

OWOSSO PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Board of Education Minutes
April 23, 2018
Report 17-136

President Jenc called the meeting of the Board of Education to order at 7:02 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

President Jenc informed the Board that the agenda had been amended to include a presentation by Bentley Bright Beginnings and Emerson staff as part of the Celebrate Kids! segment of the meeting.

Building Reports

Superintendent Tuttle excitedly announced that The Cook Family Foundation members have committed \$1.1 million to support the arts in Owosso Public Schools by converting the multi-purpose performance space in our new secondary campus into a true auditorium. This means that the multi-purpose performance space that our community voted for will be upgraded to meet the high standard of performing arts excellence that our students, staff, and community have come to expect from Owosso Public Schools. The following upgrades to the multi-purpose performance space will be made possible by The Cook Family Foundation in order to create a true auditorium for our students and community:

- Enhanced Theatre Rigging \$250,000
- Arbor Pit \$40,000
- Theatrical Drapery \$85,000
- Orchestra pit with cover \$150,000
- Enhanced Theatrical Lighting \$200,000
- Orchestra shell and towers \$175,000
- Enhanced Audio Visual system \$100,000
- Equipment Total \$1,000,000
- 10% Fees/Contingency \$100,000
- Total Contribution: \$1,100,000

With the conversion of the multi-purpose performing space to a true auditorium, Owosso students will have daily accessibility to a space that will foster cross-curricular learning and the development of real-life skills that enhance communication, technology, and public speaking skills. The arts develop well-rounded individuals who are creative thinkers, communicators, and problem solvers. A true auditorium, complete with the amenities highlighted, will not only provide drama students the opportunity to prepare for state of the art performances but equally important, it will afford our students the chance to engage in theatre experiences while meeting the state-wide academic standards from a variety of subject matters such as construction trades (set construction), technology (operating the light and sound boards and strategically using digital media and visual displays to express information and enhance understanding), engineering (CAD set design), and English (knowing your audience, public speaking, and knowing your voice).

Owosso continues to offer superior opportunities for our students and the conversion of a 1,000 seat multi-purpose performance center to a state of the art auditorium is just one more opportunity that sets Owosso apart from other districts.

For decades, The Cook Family Foundation has supported Owosso Public Schools in our innovative curriculum endeavors such as the implementation of our International Baccalaureate Program; providing at least 150 scholarships to Owosso High School graduates to attend the University of Michigan including five (5) students from the Class of 2018; ensuring the performing arts are integral to Owosso elementary students' educational experience through the Performing Arts Committee; the integration of the theatrical arts more specifically drama, into the English Language Arts curriculum at Owosso High School; and supporting cutting-edge environmental initiatives such as the Owosso High School Rain Garden. Owosso Public Schools are able to provide numerous unique 21st century learning experiences for our students because of our relationship with The Cook Family Foundation.

Superintendent Tuttle stated that she is humbled and joyful for this exceptional donation! The Cook Family Foundation members Mr. Bruce Cook, Mrs. Jacqueline Cook (former OPS Board Member), Mr. Tom Cook, Mrs. Anna Owens, Mr. Paul Cook, and Mrs. Laurie Caszatt Cook (former OPS Board Member) were thanked by the Board of Education and the meeting's audience.

