

**OWOSSO PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**Board of Education**  
**Regular Board Meeting Minutes**  
**September 25, 2024**  
**Report 24-42**

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

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**

Mr. Collins, the OMS Principal, presented an update on Trojan Time classes. He explained that Trojan Time originated before students transitioned to high school, initially offering limited choices at the middle school level. Previously, students felt they had minimal elective options, with Art and PE being the only available classes outside Band and Choir. Trojan Time was introduced to address this, initially offering around 20 class options. This has now expanded to 60 choices each quarter, providing diverse activities.

Trojan Time is also used for interventions and support without disrupting core instruction. Notable offerings include peer-to-peer support, where 24 students assist their peers in English and Science classes, contributing both socially and academically. Additionally, there are specialized intervention classes in English and Math, and diverse Arts and Athletics options like Jazz Band, Choir, Guitar, Golf, Swimming, and more.

To share their experiences, Jillian Welz, Blake Huff, and Caleb Jurhs spoke. The student council president, Jillian, highlighted how Trojan Time has helped her develop leadership skills and plan school events like powder puff and volleyball games.

**Board Correspondence**

Superintendent Brooks shared a comprehensive update on the district's recent activities and achievements. He began by highlighting the accomplishments of Wyatt Boggs, a senior who was elected as a national officer for SkillsUSA—the first student from Michigan to achieve this since the 1980s. Wyatt, along with fellow students Chloe Hayes, Paige Davis, and Ashton White, who were elected as state officers, recently attended the SkillsUSA national conference in Washington, D.C., where they visited senators' offices and presented at the meeting, representing Owosso proudly.

The Trojan Marching Band performed for all three elementary schools last Friday as a kick-off to Homecoming. After playing a few songs for the entire school, the band members mingled with

fifth graders, which is one of the most effective ways to excite our fifth graders about joining the band. This visit was perfectly timed as Band Directors Mr. Sterk and Mrs. Kowalczyk had just begun meeting with the 5th graders last week. Additionally, our fifth-grade safety patrols have been sworn in and are already hard at work ensuring the safety of our youngest students as they get on and off the buses. These safety patrol students will be honored at the home football game on October 25th.

Bryant Elementary is getting ready for its Fall Flannel Festival, hosted by the PTO on Thursday from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. The event will be casual and family-friendly, featuring games, cider, and donuts. We're also excited to welcome high school athletes for our first "What It Means To Be An Owosso Trojan" assembly, where athletes will share the importance of being part of a positive team. After the assembly, 3rd, 4th, and 5th graders will have the chance to collect autographs from the athletes. The goal is to build Trojan pride, practice a cheer, and sing the fight song. In other news, our kindergarten classes recently celebrated Community Helpers, with visits from the police, fire, snow plow, and street sweeping crews, thanks to the City of Owosso. The children were particularly thrilled by the heavy equipment demonstrations. Students also created "Get Well" cards for OHS alumni Mira Langdon and Addie Kreger, who were in a serious car accident in August. The cards are intended to bring joy and encouragement to Mira and Addie as they continue to recover.

At Central Elementary, Mrs. Friends' class has begun weekly trips to Oliver Woods to read with their reading buddies. Over the past month, Principal Rowell has been meeting with staff and reading to classrooms, ensuring strong connections. Last Thursday, they held a successful Donuts with Grownups event, organized by our PTO. They are now preparing for our upcoming Fall Fest, which will take place in the coming weeks.

Emerson Elementary kicked off its primary fundraiser of the year, Rock N Run! The students vote on a school-wide reward if they meet their goal, with Dodgeball being a perennial favorite. The campaign will end on October 4th with a celebration where students will run through an obstacle course while jamming to music. The funds raised will go toward field trips, classroom supplies, and special events throughout the year. We're also looking forward to Spirit Week and the nightly challenges that will take place next week.

The Bentley Cheerleaders officially started at Bentley Bright Beginnings, with 16 students enrolled in the program. Practices are being held, and the cheerleaders will perform at the JV football game in October. They've also received \$8,000 in preschool scholarships for 3-year-olds to attend preschool.

Owosso Middle School had all social studies classes participate in building-wide Constitution and 9/11 lessons. Our Builder Club and Student Council have been very active, working on community projects such as food distribution, creating signs for athletes, and preparing for Spirit Week. Upcoming events include the Homecoming Pep Assembly on October 4th, the Choir Concert on October 8th, and the DC Parent Meeting on October 10th.

