

OWOSSO PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Board of Education Minutes
Regular Board Meeting Minutes
January 22, 2025
Report 24-94

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

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

Election of Officers

Superintendent Brooks shared the process that the Board of Education uses for the annual election of officers. He explained that he would open the nominations for Board President by taking the first nominations. The newly elected President would use the same process for Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer offices. When the elections are completed, the meeting will continue with the new officers in place.

Superintendent Brooks opened the nominations for the office of Board President. Mr. Pappas nominated Mrs. Ochodnicky for the office of Board President, and Mrs. Ochodnicky accepted the nomination. Mr. Henne nominated Mrs. Webster for the office of Board President, and Mrs. Webster accepted the nomination. Mr. Mowen nominated himself for the office of Board President and accepted the nomination. There were no other nominations for Board President. Mrs. Quick moved to close the nominations for Board President, and Mr. Henne supported the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Mr. Henne, Mrs. Quick, Mr. Easlick, and Mrs. Webster voted to elect Mrs. Webster as Board President. Mrs. Ochodnicky and Mr. Pappas voted for Mrs. Ochodnicky as Board President. Mr. Mowen voted for himself as Board President. With a four-vote majority, Mrs. Webster was elected Board President effective immediately through January 1, 2026.

President Webster opened the nominations for the office of Board Vice President. President Webster nominated Mr. Mowen for the office of Board Vice President, and Mr. Mowen accepted the nomination. Mr. Pappas nominated Mrs. Ochodnicky for the office of Board Vice President, and Mrs. Ochodnicky accepted the nomination. There were no other nominations for Vice President. Mr. Mowen moved to close the nominations for Vice President, and Mrs. Quick supported the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Mrs. Ochodnicky, Mr. Henne, Mr. Pappas, and Mr. Easlick voted to elect Mrs. Ochodnicky as Board Vice President. Mr. Mowen, Mrs. Quick, and President Webster voted to elect Mr. Mowen as Board Vice President. With a four-vote majority, Mrs. Ochodnicky was elected Board Vice President effective immediately through January 1, 2026.

President Webster opened the nominations for the office of Board Secretary. President Webster nominated Mr. Henne for the office of Board Secretary, and Mr. Henne accepted the nomination. Mr. Pappas nominated Mrs. Quick for the office of Board Secretary, and Mrs. Quick accepted the nomination. There were no other nominations for Secretary. Mrs. Quick moved to close the nominations for Secretary, and Mr. Mowen supported the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Mr. Henne, Mr. Easlick, Vice President Ochodnický, Mr. Mowen, President Webster, and Mrs. Quick voted to elect Mr. Henne as Board Secretary. Mr. Pappas voted to elect Mrs. Quick as Board Secretary. With a six-vote majority, Mr. Henne was elected Board Secretary effective immediately through January 1, 2026.

President Webster opened the nominations for the office of Board Treasurer. Vice President Ochodnický nominated Mrs. Quick for the office of Board Treasurer, and Mrs. Quick accepted the nomination. There were no other nominations for Treasurer. Mr. Mowen moved to close the nominations for Treasurer, and Vice President Ochodnický supported the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Secretary Henne, Mr. Easlick, Vice President Ochodnický, Mr. Mowen, President Webster, Mrs. Quick, and Mr. Pappas voted to elect Mrs. Quick as Board Treasurer. With a unanimous vote, Mrs. Quick was elected Board Treasurer effective immediately through January 1, 2026.

Building Reports

Superintendent Brooks began the evening by honoring teacher Michele Betts, whom he has had the privilege of working with for a long time. He introduced Owosso Middle School Principal Richie Collins to celebrate Michele's retirement.

Principal Collins highlighted Michele's 31 years of dedicated service at Owosso Middle School, where she taught PE, science, and math. Beyond her teaching roles, Michele ran the after-school tutoring program for many years, provided home-based instruction, and served as the building AR for several years. Her involvement extended to extracurricular activities, coaching powderpuff teams (which she often led to victory), and supporting students in numerous ways. Collins emphasized Michele's passion for working with ATL students, describing it as a tremendous asset to the school. He concluded that Michele plans to spend her retirement enjoying time with friends and family, traveling, volunteering at the hospital, and attending MSU events and tailgates.

