

OWOSSO PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Board of Education Minutes
December 9, 2019
Report 19-157

President Jenc called the meeting of the Board of Education to order at 5:30 pm. The meeting was held in the media center located at Owosso High School, 765 E. North Street, Owosso, Michigan.

Present: Jenc, Krauss, Mowen, Ochodnicki, Quick
Absent: Keyes and Webster (motions of the Board of Education that were unanimous did not include Keyes and Webster)

Pledge of Allegiance

Building Reports

As part of the Celebrate Kids! segment of the meeting, Emerson Elementary Principal Jessica Anderson and students Amara Pakkala, Dreyden Smith, Nakita McGhee, Kayden Hanifan, and Bruce Hanifan shared details about the Notebook Mentors program that was started this year in honor of Dave Hoenshell. Mr. Hoenshell had a heart of gold and represented the true meaning of building relationships. Ms. Anderson thanked Dave's wife Sue; son Scott Hoenshell; and brother Terry Hoenshell for attending the meeting. Prior to his passing this past summer, Mr. Hoenshell was a recess aid/monitor at Emerson Elementary School and was gifted at working with students. Mrs. Pam Giffei, Student Facilitator explained that elementary students correspond with the high school mentors through writing in their notebooks. As a result, the program has helped boost the elementary student's morale. OHS Teacher Mrs. Jenelle Steele-Elkins explained that the mentor program was initially started about six years ago at the high school. Students anonymously mentored other students through the notebooks. After a period of time, the students approached Mrs. Steele-Elkins and stated that they felt it would be more beneficial if the program included younger students. Students in attendance at the meeting stated that they felt the program has helped them bond with each other and share issues that they have concerns with. The students also commented that they enjoy writing to each other and talk about their feelings.

Vice President Rick Mowen stated that he appreciated hearing the students express how much they like sharing their thoughts and feelings with their high school mentors and he is certain that the feelings are reciprocated.

Trustee Olga Quick commended the students for speaking about the Notebook Mentors program in front of a large crowd. She also applauded the adults that created the incredible program.

President Tim Jenc thanked the student presenters and commented that he is certain Dave Hoenshell is smiling down on them.

Superintendent Dr. Tuttle thanked the Hoenshell family and expressed appreciation for the parents that brought their children to the meeting.

Ms. Tricia Rogers, Vocal/Theater Performance Teacher at Owosso Middle School informed the Board that there is a wealth of talent in Owosso and several students are unable to take choir because of the many opportunities available to them during the school day. Last school year Ms. Rogers established an extra-curricular choir program that required students to participate in an audition. The program has been received well and expanded to approximately 30 students this year. The students meet twice a week after school. The students recently performed at the Festival of Trees and will also perform during an upcoming middle school choir concert. Ms. Rogers directed her students in a performance for the Board of Education. The student performers included Alice Banghart, Jacob Cummings, Gage Davis, Jenna Lang, Allison Martin, Ricardo Montenegro, Quinn Schemenauer, Olivia Scrimger, Sarina Shannon, Teresa Shaulis, Hayden Smith, Mackenzie Strauss, Madison Strauss, Robert Terry, Adin VanOver, Lexi Walter, Kara Yerrick, and Morgan Yerrick.

Superintendent Dr. Tuttle praised the middle choir students on their performance. She also thanked Ms. Rogers for establishing the program and giving students an opportunity to participate in the after school choir program. Superintendent Dr. Tuttle commented that Owosso Public Schools prides itself in being the District of opportunity.

Superintendent Dr. Tuttle recognized Bus Driver Joyce Malzahn on her retirement that will be effective on January 1, 2020. Mrs. Malzahn will be retiring after 25 years of service with the District. Mrs. Malzahn was unable to attend the meeting.

Board of Education Student Representative Cayden Whitehorse apologized for his late arrival and for missing the November 25th meeting.

Cayden Whiteherse reported that December is a busy month at Owosso High School with the kick-off of the canned food drive, fundraising events, Drama and Madrigal performances, winter athletic events, and other extra-curricular student activities. The Regional Honors Choir students participated in a Regional Choir competition over the past weekend and four students advanced to the State Honors Choir competition. Cayden invited the Board to the upcoming middle school and high school choir concerts that will feature Christmas music.

Cayden Whiteherse proudly announced that OHS senior Katie Clevenger earned fifth place in the State diving competition. The girls' varsity swim team earned 16th place in a relay competition. This was the first time in school history that the girls' varsity swim team had a relay advance to the second day of the competition.

Cayden Whiteherse informed the Board that Student Government plans to sell hot chocolate throughout the week in the commons with all proceeds going to the canned food drive. He announced that as of that day, the high school alone has raised approximately 10,000 pounds of food over the past month.

