the district, the end goal is to place a fellow in your guidance. He asked the following questions;

- What are your policy goals?
- What are the Leadership for Educational Equity policy goals?
- How will you monitor the research process?
- What outcomes have already been identified and what surefire solutions lie in wait, ready for immediate use?
- What costs would these probable new solutions cost the district and how would these solutions be better than any other solutions available to the district?

Boultinghouse requested clarity on O'Connor's own relationship with LEE, noting that the timing of the proposal creates the appearance that the donation from LEE to his campaign paved its way.

Boultinghouse asked the other board members to ask harder questions about this proposal, and urged caution before accepting this gift.

**PUBLIC COMMENT** (Continued)

John Abbott, an Oak Park resident, noted that increasingly the district is taking a data centered approach to the evaluation of student performance as well as the schools themselves, and asked the following questions; What does the Board see the data accomplishing? What do they acknowledge that data cannot accurately quantify or express? The more finite we become and focused on growth, do we miss the less tangible elements of the educational experience? He referenced an article regarding newly hired teachers who attended school in the district and they testified about the experience they had in the district. They mostly invoked the intangible that would not necessarily show up in the data pie charts. He questioned how much significance does the district put on these intangible experiences?

Additionally, Abbott asked the following questions; What is the district measuring? What does the district think it is measuring? What is the timeframe by which the district will impose these evaluations? How much importance of evaluative significance does the district allocate to the intangible information? He expressed concern about the data gathered by private parties, and encouraged the Board to press on with the gathering of data. He expressed his concern that the public is more mystified, and requested a public statement that clearly identifies what is going on and what the Board plans on accomplishing with the accumulated data, and why it is important to the success of the students.

ACTION ITEMS

**ACTION ITEMS**

**2.1.1 APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE SEPTEMBER 8, 2015 BOARD MEETING**

Brisben moved, seconded by Datta, that the Board of Education of Oak Park District 97, approve the minutes from the September 8, 2015 Board meeting as revised at the table. Roll call vote.

Ayes:               Brisben, Datta, Gates, Spurlock, O'Connor and Spatz  
Nays:               None  
Absent:             Felton  
Motion passed.

**2.2 APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA**

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

- 2.2.1 Approval of Bill List
- 2.2.2 Personnel Action as amended during executive session

Ayes:               Spatz, Brisben, O'Connor, Spurlock, Gates, and Datta  
Nays:               None  
Absent:             Felton  
Motion passed.

**2.3.1 ADOPTION OF THE 2015-2016 BUDGET**

Spatz moved, seconded by Brisben, that the Board of Education of Oak Park District 97, adopt its final 2015-16 budget in the total amount of \$99,985,620 as delineated in the memorandum to the Superintendent dated September 28, 2015. Roll call vote.

Ayes:               Spatz, Brisben, Spurlock, Gates, Datta, and O'Connor  
Nays:               None  
Absent:             Felton  
Motion passed.

**2.3.2 ACCEPTANCE OF BID PACKAGE #3**

Datta moved, seconded by Spurlock, that the Board of Education of Oak Park District 97, award a contract to All American Exterior Solutions (for metal panels and siding) in the amount of \$338,000 and a contract to BOFO Waterproofing (for air barriers) in the amount of \$25,000 as recommended by the Superintendent in her memorandum to the Board dated September 28, 2015. Roll call vote.

It was noted that this bid package came in at \$60,000 less than projected.

Ayes: Datta, Spurlock, Brisben, Gates, Spatz, and O'Connor  
Nays: None  
Absent: Felton  
Motion passed.

**COMMITTEE / WORK GROUP REPORTS**  
**2014 – 2015 PRIORITIES**

**FINALIZE PROJECT FOR INTERN**

The potential research projects to be assigned to the LEE intern were considered. It was noted that this person will have 290 hours to work on designated projects, and will not be utilizing much of the administrations time. The Board members were asked to prioritize the four recommended projects, which will be carefully vetted over the next two board meetings and parameters will be assigned.

- A. **District Profile** - the ad hoc dashboard committee submitted a proposal to the Board in October 2014 for developing a district profile. It was the recommendation of the committee that at least the first phases of the draft profile be implemented soon. There is a good deal of legwork that could be undertaken by a fellow to further the idea of a district profile, ideally without overly burdening staff.
- B. **Community Engagement** – Research into best practices for community engagement from NSBA (National School Boards Association), IASB, and other state school board associations.
- C. **School Day/Year** – Research into standards and practices (and potentially efficacy) for length of the school year and the school day in public schools in Illinois, the nation, and the world.
- D. **Board Performance** – Help the Board understand how it is performing on important measures e.g. proactive public engagement, goal setting and planning, student success, allocation of Board time and resources, and appropriate financial oversight. Work with the Board to identify areas to improve and research best practice in those areas.

After a brief discussion, the Board agreed to rank the projects in the order listed above, noting that the intern should be able to work on more than one project at a time.

It was reported that the next step will be for member O'Connor to interview the candidates. Dr. Kelley expressed interest in participating in the interview process by phone. It was agreed that due to the Open Meetings Act restrictions, only one other Board member could participate in the interview process.

The following timeline was identified.

- By October 7, 2015 – The Board members should email member O'Connor and Dr. Kelley with any and all questions, thoughts etc.
- By October 11, 2015 - Member O'Connor will compile the list (from above) and send it to the Board.
- October 13, 2015 Board meeting agenda – Allocate 20 minutes to further this discussion.
- October 27, 2015 Board meeting agenda - Final details for the projects will be identified.

Concern was expressed about moving forward on the dashboard if the district does not plan to use it. Member Datta, who was the chairperson for the Dashboard Committee will send the final document from the committee to the Board members.