Michele introduced her family and thanked them before sharing a few heartfelt words. Superintendent Brooks gave her a gift from the Board of Education for her years of service. Vice President Ochodnický thanked Michele, mentioning that several of her children had been Michele's students. Secretary Henne congratulated and thanked Michele, reminiscing about his time as her student and noting that she had been one of his favorite teachers.

President Webster shared a meaningful story about getting to know Michele during the COVID-19 pandemic. She recalled Michele's unwavering dedication to her students as she delivered daily lunches to hundreds of kids. Michele arrived daily to ensure her students were cared for despite everyone being sent home. "It really showed how much you cared about your kids," Webster said, "and I will always remember that time of working with you."

Superintendent Brooks welcomed Coach Tyner and Coach Irelan to recognize the district's All-State athletes. Coach Irelan introduced Lillian Pumford, a junior at Owosso High School and an exceptionally talented swimmer. Lillian specializes in sprint strokes and long-distance events. At this year's league meet, she swam the 200 freestyle, contributed to several relay victories, and claimed first place in the 100 backstroke at the Flip Metro League. Lillian also took the opportunity to introduce her family.

Coach Irelan expressed great pride in Lillian's accomplishments, emphasizing her All-State fourth-place finish in the 100 butterfly. Lillian's impressive time of 59.8 seconds earned her recognition and broke the long-standing record held by Coach Irelan's sister, Macy. Coach Irelan added humorously, "No hard feelings there—records are meant to be broken." She praised Lillian's outstanding work ethic, character, and dedication, noting that these qualities have contributed to her success. Reflecting on the team's achievements, Coach Irelan shared how proud she felt during her first year of coaching and expressed excitement for Lillian's upcoming senior season.

Vice President Ochodnicky congratulated Lillian and shared a heartfelt memory of sitting with Lillian's parents, the Irelans, and Erica during swim meets in earlier years. "We broke some records back then with the girls on the relay team," she recalled. "It's exciting to see you up here now. I'm sure your sister is proud of you, too."

Coach Tyner, head football coach at Owosso, expressed his excitement over the football program's remarkable year. He highlighted the team's recognition as Academic All-State, making it one of the top-performing academic programs in Division IV statewide. The team achieved its first winning season since 2012. Coach Tyner introduced two standout players who played a pivotal role in this success: Carter Miculka and Hoyt Patrick.

Starting with Hoyt Patrick, a senior, Coach Tyner described him as a four-year starter and one of the best players he has ever coached. Hoyt holds multiple school records, including all-time leader in rushing yards, touchdowns, and tackles. His work ethic, talent, and leadership have inspired teammates and younger players. This year, Hoyt earned First Team All-State honors as an athlete and Second Team All-State recognition as both a running back and linebacker—a rare achievement to receive all three awards in one season.

Coach Tyner introduced Carter Miculka, a junior offensive lineman, describing him as the best he has ever coached. Carter, a four-year starter next year, earned All-State honors as a junior. Coach Tyner praised Carter's exceptional talent, character, and contributions to the team, emphasizing how fortunate he feels to work with such remarkable young men. Both Hoyt and Carter introduced their families.

Trustee Mowen expressed pride in the team's success, remarking on the players' dedication and Coach Tyner's leadership. "It's a win-win when we have young men like this and a coach like Ron," Mowen said, thanking them for their hard work and commitment. Vice President Ochodnicky added her congratulations, noting how the boys are looked up to by their peers and serve as role models in the school. "Everybody is very proud of you," she said, encouraging them to continue their great work.

Secretary Henne also congratulated, highlighting the significance of earning All-State honors. "That's a serious accomplishment," he said. Addressing Carter directly, he added, "We'll see you next year. Nice job."

Superintendent Brooks introduced Owosso High School Principal Dr. Dallas Lintner to recognize the achievements of two outstanding coaches, Mallory Irelan and Kevin Moore. Dr. Lintner began by emphasizing the strong connection between student success in athletics and academics and the professional excellence of their coaches. He noted that the dedication of students and their mentors consistently leads to remarkable accomplishments.