Cayden Whiteherse reported that Student Government recently made a decision to donate half of the proceeds from the winter dance back to the canned food drive. The dance will take place on January 24th following the boys' varsity basketball game and will be more casual than in previous years. The theme of the dance will be determined by the sophomore class who also won the Homecoming float contest.

Cayden Whiteherse explained that this school year all Student Government meetings are held during the lunch period. This allows more students an opportunity to participate in the meetings and voice their opinions.

Dr Dallas Lintner, Athletic Director introduced Katie Clevenger who was recently named an all-state diver for the second consecutive year by the Michigan High School Athletic Association. Katie recently signed her letter of intent to dive at Oakland University.

Mr. Kevin Lenkart, Director of Public Safety for the City of Owosso reported that on November 19, 2019 Owosso High School student Dakota Vincent suffered a medical emergency during school hours. OHS staff members Jeff Barter and Kim Venne immediately noticed Dakota's behavior and alerted staff who recognized that he was experiencing stroke like symptoms. The staff at OHS immediately called 911. First responders were alerted and arrived at the building in less than three minutes. The paramedics began stroke protocol on Dakota and notified Memorial Healthcare of the incident. The quick actions and protocols of Jeff Barter and Kim Venne allowed OHS staff, paramedics, and Memorial Healthcare staff to have a timeline of what occurred. Their heroic actions resulted in a positive outcome for Dakota. Chief Lenkart introduced Paramedics Brian Matthies, Dan Laknen, and Matt Harvey who have participated in ongoing critical care and advanced stroke training for first responders through Memorial Healthcare. On behalf of the City of Owosso, Chief Lenkart presented Jeff Barter and Kim Venne an award for their outstanding public service. Mr. Jeff Phillips and his staff were also thanked for their team effort and assistance with Dakota's medical emergency.

Rebecca Hackenberg of Memorial Healthcare informed the Board that their stroke program is a team effort through EMS, Emergency Department staff, doctors, lab technicians, and radiology technicians. Through EMS staff's quick neurological assessment of Dakota on the day of his emergency and notifying the hospital to activate their stroke alert, this enabled Memorial Healthcare to get all of their resources to the emergency department. The entire process would not have been possible without a team effort and everyone working together.

Superintendent Dr. Tuttle commented that she is very pleased to have Dakota in attendance at the meeting and at nearly a 100% recovery rate. She also expressed her gratitude for Jeff Barter, Kim Venne, the paramedics, and Memorial Healthcare on a job well done.

Board Correspondence

Superintendent Dr. Andrea Tuttle reported that Owosso High School students auditioned at the Regional Honors Choir over the weekend. Alex Elford, Kenny Hickmott, Tyler Hoag, and Wes LaVigne advanced to the prestigious MSVMA State Honors Choir and were selected for the TTBB (tenor, tenor, bass, bass) Choir. The students will perform in conjunction with the Michigan Music Conference in January. Superintendent Dr. Tuttle remarked that this is an impressive honor for these very talented students

Superintendent Dr. Tuttle thanked Secretary Shelly Ochodnicky, Treasurer Marlene Webster, Trustee Olga Quick and her fellow door greeter, Vice President Rick Mowen for attending the annual Senior Citizen Breakfast. She stated that it is such a joy to host this event that is made possible by members of the food staff, custodians, maintenance workers, band directors, Owosso High School choir, culinary arts students and Chef Poyner, and the art department for the student created placemats. Community Education Director Jessica Thompson was applauded for organizing the event and managing the over 300 RSVP's.

Superintendent Dr. Tuttle stated that there have been numerous student performances in celebration of the Christmas season in all buildings and at all grade levels.

Superintendent Dr. Tuttle reported that bond work at the secondary campus is still on schedule pending any unforeseen issues. She remarked that she remains optimistic about the middle school students moving to the campus and having all grades 6-12 students in the building with the start of the 2020-2021 school year. Additionally, road work is scheduled for North Street beginning in May 2020, which will result in traffic congestion in front of the secondary campus.

Superintendent Dr. Tuttle informed the Board that the District is working with Community Housing Network (CHN) on negotiating a purchase agreement for the middle school. It is her goal to present the Board with a purchase agreement for the property at the January 27, 2020 Board meeting.

Superintendent Dr. Tuttle stated that for the second consecutive year, an SAT prep was hosted at the middle school with the goal of preparing students for this assessment. Out of the approximately 200 Shiawassee County eighth grade students that took the SAT assessment, 60 were from Owosso Public Schools. The assessment determines which students qualify for the esteemed Cook Family Foundation and Shiawassee Scholars program.