Mr. Tom Cook commented that The Cook Family Foundation believes that we are at our best as a community when we come together and collaborate on a really important task. He remarked that over the past 25 years, he cannot think of a stronger collaboration or a more important task than passing the November 2017 bond measure. The Cook Family Foundation would like to be a part of this success. The Cook Family Foundation has a long history with the Owosso Schools. Their benefactor and his grandfather, Mr. Donald Cook graduated from Owosso High School in 1920, four of their trustees graduated from Owosso Public Schools, and two have served on the school Board. Four members of their next generation also graduated from Owosso High School. As private citizens, they have worked on several millage campaigns. Additionally, all members of The Cook Family Foundation have served on various committees within the District and volunteered in classrooms. Mr. Cook stated that they believe that the success of our schools depends on several key items, including foresightful leadership by the Board of Education. He thanked the Board and Administration for all that they have done to highlight and advance excellence in education. Mr. Cook applauded teachers for their quality instruction and curriculum. Parents and students were also thanked for making Owosso Public Schools an engaged learning place. Community support for schools, volunteers, civic and service club donations are important as well. However, the most profound level of community support is what was witnessed in November 2017 when people voluntarily voted to invest their tax dollars to upgrade our schools. The Cook Family Foundation wants to partner with these groups to celebrate this success. The Cook Family Foundation believes that the Arts are a central component of a quality education. The new auditorium will enable excellence in the performing arts and allow for a number of musical and theatrical performances. Mr. Cook commented that they are particularly excited about the District's commitment to include performing arts in the tenth grade Language Arts/English curriculum. The performing arts also teaches important work place skills, whether it is in communication, technology, problem solving, building sets, running lights, and sound are all opportunities to learn and apply technical skills. Theater may be the most practical way of problem solving that many of our youth can actually engage in. Mr. Cook stated that they are excited to be part of this collaboration and they look forward to seeing Owosso Public Schools becoming a star on the educational stage of Michigan. He thanked everyone who helped make this opportunity possible, not only his grandfather and family, but the OPS leadership and the voters.

Superintendent Tuttle acknowledged the accomplishments of Board members Shelly Ochodnický and Sara Keyes for achieving the Michigan Association of School Boards Level One Certification and the Award of Merit. Secretary Ochodnický and Trustee Keyes used their valuable time to improve their leadership effectiveness by completing board development courses.

Central Elementary Principal Bridgit Spielman introduced third grade teacher Megan Friend to the Board of Education. Mrs. Friend thanked the Board for inviting her and two of her students back to share details about her journey to Haiti over spring break to deliver school supplies that the students had collected. The students have been learning about the effects of spreading their kindness to the children of Haiti

throughout the school year. Since her return from Haiti, the students have had time to reflect on their kindness after seeing photos and hearing stories about Mrs. Friend's journey. Mrs. Friend provided an overview of her mission trip that included visits to an orphanage. There are eight million people that live in Haiti and one million are orphans. She visited a town called the Naked Village where a majority of the residents do not have clothing. Mrs. Friend explained that many Haitian mothers are very young. Prior to her arrival, mothers from the Naked Village took a two-week parenting course and a graduation ceremony was held during her trip as part of their mission for Women in Empowerment. The women of the Naked Village were given an opportunity to shop for a dress. Mrs. Friend commented that it was amazing to witness the women's transformation and their happiness because many of them had never owned a dress. The missionaries delivered mattresses to people that were sleeping on dirt floors and a wheel chair for an 11-year boy. The trip included a visit to a tent city where people have resided since the 2010 earthquake. Mrs. Friend reported that they also cleared boulders to create a soccer field for students, cleaned schools and repackaged food. The Haitian students also made cards with their school supplies that Mrs. Friend brought back to her students. Mrs. Friend commented that in spite of how the Haitian people live, they were the happiest, humblest and kindest people she has ever met.

Mrs. Friend's student Ethan Gunther commented that he feels good about giving school supplies to the students of Haiti because they can use them to draw and do school work. When he and his classmates collected the school supplies, they were demonstrating the IB propensity of caring.

Central third grader Guendalyn Bernard remarked that she demonstrated the IB propensity of caring by helping pack the school supplies. She used the thinker propensity by thinking about what to put into the packages and was open-minded when she didn't freak out after she learned that Mrs. Friend was going to Haiti.

In closing, Mrs. Friend stated the main reason she visited Haiti was to spread kindness in her classroom and as part of a corporate social responsibility project that is being turned into a documentary.

