

**OWOSSO PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**Board of Education Minutes**  
**August 27, 2018**  
**Report 18-19**

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, Keyes, Krauss, Mowen, Ochodnicki, Paez, Webster

Absent: All members were present

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Building Reports**

Superintendent Dr. Andrea Tuttle commented that there were several new faces in the meeting's audience. "Hiring great people is one of the District's proudest moments and Owosso Public Schools has some of the greatest staff members there are," stated Superintendent Tuttle, "when hiring new employees, the District seeks staff that can take OPS to the next level and make it even better." She added that several very rigorous interviews took place prior to hiring the 11 new teachers that will be introduced during the meeting.

Amanda Rowell, Director of Bentley Bright Beginnings introduced Crystal Huber, who was hired to teach Early Childhood Special Education in her building.

Central Elementary Principal Bridgit Spielman introduced Zephie Hillard. Mrs. Hillard will teach K-5 music at Central and Bryant Schools.

Emerson Elementary Principal Jessica Anderson introduced Kathleen Seibel. Ms. Seibel will teach K-5 music and global arts. Ms. Anderson also introduced Alexandra Lenard who will teach first grade at Emerson. In addition, Casandra Gretzler was introduced and she will teach kindergarten.

Bryant Elementary Principal Shelly Collison introduced Madalena Huyck. Ms. Huyck will teach kindergarten at Bryant Elementary. Ms. Collison introduced Kaitlyn Hoffman Bannan who will also teach kindergarten at Bryant.

Owosso Middle School Principal Rich Collins commented that he has three new teachers at the middle school. Mr. Collins announced that Tricia Rogers has been hired to teach vocal/music/theater/performance; Amy Feinauer, special education teacher; and Emily Lobb mathematics teacher.

Owosso High School Principal Jeff Phillips stated that it is was his pleasure to introduce Karleen Koskinen who will teach special education at the high school.

Board of Education Student Representative Cayden Whiteherse introduced himself as the 2018-2019 Vice President of Student Government at Owosso High School. He reported that Carson Bornefeld is the President of Student Government and will be sharing the responsibilities of student representative with him at Board meetings throughout the school year. Brittne Dailey is the Secretary, Delaney Zalecki is the Treasurer, and McKenzie Idle is the Spirit Director of Student Government. Cayden explained that Student Government is focusing on getting as many students as possible involved in activities this year, while trying to make them feel that they have a sense of belonging at OHS. He remarked that Carson Bornefeld has spent a great deal of time organizing themes for football games. The "whiteout" at the Corunna football game was a great example of Carson's efforts.

Cayden Whiteherse reported that the OHS theme for this school year is *#what'syour17?* Their goal is to remember the lives that were lost in the Florida high school shooting tragedy and to ensure that all OHS

students feel safe and taken care of by one another. A variety of free activities are scheduled during passing times, lunch and before and after school that will focus on #what'syour17? Activities will include competitions between staff and students; flower days in the commons to cheer up students in need; pizza and snack tables at lunch on random days; and random tee-shirt and hat give away days.

Cayden Whiteherse announced that "Road Trip" is this year's theme for homecoming. The homecoming court will be announced during a pep assembly on September 28. Spirit week will take place on October 8-12. Interclass games will be held on October 12 which is the same day at the homecoming parade and football game. Cayden stated that the homecoming dance is scheduled for October 13 in the OHS cafeteria. He remarked that chaperones are needed for the dance and anyone that is interested should contact Mrs. Bratschi at OHS.

### **Board Correspondence**

Superintendent Dr. Andrea Tuttle informed the Board that bond work continued throughout the summer that included people with various expertise such as brick work, masonry, and interior design. She thanked staff and members of the Board who participated in the meetings. A pre-bid meeting took place on September 24 and bids are tentatively scheduled to be pre-awarded on September 6-7 prior to being formally awarded by the Board of Education.

Superintendent Tuttle expressed sincere gratitude to the community for their continued support of the sinking fund renewal. She remarked that it would be very difficult for the District to support its aging facilities that were not included in the bond if the renewal had not been approved by voters on August 7. The sinking fund mills were reduced from three mills to two mills. Superintendent Tuttle explained that sinking fund dollars were used over the summer to repair a water main break at Central School and sewer issues at Bryant School.

Superintendent Tuttle reported that the Meet Up and Eat Up summer food service program served over 15,000 breakfasts and lunches to students over the summer months. The program benefits students that may not have enough to eat or get proper nutrition during the summer. John Klapko, Michele Prince and the Food Service team were thanked for making the program a success.