Dr. Lintner first highlighted Coach Mallory Irelan, who was honored as the Zone 8 Coach of the Year in her first year as a coach by the Michigan Interscholastic Swim Coaches Association (MISCA). This award, which spans approximately 38 schools in the Metro League and Saginaw Valley League, is a prestigious recognition of her leadership and impact. Notably, she was nominated by Brad Jones, a seasoned coach from Fenton High School with decades of experience and numerous championships. Dr. Lintner praised Coach Irelan's unique blend of youthful energy, poise, and maturity, which set her apart even in her first year.

Next, Dr. Lintner introduced Coach Kevin Moore, who was recently named Assistant Coach of the Year by the Michigan High School Football Coaches Association (MHSFCA). This recognition reflects his dedication to both athletics and academics. Dr. Lintner highlighted Coach Moore's history of excellence, noting that he was previously named Regional Baseball Coach of the Year in 2012, underscoring his commitment to multi-sport participation. Coach Moore also supported the varsity football team's designation as Academic All-State, a rare and commendable achievement. At the team's banquet, Coach Moore and Coach Derek Woltjer received certificates recognizing their after-school efforts in tutoring, study halls, and academic follow-ups, all of which emphasized the importance of academics and athletics.

Coach Irelan expressed her gratitude, sharing her journey as a first-year coach while managing personal milestones, and acknowledged the incredible support from her team and family. Coach Moore thanked Superintendent Brooks and Dr. Lintner for their recognition and introduced his wife, Erin, who, he joked, has allowed him to coach for the past 20 years. He also praised Coach Tyner, describing his hiring three years ago as a "home run," and expressed gratitude for the collective support from fellow coaches, administrators, and the community. He concluded by stating that coaching is always about the kids, and while recognition is appreciated, it is a shared accomplishment.

Vice President Ochodnický thanked both coaches for prioritizing academics and supporting students' success. President Webster took a moment to extend heartfelt congratulations to Vice President Ochodnický, Secretary Henne, and Treasurer Quick on their appointments. She also thanked former President Mowen for his many years of dedicated service to the board and the community.

Reflecting on the board's dynamics, President Webster acknowledged the diversity of opinions among its members. She stated, "There's one thing I know: all of us on this board have different opinions. None of us are shy about sharing our thoughts, but all of us are here because we care

about kids.” She stated that even when ideological differences arise, board members share a common commitment to supporting students.

President Webster concluded with an optimistic outlook: "I'm looking forward to all of us continuing to work together for kids. It doesn't matter what title is before us; we're all on the same team." She thanked those elected and those who were not, reaffirming the board's dedication to collaborating to benefit the students and the community.

Superintendent Brooks began by highlighting the importance of January as School Board Member Recognition Month, a time to celebrate and honor the dedication and service of the Owosso Board of Education. He commended board members Rick Mowen, Marlene Webster, Olga Quick, Shelly Ochodnicky, Adam Easlick, Nick Henne, and John Pappas for their exemplary leadership, integrity, and shared commitment to educational excellence.

Brooks acknowledged their tireless efforts to enhance student achievement, maintain a safe and supportive environment, ensure fiscal responsibility, and support innovative programs. He also praised their ability to build strong partnerships with families and the community, noting that their unwavering commitment to every student's success reflects the highest ideals of public service. "I encourage everyone here and in the Owosso community to join me in expressing our gratitude to our exceptional board members, not just this month, but throughout the year," he said. Brooks concluded by thanking the board for inspiring leadership and guiding the district toward success. He also pointed out a small token of appreciation at each board member's seat, encouraging them to take it before leaving.

Vice President Shelly Ochodnicky thanked Superintendent Brooks, adding her thoughts about the board's longevity. "Some of us have been on this board for over a decade, and we have one of the most tenured boards in Shiawassee County. I think that speaks volumes about our ability to work through challenges and always prioritize what is best for kids," she said.

