

**OWOSSO PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**Board of Education Minutes**  
**Regular Meeting**  
**December 13, 2023**  
**Report 23-76**

Present: Easlick, Henne, Krauss, Mowen, Ochodnicky, Quick, 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**

**Building Reports**

Bryant Elementary School Principal Taylor Sergent introduced to the Board Bryant's 'Acts of Kindness' program that is organized by the Student Council, supervised by staff member Mrs. Jenny Lamay. The purpose of the program is to encourage students to use their leadership skills to spread goodwill. Principal Sergent said that next year the council will focus on Lenore, Bryant's Therapy Dog, and how to support her. Each student council member shared their named and what they enjoy about the Kindness Program. Dr. Tuttle asked how they feel when they do an act of kindness. The students replied that it makes them feel happy to have made someone else's day. Dr. Tuttle thanked the student council students and applauded their confidence in presenting to the Board of Education. President Mowen agreed that a 'thank you' or a smile is nice to receive in return, but told the Bryant students that the true reward is the good feeling you have when you help someone else.

Mrs. Dede Raffelli, Bryant Elementary Teacher, shared with the Board that as part of the International Baccalaureate Social Studies curriculum, Bryant's fourth grade classes are participating in the 'Great Mail Race'. Students prepare and send letters that include a survey to other elementary schools in each of the 50 states, and ask that the recipient send back the completed survey. Through later analysis of the surveys, students can see how similar their lives are to their fellow elementary students across the country and learn about geography along the way. Dr. Tuttle thanked the students and parents for sharing and taking the time to attend the meeting tonight. President Mowen applauded all students for their presentation and shared the 'Celebrate Kids' is the highlight of the Board meetings.

Principal Sergent ended Bryant's Board presentation by honoring retiree Mr. Greg Hall. Mr. Sergent shared that Mr. Hall has served the district for over 23 years and now is looking forward to writing a book, and spending time with his family and friends. Mr. Sergent wished Mr. Hall a peaceful retirement and thanked him for his service to the district.

Student Representative Kate Lee informed the Board that the Boys' basketball season has started and is looking forward to some great competitions. Ms. Lee also informed the Board that the 'Toys for Tots' drive raised \$2,500.

### **Board Correspondence**

Dr. Tuttle began her report by sharing an incident that occurred at Bryant Elementary School today where a student was choking and Bryant staff member Mrs. Chris Ferguson jumped in to action to perform the Heimlich maneuver, successfully saving the student. Dr. Tuttle applauded Mrs. Ferguson for her quick thinking and swift action, and remarked how important staff training is for emergencies such as this. Dr. Tuttle continued that as it is holiday season, the district has had many events at each building including book exchanges, cookie exchanges, Secret Santa, dress-up days, 'Toys for Tots', 'Twelve Days of Kindness', 'Festival of Trees' class participation, gingerbread house competitions, band and choir concerts and so on. Dr. Tuttle continued that the Senior Citizens Holiday Breakfast on December 8 went smoothly and was highly praised by community members that attended. She thanked President Mowen and Treasurer Quick for their attendance to the breakfast. Dr. Tuttle gave a tremendous kudos to Communications Director Mrs. Jessica Thompson for organizing the event and ensuring everyone had an excellent time. Dr. Tuttle also informed the Board that the Sports Booster tailgate raised \$22,000. This is always a fun event for families and a great way to fund raise for uniforms and other projects. Dr. Tuttle finished her report by informing the Board that February 27 is an election day for the Presidential Primaries. Dr. Tuttle shared the recommendation will likely be to close the district for the day for safety and security reasons.

Curriculum Director Mr. Stephen Brooks informed the board that the International Baccalaureate audit took place on December 11 and 12. Mr. Brooks shared the highlights of the feedback from the IB team: facilities at secondary campus were praised, particularly the thoughtful layout, coordination, color, natural light, the Performing Arts Center, and technology that students and staff have access to. The IB team praised the OPS leadership team, the Board and Administrative Team, and IB Coordinator Mr. Lance Little for their involvement and dedication to the IB standard. The IB team praised the supports available to students, in particular the mentor programs, therapy dogs, school nurses, student success coaches, and the liaison officers. The IB team noted that the teaching and learning areas are warm and inviting, and remarked that OPS teachers clearly go the extra mile to create a stimulating learning environment. The IB team also interviewed students and found the students were attentive, honest, and asked great questions. The IB team remarked that the CTE programs and community involvement initiatives are very impressive. Mr. Brooks thanked President Mowen and Treasurer Quick for participating in the interviews, and thanked Mr. Lance Little for his time, effort, and a successful audit. Mr. Brooks informed the Board that an official report will be published in the coming weeks, and the IB team will include goals for the district to work on over the next five years.

Secretary Krauss inquired if the district received any negative feedback from the IB team. Mr. Brooks responded that the district received 'suggestions' but no negative feedback or findings on the audit report. Mr. Brooks said one such suggestion was a collaboration between the OHS and

OMS math departments. Mr. Brooks said the administrative team would consider all suggestions made by IB and will keep the Board informed if any changes take place.

