

OWOSSO PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Board of Education Minutes
Regular Meeting
January 24, 2022
Report 21-89

Present: Adam Easlick, Sarah Keyes, Rick Mowen, Shelly Ochodnicky, Olga Quick,
Absent: Ty Krauss, Marlene Webster

President Rick Mowen called the Board of Education Meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. The meeting was held at the Washington Campus Gymnasium, 645 Alger Street, Owosso MI 48867.

Election of Officers

Superintendent Dr. Tuttle shared the process to be used by the Board of Education for the annual election of officers. Dr. Tuttle explained that she will open the nominations for Board President by taking the first nominations. The same process will be used by the newly elected President for the offices of Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. When the elections are completed, the meeting will continue with the new officers in place.

Superintendent Dr. Tuttle opened the nominations for the office of President. Shelly Ochodnicky nominated Sara Keyes for the office of Board President, and Ms. Keyes accepted the nomination. Olga Quick nominated Rick Mowen for the office of Board President, and Mr. Mowen accepted the nomination. There were no other nominations for Board President. Mr. Mowen, Mr. Easlick, and Mrs. Quick, voted to elect Mr. Mowen as Board President. Mrs. Ochodnicky and Mrs. Keyes voted to elect Mrs. Keyes as Board President. Ty Krauss and Marlene Webster were absent. With no majority vote, the current officer remains in that position. Mr. Mowen will serve as Board President effective immediately until the next election.

President Mowen opened the nominations for the office of Vice President. Mrs. Quick nominated Mrs. Webster for the office of Board Vice President, and Mrs. Webster accepted the nomination through a written letter of acceptance. Mrs. Keyes nominated Mrs. Ochodnicky for the office of Board Vice President, and Mrs. Ochodnicky accepted the nomination. There were no other nominations for Vice President. Mrs. Quick and Mr. Easlick voted to elect Mrs. Webster as Vice President. Mrs. Ochodnicky, Mrs. Keyes voted to elect Mrs. Ochodnicky as Vice President. With no majority vote, the current officer remains in that position. Mrs. Ochodnicky will continue to serve as Board Vice President effective immediately until the next election.

President Mowen opened the nominations for the office of Secretary. Mr. Easlick nominated Mrs. Quick for the office of Board Secretary, and Mrs. Quick accepted the nomination. Mrs. Keyes nominated Mrs. Webster for the office of Board Secretary, and Mrs. Webster accepted the nomination through a written letter of acceptance. Mrs. Quick and Mr. Easlick voted to elect Mrs. Quick as Board Secretary. Vice President Ochodnicky and Mrs. Keyes voted to elect Mrs.

Webster as Board Secretary. With no majority vote, the current officer remains in that position. Mrs. Webster will continue to serve as Board Secretary effective immediately until the next election.

President Mowen opened the nominations for the office of Treasurer. Vice President Ochodnicki nominated Mrs. Keyes for the office of Treasurer, and Mrs. Keyes accepted the nomination. Mr. Easlick nominated Ty Krauss for the office of Treasurer, however Mr. Krauss did not write a letter of acceptance in his absence and Mr. Easlick withdrew his nomination. Mrs. Quick nominated Mr. Easlick for the office of Treasurer, Mr. Easlick accepted. There were no other nominations for Treasurer. Mrs. Quick and Mr. Easlick voted for Mr. Easlick for the office of Treasurer. Mrs. Keyes and Mrs. Ochodnicki voted for Mrs. Keyes for the office of Treasurer. With no majority vote, the current officer remains the same. Mrs. Keyes will continue to serve as Board Treasurer effective immediately until the next election.

Building Reports

Central Elementary Principal Bridgit Spielman introduced Mr. William Lentz, the STEM teacher at Central School, and explained that STEM is one of the popular encore classes that Central has to offer. Mr. Lentz and several students from Central Elementary gave a demonstration of ‘draw programming’ to the Board, and the students showed how they could manipulate the speed and distance of a device using their program. The students giving the showcase included Donovan Pauldine, Adyson Miculka, Ella Parker, and Emma Parker.