Superintendent Tuttle applauded Transportation Director Steve DeLong and his department for their flawless start to the school year. Not one complaint was received regarding the Transportation Department during the opening week of school.

Superintendent Tuttle recognized Network Coordinator Randy Miller, Jeremy Wheeler, Joe Watson, and Gunner Stinson on the successful transition to a new telephone system in the District. The new system offers additional security measures and easier access in the event of an emergency.

Superintendent Tuttle commended Athletic Director Dallas Lintner and his team for organizing the community pep rally. She remarked that it was great to introduce the Owosso High School fall athletes and their teams. She was also pleased that there was enough student participation to warrant freshmen teams, which is not the case in several school districts. Superintendent Tuttle thanked the community for coming out and welcoming the teams. She also acknowledged the OPS Sports Boosters, Band Boosters, and Jimmy John's for donating free subs and beverages at the event.

Superintendent Tuttle reported that the District hired 11 new teachers for the 2018-19 school year. Staffing has become increasingly difficult and the teacher shortage has been realized by the District. In spite of the shortage, OPS was able to fill all of its open teaching positions with highly qualified and capable individuals.

Superintendent Tuttle applauded Mr. Steve Brooks, Curriculum Director for organizing an outstanding new teacher orientation and the instructional leadership council meetings.

The Owosso Public Schools administrative team was thanked by Superintendent Tuttle for making the start of the school year one of the best.

Superintendent Tuttle reported that the OPS Foundation has reorganized under the leadership of President Matt Van Epps. She stated that she does not have all of the details; however, the organization plans to recognize a teacher and staff member of the year. The Foundation is also seeking sponsors.

Superintendent Tuttle thanked Secretary Shelly Ochodnický for representing the Board of Education at the 2018-19 Opening Day's celebration. The new school year was kicked off with a performance by Three Men and a Tenor which was sponsored by the OPS Foundation. Superintendent Tuttle applauded Mike Gregory, Sarah Jurhs, LaShawn Ayers-Hanes, Karen Michalec, Penny Hammond, Jessica McClung, and Devin Pringle for presenting some very outstanding and thought provoking Ed Talks to District staff.

Superintendent Tuttle excitedly announced that the new Trojan Marching Band uniforms may be available to present at the next Board meeting.

Superintendent Tuttle commented that it is a known fact that Owosso Public Schools is number one in the county for academics, choir, band, and art; however, the varsity football team has struggled over the past few years. She stated that her August 30<sup>th</sup> Tuttle Thoughts will pay tribute to the football team and shared the following rough draft with the Board.

*Here's a story of a group of kids who believed in their community, their teammates, their coaches, and themselves. Here's a story of a community who stood by their youth, who filled the stands even when their team had lost 35 games in a row; a community who wore the blue and gold with pride and always held their heads high. Here's a story of a group of students, a group of friends, who filled the stands, stood on the fence row, and cheered on THEIR boys of Fall. Here's a story of a student section who knew how hard their friends practiced and cheered and encouraged their friends to victory. Here's a story of the people of Owosso who never gave up on their kids or their community school, who chose to raise their team up rather than put them down even during times of struggle and adversity. A story of a group of kids who didn't give up on themselves. Here's a story of a community who bleeds Owosso blue and gold and who loves their kids. Here's the story about a head coach who strives to develop great men first and then great football players second. Here's a story about an Owosso football team, who after four winless seasons, persevered and won a football game against our cross-town rivals on Friday night. We know we have a long way to go, but the first step up a hill has been taken. Here's a story about the beauty of the Friday night lights. Here's to those before you who may not have won, but who never gave up and paved the way so that someday others would reap the rewards of their hard work. Here's to the life lessons that are learned by having to work through adversity, staying the course, never giving up, lifting each other up, persevering, proving the critics wrong, supporting one another, and staying loyal to your friends and community. Here's to a community filled with character and who never gives up! Here's to Owosso!*

Superintendent Tuttle remarked that it was very heartwarming to witness the community come together at the Owosso versus Corunna football game. The stands were packed and it was a community experience that brought everyone together.

Curriculum Director Steve Brooks reported that new teacher orientation was held prior to the start of school. The orientation focused on the importance of building relationships and examples were modeled by administrators and Teacher Mentor Coordinator Karen Michalec. Time was also spent with new teachers reflecting on the interview process. The new teachers commented about how impressed they were with the number of staff members that participated in their interviews and for giving up their own time because they cared. The orientation also included a bus tour of the district and local neighborhoods to familiarize the new staff with the community.

