

**OWOSSO PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**Board of Education Minutes**  
**Regular Board Meeting Minutes**  
**April 23, 2025**  
**Report 24-121**

Present: Adam Easlick, Nick Henne, Rick Mowen, Shelly Ochodnicky, John Pappas, Olga Quick  
Absent: Marlene Webster

Vice President Ochodnicky called the Board of Education Meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. The meeting was held at the Washington Campus Administration Building, 645 Alger St, Owosso, MI 48867.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Building Reports**

Superintendent Brooks welcomed Owosso High School Principal, Dr. Dallas Lintner, to recognize the highest honors graduates from the Class of 2025. At Owosso High School, students who have earned a cumulative GPA of 4.0 or higher receive this prestigious recognition. This year, 18 outstanding seniors have achieved this distinction.

These top honor graduates are: Charles Agnew, Zeria Barnhill, Jason Beckwith, Emily Easlick, Gavin Fedewa, Owen Feldpausch, Jenna Lang, Desiree Mofield, Carson Moore, Evan Norton, Joshua Pearl, Sophia Reyes, Matthew Shattuck, Tyler Strauch, Michael Woodworth, Weston Yoho, Danielle Zelenka, and Elijah Zerod-Ely.

Following this, Superintendent Brooks invited Mrs. Carrie Rugenstein, Principal of Lincoln Alternative High School, to recognize Lincoln's top graduates. Six students earned special recognition for their academic achievements at Lincoln: Zackary Beard, Miracle Stewart, Miah Holbrook, Elizabeth Henderson, Da'Shona Wilbourne Little, and Maliki Clifford.

Superintendent Brooks then asked the proud parents, grandparents, and supporters of these remarkable students to rise and be recognized for their essential role in helping these graduates reach such an important milestone.

Superintendent Brooks invited Dr. Dallas Lintner to return to the microphone to help recognize a special student, Warren Regoni. Mr. Brooks expressed how proud the district is of Warren and noted that while he wouldn't spoil the story, it was one worth hearing directly from Warren himself.

Before inviting Warren to speak, Dr. Lintner reflected on Warren's journey. He shared that when Warren transferred to Owosso High School two years ago, there were initial concerns due to past impulsive decisions. However, echoing Principal Rugenstein's earlier message about clean slates and second chances, Dr. Lintner emphasized how proud he is that Owosso was able to offer Warren that opportunity.

From the moment Warren arrived, he made a strong and positive impression, building connections with staff and peers and showing consistent growth. Dr. Lintner described Warren as vibrant, personable, and determined, noting that he has matured into a strong young man. A particularly memorable moment was when Warren's Marine Corps recruiter surprised him during the school day to officially sign his enlistment papers—an emotional and impactful step in his journey.

Warren then addressed the board, sharing his story with honesty and gratitude. He spoke about his past, growing up near Detroit and making mistakes that led to time in juvenile detention. He credited his father as a significant influence in his turnaround, describing how working on cars together helped him heal and find purpose.

After moving to Owosso with his father, Warren joined OHS, worked hard to rebuild his future, and didn't let setbacks define him. Given a third chance by Mr. Brooks and the support of the staff, Warren stayed focused and is now on track to graduate. He proudly announced that he will join the United States Marine Corps as a diesel mechanic—a dream that ties back to his childhood and passion for working on cars.

Warren closed by sharing a touching memory of receiving a 1990 Mustang from his great-grandfather when he was 12, with the promise that he could drive it only if he graduated. He's held onto that goal ever since and is now making it a reality.

Vice President Ochodnický also noted that Warren was recently honored at Kiwanis as a “Rise and Shine” recipient, where the community celebrated his story. She thanked Warren for his courage, growth, and service to our country, closing with heartfelt congratulations on behalf of the entire district.

Superintendent Brooks invited Athletic Director Nick VanDuser and Danica to the microphone to recognize her exceptional accomplishments on and off the court. Danica was named All-State Honorable Mention this past season by multiple prestigious outlets, including the Associated Press, Detroit News, Detroit Free Press, and the Basketball Coaches Association. In addition to these statewide accolades, she also earned Academic All-State honors—an impressive testament to her academic and athletic commitment.

Danica made history this season by becoming the first female athlete at Owosso High School to join the 1,000-Point Club, finishing the season with 1,011 career points. But her achievements didn't stop there. She set or broke several records, including:

- Most points in a single season: 453 (previous record: 375)
- Free throws attempted in a season: 166 (previous: 111)
- Free throws made in a season: 130 (previous: 89)
- Career 3-pointers made: 84 (previous: 62)
- Career free throws made: 259 (previous: 136)

Danica is a three-sport varsity athlete, competing in volleyball, basketball, and softball throughout high school. She's been a varsity letter winner every year in all three sports. In basketball, she was named Flint Metro League First Team All-Conference. Also, she led the entire league in scoring—a remarkable achievement given the depth of talent across the conference.