Superintendent Dr. Tuttle commented that she believes it is important for the public to be aware of how much the District's buildings, students, and staff do for the community. The District greatly appreciates all that the community does to support the Owosso Public Schools. Superintendent Dr. Tuttle announced that all District buildings are participating in Toys for Tots. District buildings also took part in Giving Tuesday and collected approximately \$450, which will be donated to participating local non-profit organizations. Each building has Clothes Closets that provide needy students with hats, coats, and gloves. Staff at the Owosso Middle School donated enough money to provide 29 full turkey dinners (\$35 each) to families. They also adopted 25 students through the adopt a family fundraiser, which equated to approximately \$1,000. On November 26th Lincoln staff members and students participated in the LHS Day of Respect. Lincoln students are also volunteering as mentors at Bentley Bright Beginnings. Office staff at Owosso High School have adopted families. The students of OHS have initiated events that will garner money for the canned food drive. Administration office staff members at the Washington Campus adopted Lincoln High School students and have purchased Christmas gifts for them. Emerson Elementary staff garnered funds during their Turkey Trivia Night that allowed them the ability to provide eight turkey dinners. The building also has a virtual giving tree that provides clothes and presents to eight of their students. The Emerson staff has cooked on three separate Sundays for the Homeless Shelter. Additionally, Emerson's student council has made blankets for those in need. The Bryant Elementary staff in collaboration with Woodard Station donated 13 turkey dinners to Bryant families. Bryant staff selected 60 students that will be their special dinner guests, receive gifts, and complete a craft project at D'Mar. Sherriff Begole has adopted a Bryant family. Calvary Baptist Church adopted 16 families from Bryant. The Sawdust Santa organization adopted seven Bryant families and will provide gifts for 22 children. The staff at Bryant contributed \$85 for the Owosso Cares Backpack program and donated \$325 to the Owosso Cares Food Drive. Additionally, Bryant's student council will be making blankets for foster children in the community and are collecting funds for the Homeless Angels. The staff at Central Elementary School have also adopted families. Mrs. Miculka's first grade classroom adopted two families. Central's kindergarten students visit the long-term residents at the hospital every other week. The third grade kindness project has kicked off at Central with more than 60 individual kindness projects for the Homeless Angels. The students at Central are continuing with their weekly reading buddies visits to Oliver Woods. Central's fourth grade students also sang Christmas carols during a visit to Kiwanis Village. The students of Bentley Bright Beginnings Early Childhood Center are working on their goal of donating 600 canned goods to the canned food drive.

Superintendent Dr. Tuttle remarked that in addition to educating, keeping kids safe, athletics, and extra-curriculars; the staff, students, and families of Owosso Public Schools work together to support each other.

Curriculum Director Steve Brooks reported that six elementary teachers recently completed 24 hours of Advanced Math Recovery (AVMR). This training provides teachers with a better understanding of math concepts and specific strategies on early number sense. Ten teachers will be attending AVMR2 training early in 2020. The AVMR training is very extensive and requires teachers to complete homework after their training sessions.

Curriculum Director Steve Brooks informed the Board that the District continues to provide new teacher orientation for its newest educators. A follow-up session will occur with elementary teachers on December 10th to review approaches that are going well and areas of difficulty. This training has already been completed with secondary teachers. Mr. Brooks remarked that he is very proud that the District supports teachers with this specific training.

Curriculum Director Steve Brooks stated that a theater coach has been working with staff from the Owosso High School English department. The theater coach has been teaching this group drama techniques that will be incorporated into the English curriculum. This is already being incorporated into the 9th and 10th grade literature classes this year as an enhancement. Mr. Brooks commended the teachers for taking a risk and providing this to students.

Curriculum Director Steve Brooks reported that IB units are being rewritten by teachers in grades 6-10.

Curriculum Director Steve Brooks announced that during the past week, the school accountability index was released. He pointed out that Owosso Public Schools continues to do well in student growth, which he is very proud of. When comparing the District to schools in the surrounding area and including some of similar size in Genesee County, OPS is far superior.

Public Participation

President Jenc stated that the Board of Education is a public body and recognizes the value of public comment on educational issues. Time has been included in the meeting's agenda for public participation. Members of the audience were reminded that 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.

There were no comments from the meeting's audience.