President Marlene Webster expressed her appreciation for the gifts and the support from her fellow board members and the administration. "It's a great team to be a part of, and I truly appreciate all the support," she said.

Paige Davis presented this month's student representative report, highlighting various exciting activities and accomplishments across Owosso High School. She began by sharing news from FFA, which announced plans to start a livestock facility to provide new in-class experiences and support contest participation. The girls' wrestling team hosted a successful home tournament last Sunday, showcasing their dedication and skill.

At last Friday's basketball game against Corunna, a Lion's Gear raffle was held for the student section, adding to the excitement. Paige proudly noted that the boys' basketball team secured a victory against Corunna, which, combined with the energetic pep band and enthusiastic school spirit, made it a memorable game.

The Class of 2026 Student Council has launched a candy gram sale to raise funds for their senior year. Looking ahead, several upcoming events were highlighted: FFA will host districts on

January 29, and eighth-grade parents' night is scheduled for January 28. The National Honor Society (NHS) is organizing the OHS Oscars on February 3.

Theater students are preparing for MIFA districts this Saturday, where Mr. Ciarlino will direct the comedy *Ride the Cyclone*, and Mrs. Lounds will direct the tragedy *A Doll's House*. The band department will showcase their talent in several events, including the solo and ensemble performance on February 8, which features five soloists and four ensemble presentations, and the pre-festival band concert on February 19. The Jazz Band Dinner Dance with the middle school is set for February 22.

Paige also shared that Owosso High School will host the Flint Metro League Student Council meeting on February 13, and NHS will organize a blood drive on February 25. Other notable events include the CTE Awards Banquet at Baker on February 5 and the SkillsUSA regional competition at Delta College on February 7.

Board Correspondence

Superintendent Brooks began his report by reflecting on last Friday's varsity basketball games against Corunna. He noted the vibrant school spirit, enhanced by the pep band and the lively interaction between the elementary safety patrols and the student section. Their friendly competition and enthusiasm created a dynamic atmosphere.

He shared a recent project involving the OHS art classes, which Mr. Mike Constine commissioned to customize cornhole boards for Campgrounds R Us. Mr. Constine built the boards and invited the art department to design and hand-paint them, creating opportunities for after-school involvement. The designs featured Lions, Red Wings, Pistons, Tigers, and school logos. Mr. Constine also donated to the art club, benefiting the students and the community. The boards will be used at the campgrounds next summer, marking a successful collaboration.

Superintendent Brooks highlighted the outstanding performance of the OHS boys' swim team, noting their exceptional season and encouraging attendance at their upcoming home meet against Ovid-Elsie. He also thanked Mr. Pappas, Mr. Mowen, and Mrs. Quick for participating in Monday's State of the District and Professional Development Day. Mrs. Kim Klapko was honored as Support Staff Member of the Year during the event, and Mr. Lance Little was recognized as Teacher of the Year. A special reception is planned for later this spring to celebrate their achievements.

At Bentley Bright Beginnings, a Lego Club has been introduced, and a PTO has been established to engage parents.

At Bryant Elementary, staff are prioritizing behavior expectations and positive reinforcement by teaching weekly behavior standards, hosting weekly assemblies, and organizing Golden Ticket drawings every Friday. To further support students, a dedicated team is developing a mentorship program, and enhancing sensory areas to better serve students who need sensory regulation tools.

At Central Elementary, the first Peer-to-Peer session of the year took place last Friday, and students thoroughly enjoyed the experience. Preparations are underway for the Boost-a-Thon and the annual Glow Run, the school's largest fundraiser.

At Emerson Elementary, the recent snowfall brought joy to students as they built snowmen during recess. Emmy, the beloved therapy dog, also joined the fun, delighting students with her snowy antics. Through the PBIS "Trojan Store," students earned opportunities to walk Emmy and enjoy her playful energy. Generous winter gear donations from Grace Pointe Church and community members have ensured that all students stay warm while enjoying outdoor play.

At Owosso Middle School (OMS), the All-A Lunch for 164 students is scheduled for January 31. Boys' basketball and swimming are in full swing, and the drama production of *Beetlejuice* has been rescheduled to next weekend due to weather-related delays.

