

Official Minutes of the  
Oak Park Board of Education District 97  
260 Madison Street, Oak Park  
October 10, 2023 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 6:05 p.m.

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

ROLL CALL

Absent:

Also Present: Superintendent Dr. Ushma Shah, Assistant Superintendents Dr. Luis De Leon & Patrick Robinson, Chief Learning Innovation Officer Dr. Ebony Lofton, Chief Legal and Equity Officer Luis Rodriguez, Chief Technology Officer Michael Arensdorff, Senior Director of Communications Amanda Siegfried, Senior Director of Data Analytics Anna Colaner, Director of Finance Torrance Giles, and Lonya Boose Board Secretary.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Spurlock moved, seconded by Hurd Johnson 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 6:06 p.m.

**OPEN 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 7:03 p.m.

**5. PUBLIC COMMENT**

PUBLIC COMMENT

(Complete recording is available online)

I am Katie Noonan, I'm the teacher librarian at Irving Elementary and I am here on behalf of the entire teacher librarian team for the District. We want to thank you for including the American Library Association's library Bill of Rights to the policy language of the board. Intellectual freedom and the freedom to read is paramount to us and we teach District 97 students about their rights and the harms of censorship.

Every year since Illinois changed and banned books, Oak Park's new book sanctuary ordinance has enhanced our ability to keep books and information safe in our community. Students have the right to read and learn about anti-racism, LGBTQ+, and diversity. Thank you for helping us do our job and uphold our professional responsibilities to our colleagues, students and the community.

Sincerely  
Oak Park District 97 Teacher Librarians.

**6. SUPERINTENDENT UPDATE TO BOARD AND COMMUNITY**

**6.1. SY24 Board Presentation Plan**

Dr. Shah, Superintendent of schools provided an update to the board and community on the SY24 Board presentation plan.

**6.2 Portrait of an Oak Park 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Graduate**

Dr. Shah along with the portrait design leads, Dr. Eboney Lofton and Amanda Siegfried provided an update on staff and community engagement planning for the portrait.

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**7. ACTION ITEMS**

ACTION ITEMS

**7.1 Consent Agenda**

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

- 7.1.1 Approval of Minutes from the September 12, 2023 Board Meeting
- 7.1.2 Approval of Minutes from the September 26, 2023 Committee of the Whole Meeting
- 7.1.3 Bill List
- 7.1.4 Personnel
- 7.1.5 Approval : Curriculum Donation Recycling Request Lincoln & Beye Elementary
- 7.1.6 Approval : Whittier Elementary Outdoor Education Field Trip

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

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**7.2 Discussion and Action**

DISCUSSION  
AND  
ACTION

**7.2.1 Approval: SEIU Memorandum of Understanding: Holiday Pay**

**Background:**

The OP97 Service Employees International Union (SEIU) has been provided and observing the Rosh Hashana, Yom Kippur and Juneteenth Holidays, as have all other employee groups with the District. Although this has been the practice, a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) memorializing the practice was never adopted by the Board although a draft MOU was created in March of 2023. The matter is going before the Board for formal adoption of the MOU.

**Motion:**

Kim moved, seconded by Spurlock that the Board of Education of Oak Park Elementary School District 97 approve the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Between the Board of Education and the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) memorializing the provision of Holidays to SEIU as has been the existing practice.

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

**7.2.2 Approval: Contracts over \$25,000**

**7.2.2.1 Authorization for Agreement | The Greater Good Studio: Portrait of an Oak Park 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Graduate Staff Engagement**

Background:

We are seeking authorization to enter into an agreement with a local design firm, Greater Good Studio, to co-create a plan for our Oak Park District 97 Portrait of an Oak Park Graduate engagement as outlined in their proposal. Benefiting from the organization’s human-centered design approach, we look forward to their partnership in achieving our vision of an inclusive Portrait design process. Through this work, staff will be providing their professional expertise to the initial Portrait design, and will be trained to lead listening sessions where we learn from our community and gather feedback.

In addition, the agreement seeks longer-term engagement with Greater Good Studio to ensure that human-centered design concepts guide the implementation of the Portrait. This work reflects our effort to ensure universal student success, mitigate learning loss and achieve the vision of our equity policy.

Financial Impact:

For the 2023-2024 school year, the projected budget amount for Greater Good Studio engagement is \$74,940.

Revised Motion:

Spurlock moved, seconded by Hurd Johnson that the Board of Education of Oak Park Elementary School District 97 moves to approve the administration’s request to enter into an agreement with The Greater Good Studio for a cost not to exceed \$75,000.

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

**7.2.2.2 Authorization for Agreement | Community Mental Health Board of Oak Park Township**

Background:

The Community Mental Health Board of Oak Park Township is responsible for planning, developing, coordinating, evaluating, and funding mental health, substance abuse, and developmental disability services in Oak Park Township. In its FY20 Strategic Plan, CMHB identified six priority areas, including addressing the underutilization of existing behavioral health services and addressing the gaps in those areas. In February 2018, CMHB in partnership with District 97 issued a special request for proposals to

provide services that address the mental health needs of 6th through 8th-grade students and their families in District 97. The goal of this pilot project was to develop a program model that meets the unique needs of sixth through eighth-grade students who have complex behavioral health and social needs and who require care coordination linking them and their families to appropriate levels of treatment and services.

Through that competitive process, CMHB awarded seed funding to DePaul University in 2019 for \$62,830 for the Mindfulness Matters Program (MMP). CMHB continued funding in 2020 for \$70,000. Funding for the project jumped in 2021 (\$228,334) and 2022 (\$292,533) to pay for the addition of a care coordinator as well as for the expansion from the middle schools to two elementary schools. CMHB is requesting a cost-sharing of the Mindfulness Matters Program (MMP) for the 2023-2024 school year of \$56,250.00

### Financial Impact

For the 2023-2024 school year, the cost for the district’s portion of the Mindfulness Matters program is \$56,250. The ESSER III grant is projected to be the funding source.