Board Recognition Month

Dr. Tuttle announced that the month of January is nationally recognized as School Board Recognition Month. “I’d like to share a few words to go along with our small token of appreciation. January is School Board recognition month, and another year full of challenges for public education, the Owosso Board of Education members persevered through the adversity of 2021 and into 2022, to provide the best possible education and the greatest opportunities for Owosso’s students. Board members, you know that you make decisions that support a safe and orderly culture where Owosso students can learn, and Owosso teachers can teach. In the last couple of years, the challenges of constantly evolving data and in times of great uncertainty in our District, community, and the world, has placed additional work on our Board of Education members. It’s hard to be a leader now, and I appreciate your willingness to stand up and do what you think is right for the kids and the community of Owosso. The Owosso Board of Education collectively has forty-eight years of service to our District. Their main goal is to support student achievement and to achieve that goal the Board focuses on the following needs: as you know you develop policies that best support student achievement, safety, and security. You create a vision for what parents and citizens want their school district to become and how to make student achievement the top priority. You set standards for what children must learn and be able to do. You assess whether schools achieve their goals and whether students are learning. The accounting for the outcomes of decisions and tracking progress is on your shoulders as well. You align the districts use of human and financial resources. You collaborate to solve common problems and to support common successes and you make incredibly tough decisions all the

time. You focus on continuous improvement by questioning, examining, revising, refining, and revisiting issues related to student achievement. To celebrate School Board recognition month is one of the very small ways we express our appreciation for all that our Board of Education members do for our students, our staff, our schools, and community. Tonight, we recognize the Owosso Board of Education's contributions that require year-round dedication on their part. No matter what challenges lie ahead for our District in 2022, our school Board members will continue to govern and to provide an exceptional education for each of Owosso Public School's students."

Student Representative Madalyn Hasyn was attending Owosso High School's Oscars event, but she did give Dr. Tuttle a report to read in her absence. "Hello everyone, so sorry I am not able to be at the meeting tonight, but I still want to give you an update. Our annual can-drive ended recently, and it was a very big success. The high school alone came up with over 350lbs of food and raised over \$2,500 in the end. The junior class won the can drive challenge by raising \$930 of the total money collected, they will be holding the new trophy until next year's can drive. I am very excited to see what the high school can do next year. The OHS Oscars are tonight at 7:00pm at the Performing Arts Center. This is a new event that our National Honor Society has come up with this year and the nominees are very excited to be involved. The event has trophies, performances, and speeches so it should be a fun night. This would be a good time to promote the Drama Club's performance of the "Radium Girls" which was held at our Performing Arts Center and will be performed again on February 2nd for the public and will be moving on to the MIFA Regionals on February 5th in Saint Johns. Again, I'm sorry I'm not able to be at the meeting tonight but I am looking forward to being at the next one."

Board Correspondence

Dr. Tuttle produced a letter and a small silver spoon that was found among items from Owosso High School's past. "This is a pretty cool item. The letter is dated 1962 from Charlie and Linda Keenan. It was given at what was at the time, the new high school and was found in our archives. I wanted to show you a cool piece of the past." Dr. Tuttle continued with an update on district initiatives "We're investigating the possibility of therapy dogs, the Securely system, the potential of additional liaison officers, additional support personnel for our students and staff. The Owosso High School has a Build Better, Together initiative; it's a new club that is set to hold it's first meeting on Tuesday, January 25th. The club promotes kindness, empathy, and being the change, we all wish to see in the world. Mrs. Bratschi is the club advisor. Also on Friday, Owosso High School celebrated Student of the Month. These students are nominated by teachers for many reasons that include improved attendance, academic performance, community service and more. At Emerson, they have seen great progress in the tutored second grade students. They are adding a before-school tutoring program for first and third graders to help them prepare for the MSTEP. The Owosso Athletic Hall of Fame induction will be on February 11, at the Owosso High School Gymnasium. The inductees will be Amy Alliton, Jerry Alliton, Linda Hemgesberg-Murphy, Gary Webster, and Mitch Zwolensky. At Bryant, the staff is continuing to show care for our veterans with a Valentines Day card drawing. The goal at Bryant is to have 500 veterans receive a card. At Central the student leadership team prepared and delivered daily announcements in

