

**OWOSSO PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**Board of Education**  
**Regular Board Meeting Minutes**  
**July 24, 2024**  
**Report 24-18**

Present: Adam Easlick, Nick Henne, Ty Krauss (virtual via cell phone), Rick Mowen, Shelly Ochodnicky, Olga Quick,  
Absent: Marlene Webster

President Mowen 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**

**Board Correspondence**

Superintendent Brooks started his report with several updates. He expressed pride in the success of the summer food service program, “Meet Up, Eat Up,” which has served over 13,217 meals as of Monday—5,000 more than last year. The program is thriving, thanks in part to grants that allow for the inclusion of locally grown produce. This initiative has provided fresh fruits and vegetables from our area.

In the food service realm, recent audits, including an Administrative Review and an SEC Foods Service Program audit, yielded excellent feedback. Brooks extended his gratitude to Joy Hartman and her team for their hard work.

Special recognition was also given to the maintenance and custodial teams, particularly Mr. Hendrickson, for preparing the facilities for the upcoming school year. All summer projects are on track, with preparations complete by the August 22 opening. The technology team has been busy installing new copiers and updating technology to ensure everything is ready for teachers' return.

Regarding infrastructure, the gym renovations at Bryant School, funded by the sinking fund, are nearly finished, and the replacement of the high school's hot water boiler is expected to be completed before school starts.

Looking ahead, all administrators will be back full-time as of August 1, and preparations for the new school year are in full swing, including new teacher orientations and back-to-school events. The Board packet will include a detailed schedule of these events.

Brooks also thanked the teams involved in staffing assignments and updates for their efforts in interviewing and ensuring all staff are ready for the new school year. An update on attendance is in progress and will be presented at the upcoming administrators' retreat before being shared with the Board and community.

Lastly, after extensive negotiations, Superintendent Brooks announced a tentative agreement with the Owosso Education Association. He thanked the Owosso team and administrative negotiators for their hard work. The final details will be brought to the Board for approval at the August 14 meeting.

Dr. Cathy Dwyer reported that Summer School is flourishing across all grade levels. At the elementary level, around 70 students are consistently attending, with teachers boosting engagement through enjoyable STEM activities. Maggie Gobel is delivering targeted small-group instruction to improve foundational reading skills using the UFLI program. After assessing incoming third graders with the Core Phonics Screener, she expanded her efforts to include second, fourth, and fifth graders. For the past two weeks, Maggie has worked daily with approximately 17 students, offering explicit reading and spelling instruction, and has observed significant progress. To gauge their growth, she will reassess students with the Core Phonics Survey in the final week.

Middle school students are actively participating in a dynamic summer program that includes hands-on projects such as designing and 3D printing pencil holders, creating solar ovens to cook s'mores, dissecting owl pellets, and constructing windmills. They've also explored virtual reality, designed a weighted prize wheel to study probability, and learned about chemical and physical changes through cookie-making and ice cream production. Lincoln had 46 students enrolled in summer school, 36 participating virtually and in person. So far, 20 courses have been completed, earning ten credits, and 40 more courses are underway.

At the high school level, Session One had 75 students enrolled, with 55 half-credits earned. Session Two included 53 students, some of whom were also in Session One, and 32 half-credits have been earned so far. Secondary students are also benefiting from the meet-up, eat-up program.

We are updating our teacher evaluation tool in collaboration with Standards for Success to align with new state requirements. The previous evaluation terms ("Ineffective, Minimally Effective, Effective, Highly Effective") have been replaced with "Needing Support, Developing, and Effective."

Despite rain on July 10th, the event was successfully moved indoors, with 132 children attending. Upcoming events include an August 7th Hawaiian-themed night sponsored by Bryant's PTO, featuring hot dogs, chips, games, and promotions for bus drivers and Littlest Trojan Orientation. Plans are underway for an autograph night with Coach Tyner and the football team. Recent events have added a Story Walk and food bags, contributing to increased participation, with efforts to boost attendance for the final three events.

The Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS) program is offering free professional development for K-6 teachers in Michigan. This two-year commitment involves eight units and approximately 150 hours of training through online modules, readings, and Zoom meetings. The teacher union has negotiated grant funding to compensate teachers for completing this training. Currently, 22 teachers are participating, collectively having completed 46 units.

New Teacher Orientation is scheduled for August 13-14, starting with breakfast at Fortitude, team-building activities, and a tour of Owosso. New teachers will meet with department heads on the second day to learn about curriculum and teaching resources. Professional Development for all staff will occur from August 19-21, with a comprehensive list of options to ensure meaningful and relevant learning. Additionally, the Littlest Trojans Bus Orientation Event on August 21 will allow kindergarten students and their parents to ride bus routes in preparation for the new school year.

### **Public Participation**

President Mowen 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:  
Anthony Buza

### **For Action**

- Moved by Easlick, supported by Henne, to approve the June 26, 2024, Budget Hearing Minutes, June 26, 2024, Regular Meeting Minutes, Current Bills, and Financials as presented. President Mowen conducted a roll call vote. Ayes: Easlick, Henne, Mowen, Ochodnicky, Quick. Nays: None. Motion carried unanimously.
- Moved by Quick, supported by Easlick, to approve the course listings presented for the Middle School, High School, and Lincoln High School for the 2024-25 school year. Motion carried unanimously.
- Moved by Quick, supported by Ochodnicky, to authorize the District to purchase two used 77-passenger buses and lease one additional bus. Motion carried unanimously.
- Moved by Quick, supported by Henne, to adopt the Michigan High School Athletic Association membership resolution for the year beginning August 1, 2024, through July 31, 2025. Motion carried unanimously.
- Moved by Easlick, supported by Quick, to resolve that the Board of Education approve the July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025, Tentative Agreement between the Owosso Education Support Personnel Association and the Owosso Board of Education. President Mowen conducted a roll-call vote. Ayes: Easlick, Henne, Ochodnicky, Quick. Mowen abstained due to a conflict of interest. Motion carried.