### Revised Motion:

Spurlock moved, seconded by Ross Dribin that the Board of Education of Oak Park Elementary School Distric 97 moves to approve the administration’s request to enter into an agreement with Community Health Board of Oak Park Township for a cost not to exceed \$56,250.

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

## **8. DISUSSION ITEMS**

DISCUSSION  
ITEMS

\*Tonight’s presentations and additional information can be viewed by looking at the livestream of the board of education meeting on the district 97 YouTube channel or by viewing the materials in the board packet.

### **8.1 OPTA Memoranda of Agreement “MOA” (action 11.14.23) \***

#### Wrestling:

On November 16, 2021 a proposal for the establishment of a cooperative middle school wrestling team was presented to the Board of Education. On January 25, 2022, a detailed funding plan was shared with the board. Said funding proposal was approved during the February 8, 2022 Board meeting for the 2022-2023 school year. In May of 2023, the Oak Park Teachers’ Association (OPTA) presented a Memorandum of Agreement that aligns the wrestling team provisions with the collective bargaining agreement. This alignment provides for two coaching stipends for the position of Middle School Wrestling Coach - one for Brooks Middle School and one for Julian Middle School - for two teams per Article XVI, H Supplemental Pay, 1. Sports of the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Board of Education and the Oak Park Teachers’ Association.

The administration has reviewed the Memorandum of Agreement and collaborated with OPTA on the final version of the document.

### Robotics:

The robotics program has a robust history and District 97 has a vested interest in its support of the Robotics program. In May of 2023, district administration and the Oak Park Teachers' Association (OPTA) agreed on the establishment of the position of Middle School Robotics Coordinator. This position will be added to Article XVI, H Supplemental Pay, 1. Sports of the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Board of Education and the Oak Park Teachers' Association. OPTA drafted the Memorandum of Agreement based on a collaborative discussion. District administration has reviewed the Memorandum of Agreement and has provided the final version of the document.

The administration is requesting that the Board of Education approve this Memorandum of Agreement at its November 14th board meeting.

### 8.2 Press Plus Issue 111 and 112 Policy Update | First Read (action 11.14.23) \*

Chief Legal and Equity Officer, Luis Rodriguez presented the recommended and suggested changes to Press Plus Issues 111 and 112. The policy revision steps were reviewed before details of changes were discussed.

There were 27 updates with two subcategories:

1. Minor edits to language or legal citations, 21 total;
2. Substantive changes, with additional details discussed during the presentation, 6 total;

We anticipate a large number of recommended edits in the next Policy Issue (113). Any new mandates the district administration is required to adhere to will be acted on in our schools/buildings upon the effective date of those requirements while proposed language works its way into the policy via the review process. The board is expected to take action on tonight's recommendations at the November 14, 2023 Board meeting.

### 8.3 Washington DC Field Trip \*

Dr. Lofton lead a presentation titled, Field Trip Participation: A policy Discussion. Details of Board Policy 6:240 Field Trips were shared, along with Board Policy 4:140 Waiver of Student Fees. This was discussed as Dr. Lofton and Dr. Shah grounded the conversation around Policy 7:12 Ensuring Racial and Educational Equity.

As of September, 540 eighth-grade families expressed interest in attending the SY24 Washington D.C. 8<sup>th</sup> Grade field trip out of state. Of the total, 121 families expressed interest in financial assistance. This number includes 62-families that qualify for either free or reduced lunch and school fees.

### Discussion:

How can the district act on obligations inherent in Policies 6:240, 4:140 and 7:12 to provide a reliable and sustainable funding path to enable students who receive free (and reduced) lunch access to fiend trips?

Recommendations:

Option A:

Reallocate district funds for SY24 to meet the waiver of student fees requirement and leverage sustainable and reliable federal grant funding for in-state trips from SY25 forward. All students who receive free (and reduced) lunch can attend.

Option B:

Do not reallocate district funds. Move forward with the trip and depend solely on outside funding efforts. Some students who receive free (and reduced) lunch maybe able to attend

Option C?

Next Steps:

The district will look further into option A for SY24. Noting this is not a sustainable option, but realizing the field trip has already received board approval for the current school year.

**9. BOARD ASSIGNMENTS**

BOARD  
ASSIGNMENTS

- Board President Kearney provided an update on district efforts around sustainability. At the Committee of the Whole meeting on September 26, 2023 Gary Cuneen will join to discuss C4 partnership. Draft policy language and framing will be shared with the policy committee ahead of this discussion.
- Board member Hurd Johnson, IGOV has a meeting scheduled for this upcoming Saturday, report-out will take place at the next business meeting of the board.
- PTOC will be meeting on Monday October 16.
- Board member Moore, OPEF met last month, to discuss programming. There was also discussion around funding and overview of programs and future efforts.
- Board member Kim, I recently went to the Ed-RED kick-off luncheon. There was much discussion around Artificial Intelligence, “AI” and Migrant Family Support.

**10. CONCLUDING ITEMS**

CONCLUDING  
ITEMS

10.1 Board Remarks

Concluding remarks were incorporated in Board Assignment updates.

**11. EXECUTIVE CLOSED SESSION OF THE BOARD - Resumed**

EXECUTIVE  
CLOSED  
SESSION-  
RESUMED

Spurlock moved, seconded by Kim that the Board move back into executive session for the continued 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 9:21pm

**12. 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 9:47 p.m.

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Board President

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Board Secretary