

OWOSSO PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Board of Education Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes
September 9, 2019
Report 19-21

President Jenc called the Board of Education Committee of the Whole Meeting to order at 5:32 pm. The meeting was held at the Washington Campus, 645 Alger Street, Owosso, MI 48867.

Present: Tim Jenc, Sara Keyes, Rick Mowen, Shelly Ochodnicky, Olga Quick, Marlene Webster
Absent: Ty Krauss

Pledge of Allegiance

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 public.

Opening Days

Superintendent Dr. Tuttle thanked Vice President Rick Mowen, Secretary Shelly Ochodnicky, and Trustee Olga Quick for participating in Opening Day activities. The entire OPS team met at the Stone House Farm in Bancroft for the opening day kick-off and it was a great start to the school year. The event was sponsored by Young Chevrolet Cadillac Buick GMC of Owosso, Dr. Ayaz and Laura Jafri of Mid-Michigan Dental, Kevin and Janena Kregger from Nelson-House Funeral Home, Keith Maike of Main Beverage, and Clark Construction. Superintendent Dr. Tuttle thanked the sponsors for their support of Owosso Public Schools. Every staff member was assigned the task of painting one of five paintings that represent the International Baccalaureate propensities at the opening day. Superintendent Dr. Tuttle commented that it was interesting to view the different results when the paintings were completed even though everyone received the same instructions. Staff members participated in a variety of professional development activities following the opening day event.

The Board took part in an activity that required each of them to place cards in a specific order. Superintendent Dr. Tuttle explained that she wanted to replicate the activity that the OPS staff worked on at Opening Days. She remarked that these type of activities help teachers understand student learning styles and can tell them a lot about their kids. Superintendent Dr. Tuttle remarked that it was interesting to watch how the Board accomplished the activity. She stated that it makes you think about the pressures that are placed on students.

10 Ways to Have a Better Conversation

Superintendent Dr. Tuttle presented a portion of a TED Talk video that focused on conversations. She commented that this is a topic that needs to be addressed in education and is a result of the increasing use of technology. As a District, the administration is really trying to work on communication and how to have respectful discourse, especially since the cell phone ban at Owosso High School.

State Budget

Superintendent Dr. Tuttle reported that she is hearing good news in regards to the state's budget. The republicans and democrats are working with the Governor to have a budget passed by October 1. In a released statement, this essentially brings to an end the demands Whitmer had made to tie road funding to the budget and her vows to veto a budget without a road funding solution.

Board Retreat

A Board retreat has been scheduled for November 11 at 5:30 pm and will be held in the Washington Campus. The retreat will be in place of the November Committee of the Whole meeting. Superintendent Dr. Tuttle remarked that this will be a great opportunity to revisit the Framework for Effective Governance with the entire Board and will benefit the newer members.

Bond Update

In an attempt to recoup some time, the 6-12 campus furniture package will be presented to the Board as a "for action" item at the September 23 Board meeting. Superintendent Dr. Tuttle shared a copy of the bid tabulations and explained that a worst case scenario may be a recommendation for the highest bids. The District is still waiting to receive examples of some prototype furniture. If this furniture is favored, a lower bid may be recommended. There is also a possibility of purchasing new furniture for all but 12 classrooms at the secondary campus. Bids were not received for choir risers and band stands. These items will be put back out for bid. A total of \$826,380 was budgeted for furniture at the secondary campus and the total of the base bids with allowances and previous purchases totaled \$518,461.40.

MASA Conference

Superintendent Dr. Tuttle informed the Board that she will be out of the District on September 18-20 to attend the annual Michigan Association of Superintendents and Administrators conference.

Safety and Security

Superintendent Dr. Tuttle announced that Mr. Tom Mynsberge of Critical Incident Management (CIM) will conduct a crisis management refresher course for all staff during the September 27 professional development day.

As part of the \$160,000 security grant, hammered glass has been installed in several of the District's buildings. Keyless card reader entry systems have been installed in all buildings which allows the administration to control who has access to buildings. Buildings can also be locked down immediately with this new system.

Curriculum Updates

Mr. Steve Brooks, Director of Curriculum and Instruction informed the Board that on September 27 the District will hold a half-day professional development. This will be an opportunity for staff to receive a follow up on many of the initiatives that were introduced during their August PD. Secondary staff members will engage in areas of Social-Emotional, Positive Behavior Intervention & Supports (PBIS) expectations, and Critical Incident Management training. Elementary staff will engage in writing, math, and IB units of instruction, and a refresher course on being prepared for any type of emergency.