honor of Dr. Martin Luther King that included a quote by Dr. King and a short fact. They also created posters with positive messages inspired by Dr. King's life that were posted in the building. Additionally, Mrs. Hutchison and the 5th graders have created daily inspiration announcements for the entire month of February. At the Middle School they had 124 students that had all As for their first semester, so kudos to those students but also to their teachers and parents and all those who work with our students daily. And not to be outdone, the Owosso Middle School Drama Club performed a production of the animated '13 Reasons Why Not To Be a Pirate' on Saturday January 22nd. They too did very well, and they received the highest honor which is the cast/ensemble 'Superior' rating. They will be performing on February 2nd at 7:00pm. At Lincoln we continue to get our students ready to graduate; they are working on their tuition and incentive programs, like the Federal Application for Federal Student Aid and the college readiness program Xello. And finally, I am excited to announce that Bentley Bright Beginnings Director Amanda Rowell wrote a grant to the Michigan Department of Education and received about \$230,000 to renovate the existing Bentley building. Bentley passed their licensing with flying colors, and that is not done without a lot of hard work. Kudos to Mrs. Rowell for her grant and the hard work put in from the Bentley team. That concludes my good news in the District."

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.

The following individuals addressed the Board:

- Corey Agnew
- Tom Manke
- Kristen Bratschi
- Karen Robinson
- Beth Hutchison
- Rebecca Gillett
- Kayla Keller
- Marc Senk
- Carrie Miculka
- Bonnie Winslow
- Daisy Davis
- Maggie Gobel
- Tony Newman
- Vanessa Senk

For Action

- Moved by Keyes, supported by Easlick to approve the December 13, 2021, Regular Board Meeting Minutes, January 10, 2022, Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes, January 10 Committee of the Whole Meeting Closed Session Minutes, Current Bills and Financials as presented. Motion carried unanimously.
- Moved by Quick, supported by Easlick to continue following the current COVID-19 protocols until the regular Board meeting in February. Dr. Tuttle introduced the topic by stating “First of all, I would like to thank the public for their respect. This is an incredibly difficult decision. I appreciate the passion that you all share. We do have to make decisions that are in the best interest of our students. Unfortunately, Mr. Brooks is not here tonight, but has obviously done a great job in assembling this data. As expected, we’ve seen a rise in cases after Christmas break. You can see it’s starting to decline. My overall objective is to keep kids in school. We’ve been going month to month on this. I very much hope that we will not need to go virtual. It has been my goal since day one that we keep the district open, and that we continue to offer opportunities to our students. I know this is a divisive decision. I am here to recommend that we continue with the existing protocols, the masks, at home contact tracing, and testing for athletics until our February meeting. That is my recommendation.” President Mowen conducted a roll call vote; President Mowen, Trustee Quick and Trustee Easlick voted aye, Vice President Ochodnicky and Treasurer Keyes voted nay, Motion carried in three to two roll-call vote.
- Moved by Quick, supported by Easlick to approve the OESPA and OEA Non-Union salary schedule change. “The pay schedule in front of you involves two groups; the OESPA and the OEA Non-Union. Basically, this extends their step schedule. The intent is to thank these staff members that have been loyal to this District and to retain those people and attract others. This would make us more competitive with other districts.” Motion carried unanimously.
- Moved by Ochodnicky, supported by Easlick to authorize the Superintendent to hire Megan Brabo as a Special Education teacher. “Megan Brabo comes to us as a Special Education teacher. It is becoming harder and harder to get applicants for every teaching position. Megan comes from a neighboring district and would join us at Step 5.”

For Future Action

- The Board will be asked to approve the Kingscott Resolution authorizing the Superintendent to move forward with litigation. Dr. Tuttle stated “This resolution is authorizing the Superintendent or his/her designee to proceed with litigation with Kingscott. The district argues that the errors in omission were in excess of the contract, Kingscott obviously argues differently. We’ve been through mediation unsuccessfully. I would like to continue to try to solve this through mediation, if possible, but this tells Kingscott the Board is serious about moving forward with litigation. I would recommend the Board move in that direction.”
- The Board will be asked to approve the School Nurse Contract and proposed contract for an additional school nurse. Dr. Tuttle stated “Our school nurse has been phenomenal. The

partnership with Memorial Healthcare has been outstanding. People matter, you must have the right person in this position, and we are fortunate to have a great candidate. This would be asking the Board to formalize the agreement with Memorial Healthcare and to authorize the Superintendent to enter into a similar agreement for a second school nurse.”