Mrs. Amanda Rowell, Director of Bentley Bright Beginnings Early Childhood Center introduced Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP) Teacher Ms. Erika Anderson and Emerson Elementary Second Grade Teacher Mrs. Jacalynn Buza who shared information about their second grade buddies program. Ms. Anderson reported that second grade buddies were introduced by her and Mrs. Buza to help the second graders develop leadership and relationship skills through their work with Bentley Bright Beginnings four-year old students. The four-year olds are transported from Bentley to Emerson for the program. The students work together on STEM related projects. Ms. Anderson commented that she has enjoyed watching her four-year old students grow and learn new skills from their older buddies.

Mrs. Jacalynn Buza commented that one of the main things her second graders have learned is patience which they also practice in class.

Emerson Elementary second grader Brynley Miller explained that it is very exciting to work with their pre-school pals. They work on different activities together such as reading and have a lot of fun.

Caiden Nidefski commented that having a preschool buddy helps him be a role model. He also likes helping his pal when he needs it.

KhiaLa Keyes remarked that she likes being a role model for her preschool buddy, how they look up to her and how kind they are. She hopes that her buddy will remember her as a role model when they are older and will be a buddy also.

A slide-show of the preschool students displaying what they like best about their second grade buddies was shared with the Board of Education. Ms. Anderson commented that she and Mrs. Buza really enjoy the second grade buddies program and hope they can continue it.

Board of Education Student Representative Cayden Whiteherse informed the Board that he is a sophomore at Owosso High School and an intern/student representative for student government. He stated that next year he plans to run for an officer's position on the Student Government E-Board.

Cayden Whiteherse reported that the high school recently hosted the Ms. Magnificent Pageant. Each of the female contestants chose an organization that they donated money to. The Shiawassee County Humane Society will be presented with a \$100 check from the pageant's proceeds and the ARC will receive a check for \$85. Cayden announced that Jenna Grubb was awarded Miss Congeniality. Morgan Hebekeuser received the People's Choice award for earning the most money for her organization. Olivia Bernard was the winner of the Ms. Magnificent Pageant.

Cayden Whiteherse announced that members of Flint Metro-League Student Government organization will travel to Eastern Michigan University to work in the food bank for the first time.

Cayden Whiteherse informed the Board that the ABC Spirit Cup competition ends in May. Morning Reporter Marc Jacobson informed the students during his last visit that Owosso High School has a good chance of winning this year.

Board Correspondence

Superintendent Dr. Andrea Tuttle commented that several of the meetings presentations have focused on what happens in the District beyond the classroom and all of the great things that continue to occur.

Superintendent Tuttle drew attention to the incredible IB personal projects that have been completed by OHS students and were on exhibit as people entered the meeting. The projects are an IB initiative and each year they become more complex as students begin to understand what is involved in the projects. She encouraged the Board to examine the projects as they exit the meeting.

Superintendent Tuttle announced that the second annual Dueling Pianos event was a huge success. Collectively, all three elementary schools profited over \$25,000 from the PTO sponsored event. All proceeds will be returned to the elementary buildings.

Superintendent Tuttle reported that the Blue and Gold Banquet was recently held to honor high school seniors that have achieved a 3.5 or higher grade point average throughout high school. Students with a 4.0 grade point honored their Star Fish recipient during the banquet by writing how this person has made a positive influence on them. Superintendent Tuttle commented that she felt the students had some of the best writings she has ever heard.

Superintendent Tuttle stated that earlier that day she participated in the second annual Bryant Elementary Career Day. She recognized Ms. Michele Collison, Bryant Interim Principal for organizing the event. Community members were invited to Career Day to share information about their job with the students. Students were able to choose the career presentations they were most interested in. Superintendent Tuttle stated that she enjoys participating in the event, but also likes seeing the various careers that are represented by community members.

Superintendent Tuttle commented that Lincoln High School students listened to a great presentation by the Alliance for a Drug-Free Shiawassee. Sergeant Doug Chapman spoke to students about drug education for youth and the loss of his daughter due to a drug overdose. The presentation was very impactful and will be shared with Owosso High School students on May 4.

Superintendent Tuttle informed the Board that elementary students will be transported to Owosso High School on April 25th for a symphony band concert.

