

OWOSSO PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Board of Education

Committee of the Whole Meeting

August 13, 2025

Report 25-27

Present: Marlene Webster, Adam Easlick, Nick Henne, Rick Mowen, Shelly Ochodnicky, John Pappas, Olga Quick

Absent:

President Webster 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

Public Participation

President Webster 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 participants addressed the Board:

None

Amend Agenda

President Marlene Webster requested that the agenda be amended to include a Closed Session to discuss contract negotiations. Moved by Pappas, supported by Ochodnicky, to approve the agenda as amended. Motion carried unanimously.

Closed Session

Following the agenda amendment, Vice President Ochodnický requested that the Board enter closed session to discuss contract negotiations. Moved by Pappas, supported by Webster, at 5:32 p.m. to move into closed session. Motion carried unanimously.

Moved by Mowen, supported by Ochodnický, to move back into open session at 6:14 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

For Action

OEA Agreement

Treasurer Olga Quick and Trustee Rick Mowen abstained from discussion and voting on the OEA contract due to conflicts of interest.

Henne moved to approve the 2025 OEA Tentative Agreement, supported by Vice President Ochodnický. President Webster conducted a roll call vote: Ayes: Easlick, Henne, Ochodnický, Pappas, and Webster Nays: None. Quick and Mowen abstaining. Motion carried unanimously.

OESPA Agreement

Henne moved to approve the 2025 OESPA Tentative Agreement, supported by Vice President Ochodnický. President Webster conducted a roll call vote: Ayes: Easlick, Henne, Mowen, Ochodnický, Pappas, Quick and Webster Nays: None. Motion carried unanimously.

Agenda

Board Communication Protocols

President Webster led a discussion on the distinction between governance and management roles. She emphasized that board member inquiries often require significant administrative research and responses, which are shared in the Friday letter for transparency. Members discussed streamlining communication, ensuring timely information for all board members, and respecting administrative workload.

Bond

Superintendent Brooks presented the bond proposal, citing urgent facility needs: \$3.6 million for boiler replacements, \$4.5 million for roof repairs, and other deferred maintenance. Without the bond, these repairs cannot be funded without affecting operations. The Superintendent also reviewed the information that will be distributed to the public and to schools, including outreach materials designed to explain the bond's purpose and benefits. The Board discussed strategies for

public engagement, emphasizing the “Safe, Dry, Warm” message and the importance of community support.

Thrun Policy Updates

Superintendent Brooks introduced policy revisions from Thrun Law Firm to align with legislative changes and best practices in governance. These updates are scheduled for review at the September Committee of the Whole before board consideration.

Facility Updates

The Board discussed ongoing work and partnership opportunities for the old middle school building. A potential agreement could secure blight funding while the property remains under district ownership, covering the cost of a new roof and possibly window replacements at no cost to the district. Contractors and grant administration would be handled entirely by the partner. The current roof, assessed as structurally sound but leaking in places, could be replaced as early as this fall and no later than August 1, 2026. To allow this work and transition to proceed, an eight-month extension of the current agreement with Venture—set to expire December 31—was proposed, giving time for project completion and future planning if the transfer does not occur. This topic will be added to the agenda in two weeks, with a possible presentation from Venture representatives.

New Teacher Orientation

Dr. Cathy Dwyer reported that the New Teacher Orientation went extremely well. Feedback from participants was overwhelmingly positive—three separate teachers reached out to share how much they enjoyed the day, how appreciative they were of the experience, and how welcomed they felt joining the district. It was a wonderful start to the year and a great opportunity to connect with the newest educators.

Opening Days of School

Dr. Dwyer stated that Opening Day professional development sessions have been finalized and will be shared with the ILC tomorrow. Following that, she will send a districtwide email welcoming everyone back. This year’s lineup includes sessions on new literacy programs, special education reporting, engagement strategies, preschool skills, artificial intelligence, and more. Superintendent Brooks will deliver opening remarks on Monday at the PAC, with light refreshments served from 7:30–8:00 a.m. before the 8:00 a.m. start.

Community Pep Rally

Plans for the pep rally include performances, team introductions, and activities to engage families and the community. Board members emphasized promoting the event to encourage strong attendance.

Curriculum Updates

Dr. Dwyer reported that new literacy materials and math workbooks have been delivered to classrooms this week in preparation for the school year. A big thank-you was extended to the Operations Department for their hard work in making this happen smoothly and efficiently. In June, the district applied for another literacy grant, the 35m, and was awarded \$285,000 to support the implementation of HMH Into Reading. The district also submitted an application for the 35n grant, a competitive award to support the middle school literacy program. There were 115 applicants, and only 16 schools will be selected; notification has not yet been received

Round Table

Board members shared closing remarks, expressing appreciation for staff readiness, acknowledging community concerns about the bond, and stressing the importance of transparent communication.

Upcoming Board Meeting Dates:

- August 27, 2025: Board of Education Regular Meeting, 5:30PM, Washington Campus Gymnasium
- September 10: Board of Education Committee of the Whole Meeting, 5:30 PM, Washington Campus Conference Room 112
- September 24: Board of Education Regular Meeting, 5:30PM, Washington Campus Gymnasium

Adjournment

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

Minutes recorded by Sara Selleck.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nick Henne". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right. Below the signature is a solid horizontal line.

Nick Henne, Secretary