- Moved by Quick, supported by Easlick, that the Board of Education approve the hiring of the following certified staff:

| Name           | Building/Grade           | Recommending Administrator  | Salary Schedule Step   |
|----------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| Leah Collins   | LHS/Social Studies       | Superintendent Steve Brooks | BA Step 1<br>\$43,332  |
| Sarah Covert   | Emerson/2nd              | Superintendent Steve Brooks | BA Step 2<br>\$43,956  |
| Jeffrey Proulx | Bryant/Special Education | Superintendent Steve Brooks | MA Step 13<br>\$79,991 |
| Erin Pitkowicz | Bryant/5th               | Superintendent Steve Brooks | MA Step 5<br>\$55,534  |

Motion carried unanimously.

### **For Future Action**

- The Board will be asked to approve the Tax Levy (L-4029) for 2024 as presented and as discussed during the Budget hearing at the regularly scheduled Board meeting on June 26th.
- The Board will be asked to approve the out-of-state travel for Owosso Middle School students and staff on a Washington D.C. trip to the Capital of the United States on April 23-25, 2025.
- The Board will be asked to authorize the purchase of High School Choir Uniforms with a General Fund cost not to exceed \$12,000.

### **For Information**

Superintendent Brooks announced the following personnel changes:

### **Accepted Positions**

- Karla McCurdy has accepted the Sub Bus Driver position.
- Ginger Strittmatter has accepted the Sub Food Service worker position.
- Samantha Sutphen has accepted the Paraprofessional position at OHS.
- Kimberly Wahl has accepted the Monitor position at Emerson.

### **Resignations**

- Jennifer Maier, Teacher at OHS resigned effective July 16, 2024.

### **YMCA Memorandum of Understanding**

The Board was informed that the Shiawassee Family YMCA and Owosso Public Schools renewed their partnership for after-school and before-school childcare for the 24-25 school year.

### **Emergency Operations Plan**

The Board was informed that the Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) was updated and reviewed for each school building in the District. The Emergency Operations Plan for Owosso Public Schools aims to reduce the risk to life and health and promote the safety of students, staff, parents, county employees, visitors, and emergency services personnel. This plan sets forth the procedures and planning guidelines for responding to an incident within the School District. Use of this plan is coordinated with local responding agencies and personnel. The District's Homeland Security expert created the Emergency Operations Plan, Mr. Tom Mynsberge, and tailored it to each of the districts in Shiawassee County.

### **Back to School Events**

The Board was informed of the Back to School Events for the 2024-25 school year.

### **Public Participation**

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The following participants addressed the Board:

None

### **Board Comments**

Trustee Henne questioned whether the choir uniforms should be brought up for action and a vote tonight. He also expressed gratitude for the back-to-school events and calendar, noting that both are helpful and look great. He hopes everyone is enjoying their last few weeks of summer vacation.

Trustee Ochodnicky reiterated that the changes to Title IX will take effect in the first week of August. She expressed concerns about the boys' and girls' bathroom arrangements, emphasizing the need for mindful planning as the changes approach. She acknowledged the District's efforts to address these concerns but remains worried about the impending implementation. Additionally, she thanked the grounds and maintenance teams for their hard work, noting the

unusually rainy summer in Michigan and commending them for keeping everything looking good despite the challenges.

Secretary Krauss thanked Superintendent Brooks for making it possible for him to participate via cell phone, citing a busy summer of events and conferences that prevented him from attending some Board meetings. He also expressed gratitude to the administration, staff, and teachers for their hard work preparing for the upcoming school year and looks forward to a great 2024-25 school year.

Treasurer Quick welcomed the new staff and praised the success of the Meet Up and Eat Up program. She expressed high regard for the summer school program and is looking forward to the upcoming attendance update.

Trustee Easlick thanked everyone involved in the negotiations for their hard work in finalizing the agreements. He welcomed the new teachers to the District and looks forward to meeting them at the new teacher orientation. He also thanked all district staff working over the summer to keep operations running smoothly.

President Mowen warmly welcomed and congratulated the new hires, expressing his pleasure in seeing former students like Leah return to the team. He acknowledged the increasing difficulty of filling these positions but affirmed that their commitment to hiring only the best continues to be validated.

#### **Upcoming Board Meeting Dates**

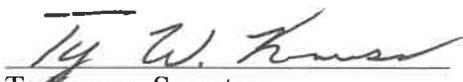
- August 14: Board of Education Committee of the Whole Meeting 5:30 p.m., Washington Campus Gymnasium
- August 28: Board of Education Regular Meeting 5:30 p.m., Washington Campus Gymnasium

#### **Adjournment**

Moved by Quick, supported by Ochodnicky, to adjourn at 6:32 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Minutes recorded by Stephanie Goetzinger.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Ty Krauss, Secretary