Superintendent Tuttle reported that all three elementary schools recently participated in the “Paint the Town Blue” campaign. Students planted pinwheels around town to raise awareness about child abuse and neglect.

Superintendent Tuttle stated that Mr. Demetrius Lemanski took his second and fifth grade students bowling. Mrs. Dede Raffaelli organized a fourth grade art show for Bryant and Central students. Teachers also planned a healthy hero’s walking club to promote physical activity. Superintendent Tuttle explained that these are a few examples of all the extra activities that teachers do for the kids of OPS.

Superintendent Tuttle announced that the OEA Retirement Dinner was held on April 20th at the Wrought Iron Grill. The event was organized by Mrs. Brena Irelan and OEA President Josh Dewley to celebrate teachers that have dedicated their lives to education and will be retiring at the conclusion of the school year.

Superintendent Tuttle recognized the OPS Food Service Department for hosting the foreign exchange student luncheons. She encouraged Board members to attend the luncheons and sample the great cuisine that has been chosen by the exchange students while they learn about different cultures.

Superintendent Tuttle reported that OHS construction trades students have been busy building equipment spaces in the District’s baseball field dugouts. The students are learning some beneficial skills while benefiting the District.

Superintendent Tuttle announced that the Emerson Elementary baseball fields are in the process of being rejuvenated by Mr. Michael Ihm of Owosso Hit and Pitch.

Superintendent Tuttle informed the Board that administrators recently attended the Michigan State University Job Fair with hopes of obtaining some good candidates for positions that will be available next year.

Superintendent Tuttle explained that the architects have informed her that the District is on a great pace for completing the design concepts for the bond. Once completed, the designs will be sent to the construction managers to ensure that they are on budget. She announced that the District has received an A rating for the S & P bonds. According to our financial managers, an A rating is very good.

Curriculum Director Steve Brooks reported that it is testing season and students are in the midst of the M-STEP assessment and SAT testing. Students are dedicated to completing these tests according to schedules. He commented that staff members have been integral in providing a positive atmosphere for a great testing experience. Representatives from the Michigan Department of Education recently visited the Owosso Middle School to complete a testing audit and the school passed the audit with flying colors.

Mr. Brooks stated that administrators are working on completing teacher evaluations. Teachers have submitted student growth reports for their classes, which are being reviewed by administrators as part of their annual evaluation.

Mr. Brooks explained that the District’s perception surveys have been reviewed by leadership teams in each building. Data from the surveys help determine strengths and weaknesses when developing school improvement plans for the 2018-2019 school year.

Mr. Brooks reported that summer professional development opportunities are being reviewed so teachers are not taken out of the classroom during the school year. He stated that kindergarten through fifth grade teachers are in the process of scheduling their attendance at Project Lead the Way (PLTW) training over the summer. In addition to the purchase of PLTW modules for training grades 6-8 science department teachers.

Mr. Brooks announced that the high school English department is very excited to develop the performing arts curriculum. They are in the process of exploring various options that will fit the District's needs. They have established a timetable and writing the curriculum in conjunction with the English department.

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.

City of Owosso Mayor Chris Eveleth thanked The Cook Family Foundation for their generous donation to Owosso Public Schools. For several generations they have been wonderful participants and contributed so much to the Owosso community.

On behalf of the City of Owosso, Mayor Chris Eveleth reported that the city's Parks and Recreational division received a grant opportunity through the Michigan Economic Corporation to raise \$30,000 within a month's timeframe. If the goal was met, they would match the amount with another \$30,000. Mayor Eveleth announced that they were able to raise the \$30,000 requirement ahead of time and the funds will be used to create a skate park. This was achieved through a partnership with the schools. Mayor Eveleth recognized the fundraising efforts of students from Bryant and Central Elementary Schools. He reminded the Board that if anything is needed from the City, they will gladly support the District.