Owosso High School recently hosted a New Student Donut Club, organized by Assistant Principal Karen Van Epps, for about 30 new students from across the country, including North Dakota, Iowa, Virginia, New York, and Kentucky, as well as our exchange students.

Additionally, 181 sophomores through seniors were honored at the Academic Achievement Awards for maintaining a 3.5 GPA or above. Next week, 12 sophomores will attend the Flint Metro League's Sportsmanship/Leadership Summit. Homecoming festivities are also next week, with this year's court featuring Charlie Agnew, Santi Aguirre, Gavin Fedewa, Owen Feldpausch, and Charlie Nolph as the gentlemen representatives, and Addison Collard, Emily Easlick, Khi-Ree Kuchar, Natalie Summerland, and Madelyn Usher as the ladies. The Grand Marshal is Dede Raffaelli.

Lincoln High School hosted the "Schools to Tools" mobile field trip, a hands-on career exploration event held in the school parking lot. Students from Lincoln, along with high school building trades and woods classes, participated in a variety of activities, including virtual simulations, hammering, drilling, and using harnesses. The event provided exposure to careers in the CTE (Career and Technical Education) field. Additionally, KORT (Knights of the Round Table) held officer elections, and the service learning class and new students will be heading to the Howell Nature Center for team-building exercises.

In Food Service news, Owosso Public Schools was awarded the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) for Bryant and Emerson Elementary Schools. In addition, a new breakfast cart was launched in the OHS/OMS hallway to help more students start their day with a healthy breakfast. The district is also involved in new and ongoing Farm to School grants funded through the MDE and MSU Extension.

Superintendent Brooks concluded his report by sharing that the maintenance team completed the removal of old wood mulch and installed new rubber mulch on the toddler playground at Bentley.

Curriculum Director Dr. Dwyer began her report by noting that the fall testing window is in progress. We are currently administering the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) and the NWA tests for reading and math. These assessments provide us with essential baseline data, allowing us to set targeted learning goals for each student. Both tests are crucial in identifying students' strengths and areas needing improvement, offering valuable insights to guide our instruction. The data also helps us determine which students may require additional support. We use this information to develop Individual Reading Improvement Plans (IRIPs) and keep parents informed throughout the process.

Our early math intervention program, funded by the 23h grant as Number Corner, is now in full swing with the delivery and distribution of Number Corner materials to teachers. Missy McIntyre is visiting each elementary school to assist teachers in organizing their materials and setting up their Number Corner spaces. Teachers will receive ongoing professional development throughout the school year to enhance their use of this resource.

Dr Dwyer provided an important update about Shiawassee Scholars; with the College Board's transition to online SAT administration, hosting the traditional in-person SAT test sessions is no longer feasible due to technological constraints across the county. As a result, the Shiawassee Scholars Advisory Board has decided to use the PSAT 8/9 as the new qualifying test. This change has several benefits, including providing all eighth graders an equal opportunity to

qualify, offering the test at no cost to parents, and allowing makeup testing for students who are absent on the initial test day.

Due to the later testing schedule, the Shiawassee Scholars reception will be moved to the following fall, and the traditional June visit to the University of Michigan will now take place during the summer after students complete their first year.

Lance Little recently led an after-school professional development session for new teachers focusing on the International Baccalaureate (IB) program. Building on the work started in August, participants began developing a unit, discussing key and related concepts, global contexts, statements of inquiry, and inquiry questions.

Owosso Public Schools received an additional \$50,000 for the Grow Your Own grant, increasing the total to \$250,000. This grant provides tuition reimbursement for staff members pursuing their teaching certificate, including paraprofessionals or those not currently in the classroom. It also supports current teachers seeking additional endorsements on their certificates, particularly in special education.

Dr. Dwyer concluded her report by mentioning the launch of a curriculum newsletter designed to streamline communication for teachers who were receiving information from multiple sources. The newsletter is sent via email every other Friday. It is also uploaded to the Google Drive, providing a central location for teachers to access important updates and information if needed later.

### **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:

Pam Morris  
Principal Collins

### **For Action**

- Moved by Quick, supported by Easlick, to approve August 28, 2024, Regular Meeting Minutes, September 11, 2024, Committee Meeting Minutes, September 11, 2024, Closed Session Minutes, Current Bills, and Financials as presented. Motion carried unanimously.
- Moved by Quick, supported by Easlick, 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. Motion carried unanimously.