**2.3.2 AGREEMENT TO UTILIZE THE SERVICES OF AN INTERN FOR RESEARCH PURPOSES**

Spurlock moved, seconded by Spatz, that the Board of Education of Oak Park District 97, agree to utilize the services of an intern from the Leadership for Educational Equity (LEE) program for research purposes as defined in the proposal presented by member O'Connor on September 8, 2015. Roll call vote.

Ayes: Spurlock, Spatz, Brisben, Gates, Datta, and O'Connor  
Nays: None  
Absent: Felton  
Motion passed.

**STANDING BOARD COMMITTEES**

**FACILITIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE (FAC)**

It was reported that the liaison report was sent to the Board. They had a very productive meeting, reviewing the bid package #3, which will see a savings of about \$70,000. They discussed why the changes were possible and will consider ways to lower the costs in future bid projects. The committee concurred that the increased expenses that the administration building construction is experiencing are typical in the industry at this time.

**FINANCIAL OVERSIGHT AND REVIEW COMMITTEE (FORC)**

The next FORC meeting is scheduled for November 16, 2015, at which time the committee will review the preliminary audit and review the projections prior to the levy in December. The Board was asked to send additional topics for consideration to member Spatz.

**COMMITTEE FOR LEGISLATIVE ACTION, INTERVENTION, AND MONITORING (CLAIM)**

It was reported that the liaison report was sent to the Board. The CLAIM committee has expressed interest in having a CLAIM member be designated as a liaison to ED-RED. An ED-RED representative will attend the next CLAIM meeting to address this group.

The need for one additional committee member was expressed. The position will be publicized for the next 10 days.

The committee expressed interest in addressing the Board on December 1, 2015.

**ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS**

**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT (FOIA) REQUEST UPDATE**

The recent FOIA requests were shared.

**SCHOOL RECOGNITION APPLICATIONS**

It was reported that this is an annual items requiring Board action. This item will return to the Board on October 13, 2015 for action.

**CONCLUDING ITEMS**

**SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

Dr. Kelley shared an update on her entry plan. She has completed interviews with the Board members, Cabinets, principals, social agencies, Park District and Village Manager. She has met with two of the association presidents, the board president of D200, the Community Foundation, and began to attend faculty meetings, and PTO meetings. She reported that it has been a busy 60 days, and she is planning to share her findings with the Board by the end of October or early November.

Around the end of October, Dr. Kelley will be announcing her first book read. The book is called *Building School 2.0*. by Chris Lehmann. She is planning on doing a “flow chat” through Twitter as well as face to face gatherings to discuss the book. The dates for her listen and learn sessions will be announced soon. Each conversation will be focused on relationship, relevance and rigor.

Dr. Kelley met with member Spurlock last week about her draft goals and evaluation process. She will have something to the Board in time for October 6, 2015 special meeting.

Dr. Kelley will attend a superintendent conference in Springfield on September 30, 2015 and October 1, 2015.

**BOARD CONCERNS / ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Collaboration IGA Governing Board will be meeting on Wednesday. Members Datta and Spatz will be in attendance.

Members Spatz and Datta will meet to follow up on the ECRA report.

Member Datta chaperoned the Beye Outdoor Education event. She expressed her support for the program.

## BOARD CONCERNS / ANNOUNCEMENTS (Continued)

Member O'Connor attended the Irving Curriculum Night and noted that it was a successful event.

It was suggested that the Public Comment portion of the meeting be moved to before the Special Reports. In opposition, it was noted that sometimes the principals and volunteers have to wait a long time for public comment to finish. This item will be discussed during the special meeting on Tuesday, October 6, 2015.

Member O'Connor will not be in attendance during the October 13, 2015 Board meeting.

Interest was expressed in hearing about if the district has any special relationships with preparation programs that are solid and if the district is being deliberate in the placement of student teachers hired permanently by the district with solid faculty members.

Member Brisben was not able to attend the Oak Park River Forest Citizens Council meeting.

Member Brisben was able to attend the Julian curriculum night, which was excellent. He reported on the advancement of the integrated studies curriculum. He complimented the administration on these advancements.

The IGOV report was emailed to the Board. It was noted that the October all jurisdiction meeting was postponed until January 23, 2016. The demographic trends in Oak Park will be completed by a member of that group. Member Spatz volunteered to put together a holistic view of the outstanding Oak Park Government debt.

The IASB West Cook spring meeting will be held on April 25, 2016 with discussion on technology in the schools.

Member Spurlock will meet with the PTO Council president in the near future regarding her position as liaison to that group.

It was suggested that the contract with LEE be shared with the Board for review.

The Park District of Oak Park received the 2015 gold medal during the National Parks and Recreation Conference. This is the first time that they placed in the event since 1969 (initial year). President Gates attended the recent Park District board meeting to celebrate with them.

President Gates sent four documents to the Board members for consideration during the Special Board meeting scheduled on Tuesday, October 6, 2015. He asked that they follow the directions in preparation for the special meeting.

The Board will be meeting at 7 a.m. on Saturday, October 3, 2015 at Lake Street and Elmwood for the Farmers' Market. He will reconfirm the times that board members will be attending. Dr. Kelley will be there for the entire time.

The Board will be receiving their second Board Governance award tomorrow evening during the IASB dinner meeting. President Gates will make sure that past board member Sacks and Dr. Roberts were notified of this award.

## BOARD RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENT

It was agreed that the Board will respond to Mr. Boultinghouse and Dr. Kelley will respond to Mr. Abbott.

## PREVIEW AGENDAS

The draft agendas for October 6, 2015 (special meeting) and October 13, 2015 were reviewed and modifications were suggested.

## ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to conduct, President Gates declared the meeting adjourned at 9:28 p.m.

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Board Vice President

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Board Secretary