

**OWOSSO PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**Board of Education Minutes**  
**Regular Meeting**  
**February 21, 2024**  
**Report 23-123**

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**

Prior to the Board meeting, Future Farmers of America students Tayloe Spielman, Gracie Meyer, and Evelyn Harrand gave a 15-minute, interactive presentation on ‘What to Expect When Your Mare is Expecting’ to audience members. The students showcased their life-sized horse model, that included a functional uterus to demonstrate a mare’s birthing process. Tayloe, Gracie, and Evelyn confidently explained to the audience proper sanitary conditions, pre- and post-natal care for a mare, and how to care for the foal once it has been birthed. Tayloe Spielman shared that she has been in FFA for two years and shared with the Board that the opportunity to take classes she is interested in has helped her find her passion. Evelyn Harrand shared that she has been in FFA for three years and her current favorite class is botany. Gracie Meyer shared that she is also enrolled in botany class, and her favorite unit has been horticulture. Greenhand Speaker Maddie Hagan appreciates the opportunities she’s been given to follow her interests. Treasurer Quick thanked the students for their time and asked how their presentation was rated at their recent leadership contest. Evelyn responded that Owosso took home first place at the district competition, and won second place at the regional competition. She continued that Owosso will compete again at the upcoming state competition. Vice President Webster complimented the students on their public speaking skills, and said it is heartening to see kids so excited about their studies. She thanked Agri-Science Instructor and FFA Advisor Mrs. Beth Clark for encouraging her students to follow their passions.

**Board Correspondence**

Interim Superintendent Mr. Dave Schulte shared with the Board that he met with the OPS administrative team last week and the central office continues to run smoothly. He thanked central office team members for their patience and hard work during the transition period.

Curriculum Director Mr. Stephen Brooks shared good news in the district. Owosso High School had two wrestlers qualify for D2 state finals; he congratulated Zach Rye and Hannah Hart on their success. Over the weekend, Camden Caswell bowled a perfect 300 game at the metro competition. On February 9, OHS hosted the Athletic Hall of Fame and inducted Dillon McClintock class of 2015, Jeff Ardelean class of 1978, Cory Bouck class of 1987, Kevin Odor

class of 1975, and Christine Smiggen Forester class of 1989. Mr. Brooks shared that the OHS swim team is undefeated and will head to the Metro League Championships this weekend; he wished them good luck as they aim for the championship title. Mr. Brooks continued that the CTE Construction Trades class built an incredible table for the Performing Arts Center. The table will be used by theater students to help build sets and props for theater productions. Mr. Brooks congratulated the cast and crew of 'Exposure' who finished fifth place at the recent MIFA competition at Wayne State University. Excellence Awards in acting went to Alyssa Miller and Jaxon Fedewa, lighting design, Dramaturgy for Jenna Lang. Superior Awards for Addison Collard for lobby display and sound execution, and Addison Collard and Lily Walters took home awards for sound design. Mr. Brooks reminded the Board that the Lincoln Alternative High School basketball team has had a great start to their season and the next game will take place on February 27 in the secondary campus gym. Mr. Brooks said the elementary buildings have had a busy couple of weeks with Black History Month, Valentine's Day celebrations, parent teacher conferences, and kindergarten registration. Mr. Brooks gave kudos to Communications Director Jess Thompson and the Title I team for their work on Kindergarten round up. Owosso families will receive a school messenger communication this evening advertising the kindergarten registration process and will have also received a marketing post card. Newspaper ads, social media posts, and commercials for kindergarten registration began to air on February 1. Elementary principals will also visit daycares and pre-schools in the Owosso area to talk about the registration process. Mr. Brooks shared with the Board that the district will receive a special award from Navigate 360 for Mental Health Awareness. It is a national award and the Navigate 360 team will be here on March 8 to present the award to administration. Mr. Brooks continued that Pupil Count Day took place on February 14. He gave special thanks to Pupil Accounting Specialist Mrs. Tasha Speck for her preparation and efficient work during the process. Mr. Brooks said central office continues to run smoothly and he thanked everyone for their patience while the Board continues the superintendent search.

### **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 Webster, supported by Easlick, to approve the February 7, 2024 Special Meeting Minutes, the current bills and financials as presented. Secretary Krauss conducted a roll call vote; Henne, Ochodnick, Easlick, Krauss, Webster, Quick, Mowen, voted aye. No nay votes. Motion carried unanimously.

- Moved by Easlick, supported by Henne, to approve the hiring of Erika Duso for the Bryant and Emerson Elementary/Resource Room position at BA Step 2, \$43,956 and the hiring of Benjamin Price for the Central Elementary STEM position at MA Step 8, \$64,305. Motion carried unanimously. Treasurer Quick asked why Ms. Duso will be hired at Step 2. Mr. Brooks responded Ms. Duso has one year of experience, which qualifies her for the Step 2 salary.
- Moved by Ochodnicky, supported by Webster to approve the out-of-state travel for Food Service Director Joy Hartman, to attend the American Commodity Distribution Association in St. Louis, Missouri, April 20-April 24, 2024. Motion carried unanimously.