Mr. Brooks informed the Board that students from Lincoln High School completed 18 classes and earned nine credits after attending summer school. Students completed 92 classes at Owosso High School and earned 45.5 credits. The middle school had 30-35 students that attended summer school on a regular basis and 60-75 elementary students participated as well.

Mr. Brooks provided the Board with a copy of the Owosso Public Schools Scientific Method that was developed by the District's K-12 teachers last year. The document is inclusive of the elementary and secondary versions and provides a universal approach to the scientific process for all students in grades K-12.

Mr. Brooks reported that the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) recently announced that they will not be releasing M-STEP science scores for the next two years. Their rationale is because this is a pilot test. Mr. Brooks commented that this is very frustrating for school districts when you are constantly trying to hit a moving target.

Mr. Brooks explained that as a District, a great deal of time has been spent discussing the teacher evaluation process. This has been a collaboration with the OEA, administrators, teacher leaders, and teachers. Mr. Brooks remarked that he is very proud of everyone's efforts and what has been developed thus far.

Mr. Brooks reported that the Books at Bryant summer program concluded on August 23. Over 1,200 books were distributed to students over a 12-week period. Mr. Brooks remarked that the program was a success based on the positive feedback they received. The sponsors of the summer program were Farmer's Insurance and The Cook Family Foundation. The Owosso Police Department, Baker College, and OHS students volunteered as celebrity readers.

### **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 July 23, 2018 regular meeting minutes and current bills as presented. Motion carried unanimously.
- Moved by Keyes, supported by Krauss to approve the tax levy (L-4029) for 2018 as presented. Consistent with the taxation rate for 2018, the operating millage rate, through the renewal of the operating millage in February 2013 will be at the maximum allowable by the State for the December of 2018 levy. The sinking fund levy is based on the full 3 mills voted on during the November 2013 election and has not been subject to a Headlee rollback at this time. In addition, this is the first year for the debt levy assessment which has also been included on the L-4029 at a millage rate consistent with the first year levy as proposed in the ballot language. This millage rate will change over time in order to assure that the amount levied equates to the debt that must be paid off. Motion carried unanimously.
- Moved by Mowen, supported by Paez 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 24-26, 2019. Motion carried unanimously.
- Moved by Mowen, supported by Webster to approve the hiring of certified staff members Kathleen Seibel, Emerson Elementary Grades K-5 Music Teacher; Kaitlyn Hoffman, Bryant Elementary

Kindergarten Teacher; Alexandra Lenard, Emerson Elementary First Grade Teacher; Emily Lobb, Owosso Middle School Math Teacher; and Amy Feinauer, Owosso Middle School Special Education Teacher. Motion carried unanimously.

### **For Future Action**

- The Board of Education will be asked to approve the out-of-state travel by Owosso High School students to attend and compete in the Virtual Enterprise (VE) Southern Regional Trade Show in Pigeon Forge, TN on November 18-21, 2018 and the VE Great Lakes Trade Show in Chicago, IL on January 30-February 1, 2019.

### **For Information**

Superintendent Tuttle reported that Christopher Poyner has accepted the Special Education Paraprofessional position at Owosso High School. Meg Benson has accepted the Special Education Paraprofessional position at Owosso High School. Janelle DeLong has accepted the Title I Paraprofessional position at Emerson Elementary. Daniel Mellen has accepted the At Risk Paraprofessional position at Lincoln Alternative Education High School. David Venne has accepted the Monitor position at Owosso High School. Melissa Nitz has accepted the Monitor position at Bryant Elementary. Jill Siddens has accepted the Monitor position at Bryant Elementary. Charlene Gonyou has accepted the Paraprofessional position at Bryant Elementary. Danielle Grills, Owosso Middle School Teacher has resigned effective August 14, 2018. Jaclyn Williams, Special Education Teacher at Owosso Middle School has resigned effective August 14, 2018. Annette Richmond, Special Education Paraprofessional at Owosso High School has resigned effective August 17, 2018.

### **Public Participation**

There were no comments from the meeting's audience.

### **Board Member Comments/Updates**

President Tim Jenc thanked Superintendent Tuttle for taking the time to assist him with a tour of Owosso High School on a Saturday for approximately 60 graduates from the Class of 1973.

