

OWOSSO PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Board of Education
Regular Board Meeting Minutes
August 28, 2024
Report 24-32

Present: Nick Henne, Ty Krauss, Rick Mowen, Shelly Ochodnick, Olga Quick, Marlene Webster

Absent: Adam Easlick

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

Carrie Warning, the CTE Coordinator at Owosso High School, provided several updates regarding the school's technology education programs. The school offers various courses, including Agriscience, Business, Construction, Culinary, Engineering, Manufacturing, and Woodworking with plans to expand. One new addition is a partnership with Vibrissa for a cosmetology program, currently seeking state approval as a CTE offering.

We are excited to introduce new course offerings. These include *Introduction to Shop Tools*, a semester-long class for students interested in hands-on learning, and *Introduction to Careers and Life Skills*, which focuses on life skills and career exploration. Additionally, the *Agriscience Leadership Program* is designed for advanced students in their fourth year of Agriscience

The school has also secured major funding, including a \$70,000 agriscience grant and a \$300,000 SME Prime grant for engineering and manufacturing programs, which will help provide new equipment, curriculum, and certifications.

In response to the new Perkins V requirements, we are making a significant shift. We are moving from traditional tests to industry-recognized credentials. This change reflects our commitment to offering certifications that meet industry standards and support state and federal funding, which is linked to CTE outcomes like graduation rates and credential attainment.

Mrs. Warning concluded her report by announcing that, in about two months, the lab will be outfitted with new machines, providing students with hands-on experience in mechatronics, robotics, and other technical fields while earning industry-recognized credentials. These advancements have generated enthusiasm among industry partners and will significantly enhance students' preparedness for the workforce.

President Mowen introduced Student Representative Paige Davis, who shared some exciting updates. She began her report by discussing the successful back-to-school events, starting with last Tuesday's pep rally, where all the Fall sports teams and the TMB (Trojan Marching Band)

were introduced. The event went smoothly, although there's room for improvement with the t-shirt launching. Band camp was another highlight, with the Owosso Fire Department bringing their fire truck to spray the kids, making the week even more enjoyable. The band members worked hard daily from 9:00 AM to 11:30 AM and 1:00 PM to 3:30 PM, mastering their pregame and halftime shows.

Ms. Davis also mentioned the drama club and PBIS, which created humorous yet informative videos to teach students school expectations. Last Friday, the Student Government organized a successful back-to-school carnival featuring eight booths, including Skills USA, the Class of 2026, and the OHS cheer team. The carnival raised around \$800, benefitting multiple clubs.

Upcoming events include a freshman icebreaker activity and an anti-bullying assembly. Freshmen will also attend wellness presentations covering topics like social media safety, mental health services, and anti-bullying initiatives, with speakers from the State Police, Shiawassee Health Committee, and Catholic Charities.

Student Government is hard at work planning Homecoming, and more details will follow next month. Ms. Davis also highlighted the senior sunrise event on the first day of school, where seniors gathered for donuts and celebrated their final year. In sports, the school recently hosted a cross-country meet, a home volleyball tournament, and a major soccer tournament.

Ms. Davis concluded her report by sharing that, over the summer, eight students competed at Nationals for Skills USA, with Wyatt Boggs earning the distinguished position of National Secretary—a remarkable achievement for both him and the school.

Board Correspondence

Superintendent Brooks began his report by highlighting the success of the OHS Student Government's "Back to School" carnival on August 23rd. The event brought together eight high school clubs and the Middle School Builders Club, attracting around 50 elementary students. Proceeds from the carnival will be shared among seven participating groups, with each receiving \$100 for their contributions.

GracePointe Wesleyan adopted all three elementary buildings, helping prepare them for open houses, while various community groups provided significant supply donations. Superintendent Brooks and Principal Collins hosted a tour for the Class of 1974 during their 50th reunion, with 50 alumni visiting the campus.

Bryant Elementary hosted a professional development session for playground monitors aimed at fostering positive engagement and successfully launched its PBIS Rewards system. The school also received commendation for its cherished Flag Ceremony tradition, while staff enjoyed refreshing cold drinks, courtesy of Michael Pepin and Melissa McIntyre.

Central Elementary embraced a "Telling Our Story" theme with social media initiatives, and teachers created engaging TikTok-inspired posts. Kristen Riley planted sunflowers that now serve as a beautiful backdrop for students.

Emerson Elementary launched an Emmy t-shirt and water bottle drive to support their therapy dog and embraced a beach theme with the slogan, "We All Swim Together." Sunburst Gardens refreshed the landscaping with flowers and mulch outside the gym.

OMS welcomed new students with breakfast and spirit shirts and began the year with class meetings and athletics.

At OHS, the Trojan Mentors program continues to thrive, with older students helping new ones acclimate. Freshman orientation and team-building activities are also underway.