Danica thanked her parents, Cathy and Jeremy Dwyer, for their unwavering support.

Superintendent Brooks introduced Darrick Huff and Dave Warner, representatives from Spicer and Clark Construction, who reviewed the facility assessment and community feedback gathered over the past several months. The team evaluated all district buildings beginning in January 2025 and identified over 300 scope items totaling approximately \$120 million in infrastructure needs. This study provides a far more comprehensive view than previous sinking fund assessments.

The proposed plan would involve spreading improvements across three years—2027, 2028, and 2029—at approximately \$11 million annually, starting with examples like 27 scope items at Bryant Elementary.

The district held 12 public meetings in March and April and received input from over 600 community participants. Feedback was gathered using interactive methods, such as participants placing sticky notes on projects they supported.

Community priorities were categorized into four quadrants based on support levels. Projects with strong support included:

- HVAC/boiler upgrades
- Parking lot and sidewalk replacements
- Roof replacements
- Restroom renovations
- Asbestos abatement (non-hazardous, but proactive removal supported)

Projects with low support included competitive field upgrades and artificial turf at Willman Field.

The community is aligned with improvements that provide warm, safe, and dry learning environments, supporting infrastructure that directly impacts student and staff well-being.

Superintendent Brooks outlined the timeline moving forward:

- May: Finalize scope and develop ballot language with PFM (Public Financial Management)
- Before Memorial Day: Submit to the Department of Treasury for review
- May Board Meeting: Present final proposal for board review and future action
- June: Vote to place bond proposal on the November ballot

The proposal would involve no increase in the current 4.7 mills tax rate, only an extension from 2046 to 2053.

Vice President Ochodnicky shared feedback from a Kiwanis presentation, noting strong community support and appreciation for the inclusive process. Over 600 participants engaged meaningfully. She reinforced that this is a responsible ask, aligned with regional standards, and not an extraordinary request.

Treasurer Quick asked whether a detailed project implementation timeline could be shared publicly. Darrick Huff confirmed that a yearly phased plan will be developed, outlining specific projects by location and category (e.g., classroom, bathrooms), based on community input, district priorities, and funding availability. Although subject to minor changes, the bond application will include transparent, itemized details.

Madison Strauss presented this month's student representative report, highlighting a variety of exciting updates and accomplishments across OHS.

The National Honor Society will host a car wash fundraiser at Advance Auto Parts on April 25 from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. All proceeds will support upcoming service projects led by NHS members.

The OHS Drama Club is preparing for their next production, *Puffs*. Auditions will be held on April 29 at 3:00 p.m., and all students interested in performing are encouraged to participate.

Evelyn Harrand and Barrett Yoho have been slated as Regional Secretaries for FFA. Even more exciting, Paige Davis and Aubrey Boggs have been elected State FFA Officers for the 2025–2026 term. Paige will be serving her second term, this time as State President.

Vibrissa School of Cosmetology will hold an open house for incoming students on April 22 at 6:30 p.m. This event is an excellent chance for students to explore cosmetology as a career path and connect with program staff.

Prom season is here, and this year's Prom Court has been announced. Prom Queen candidates are Zeria Barnhill, Kyle Ashley Bermudez, Lauren Collard, Desiree Mofield, and Danielle Zelenka. Running for Prom King are Wyatt Boggs, Simon Erfourth, Mason Maurer, Carson Moore, and Weston Yoho.

Mr. Klapko's business class took a field trip to a Detroit Tigers game, where they explored the business operations behind professional sports.

The recent Pure Pro Wrestling fundraiser and school assembly, hosted by the OHS Drama Club, was a huge success.

At last week's Blue and Gold Awards, 73 seniors were honored for achieving a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or higher. In addition, 18 students were presented with Starfish Awards for their meaningful contributions to the school community.

Ms. Strauss concluded her report congratulating junior Gabi Hufnagel, who broke the school record in the 300-meter hurdles.

### **Board Correspondence**

Superintendent Brooks began his report by thanking Dr. Dwyer for stepping in to lead last month's board meeting in his absence. He announced that Staff Appreciation Week will be celebrated districtwide from May 5–9. While the week coincides with National Teacher Appreciation Week, Owosso takes the opportunity to recognize all staff members, with special treats and surprises planned throughout the week.