At Owosso High School (OHS), Varsity Basketball had a fantastic night against Corunna, with great crowds, band performances, and a BIG win for the boys' team. Junior Danica Dwyer set a school record with 64 career 3-pointers—and counting!

Lincoln students of the month are Carter Warner and Matthew Hathon. The Knights' basketball team celebrated a victory in their first game against Kensington. Lincoln continues its Bryant Buddies program and service-learning projects, focusing on a Green School initiative this quarter. Notably, five Lincoln students will graduate this Friday, marking a significant milestone.

In food service, the district unveiled new designs for its box trucks, featuring "Trojan Nation" branding. The homemade pizza station has been a hit with students. Maintenance updates included completing the door project at the Washington campus for safety and security, installing sinks at Bentley Bright Beginnings, and repairing the Performing Arts Center dampers. The OMS and LHS gym floors were finished and waxed over the holiday break.

Superintendent Brooks concluded his report with an update on transportation. Bus drivers continue professional development on the Tyler Drive system, which will launch in the 2025–26 school year. The drivers have embraced the training and are eager to implement the new system.

Curriculum Director Dr. Dwyer provided updates from the recent CTE Advisory Board meeting. She shared that SkillsUSA regional contests are scheduled for February 2025, with the state competition set for April and nationals in June. The district will host an FFA regional competition on January 29 at 4:00 PM. In BPA, 10 students have qualified for the state competition, with four alternates also eligible to compete. The culinary team will showcase their talents in the ProStart Pasta Competition on March 10. Dr. Dwyer also announced the successful acceptance of the Cosmetology CTE application.

This fall, perception surveys were distributed to parents, staff, and students to gather feedback about the district. Parents were invited to participate during parent-teacher conferences, with reminders sent through School Messenger and access provided on the district website. The surveys saw strong participation from all three groups. Last week, principals and teacher leaders reviewed their building-level data to identify insights, with plans to incorporate the findings into

school improvement meetings. These results, which show consistent trends, will be used to guide improvements. Dr. Dwyer plans to provide more detailed updates in future board communications.

The district conducts winter benchmark assessments to measure academic progress and social-emotional well-being. These include the NWEA assessments in math and reading, the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA), the Core Phonics Survey (K-2), and the SAEBRS/MySAEBRS assessments. These results will provide critical insights into student growth, celebrate achievements, and identify areas for additional support. The data will guide instructional decisions to ensure students thrive academically and emotionally.

On January 20, the district held a successful professional development day, offering a variety of sessions tailored to staff needs. This week, Dr. Jan Richardson works directly with elementary staff, conducting learning labs to provide hands-on training for K-5 teachers. This initiative was made possible through Mandi Cicalo, the Title I team, and elementary principals, who adapted schedules to accommodate staff participation despite cold weather challenges.

Dr. Dwyer concluded her report by highlighting the progress of the literacy pilot. Pilot teachers recently observed the materials at a neighboring district and explored the program's digital platform during the January 20 professional development day. All K-5 teachers also participated in a virtual meeting with the program's representative to better understand its features. Tomorrow, pilot teachers will attend an implementation session to prepare for the next phase of the pilot. Families of students in pilot classrooms will receive letters about the initiative, ensuring transparency and awareness. Teachers have thoughtfully selected modules that align with the current curriculum, finding the materials well-suited to their instructional goals. This pilot offers significant potential for enhancing literacy instruction across the district.

Public Participation

President Webster 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:

Chris Eveleth
Tom Manke

For Action

- Moved by Mowen, supported by Henne, to approve the December 11, 2024, Regular Meeting Minutes, December 11, 2024, Closed Session Minutes, January 8, 2025 Committee Meeting Minutes, January 8, 2025, Closed Session Minutes, Current Bills,

and Financials as presented. Secretary Henne conducted a roll call vote. Ayes: Easlick, Quick, Mowen, Webster, Ochodnicki, and Henne Nays: None. Pappas abstained. Motion carried.