LHS saw a successful start with building-wide activities to help students adjust. Their open house had record participation with 75% attendance, and our new service-learning class is off to a strong start.

Transportation is fully staffed and ready for the year, with buses in great shape thanks to Michael Graham and Karen Sawicki. Food Service served nearly 33,000 meals over the summer.

Athletics has launched a new website for updates and scores and will soon release a mobile app for fans to stay connected.

Curriculum Director Dr. Cathy Dwyer kicked off her report by celebrating the tremendous success of our opening days! We hosted diverse sessions for our teachers and support staff, featuring UFLI and Literacy Updates, Disciplinary Literacy, PBIS Rewards Technology, Lifeguarding Training, Number Worlds, Para Training, and Peaceful Playground.

We concluded our professional development with a keynote address by Chad Williams from MEA, who spoke on "Telling Our Story," which received positive feedback from attendees.

In addition to our successful opening days, we were awarded a \$200,000 23H grant as part of a consortium with the RESD. This grant supports early math intervention, funding Melissa McIntyre's role as our Math Interventionist Coach. Melissa has already begun training our K-5 teachers and will continue to provide in-class support throughout the year. Each K-5 classroom will also receive \$1,000 worth of materials for their Number Corners kits.

Jennifer LaMay, our K-8 Writing Interventionist and PYP Coordinator, has been updating the scope and sequences and will be working closely with teachers across the district, spending one day at each building to support writing intervention strategies.

Our UFLI Coordinator, Margaret Gobel, has successfully implemented our phonics program. Last year, we introduced UFLI to our K-2 reading instruction, and this year, we're expanding it to include 3rd grade. Maggie led comprehensive UFLI training sessions for all K-3 teachers during Professional Development, ensuring a smooth and effective program rollout.

Mandi Cicalo, our K-8 Reading Interventionist, has been diligently working to train new teachers in our literacy programs. During professional development, she provided a valuable update on our literacy initiatives, reaffirming her commitment to ensuring all teachers have the support they need, leveraging the resources from our 35J grant.

Our virtual program is now operational, with 56 students enrolled. We carefully select students to ensure they are a good fit and provide them with a mentor teacher for daily communication to support their success while remaining within our district.

Dr. Dwyer concluded her report by encouraging everyone to mark their calendars for Academic Achievement Night, which will be held on September 10 at 7:00 PM in the PAC. During the event, we will honor 180 exceptional students from grades 10 through 12, including 58 first-year certificate recipients, 67 second-year letter winners, and 55 students who have excelled all three years.

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 participants addressed the Board:
None

For Action

- Moved by Webster, supported by Henne, to approve July 24, 2024, Regular Meeting Minutes, August 14, 2024, Committee Meeting Minutes, Current Bills, and Financials as presented. President Mowen conducted a roll call vote. Ayes: Henne, Ochodnicky, Krauss, Webster, Quick, Mowen. Nays: None. Motion carried unanimously.
- Moved by Webster, supported by Henne, to approve the July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025, Tentative Agreement between the Owosso Education Association and the Owosso Board of Education. Secretary Krauss conducted a roll-call vote. Ayes: Henne, Krauss, Ochodnicky, Webster. Mowen and Quick abstain due to a conflict of interest. Motion carried.
- Moved by Quick, supported by Ochodnicky, to approve the Tax Levy (L-4029) for 2024 as presented and as discussed during the Budget hearing at the regularly scheduled Board meeting on June 26th. Motion carried unanimously.
- Moved by Quick, supported by Ochodnicky, to approve the out-of-state travel for Owosso Middle School students and staff on a Washington D.C. trip to the Capital of the United States on April 23-25, 2025, the out-of-state travel for Owosso High School Engineering students Paige Davis, Kloe Hayes, and Ashton White on a SkillsUSA MI supervised trip to Washington DC September 21-25, 2024, and the out-of-state travel for Owosso High School Engineering student Wyatt Boggs to meet the obligations as a SkillsUSA National Officer. Motion carried unanimously.

- Moved by Quick, supported by Webster, to authorize the Owosso Public School’s Operations department to dispose of the item listed under the “Facts and Statistics” Motion carried unanimously.
- Moved by Webster, supported by Henne, that the Board of Education approve the hiring of the following certified staff:

Name	Building/Grade	Recommending Administrator	Salary Schedule Step
Amanda Rowell	Central/Principal	Superintendent Steve Brooks	Step 4 of 10 \$105,510

Motion carried unanimously.

For Future Action

- The Board will be asked to approve the out-of-state travel for Owosso High School Agriscience students and teacher Elizabeth Clark on a trip to Indianapolis, IN, from October 23 to October 26, 2024.

For Information

Superintendent Brooks announced the following personnel changes:

Accepted Positions

Brian Slack has accepted the Bus Driver position.