Mr. Brooks reported that the District will be sending a team of middle school and high school staff to conduct an analysis of the spring PSAT/SAT data. Additionally, teams will be breaking down data from the 2019 spring assessments in the areas of reading, math, science, and social studies. Mr. Brooks explained that State assessment averages for 2018-19 dipped overall in math and ELA. Owosso Public Schools averages rose 3.6% in ELA for an average score of 52.9%. Math scores also rose 4.6% for an average of 29%. The main focus of the District is to continue working on closing these gaps. Superintendent Dr. Tuttle commented that our younger students do not do as well on standardized tests; however, these trends improve at the secondary level. An excerpt regarding standardized testing from the book "Schools Cannot Do It Alone" was read as follows by Dr. Tuttle:

Standardized Testing: Never before have America's children taken so many standardized tests, and never before have they meant so much. Testing proponents, including many powerful political and corporate leaders, contend that standardized tests objectively quantify student performance as measured against rigorous standards. Critics argue that such testing is a meaningless pseudo-quantification of the learning process, telling us more about household income than student achievement. As long as the champions of testing can convince Americans that the tests are reliable, then the growth of this trend is assured. And as long as proficiency cut scores are arbitrarily set to ensure that millions of children fail, then this trend will continue to erode the public's faith in public schools, which some educators fear is the whole point.

Steve Brooks displayed MISCHOOOLDATA results from the 2018-19 assessments. The eleventh grade ELA SAT scores show statewide student proficiency at 55.3%, the county was at 53.9% and OPS was 49.1%. He explained that the scores are inclusive of Lincoln. Additional scores that compared the District with the state and schools within the county from the previous school year were also shared with the Board. Superintendent Tuttle reminded the Board that even though our scores are low in some areas, we are slowly increasing and improving in these areas. Mr. Brooks stated that scores throughout the state went down in all areas last year when compared to the previous year. He also shared that it is difficult to compare the scores from year to year because it is a different test. Owosso Public Schools out measures all county schools in the growth of a student when you look at their progress from k-12.

Perception Surveys

Steve Brooks reported that perception surveys will be administered to parents during Parent/Teacher conferences in October. Students and staff members will also participate in the annual survey. The information obtained from the survey will help the District with areas that need to be improved upon and in areas that we are doing well. Mr. Brooks commented that our trend data has remained pretty solid. The results from the perception surveys will be shared with the Board at a later date.

Mr. Brooks informed the Board that the District is gearing up for the fall internal data assessments. He remarked that these assessments are an important tool that measures individual student progress over the course of the school year.

Board Comments

Treasurer Marlene Webster informed the Board that she was diagnosed with an autoimmune disease in August. She remarked that her body is responding well to treatment and it is good to be back.

Secretary Shelly Ochodnicky commented that she has been in buildings and she is hearing really good things about the District. She stated that she recently was given a tour of the high school and it looks amazing. She was impressed with the new open ceilings and how clean everything is.

Superintendent Dr. Tuttle stated that if anyone is interested, a tour of the high school will take place after the next Board meeting. She remarked that parents have been very complimentary of the new access drive at the high school. The traffic flow has been great and Kevin Lenkart, Director of Public Safety for the City of Owosso provided two additional crossing guards for the beginning days of school. New signage at the secondary campus will also be installed.

Trustee Olga Quick stated that she has heard a lot of nice things about the new hires at OHS. She stated that she also likes how great the facilities look.

Vice President Rick Mowen commented that he was amazed with the interactions between staff at the opening day activity. He was also impressed with the great attendance at the elementary ribbon cutting ceremonies. Mr. Mowen stated that it has been a great start to the school year.

President Tim Jenc applauded Steve Brooks for his input on the recent Argus Press article that highlighted areas schools record mixed results on the M-STEP.

Trustee Sara Keyes remarked that several teachers from Emerson Elementary asked her to share their appreciation of the new floors that were installed over the summer.

Superintendent Dr. Tuttle presented a video titled “Once Upon a Time in a Coffee Shop” that she also shared with the entire staff during the opening day activity. The point of the video is proof that the littlest things can have the biggest impact on students.

Important Dates:

- September 11: LHS Open House, 5-7 pm
- September 12: Bond Construction Meeting, 1 pm
- September 13: Home football game vs. Goodrich
- September 19: Bond Construction Meeting – CANCELED

Adjournment

Moved by Mowen, supported by Ochodnicky to adjourn at 6:54 pm. Motion carried unanimously.

Minutes recorded by Clara Pitt

Respectfully submitted,

Shelly Ochodnicky, Secretary