For Action

- Moved by Mowen, supported by Ochodnický to approve the November 25, 2019 regular meeting minutes, November 25, 2019 closed session minutes, current bills, and financials as presented. Motion carried unanimously.
- Moved by Ochodnický, supported by Mowen to approve the course listings presented for the Middle School, High School, and Lincoln High School for the 2019-20 school year. Motion carried unanimously.
- Moved by Quick, supported by Mowen to authorize the purchase of internal signage from Shattuck Advertising in an amount not to exceed \$24,300.29 including alternates for Unit B signs and directional signs. Motion carried unanimously.
- Moved by Mowen, supported by Krauss to adopt the evaluation for Superintendent Dr. Andrea Tuttle biennially as opposed to an annual evaluation effective with the 2019-2020 school year. This is based upon Dr. Tuttle receiving highly effective educator effectiveness ratings consecutively for 2012-2013 through the 2018-2019 school years. In addition, resolve that the Board of Education extend the Superintendent's contract one year to be employed under a five-year contract from July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2025. Secretary Ochodnický remarked that she feels Dr. Tuttle has created a cohesive relationship with the Board and administrative team. Dr. Tuttle and her team's leadership with the bond, use of tax payer dollars, and ensuring that the bond construction is being done correctly is appreciated. Secretary Ochodnický stated that she supports moving forward with a highly effective evaluation for Dr. Tuttle. President Tim Jenc echoed Mrs. Ochodnický's remarks. He added that great leaders surround themselves with great teams. Owosso Public Schools is very fortunate to have Dr. Tuttle, the administrative team, teaching staff, and a Board of Education that he is proud to serve with. President Jenc stated that Dr. Tuttle has a five-year contract and he is happy to add an additional year to her rolling contract. Secretary Ochodnický commented that when she attends meetings and conferences throughout the state with other Board members, she is often reminded of how lucky OPS is to have a Superintendent of Dr. Tuttle's caliber. Trustee Olga Quick remarked that she has spent a lot of time with Dr. Tuttle over the past year and she admires her abilities and what she has learned from her in a short period of time. Trustee Quick stated that prior to becoming a Board member she lacked an understanding behind the logic of a rolling contract and wondered if Dr. Tuttle has an opportunity to talk about her contract with the Board. President Jenc informed Trustee Quick that Dr. Tuttle meets with the Executive Board (President Jenc, Vice President Mowen, and Treasurer Webster) to discuss her contract and any concerns she may have in regards to her contract. President Jenc explained that it is the Board's intention to ensure that Dr. Tuttle feels secure in her position and the rolling contract provides that security. He also stated that Superintendent vacancies have become difficult to fill and many are leaving these positions. Secretary Ochodnický commented that Dr. Tuttle was initially placed on a three-year rolling contract, but after receiving highly effective evaluations consecutively, the Board collectively decided to change this to a five-year rolling contract, which is not an uncommon practice. Trustee Quick commented that the Board has not discussed the contract and asked if it has been reviewed by Dr. Tuttle and the Board. President Jenc responded that Dr. Tuttle's contract has been shared with the Board and Dr. Tuttle. The Board met in closed session on November 25, 2019 for the purpose of discussing Dr. Tuttle's contract. Trustee Quick commented that she has seen the contract and wondered if Dr. Tuttle is able to request changes or a review of specific areas to the contract. President Jenc

informed Trustee Quick that because Dr. Tuttle has been highly effective, a review of her contract did not take place. Additionally, the Board agreed to a biennial evaluation for the current year. Trustee Ty Krauss voiced his support of Dr. Tuttle and thanked her for her commitment to Owosso Public Schools. He stated that she does a fantastic job. Secretary Ochodnicki conducted a roll call vote. Ayes: Quick, Ochodnicki, Mowen, Jenc, and Krauss. Nays: none. Motion carried unanimously. Superintendent Dr. Tuttle stated that she feels extremely fortunate to work with the current Board of Education and her administrative team. She remarked that we all have options in this world, but she chooses to stay in the District because of the Board and administrators. She stated that she also feels extremely fortunate to have her children in the District. She is pleased to work in the District because of the professionalism that is displayed and where OPS is headed. She thanked the Board of Education for allowing her the ability to do her job. Vice President Rick Mowen commented that he has served on the Board for several years and believes that Owosso Public Schools would not be in the financial position it is in today without Dr. Tuttle's leadership.

- Moved by Quick, supported by Ochodnicki to authorize district personnel to proceed with issuing purchase orders for furniture purchases for the secondary campus for the remaining areas at the 6-12 campus as construction is completed with a target date of August 2020 in an amount not to exceed \$640,000 including general allowances for items that must be directly purchased by the District. Secretary Ochodnicki conducted a roll call vote. Ayes: Quick, Ochodnicki, Mowen, Jenc, and Krauss. Nays: none. Motion carried unanimously.