Beverly Cogan has accepted the Bus Driver position.

Linde Tucker has accepted the Bus Driver position.

Alexis Grider has accepted the GSRP Associate Teacher position.

Robena Jackson has accepted the GSRP Paraprofessional position.

Lisa Hinman has accepted the Executive Secretary position at Lincoln High School.

Kristin Klumpp has accepted the Paraprofessional position at Owosso Middle School.

Staci Wing has accepted the Paraprofessional position at Lincoln High School.

Tiffany Harwood has accepted the Monitor position at Bryant Elementary.

Jennifer Coe has accepted the Monitor position at Bryant Elementary.

Resignations

Rodika Ivancu, Bus Driver has resigned effective August 6, 2024.

Jessica Lynch, Monitor at Emerson has resigned effective July 19, 2024.

Andrea Savage, Monitor at OHS has resigned effective August 14, 2024.

Anna Meyer, Executive Secretary at LHS has resigned effective August 16, 2024.

Bond Information

Kari Blanchett provided valuable insights into our district's financial planning, highlighting key points from recent discussions. She emphasized the importance of keeping our community informed about these developments.

Two weeks ago, Darrick Huff from Spicer detailed the district's facility needs and associated costs. Blanchett's presentation complements this by discussing the potential for issuing new bonds to address these needs.

Blanchett, Managing Director of PFM Financial Advisors, explained the current financial status and options for bond issuance. With the recent growth in our tax base, the district is well-positioned to consider new bonds without increasing the current 4.7 mills. She outlined three options for bond series: 20, 25, and 30 years, noting that while longer terms involve higher interest costs, they may be suitable depending on project needs.

She also discussed the timing for potential bond elections, emphasizing the need for early planning and community engagement. The presentation included a visual representation of millage rates compared to neighboring districts and discussed historical bond passage rates, highlighting that maintaining the same millage rate often leads to successful outcomes.

Blanchett concluded by noting that many districts are capitalizing on similar strategies, and emphasized the importance of timely decision-making to maintain facility standards.

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None

Board Comments

Trustee Henne thanked Kari for the presentation, noting that it was exceptionally informative. He acknowledged the critical need for funding to ensure the district runs smoothly and expressed

relief at having available options. He also extended his gratitude to Michael Hendrickson and his team, commending them for the fantastic condition of the grounds and Willman Field. He mentioned his enthusiasm for the start of the football season.

Trustee Ochodnický extended her heartfelt gratitude to Mr. Collins and Dr. Dwyer for the opportunity to discuss our current initiatives and innovative approaches to reading. This topic is one she is deeply passionate about. Dr. Dwyer's enthusiasm for her new role and her unwavering commitment to these goals are truly inspiring. Her dedication is crucial to our educational progress, and Trustee Ochodnický is eager to witness the impact of these initiatives.

Additionally, she had the pleasure of attending the Bryant flag-raising ceremony, a cherished tradition. Although she missed some events while out of state last week, she is excited to see our programs off to a strong start and looks forward to more positive developments.

Vice President Webster expressed how impressed she was with Carrie Warning's presentation. She is thrilled that our district is actively preparing students for the workforce, especially in the manufacturing sector. It's exciting to see us working diligently to create more opportunities in our county. This initiative has the potential to be a game-changer for many students who may not pursue a traditional college path, offering them valuable skills that can lead to stable, well-paying jobs.

Secretary Krauss extended his gratitude for the outstanding presentations. He found the CTE presentation fantastic and appreciated the bond presentation for its valuable updates on the numbers. Additionally, he welcomed Amanda and expressed his excitement about the positive contributions she will bring to the district.

Treasurer Quick warmly welcomed Amanda and the other new staff members. She praised the district's cohesive approach to supporting students, especially those facing challenges such as anxiety, and emphasized the importance of creating welcoming and supportive environments where students feel secure and understood.

She was also impressed by the growing engagement and enthusiasm among the students. Treasurer Quick recognized the need to evaluate our space requirements, particularly concerning the lack of air conditioning in some areas. She commended the district's commitment to addressing student needs and fostering a positive atmosphere for both students and staff.

Upcoming Board Meeting Dates

- September 11: Board of Education Committee of the Whole Meeting, 5:30 PM, Washington Campus Gymnasium
- September 25: Board of Education Regular Meeting, 5:30 PM, Washington Campus Gymnasium

Important Upcoming Dates


- August 29: Half Day for All Students: Teacher Work Day
- August 30-September 2: Labor Day Recess
- September 10: Academic Achievement Awards, 7:00 PM, PAC

Adjournment

Moved by Quick, supported by Ochodnický, to adjourn at 6:43 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Minutes recorded by Stephanie Goetzinger.

Respectfully submitted,


Ty Krauss, Secretary