Mr. Brooks continued with an update on the Food Service and Nutrition Program. OPS Food Service had their own audit last week and the results were fantastic. Mr. Brooks gave immense kudos to the Food Service Director Joy Hartman, Food Service Supervisor Michele Prince, and the entire Food Service team, who went above and beyond to ensure the audit went well. The audit team reported no findings and expects to see OPS in another five years.

Mr. Brooks finished his report by informing the Board the district is currently working on grants for the CTE department, as well as safety and security grants. Mr. Brooks will keep the Board informed as the grants progress in the application process.

### **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.

No public participants addressed the Board.

### **For Action**

- Moved by Easlick, supported by Henne, to approve November 29, 2023 Board of Education Regular Meeting Minutes. President Mowen noted that the Board does not have 'Current Bills' and 'Financials' to review at this meeting due to the timing of the November 29 regular meeting and the change in position of the Chief Financial Officer. Current Bills and Financials will be available at the next regular meeting, January 24. Motion carried unanimously.
- Moved by Quick, supported by Ochodnicky to review and approve the Emergency Operations Plan (EOP). This is a biannual agenda item - the plan describes the purpose, scope, situation, policies, and concept of operations for the response and recovery activities to an emergency crisis. Motion carried unanimously.
- Moved by Easlick, supported by Henne, to approve the hiring of Michael Pepin for the Elementary Instructional & Behavioral Interventionist at Bryant Elementary, at Step 1, \$89,712. Motion carried unanimously.
- Moved by Quick, supported by Ochodnicky, to approve the hiring of Jamie Cline for the Social Studies Teacher position at OMS at Step 1, \$43,332. Motion carried unanimously.

### **For Future Action**

- The Board will be asked to authorize the Superintendent to contract with the winning bidder(s) for an estimated total bid of \$650,000, for which the District would be

responsible for 15% of the total, equating to \$97,500 for ERATE projects (Network Switch Upgrade and Wi-Fi Upgrade).

### **For Information**

Dr. Tuttle announced the following personnel changes:

### **Retirements**

- Gregory Hall, Teacher at Bryant has retired effective 11/30/2023.

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### **Board Comments**

Trustee Easlick thanked Mr. Hall for his service and congratulated him on his retirement. Trustee Easlick attended the 6<sup>th</sup> grade choir concert and applauded the students on their performance. He thanked Mr. Lance Little for his efforts on the IB audit, the Food service team for a great review, welcomed new hires Mr. Pepin and Ms. Cline to their roles.

Secretary Krauss thanked the district for the holiday gifts. He congratulated the secondary campus for the great IB audit, and congratulated the Food Service Team for their successful audit as well. He appreciates everyone's efforts and wished everyone a happy holiday.

Treasurer Quick wished Greg Hall a peaceful retirement. She welcomed Mr. Pepin and Ms. Cline. She thanked Mr. Brooks and Mr. Little for their work on the International Baccalaureate audit. She thanked the district for hosting YMCA food drive at OHS, as it is such a central location more families can be served. She ended her comments by thanking Student Representative Kate Lee for her report and wished everyone a great holiday.

Vice President Webster thanked the district for the cookie trays and gifts. She shared that Shiawassee Hope, a community organization dedicated to help those in need, will be serving 200 kids at Christmas store this season. She thanked all those involved in the helping the organization reach beyond their goal. She ended her comments by thanking all district staff and wishing everyone a warm holiday.

Trustee Ochodnický applauded the Madrigals and the recent holiday performances by the students. She congratulated Dr. Tuttle on her new position and said the Board will take great care in the choosing of her replacement.

Trustee Henne congratulated the students on the successful Toys for Tots and Sports Boosters fundraisers. He wished staff and students a restful holiday break. He thanked Communications Director Mrs. Thompson for the fantastic Senior Citizen breakfast. Trustee Henne finished his comments by congratulating Dr. Tuttle on her new position, he is proud of her and of her accomplishments. He said he has full confidence the Board will make the right decision when it comes time to fill Dr. Tuttle's role.

President Mowen thanked all staff and students for their community involvement and for the great successes they have had with recent fundraisers. He remarked the Sports Boosters was a fun night and he is overjoyed to have those funds going to a great cause to support students. He is very pleased that both the IB and FS audits went well, and thanked all those involved in making sure those audits went smoothly. President Mowen thanked all those in attendance at the meeting.

### **Upcoming Dates**

- January 10, 2024: Board Retreat/Workshop, 5:30 pm, Shiawassee Arts Council
- January 24, 2024: Regular Board Meeting, 5:30 pm, Washington Campus Gymnasium
- December 19, 2023: Half day for students, noon dismissal
- December 20-January 2: Holiday recess
- January 3: School resumes

Moved by Quick, supported by Webster to move in to closed session at 6:28pm for the purpose of conducting a student hearing. Secretary Krauss conducted a roll call vote: Easlick, Henne, Krauss, Mowen, Ochodnick, Quick, Webster voted aye. No nay votes. Motion carried unanimously.

Moved by Webster, supported by Quick, to move back into open session at 6:52pm for the purpose of adjournment.

### **Adjournment**

Moved by Quick, supported by Ochodnick, to adjourn at 6:53pm. Motion carried unanimously.

Minutes recorded by Carrie Yoho and Brooke Barber.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Ty Krauss, Secretary