### **For Future Action**

- The Board will be asked to authorize the Superintendent to upgrade building controls at Central and Bryant Elementary schools. Mr. Brooks informed the Board that the control panels for the boilers are outdated; the software is from the early 2000s. Parts for the panels are either obsolete or difficult to find and expensive. Mr. Brooks said it is the administration's recommendation that the Board prepare to upgrade the control panels, to request proposals and then review bids.
- The Board will be asked to authorize the Superintendent to either lease or purchase up to five buses pending results of bids. Treasurer Quick asked for clarification on the timeline. Mr. Brooks responded two buses will need to come off lease before June, an additional bus will need to be declared obsolete likely in the next month or two, and then two buses will need to come off lease before August 2024. Mr. Brooks ensured the Board that the district will receive the best pricing as guaranteed by the Michigan School Business Officials organization.

### **For Information**

Mr. Schulte announced the following personnel changes:

### **Accepted Positions**

- Claire Munro has accepted the Paraprofessional position at Bryant.
- Debra Cummings has accepted the Sub Custodian position.
- Lily Crugher has accepted the Paraprofessional position at Bryant.
- Beulah Thomley has accepted the Custodian position at OHS.

### **Resignations**

- Christian Davis, Custodian resigned effective January 26, 2024.
- William Lentz, Central Teacher resigned effective February 16, 2024.

## **Superintendent Search Update**

President Mowen gave an update on the superintendent search process. The Community Survey has been completed. We had 438 surveys that were completed. Our search consultant, Mr. Dave Moore, said it was a higher number than most districts he has worked in. The Internal Posting has been completed. Mr. Steve Brooks is the only internal candidate who applied. At Friday night's special board meeting starting at 5:30pm, we will be: reviewing the Open Meetings Act, going over the survey results, reviewing Mr. Brook's application materials, reviewing and then making a final draft of the Selection Criteria. In addition, we have to determine our next steps in the process. The Board has three options: appoint a new superintendent, interview Mr. Brooks, or post the position externally.

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No public participants addressed the Board.

## **Board Comments**

Trustee Henne thanked central office staff as they continue to work hard during a period of tumultuous change. He congratulated the bowling team and the wrestling team for their recent success. He is looking forward to the meeting on February 23.

Trustee Ochodnicky shared that on her way to the meeting, she saw many kids outside, laughing and playing. She is relieved that warm weather is returning and kids will be outside having fun. She thanked staff for continually supporting Owosso families. Her organization recently took in a mother and small child from Lincoln, as well as a mother and daughter from Bryant. She is appreciative that district staff goes above and beyond to help the community.

Vice President Webster voiced her appreciation for search consultant Dave Moore and interim superintendent Dave Schulte. She said the communication has been effective, efficient, and she feels MASB has done a great job with the search process so far. She acknowledges the difficulty that comes with leadership positions being unfilled, and she thanked everyone for their patience while the Board searches for a new superintendent.

Trustee Easlick thanked the FFA students for their presentation. He congratulated the sports teams and the theater group for their recent successes. He thanked Mr. Brooks for sharing all the good news in the district.

Treasurer Quick echoed all previous Board member comments. She thanked everyone in the district for their patience while the Board continues the superintendent search.

Secretary Krauss commended the FFA students for their presentation. He complimented their preparedness and public speaking skills. He congratulated the athletic teams and the theater students for their recent successes. He also shared that administrative assistant Ms. Brooke Barber recently resigned, and he thanked her for her dedication to the district the last couple years. He said the Board will miss her professionalism and positivity. He is looking forward to the upcoming Board meetings as the Board progresses in the search process.

President Mowen also thanked Ms. Barber and said she will be deeply missed. He thanked all those in attendance at the meeting and said the Board truly appreciates when students share their academic passions with the Board.

### **Upcoming Dates**

- February 23, 2024: Board of Education Special Meeting, 5:30pm, Washington Campus Gymnasium
- February 29, 2024: Board of Education Special Meeting, 5:30 pm, Washington Campus Gymnasium
- February 27: No school – Election day and professional development
- February 28: OHS Choir Concert, 7:00pm, PAC
- March 7: OHS Dodgeball, 7:00pm, OHS Gym
- March 22-29: Spring Recess

Moved by Quick, supported by Easlick to move in to closed session at 6:16pm for the purpose of conducting a student hearing. Secretary Krauss conducted a roll call vote: Easlick, Henne, Krauss, Mowen, Ochodnicky, Quick, Webster voted aye. No nay votes. Motion carried unanimously.

Moved by Ochodnicky, supported by Easlick, to move back into open session at 7:15pm. for the purpose of reading Board's decision and adjournment. Motion carried unanimously.

### **Adjournment**

Moved by Quick, supported by Ochodnicky, to adjourn at 7:18pm. Motion carried unanimously.

Minutes recorded by Brooke Barber.

Respectfully submitted,

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Ty Krauss, Secretary