For Action

- Moved by Mowen, supported by Webster to approve the March 26, 2018 regular meeting minutes, April 16, 2018 committee of the whole meeting minutes, April 16, 2018 closed session minutes, current bills, and financials as presented. Motion carried unanimously
- Moved by Keyes, supported Krauss to authorize the Superintendent to renew the contract with PCMI/Willsub for the fiscal year 2018-19 to provide contracted services for the Athletic Department for non-employee coaches, Bentley Bright Beginnings non-certified/non-administrative staff and for special circumstances in which specialized non-union staff are needed. Motion carried unanimously.
- Moved by Keyes, supported by Krauss to adopt the Resolution calling for a Special Election to renew two (2) mills which is less than the currently approved three (3) mills for the sinking fund for a term of five (5) years. Motion carried unanimously.
- Moved by Mowen, supported by Ochodnický to resolve that the depository and withdrawal authorized signers of the Chief Financial Officer and the Treasurer of the Board for the Owosso Public Schools be authorized to open bond accounts in the name of the District inclusive of authorization for any future ACH transactions and/or bank transfers. Motion carried unanimously.
- Moved by Mowen, supported by Paez to adopt Revised Policy 5722 – School Sponsored Publication and Productions, as a second reading. Motion carried unanimously.
- Moved by Mowen, supported by Paez to adopt Revised Bylaw 0143.1 – Public Expression by Board Members, as a first reading. Motion carried unanimously.
- Moved by Mowen, supported by Paez to adopt Revised Policies 3121 and 4121, New Policy 1421 – Criminal History Record Check (administrative, professional, and support staff), as a first reading. Motion carried unanimously.
- Moved by Mowen, supported by Paez to adopt Revised Policy 4162 – Controlled Substances and Alcohol Policy for Commercial Motor Vehicle (CMV) Drivers and Other Employees Who Perform Safety Sensitive Functions, as a first reading. Motion carried unanimously.
- Moved by Mowen, supported by Paez to adopt Revised Policy 5111 – Eligibility of Resident/Nonresident Students, as a first reading. Motion carried unanimously.

- Moved by Mowen, supported by Paez to adopt Replacement Policy 7540.02 – Web Accessibility, Content, Apps and Service, as a first reading. Motion carried unanimously.
- Moved by Mowen, supported by Paez to adopt Revised Policy 8321 – Criminal Justice Information Security (Non-Criminal Justice Agency), as a first reading. Motion carried unanimously.

For Future Action

- The Board of Education will be asked to approve the 2018-2019 student handbooks for Bentley Bright Beginnings, elementary, middle and high schools as presented.
- The Board of Education will be asked to authorize the Superintendent to sign the contract with BSB Communications for the purchase of a replacement phone system in an amount not to exceed \$146,464.46 and approve the purchase of the server to support the phone system from Dell in the amount of \$21,611.77. The current phone system is 20+ years old and has exceeded its expected end of life date. In addition, the current phone system is **NOT** capable of supporting E-911. The new system is fully capable of supporting all E-911 compliance standards which will go into effect on December 31, 2018.
- The Board of Education will be asked to authorize the Operations Department to dispose of the following obsolete vehicle: 1998 Ford Van, 167,636 miles – VIN #1FPRE1429WHB52721. The vehicle has been deemed to be no longer viable for use in the Operations Department due to the wear and tear that has taken place over the years.

For Information

Superintendent Tuttle reported that Janice Coppersmith has accepted the 4-hour Bus Driver position effective April 10, 2018. Kirsten Schaffert, OMS Choir Teacher, has submitted her letter of resignation effective at the conclusion of the school year. Anne Crowe, Paraprofessional at Bryant Elementary has submitted her letter of resignation effective April 20, 2018. Cindy Helvie, Executive Secretary at Bentley Bright Beginnings has submitted her letter of intent to retire effective June 15, 2018 after 27 years of service with the District.

Public Participation

There were no comments from the public.

Board Member Comments/Updates

Trustee Marlene Webster stated that there has been a rumor going around that she was considering running for the Shiawassee County Board of Commissioners and earlier that day she confirmed that the rumors are true. She announced that it has also been confirmed that if she is elected, she can remain on the Board of Education and plans to continue to serve Owosso Public Schools.