- Moved by Mowen, supported by Quick, to Adopt the Bylaws for Owosso Public Schools as presented. This is an annual agenda item. Motion carried unanimously.
- Moved by Mowen, supported by Ochodnicki, to authorize the Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee to conduct and manage any school elections for the calendar year 2025. This is an annual agenda item. Motion carried unanimously.
- Moved by Mowen, supported by Henne, to retain Thrun Law Firm, P.C., as the District's attorneys. This is an annual agenda item. Motion carried unanimously.
- Moved by Quick, supported by Mowen, to authorize the superintendent or a Board designee to accept professional staff resignations on behalf of the Board. This is an annual agenda item. Motion carried unanimously.
- Moved by Mowen, supported by Quick, to resolve that the depository and withdrawal authorized signers for the Owosso Public Schools' financial and banking transactions for the 2025 calendar year be approved as presented, including authorization for necessary ACH transactions and/or bank transfers. This is an annual agenda item. Motion carried unanimously.
- Moved by Quick, supported by Ochodnicki, to appoint Trustee Rick Mowen as a representative of the Shiawassee County School Board Executive Board and the SRESB Budget Review and Election. This is an annual agenda item. Motion carried unanimously.
- Moved by Henne, supported by Mowen, to approve the Michigan Merit Curriculum Waivers for CTE programs for the 2024-25 school year. Motion carried unanimously.
- Moved by Mowen, supported by Pappas, to adopt the resolutions that revise the appropriations for the General and School Service for the 2024-25 fiscal year. Secretary Henne conducted a roll call vote. Ayes: Easlick, Quick, Pappas, Mowen, Webster, Ochodnicki, and Henne. Nays: None. Motion carried unanimously.
- Moved by Mowen, supported by Ochodnicki, to approve the addition of an Amazon Credit Card for District use. Motion carried unanimously.
- Moved by Ochodnicki, supported by Mowen, to approve the use of the Huntington Bank Liquidity Portal to manage excess cash in our organizational accounts. This initiative will ensure that we effectively optimize cash management and liquidity and maximize returns on idle funds. Utilizing this tool can streamline our cash management process, enhance financial flexibility, and ensure we are making the most of available resources. Motion carried unanimously.

- Moved by Henne, supported by Pappas, to approve the Jerome Street and Willman Field parking proposal as presented, including the allocation of \$20,000 for 12 additional parking spaces. Secretary Henne conducted a roll call vote. Ayes: Quick, Pappas, Mowen, Webster, Ochodnicki, and Henne. Nays: Easlick. Motion carried 5 to 1.
- Moved by Mowen, supported by Henne, that the Board of Education approve the hiring of the following certified staff:

Name	Building/Grade	Recommending Administrator	Salary Schedule Step
Christopher Poyner	OHS/CTE-Culinary	Superintendent Steve Brooks	BA Step 5 \$52,486
Page Brousseau IV	LHS/Social Studies	Superintendent Steve Brooks	MA Step 1 \$47,413

Motion carried unanimously.

For Future Action

- The Board will be asked to authorize the Owosso Public School's Construction Trades Department to dispose of older tools that they no longer use. Moved by Mowen, supported by Pappas, to move to For Action at the February 26, 2025, Regular Board Meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

For Information

Superintendent Brooks announced the following personnel changes:

Accepted Positions

Deric Matrau has accepted the Grounds/Maintenance position.

Loren Welsheimer has accepted the Food Service Driver position.

Adam Voss has accepted the Paraprofessional position at LHS.

Resignations

Janna Guyski, Food Service worker has resigned effective January 10, 2025.

Steve Irelan, Athletic Director has resigned effective January 10, 2025.

Isaac Williams, Paraprofessional at Central has resigned effective January 6, 2025.

Mandi Hallett, Custodian at Bryant has resigned effective January 16, 2025.

Retirements

Michele Betts, Teacher at Owosso Middle School retired effective December 20, 2024 after 30 years of service.

Public Participation

President Webster 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

Board Comments

Trustee Easlick congratulated the newly elected officers and Michele on her retirement. He also recognized the accomplishments of all the student-athletes, offering a special congratulations to Lilly Pumford. He noted how meaningful it was to hear Coach Ireland commend Lilly's outstanding character and conduct both in and out of the pool. He expressed his gratitude to Paige for keeping everyone updated on the various activities and achievements.