Trustee Ty Krauss thanked the public for passing the sinking fund renewal. He stated that he was very proud of the varsity football team and their recent win. Mr. Krauss applauded the OPS administration for a smooth start to the school year. He also thanked Superintendent Tuttle and Administrative Assistant Clara Pitt for the opportunity to participate in professional development on August 10-12 as he continues to work on obtaining MASB Board certification.

Trustee Sara Keyes commented on a great start to the new school year. She also praised Curriculum Director Steve Brooks and new principals Mrs. Shelly Collison and Ms. Jessica Anderson on a flawless start of school.

Vice President Rick Mowen welcomed the new staff that was introduced during the meeting and all returning staff members. Mr. Mowen remarked that he recently attended a youth football scrimmage in Corunna and was very encouraged by the enthusiasm of the young players. He stated that he was very proud of Owosso and the greater community for passing the sinking fund renewal and SRESM millage. Mr. Mowen remarked that the SRESM millage provides many benefits for District programs and could have been detrimental had it not passed.

Secretary Shelly Ochodnicki remarked that she was unable to attend the Owosso versus Corunna varsity football game but did listen to it on the radio. She stated that it was a great and exciting game to listen to and hopes the excitement will continue during the next home game. Mrs. Ochodnicki reported that she attended another amazing opening day and thought the Three Men and a Tenor performance was fabulous. She applauded OPS Foundation President Matt Van Epps on his impressive Elvis impersonation and the teachers that took a risk with their Ed Talk presentations. Mrs. Ochodnicki also

expressed her appreciation for the several teachers she noticed working on their own time in their buildings throughout the summer; in addition to purchasing classroom supplies with their own money.

Treasurer Cheryl Paez echoed the previous comments about the great start to the year. She also praised the Emerson Elementary staff for dealing with the road construction on Oliver Street.

Trustee Marlene Webster remarked that during the July Board meeting she shared information about Shiawassee Hope's neighborhood party at Pleasant Valley. The party was held on August 18 and it was the biggest and best party that has ever been held. The entertainment included a DJ and dancing in the streets to create a positive feeling about going back to school. Mrs. Webster announced that they were able to give \$20 gift cards to 70 children for the purchase of new shoes. The children also received new clothes and school supplies. Mrs. Webster expressed sincere gratitude to the staff of OPS for their donations of money and time to community projects for the many under resourced and at risk students. She also thanked Steve DeLong of the Transportation Department for bringing a school bus to the party and allowing students to tour the bus and meet their bus driver prior to school starting.

Trustee Webster invited everyone to the Drug Alliance Parent Group meeting on September 18. Judge Matt Stewart, Prosecuting Attorney Deanna Finnegan, Sergeant Doug Chapman, and several other guest speakers will address youth substance abuse and trends. Mrs. Webster asked that everyone get the word out about the event and encourage parents to attend.

Trustee Webster stated that she also attended the Owosso versus Corunna varsity football game and she was very proud of the pride that was displayed by OPS students and fans.

Superintendent Tuttle commented that the Drug Alliance Parent Group meeting is truly worth attending. The message to be shared is very powerful, informative, and high caliber.

Superintendent Tuttle encouraged everyone to attend the August 30 football game at Willman Field. She commented that she is excited to hear the great Trojan Marching Band perform and watch a winning football team play.

Superintendent Tuttle announced that a crew from the New York Giants football team recently visited the District for a documentary they are working on about former OHS graduate and NY Giants Player Brad Van Pelt. It was later reported that the New York Giants crew were extremely impressed with how well Willman Field has been maintained over the years and its nostalgia.

**Upcoming Board Meeting Dates:**

September 10 – Board of Education Committee of the Whole Meeting, 5 pm

September 24 – Regular Board Meeting, 5:30 pm

**Important Upcoming Dates:**

August 30: Staff Tailgate at Willman Field, 5:30 pm

August 31-September 3: No School – Labor Day Recess

September 4: School Resumes

September 17: Constitution Day, District-wide

September 21: End Zone Dance at Willman Field, 9 pm

Vice President Mowen, referred to Superintendent Tuttle's comment about how excited she was to listen to the Trojan Marching Band at the next home football game. Mr. Mowen informed the audience that many people are unaware that the band has always created a different program for each of its performances.

Secretary Shelly Ochodnicki announced that the Owosso High School Varsity Football Team is hosting a Salute to Service special event on Friday, September 21<sup>st</sup> at Willman Field.

**Adjournment**

Moved by Mowen, supported by Ochodnický to adjourn at 6:22 pm. Motion carried unanimously.

Minutes recorded by Clara Pitt

Respectfully submitted,

---

Shelly Ochodnický, Secretary