Owosso Public Schools was recently honored with eight "Best of the Best" awards by the *Argus Press*, including:

- **Best Daycare:** Bentley Bright Beginnings
- **Best Elementary School:** Central Elementary
- **Best Principal:** Mrs. Bridgit Spielman
- **Best Teacher:** Mrs. Jackie Buza at Emerson
- **Best Law Enforcement Officer:** Officer Dave Stone
- **Best Coach:** JoEllen Smith (Girls Softball)
- **Best Middle School:** Owosso Middle School
- **Best High School:** Owosso High School

Photos are being taken this week to celebrate the winners. Officer Stone was so excited that he took the evening off, with Officer Schmitz filling in.

Mr. Brooks also acknowledged Administrative Professionals Day on April 23, extending heartfelt thanks to Stephanie and all office managers for their outstanding work and keeping operations smooth across the district.

Several academic and extracurricular highlights were shared. OHS teacher Kevin Moore received the "Heroes in Education" award from Saginaw Valley State University, honoring alumni who serve the profession with distinction. This week, a professional video recognizing this achievement will be shared in board communication.

Graduation-related information has been shared via a newsletter from Dr. Lintner, and all event dates and locations are being distributed to board members again for easy reference.

In athletics, both the varsity boys' and girls' basketball teams were recognized for academic excellence. The boys earned Academic All-State with a collective GPA of 3.81—the second highest in Division II—while the girls also earned Academic All-State with a 3.71 GPA. Brooks emphasized their success both on the court and in the classroom.

Senior Athletic Awards will be held on Monday, May 19, at 7:30 p.m. in the PAC. Meanwhile, middle school students left at 2 a.m. for their Washington, D.C. trip and arrived safely. Parents are engaging through livestreams of key moments, such as the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier

ceremony. The 8th Grade Awards Ceremony is scheduled for May 31, from 6–7 p.m., followed by the Spring Fling dance from 7–9 p.m.

Lincoln High's zoology class will visit the Detroit Zoo on May 5, and the school has achieved Level 1 Green School certification. Fifteen alternative education students will attend the MAEO Stars College and Career Competition at Delta College on May 15, competing in areas like art, critical thinking, and community service.

Central School's unified basketball team is visiting elementary schools and planning a Mother's Day Makeover event on May 9. At Bryant, a recent Family Fun Night drew over 700 attendees with support from 50 volunteers. The school also launched a Morning Mile Club for second graders and recently held 3rd and 4th grade concerts at the PAC.

Recorder concerts are taking place across the district, and Emerson is hosting its own Family Fun Night and Book Fair this Friday, with active PTO and parent support. Emerson also received a landscaping refresh for Earth Day thanks to Sunburst Gardens. Students continue to earn rewards at the Trojan Store through PBIS.

Bentley Bright Beginnings has launched its first-ever PTO, hosted a movie night attended by 15 families, and sent four teachers to an early childhood conference. The Bryant PTO recently sponsored their treat trolley.

Food service is gearing up for the Meet Up and Eat Up summer meal program, which will serve thousands of meals at Bryant, Emerson, and the secondary campus.

Operations teams are preparing sports fields and facilities for spring events, drawing praise from visitors. Transportation recently received a long-awaited bus ordered back in October, which took its maiden trip transporting middle school students to the airport. New Tyler Technologies systems are being installed this week, with training for drivers underway and full implementation expected by fall. The district also hired a new bus driver.

Lastly, Brooks shared a heartwarming update. Lowell George, a postcard pen pal from Stockton, California, sent a thank-you note after receiving an Owosso swag bag. His note read: "Thank you, your friend, Lowell in Stockton." It was a delightful surprise that capped off a hectic and rewarding month.

Dr. Dwyer shared several key updates during her recent report. Spring testing is currently taking place across all district levels. She extended gratitude to the testing coordinators—Lance Little, Carrie Warning, Penney Wakefield, Gizelle Ross, and Leah Collins—as well as elementary principals and the technology department for their vital collaboration and attention to detail, contributing to a smooth testing process.

The staff participated in a book discussion last Thursday after school to wrap up March, Reading Month. About 20 staff members joined in on this engaging conversation, with special thanks to Erin Moore for leading the event and fostering a reflective and energizing atmosphere.

The second round of elementary literacy pilot programs will conclude next week. Afterward, teachers will engage in final discussions to decide which program best supports student needs. Once a decision is made, planning will begin for summer implementation and fall professional development to ensure a successful rollout.