Treasurer Quick congratulated the student-athletes and coaches of the year, acknowledging their contributions and the leadership they provide. She also praised Mrs. Klapko and Mr. Little for receiving their respective awards. Reflecting on her long-standing history with Mr. Little, she expressed deep admiration and respect for his dedication, contributions, and the many lives he has positively impacted.

Treasurer Quick shared her excitement about the upcoming FFA leadership contests, where she has been invited to serve as a judge and is looking forward to participating. She informed the board that the band will host a concert festival in the first week of March. She also mentioned the upcoming Jazz Dinner, noting that ticket details would be shared soon. Concluding her remarks, she expressed her enthusiasm for continuing to work with everyone.

Trustee Pappas began by expressing his gratitude and excitement to serve on the board again. Reflecting on his prior tenure 25 years ago, he shared that his own children, now in their late 30s and 40s, are thriving—a testament to the importance of strong educational foundations. He acknowledged the conversations in the community about his return to the board and emphasized that his primary goal is to ensure that children always come first.

He spoke about his vision for the district, aiming to sustain its success for the next 50 years and beyond, ensuring that future generations have the same opportunities to thrive. Trustee Pappas stressed the importance of financial stability and providing an education that equips every student to succeed, contribute to society, and become responsible citizens.

Acknowledging his straightforward communication style, he humorously apologized in advance for moments when he might not be politically correct, promising always to speak from the heart. While differences of opinion are inevitable, he emphasized his willingness to compromise when it aligns with putting students first.

Trustee Pappas expressed enthusiasm for the district's initiatives, particularly the active participation of students in various programs and activities. He underscored the importance of understanding and addressing the community's vision for the district over the next 15 years while preparing the next generation for leadership roles. In closing, he thanked the community members who supported him and reiterated his commitment to prioritizing the students' needs.

Trustee Mowen began by officially welcoming Mr. Pappas to the board, expressing confidence in the value he will bring. He commended Mr. Pappas for his "Kids First" philosophy, noting that it aligns with the board's longstanding commitment to prioritizing students. Trustee Mowen also congratulated the newly elected board officers, emphasizing the leadership and dedication of all board members, whether in an official role or not, in putting students, staff, and the community first.

Reflecting on retirements, Trustee Mowen acknowledged the bittersweet nature of these moments. He recognized Michelle's incredible 31 years of service and extended gratitude to the Support Staff Member of the Year, Kim Klapko, who devoted 30 years as the administrative secretary at Central. He also praised Teacher of the Year, Lance Little, highlighting his leadership, particularly his instrumental role in introducing and sustaining Owosso's International Baccalaureate (IB) program.

Trustee Mowen shared his impressions of the State of the District meeting, where attendees were greeted with seven short promotional videos showcasing different aspects of the district. He applauded the quality of the videos and noted their potential to positively promote the district.

Turning to sports, Trustee Mowen emphasized the importance of balancing academics and athletics. He celebrated the achievements of student-athletes like Lillian, whose swimming records are remarkable, and Hoyt and Carter, who were recognized as All-State athletes. He highlighted their dedication and the example they set. He also commended Coaches Tyner and Moore for fostering athletic and academic excellence among their players. Speaking specifically about his grandson Carter, Trustee Mowen praised his forward-thinking mindset, as Carter places his educational goals above his aspirations in sports—a perspective he hopes all students emulate.

Finally, Trustee Mowen congratulated Coach Irelan on an extraordinary first year, culminating in being named Coach of the Year. He concluded by expressing pride in the accomplishments of students, staff, and coaches, whose hard work and dedication continue to inspire.

Secretary Henne welcomed John to the board and expressed his happiness to have him on the team. He emphasized the shared commitment of all board members to putting kids first, which he noted is the core reason they serve.