Treasurer Cheryl Paez congratulated Mrs. Webster on her new endeavor. She also thanked The Cook Family Foundation for their most generous donation to Owosso Public Schools and looks forward to seeing the completed facility.

Secretary Shelly Ochodnický remarked that last year she attended the Exchange Student Luncheon and met a student from Slovakia, which is where her husband's family is from. She encouraged the Board to attend future luncheons if they are able.

Mrs. Ochodnický stated that she was able to attend the sold-out Dueling Piano's fundraiser. She applauded Bridgit Spielman and Carrie Muculka for organizing the fun event. The event was well done and the silent auction items were very impressive.

Vice President Rick Mowen also thanked The Cook Family Foundation for their continued support of the District. He stated that he is always amazed by how the community comes together when there is a true need.

Mr. Mowen commented that he attended the Blue and Gold Banquet and after listening to the students speak about their Star Fish recipient, he was impressed that the main focus was about the relationships the students had established with their teachers, coaches, band directors, etc. He stated that there is so much more to education than just opening a book and reading. The relationships that have been established will continue for years.

Mr. Mowen referenced the second grade buddy's presentation. He remarked that the connections that are built will continue to grow for many years and these role models are what makes a community successful.

Trustee Sara Keyes echoed Mr. Mowen's comments about the Blue and Gold Banquet and the importance of connections between students and their Star Fish recipient.

Mrs. Keyes reported that The Kindness Sisters have been nominated for the Y-Pif award. The ePIFanyNow Award honors youth who are passing kindness forward and making a positive contribution to their communities. Mrs. Keyes asked people to vote for the girls by going to their Facebook page, follow the link and donate one dollar. If the girls win they will receive \$500 for Emerson Elementary School and \$500 towards their next project, which would be donated to the Shiawassee Hope organization for the installation of a playscape at the Pleasant Valley trailer park.

Trustee Ty Krauss added his thanks to The Cook Family Foundation for their generous donation that will immensely benefit the District.

Mr. Krauss commented that he enjoyed attending the Blue and Gold Banquet and witness the impact that our teachers and staff have on our students. He stated that as a Board member, he witnesses this all the time and he is very proud of everyone.

Mr. Mowen remarked that the highest honors seniors recognize the person that has had the most impact on them throughout their education at the Blue and Gold Banquet. In addition to this, every student in the District is also given the opportunity to recognize someone that has made a difference in their lives.

Mrs. Ochodnicky stated that Owosso Middle School teacher Mr. Zeb Perrin has his students write a letter to themselves that they open during their senior year. She commented that her daughter recently opened her letter and it made her realize how much she has grown.

President Tim Jenc remarked that the meeting was great!

Upcoming Board Meeting Dates:

May 14: Regular Board Meeting, 5 pm (meeting is being held at 5 pm and on the second Monday of the month)

Important Upcoming Dates:

April 24: High School Honor's Luncheon at D'Mar Banquet Center, 11:30 am

April 24: OMS Band Concert, 7 pm

April 25-27: OMS Washington, DC Trip

April 27: LHS Community Breakfast at Washington Campus, 7:45 am

April 28: OHS Prom at D'Mar Banquet Center, 8-11 pm

May 1: Shiawassee Scholars at D'Mar Banquet Center, 7 pm

May 2: OHS Band Concert, 7 pm

May 8: Fifth Grade Parent Night at OMS, 6 pm

May 11: Fifth Grade Fun Night at OMS, 4-5:30 pm

Closed Session

Moved by Mowen, supported by Ochodnicky to move into closed session at 8:16 pm for the purpose of a negotiations discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

Moved by Keyes, supported by Ochodnicky to return to open session at 8:43 pm. Motion carried unanimously.

Adjournment

Moved by Webster, supported by Paez to adjourn at 8:44 pm. Motion carried unanimously.

Minutes recorded by Clara Pitt

Respectfully submitted,

Shelly Ochodnicky, Secretary