In support of writing instruction, Jenny LaMay has played a central role in implementing The Writing Revolution strategies. She worked with OMS Science and Social Studies teachers earlier this year and has recently begun supporting elementary teachers post-spring break. Teachers have had the opportunity to observe Jenny modeling strategies in their classrooms, and positive feedback has been noted. The district plans to expand this initiative into the 2025–2026 school year.

Dr. Dwyer announced that Owosso Public Schools will host the Michigan Math Recovery Specialists Network at Emerson Elementary on May 20, 2025, from 12:00 to 3:00 PM. The visit will include classroom observations, demonstrations of math intervention strategies, and a structured debrief. Around 30 guests from across the state are expected to attend, providing an opportunity to showcase the district's math interventions and collaborate with educators statewide.

### **Public Participation**

Vice President Ochodnický stated that the Board of Education is a public body and recognizes the value of public comment on education issues. Time has been included in the meeting's agenda for public participation. Members of the audience were reminded they should announce their name and group affiliation when applicable and to limit their participation time to three minutes or less. Comments should be directed to the Board and be relevant to the business of the Board of Education. This is not an opportunity for dialogue with the Board of Education. The rules of common courtesy should also be observed.

The following participants addressed the Board:  
None

### **For Action**

- Moved by Easlick, supported by Mowen, to approve March 26, 2025, Regular Meeting Minutes, April 9, 2025, Committee Meeting Minutes, Current Bills, and Financials as presented. Secretary Henne conducted a roll call vote. Ayes: Pappas, Quick, Henne, Easlick, Mowen and Ochodnický. Nays: None. Webster was absent. Motion carried unanimously.

### **For Future Action**

- The Board will be asked to authorize the Superintendent to sign the proposed contract with ESS Midwest (formerly PCMI/Willsub) for the 2025-2026 fiscal year. Moved by Mowen, supported by Easlick, to move to For Action at the May 28, 2025, Regular Board Meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

- The Board will be asked to authorize the Superintendent to proceed with the Server System Upgrade project, which will significantly improve both safety and operational efficiency. Moved by Mowen, supported by Henne, to move the Server System Upgrade Project from Future Action to For Action and approve the Server System Upgrade Project. Secretary Henne conducted a roll call vote. Ayes: Pappas, Quick, Henne, Easlick, Mowen and Ochodnicki. Nays: None. Webster was absent. Motion carried unanimously.
- The Board will be asked to approve the Communicable Disease Health Material. Moved by Easlick, supported by Mowen, to move to For Action at the May 28, 2025, Regular Board Meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

### **For Information**

Superintendent Brooks announced the following personnel changes:

### **Accepted Positions**

Alisanne Gordon has accepted the Sub Monitor position at Bryant.

Hannah Spencer has accepted the Monitor position at Bryant.

Dannielle DeFrenn has accepted the Custodian position at OMS.

Jordan Lanning has accepted the Custodian position at Bryant/Central.

### **Resignations**

RyAnne Hetfield, Paraprofessional at Bryant has resigned effective March 28, 2025.

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The following participants addressed the Board:  
None

### **Board Comments**



Trustee Mowen shared his appreciation for the recent Blue and Gold event, which honored top students in the district. He expressed how impressed he was by the 18 students who presented their Starfish Awards, noting their eloquence and the leadership qualities they displayed. He also acknowledged the few who were briefer, appreciating their sincerity nonetheless.

He emphasized these students' remarkable talent and dedication in academics, athletics, and extracurricular involvement. He highlighted their ability to multitask and show up with commitment, which future employers highly value, traits he believes are essential for strong leadership.

Trustee Mowen also thanked Mr. DeLong for safely escorting the eighth-grade students to Washington, D.C., and back. He shared a personal story about his granddaughter, who had the honor of helping place a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. He described how meaningful and dignified the experience was for her and all the students involved. He noted how powerful it is for young people to experience living history and witness the sacrifices made for our country firsthand.

Looking ahead to next month's graduation of 180 seniors, Trustee Mowen again emphasized the importance of education in shaping individuals and the nation. He reflected on Michigan's long-standing commitment to public education, even before statehood, and praised the district's approach—teaching the basics and encouraging students to think critically, ask questions, and engage with the world thoughtfully.

He closed by expressing his pride in the district and the strong foundation it provides, stating that these young people are well-prepared for the future as Owosso graduates.

Trustee Easlick extended heartfelt congratulations to the top graduates from Owosso High School and Lincoln High School—18 and 6 students, respectively—recognizing their hard work and dedication.