For Future Action

- The Board of Education will be asked to approve the contract with Clark Construction Management, as presented, for retention of their services for the Sinking Fund Project Administration for the roofing project at the Owosso High School slated for spring/summer of 2020. Clark Construction will be providing the oversight on the secondary campus roofing bond project. The additional sinking fund roofing project at the secondary campus will be performed by the same contractor and therefore, in order to achieve consistency in oversight it is deemed prudent to retain the services of Clark Construction for this portion of the roof as well.
- The Board of Education will be asked to approve the out-of-state travel for approximately 54 Owosso High School 9th-12 grade Choir students, teacher Jessica Nieuwkoop, and chaperones on a trip to New York City, NY March 11-14, 2020.
- The Board of Education will be asked to authorize the Superintendent to enter into a three-year fair market value lease agreement or the purchase of two new or used buses.

For Information

Superintendent Dr. Tuttle reported that Jessica Lynch has accepted the Monitor position at Bryant Elementary. Joyce Malzahn, Bus Driver, has submitted her letter of retirement effective January 1, 2020 after 25 years of service with the District.

Public Participation

There were no comments from the meeting's audience.

Board Member Comments/Updates

Trustee Ty Krauss expressed his sincere appreciation for the Christmas gifts. He thanked the students, staff and administrators of OPS and remarked that every year the gifts are bigger and better. He wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

President Tim Jenc commented that it is so much fun to go home after the meeting and open the gifts that the Board receives.

President Tim Jenc referenced an email from Darrick Huff of Spicer expressing their continued support of the District. Mr. Jenc commented that it was a heartfelt email that was greatly appreciated.

President Tim Jenc remarked that about a year and a half ago, there was controversy and misunderstandings in regards to what some people in the community perceived as an elimination of the middle school choir program. He stated that choir was not eliminated and praised the middle school choir students on their awesome performance at the beginning of the meeting. Mr. Jenc's also praised the Notebook Mentor program that was also shared with the Board during the Celebrate Kids! segment of the meeting.

Vice President Rick Mowen stated that he thinks it is awesome that all students can audition for the middle school's after school choir program. He commented that the program reflects very well on the District and the instructor.

Vice President Rick Mowen referenced the ABC Channel 12 early morning pep assembly that kicked off the canned food drive and remarked that it is great to see the student participation. He stated that the Channel 12 newscasters made a special point of praising the students and community on the amount of food that is donated.

Vice President Rick Mowen praised the District, staff and students for giving back to the community and the numerous donations to those in need without expecting anything in return.

Vice President Rick Mowen applauded Curriculum Director Steve Brooks for providing ongoing support to new teachers.

Vise President Rick Mowen also thanked everyone for the wonderful Christmas gifts. He wished everyone a very Merry Christmas.

Secretary Shelly Ochodnicky commented that the students and staff of Owosso Public Schools have been wonderful supporting the Homeless Angels. She reported that Homeless Angels have housed seven students from the District since October 19, 2020. Mrs. Ochodnicky expressed her appreciation for the continued support that the District provides to the Homeless Angels.

Secretary Shelly Ochodnicky stated that one her favorite events is the Senior Citizen Breakfast. Jessica Thompson was thanked for putting on this great event.

Trustee Olga Quick commented that she continues to be impressed with the District and how blessed the Board is to be a part of all the great things that are happening. She expressed her gratitude for Mr. Jeff Barter and Mrs. Kim Venne for their quick actions that resulted in a positive outcome for Dakota Vincent during his medical emergency.

Trustee Olga Quick remarked that the Senior Citizen Breakfast was incredible. Jessica Thompson was praised for organizing the event.

Trustee Olga Quick thanked everyone for the wonderful Christmas gifts. She wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Upcoming Board Meeting Dates:

January 13: Board Committee of the Whole Meeting, 5:30 pm

January 27: Regular Board Meeting, 5:30 pm

Important Upcoming Dates:

December 10: OMS Choir Holiday Concert, 7 pm

December 12: OHS Choir Concert at OMS, 7 pm

December 13: Emerson Christmas Caroling, 6:30 pm

December 20: Half Day for All Students: Teacher Work Day

December 23-January 3: No School: Holiday Recess

January 6: School Resumes

January 15: LHS Parent/Teacher Conferences, 5:30 pm

January 18: Snow Globe at OHS

January 21: OHS Oscars, 7 pm

January 25: OHS Winter Formal, 7 pm

Adjournment

Moved by Ochodnicky, supported by Mowen to adjourn at 6:51 pm. Motion carried unanimously.

Minutes recorded by Clara Pitt

Respectfully submitted,

Shelly Ochodnicky, Secretary