Henne congratulated the coaches and student-athletes for their achievements and recognized Mr. Little and Mrs. Klapko for their well-deserved honors. He then took a moment to reflect on the lasting influence of coaches in student-athlete's lives. Sharing a personal anecdote, he recalled the impactful words of her former coach, who taught him the value of punctuality by saying, "If you're not 10 minutes early, you're late." He noted how lessons like these stick with students long after their athletic careers, underscoring coaches' significant role in shaping character.

Vice President Ochodnický briefly echoed the sentiments shared by other board members before sharing a heartwarming story from her work. She highlighted a recent milestone for a family in the shelter—a new baby who had just come home from the hospital. The baby's mother, a woman in recovery, has shown remarkable progress during her three months in the program, and Ochodnický expressed her pride in the mother's journey. She also shared a touching account of the baby's older sibling, a little boy who had just turned three, whose birthday they celebrated earlier in the week before his sibling's arrival.

The boy came to the shelter with several challenges: he was nonverbal, walked on his toes, refused to wear socks and shoes, and disliked wearing clothes. Having never received prior services, the shelter team immediately acted, making phone calls to connect him with resources. Thanks to the support of the RESD, which has visited the shelter multiple times, the boy has now received a diagnosis of autism.

Beyond the diagnosis, the team worked with Bentley Bright Beginnings to arrange daily transportation for him to attend their program, providing much-needed respite for his mother. Although he is still adjusting to his new sibling—often observing and then walking away—they are progressing as a family.

Ochodnický emphasized the collective effort required to support families like this one. She expressed gratitude for the incredible staff at the shelter, who work tirelessly to assist families, make connections with schools and administrators, and ensure that everyone is safe and supported. She thanked everyone involved in these efforts for their dedication and compassion.

President Webster warmly welcomed John, emphasizing her appreciation for the diversity of viewpoints and opinions on the board. She shared her excitement about working collaboratively with the team and humorously noted her eagerness for schools to reopen as a foster parent of four children. Her husband jokingly remarked that they would drop the children off at school the next day regardless of whether it was in session, reflecting the sentiment of many parents looking forward to the return to routine. She also thanked everyone for ensuring safety during the bitterly cold weather.

President Webster acknowledged Mr. Eveleth's attendance, noting the importance of having representation from Shiawassee Health and Wellness at the meeting. She reiterated the board's focus on students' mental health and expressed enthusiasm for future collaborations to strengthen the relationship between the board and the organization and ensure enhanced support for students.

Lastly, she addressed a question raised by Mr. Manke regarding board policies. She explained that the board collaborates with the Thrun Law Firm, which monitors new legislation and drafts policies accordingly. These policies are then reviewed and voted on by the board. President Webster clarified that they are awaiting guidance on how the President's executive order will translate into actionable policies for school districts. Once recommendations are provided by their attorneys in alignment with the law, the board will review and discuss them in future meetings.

Meeting Updates:

- February 12: Board of Education Committee of the Whole Meeting, 5:30 PM, Washington Campus Conference Room 112
- February 26: Board of Education Regular Meeting, 5:30 PM, Washington Campus Gymnasium
- March 12: Board of Education Committee of the Whole Meeting, 5:30 PM, Washington Campus Conference Room 112

Important Upcoming Dates:

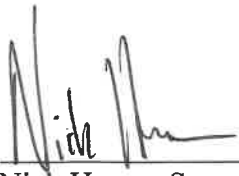
January 24: OMS Drama Club Performance, 6:00 PM, PAC
January 29: FFA District Competition, 4:00 PM, OHS
February 14: Half Day for All Students: Teacher Work Day
February 17: No School, President's Day
February 19: OHS Band Concert, 7:00 PM, PAC
February 20: OMS Band Concert, 7:00 PM, PAC
February 25: NHS Blood Drive, 7:00 AM-3:00 PM, PAC
February 25: OMS Choir Concert, 7:00 PM, PAC
February 26: OHS Choir Concert, 7:00 PM, PAC
February 28: LHS 2nd Trimester Ends

Adjournment

Moved by Mowen, supported by Ochodnick, to adjourn at 7:02 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Minutes recorded by Stephanie Goetzinger

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nick Henne", written above a horizontal line.

Nick Henne, Secretary