He gave a special shout-out to Warren, applauding him for overcoming challenges and finishing his senior year strong, including earning straight A's. He also congratulated Danica Dwyer for her many accomplishments, noting her impressive involvement.

Lastly, he thanked Madison for consistently informing the board about everything happening at the high school level.

Treasurer Quick echoed the congratulations extended to the graduates of Lincoln High School and Owosso High School, offering a special acknowledgment to Warren. Although she doesn't know him personally, she admired his story and hoped he might one day share it with others, as she believes it could have a powerful impact.

She reflected on Superintendent Brooks' theme of "*our story*," noting how deeply it resonated during the Starfish Award presentations. The students' reflections highlighted the importance of relationships; many recognized individuals who had supported them since elementary school. She emphasized that these everyday connections make a lasting difference in students' lives.

Treasurer Quick congratulated Danica, Mr. Moore, and the Lincoln High School team on their accomplishments.

On a personal note, she shared her excitement and pride as a mom—her son, a member of a Milwaukee community choir, will be performing as part of an ensemble at the NFL Draft. His performance will air on the NFL Network at 6:39 p.m.

Secretary Henne noted that much of what he wanted to say had already been shared. However, he added how exciting it is to hear about all the recent athletic achievements and student field trips, especially the Washington, D.C. trip—an incredible opportunity and honor for those involved.

He took a moment to wish a happy Administrative Professionals Day to Stephanie and all others who help keep things running behind the scenes.

Secretary Henne also expressed enthusiasm about finally receiving the facilities assessment report. Though he had seen an early preview, he's looking forward to reviewing the full report and is eager to help move that work forward.

Vice President Ochodnický shared a heartfelt reflection, noting that after raising five children through the district, she's attended her fair share of recorder concerts—some of which were, as she fondly put it, “painful but sweet.” She recently attended her granddaughter's fourth-grade concert at Central and was thoroughly impressed. She praised music teacher Sophie Hilliard for her professionalism, organization, and the way she had the students well-prepared and dressed for the performance. It was a memorable and impressive event.

She also shared a personal story about her daughter, who went on the Washington, D.C. trip years ago and still vividly remembers visiting the Holocaust Museum. That experience left a lasting impact, and Vice President Ochodnický expressed her appreciation for the tradition, which continues today. She emphasized how meaningful it is for students, especially those who may not often leave the community, to have such powerful learning experiences.

She closed by thanking everyone involved in making those opportunities possible.

#### **Meeting Updates:**

- May 14: Board of Education Committee of the Whole Meeting, 5:30PM, Washington Campus Conference Room 112
- May 28: Board of Education Regular Meeting, 5:30PM, Washington Campus Gymnasium
- June 11: Board of Education Committee of the Whole Meeting, 5:30PM, Washington Campus Conference Room 112

#### **Important Upcoming Dates:**

April 26: OHS Prom, 6:00PM, Golden Glow in St. Charles

April 29: OHS Band Concert, 7:00PM, PAC  
April 30: OMS Band Concert, 7:00PM, PAC  
May 9: Cabaret, 7:00PM, PAC  
May 10 Cabaret, 7:00PM, PAC  
May 11: OHS Art Show, 11AM-1PM, PAC  
May 11: Cabaret, 2:00PM, PAC  
May 14: 5Th Grade Combined Band Concert, 7:00PM, PAC  
May 16: OEA Retirement Banquet & Celebration, 5:00PM, Comstock Inn & Conference Center  
May 19: Senior Cookout, 10:00AM, OHS Courtyard  
May 19: OHS Athletic Awards, 7:30PM, PAC  
May 20: OHS Honors Convocation, 7:00PM, PAC  
May 21: OHS Graduation, 7:00PM, Willman Field, May 22nd, Rain Date  
May 23: Half Day for All Students: Teacher Work Day (optional)  
May 26: No School: Memorial Day  
May 27: Bentley Bright Beginnings Preschool Graduation, 6:00PM, PAC  
May 29: LHS Graduation, 6:00PM, PAC  
May 31: 8th Grade Awards Ceremony, 6:00PM, PAC  
May 31: Spring Fling Dance, 7:00PM, OHS Gymnasium

### **Closed Session**

Moved by Mowen, supported by Quick, to move into closed session at 6:37 p.m. for contract negotiations. Motion carried unanimously.


Moved by Quick, supported by Pappas, to move back into open session at 7:12 p.m. for the purpose of adjournment. Motion carried unanimously.

### **Adjournment**

Moved by Mowen, supported by Easlick, to adjourn at 7:13 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Minutes recorded by Stephanie Goetzinger

Respectfully submitted,

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Nick Henne, Secretary