For Information

- The Board was given an update on the ESSER Plan Consultation. Dr. Tuttle explained “As you know, we put out a questionnaire and we received over 700 responses from the community. Primarily the community indicated they would like the funds to be used for building improvements as well as Safety and Security. This survey allows us to meet the requirement that we must have meaningful consultation with stakeholders regarding the use of the ESSER funds.”
- Dr. Tuttle reported the following personnel changes:

Accepted Positions

- Vanassa Shapas has accepted the Lead Cook II position at Owosso High School.
- Nicole Walworth has accepted the Owosso Middle School Executive Secretary position.
- DeAnn Jones has accepted the 3-hour ECSE Paraprofessional position at Bentley Bright Beginnings.
- Austin Hendrickson has accepted the Custodian II position at Owosso High School.

Resignations

- Teresa Graham, Owosso Middle School Executive Secretary has resigned.
- Courtney Webster, Food Service Worker at Central Elementary has resigned effective January 28, 2022.
- Dallas Lintner, Lincoln Alternative High School Principal, has announced his resignation effective January 31, 2022.
- Tonia Pelech, Custodian II at Washington/Bentley has submitted her letter of resignation effective February 3, 2022.

Retirements

- Shelly Collison, Bryant Elementary Principal, has announced her retirement at the conclusion of the 2021-2022 school year.

Public Participation

The following individuals addressed the Board:

- Corey Agnew
- Tom Manke

- Kristen Bratschi
- Bonnie Winslow
- Vix Shive
- Phoenix Neese

Board Reports

Treasurer Keyes commended Vix Shive and Phoenix Neese for their thoughtful presentation on the Lincoln program, and their courage to get up and speak in front of the Board. She also commented she agrees that the community is polarized, especially concerning COVID. She hopes everyone reflects on their thoughts and behaviors and that she hopes the community can come together for the greater good. She ended her comments by wishing Dallas Lintner, Shelly Collison, and Teresa Graham well in their future endeavors.

Vice President Ochodnický commented that Dallas Lintner and Shelly Collison will be sorely missed and thanked them for their support and care of Owosso Public Schools and its students. She also said that the Lincoln program is very dear to her heart, and to her family. She said no decisions have been made and nothing will be decided flippantly, and she appreciates all voice that have been heard tonight on the matter.

Trustee Quick thanked all public participants for their comments. She said the Lincoln program is also very important to her and the Board is not taking the matter lightly. She thanked all public participants for voicing their opinions and assured the audience that their voices have been heard. Trustee Quick ended her comments by saying the Board takes all opinions into consideration and makes decision based on the information in front of them. She said the community and the Board should continue to work together for what's best for our students and staff.

Trustee Easlick thanked Mr. Lentz and the Central students for their Celebrate Kids Showcase and said their demonstration was very impressive. He commended Bentley Bright Beginnings Director Amanda Rowell for the successful grant she wrote. He ended his comments by thanking Vix Shive and Phoenix Neese for their presentation on Lincoln and commended their preparation.

President Mowen thanked Dallas Lintner and Shelly Collison for their service to the District and wished them well as they move on to the next phase in their lives. He also said he thinks the Board has served its purpose of providing for the safety and well-being of students in the school environment and has met the goal of keeping the District open and keeping students in classrooms.

Upcoming Dates

- **February 14:** Board of Education Committee of the Whole, Washington Campus Superintendent's Office, 5:30 pm
- **February 28:** Board of Education Regular Meeting, Washington Campus Gym, 5:30

- **February 2:** Owosso High School and Owosso Middle School MIFA Performance, Performing Arts Center, 7:00pm
- **February 5:** Owosso High School MIFA Regionals, Saint Johns, All Day
- **February 12, 13:** Owosso High School MIFA States, Avondale, All Day

Adjournment

Moved by Ochodnicky, supported by Keyes to adjourn at 7:28 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Minutes recorded by Brooke Barber.

Respectfully submitted,

Marlene Webster _____

Marlene Webster, Secretary