

Official Minutes of the
Oak Park Board of Education District 97
260 Madison Street, Oak Park
June 28, 2023 Special Meeting

This meeting was open to the public, and held in-person. Board members along with the Administration met in-person.

Meeting was called to order by Board President Kearney at 6:00 p.m.

Roll call was conducted. Vice President Dribin, Ms. Kim, Ms. Moore, Ms. Burns, Ms. Spurlock and President Kearney voiced they were present, constituting a quorum. Also present in Board Chambers were Superintendent Ushma Shah and Chief Legal Officer Luis A. Rodriguez

3. Appointment of Secretary Pro Tempore

Next agenda item was the appointment of Luis A. Rodriguez as the Secretary Pro Tempore in the absence of Board Secretary Lonya Boose. The motion was read into the record by Ms. Kim. Vice President Dribin seconded the motion. Votes in favor: Vice President Dribin, Ms. Kim, Ms. Moore, Ms. Burns, Ms. Spurlock, and President Kearney. No votes opposed. Motion passed 6-0.

4. Public Comment

No Public Comment

5. Action Items

5.1 Consent Agenda

Next was the approval of the consent agenda. The motion to approve the consent agenda was read into the record by Ms. Jung. Vice President Dribin seconded the motion. Votes in favor: Vice President Dribin, Ms. Kim, Ms. Moore, Ms. Burns, Ms. Spurlock, and President Kearney. No votes opposed. Motion passed 6-0.

* Board Member Venus Hurd arrived at the meeting at 6:03 p.m.

5.2 Action

5.2.1 Approval: OPESP Collective Bargaining Agreement 2023-2027

Next item on the agenda was the approval of the OPESP Collective bargaining agreement for 2023 through 2027. Ms. Spurlock read the motion into the record to approve the OPESP Collective bargaining agreement for 2023 through 2027. Vice President Dribin seconded the motion. Votes in favor: Vice President Dribin, Ms. Johnson, Ms. Kim, Ms. Moore, Ms. Burns, Ms. Spurlock, and President Kearney. Motion passed 7-0.

6. Board of Education Retreat

The Board of education then began the retreat portion of their meeting to discuss governance.

President Kearney opened the retreat portion of the meeting by explaining the purpose and the flow of that portion of the meeting, beginning with a grounding exercise. The exercise allowed each individual Board member an opportunity to share why they joined the Board as well as to share some goals they have individually. Some reasons and goals shared during this grounding portion include:

- Being drawn to the Board as a natural progression of being a parent of students in the District;
- Ensuring all students have a great experience in OP97;
- Desire to ensure that the Board of education had a racially diverse membership;
- Representing the voice of renters in the community (in addition to home owners);
- Providing a broad and holistic view to Board membership as opposed to a narrow, issue specific view;
- Maximizing the impact of the Board by thinking outside the box when making decisions; and,
- Using their influence to make positive changes in the community, in particular in the realm of equity for all students.

The next part of retreat focused on the Board as a whole and their long-term goal as an entity looking ahead 4 to 5 years. Prior to individual Board member input, Dr. Shah shared some slides on her goals and the “CixCle” vision she has as the Superintendent over the term of her contract. Some of the points she shared during the 5-minute presentation included:

- Differences between traditional learning versus students truly understanding concepts taught in the schools;
- School improvement logic models;
- How core instruction, operational excellence and community-based learning and entrepreneurialism all come together as part of her leadership plan.

Using this information as a starting point, Board members then shared multiple viewpoints when answering what OP97 would look like in 5 years if we were wildly successful, and what role would the Board play in getting the school District there. Some ideas shared by the Board members during this part of the meeting included:

- Having every student feel super excited and inspired by teachers and staff in the District;
- Having success feel the same for all students including students of privilege and students that are not as privileged, as well as students of all races and socio-economic backgrounds;
- Removing barriers to the things that need to get done, or rather than saying “this is something we cannot do” instead saying here are options to get where we want to go even if it seems there is a current barrier;
- OP97 students being the model in their high schools wherever they end up going;

- Even though the Board may have good ideas that the community may like, being sure to obtain buy-in from the people that do the day to day work;
- Board members supporting Superintendent's ideas, because without that support, the ideas never have an opportunity to materialize and they are ideas that acknowledge stress;
- Board being willing to accept some of the stress and pressure that is going to come from the community when implementing change; and,
- Board more dialed in to the community and more welcoming to its members.

After a short break, the Board used the remainder of the meeting to discuss some of the specific things the Board can begin doing over the next 5 years to improve contributions to the District's progress. Some ideas on the specific contributions the Board can make included:

- Empowering the administration to do whatever they need to do to move the number on outcome progress;
- Community wide forums, and PD for the Board;
- Perhaps an external cabinet for the Superintendent made of non-employees;
- A strategic community engagement plan;
- Board meetings that allow for more Board member input and exchange (perhaps longer meetings, or allowing items that are going to be voted on to be presented over a series of meetings before vote; and,
- Revisiting an annual cadence of meeting topics for the year;

The Board then began to review existing Board committees, the need and usefulness of some of the committees, which ones are required by law, and the idea of perhaps revising whether some of those committees are needed. The Board members provided input on each of the committees discussed and discussed perhaps revisiting the matter again at a future date.

8. Adjournment

After the conclusion of the committee discussion, the Board President asked for a Motion to adjourn. Ms. Spurlock made the motion; Vice President seconded the motion. Those in favor of adjourning said "aye", and there were zero "nays." The "ayes" had it unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 9:16 p.m.