### **For Future Action**

- The Board will be asked to authorize the Superintendent to upgrade building controls at Emerson Elementary.
- The Board will be asked to authorize the Superintendent to renew the City of Owosso's revised agreement for two "full-time" officers with the City of Owosso, pending City approval. To enhance the public safety of the City of Owosso and Owosso Public School District through the provision of police officers to serve as School Resource (liaison) officers for the contract year of fiscal year 2024-25 through fiscal year 2028-2029.
- The Board will be asked to authorize the district the option to purchase one 77 passenger bus instead of leasing as originally proposed in June/July of 2024.

### **For Information**

Superintendent Brooks announced the following personnel changes:

#### **Accepted Positions**

Owen Krupp has accepted the Monitor position at Emerson.

Kristopher Podolan has accepted the Sub Custodian position at OMS.

Emily Piercecchi has accepted the Monitor position at Emerson.

Devin Adamski has accepted the Monitor position at Emerson.

Deann Floria has accepted the Sub Custodian position.

Britni Delaney has accepted the Paraprofessional position at Emerson.

#### **Resignations**

Tammy Friedman, Custodian at OHS has resigned effective September 9, 2024.

Tara Morin, Paraprofessional at OMS has resigned effective September 20, 2024.

Brian Logghe, Grounds/Maintenance has resigned effective September 20, 2024.

Kristopher Podolan, Custodian at OMS has resigned effective September 13, 2024.

Tiffany Harwood, Monitor at Bryant has resigned effective September 16, 2024.

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None

## **Board Comments**

Trustee Ochodnicky discussed her conversation with Mr. Brooks about the liaison officer contract, expressing concerns about the five-year term due to potential financial uncertainties. She appreciated the opportunity to address her concerns, emphasizing the value of the liaison officers and sharing a heartwarming story about Officer Stone and her granddaughter.

She also thanked Mrs. Van Epps for her work with the Kiwanis Club on the "Rise Up and Shine" initiative, which honors students who may not be recognized for academic achievements but contribute positively in other ways.

Ochodnicky mentioned the hunting deer blinds for sale by the construction trades class, hoping they are selling well given the hunting interest in her family. Additionally, she highlighted an entrepreneurial effort by Miss Natalie Summerland, who sells flowers and crochet items on Copas Road, noting her own enjoyment of the beautiful bouquets.

Treasurer Quick expressed excitement about the positive developments happening in the district, particularly enjoying the students' insights about Trojan Time. She highlighted the convenience it offers for families, allowing children to get to school without disrupting their day.

Quick also shared about her own experiences with safety patrol, recalling how Judge Dignan's daughter felt comfortable only when Eric, a fellow safety patrol member, was present. She emphasized the importance of the safety patrol role and expressed anticipation for seeing them at the upcoming game. Overall, she extended kudos to everyone involved for their efforts.

Trustee Easlick thanked Mr. Collins for the updates on Trojan Time classes, appreciating the insights. He expressed enthusiasm for the elementary schools engaging with the community through reading initiatives.

Easlick also thanked Mrs. Van Epps for organizing the donut meeting for students, highlighting the importance of providing opportunities for social interaction, especially for those who have attended multiple schools and may feel out of place. Lastly, he praised Dr. Dwyer for the curriculum newsletter, noting it as a great way to keep everyone informed and aligned.

### **Upcoming Board Meeting Dates**

- October 9: Board of Education Committee of the Whole Meeting, 5:30 PM, Washington Campus Gymnasium
- October 23: Board of Education Regular Meeting, 5:30 PM, Washington Campus Gymnasium
- November 13: Board of Education Committee of the Whole Meeting, 5:30 PM, Washington Campus Gymnasium
- November 20: Board of Education Regular Meeting, 5:30 PM, Washington Campus Gymnasium

### **Important Upcoming Dates**

- October 2: LHS Evening PT Conferences
- October 4: Homecoming Parade, 5:30 PM, Fayette Square
- October 4: Homecoming Varsity Football Game, 7:00 PM, Willman Field
- October 5: Homecoming Dance, 7:00 PM, TBA
- October 8: OHS Choir Concert, 7:00 PM, PAC
- October 9: OMS Choir Concert, 7:00 PM, PAC
- October 15: OMS & OHS Evening PT Conferences
- October 17: Half-Day Elementary Only, Afternoon & Evening PT Conferences
- October 17: OHS Hauntcert, 7:00 PM, PAC
- October 18: No School

Superintendent Brooks shared two updates with the Board. First, he mentioned that choir students sent postcards thanking the Board for their purchase of choir uniforms, which have arrived. He expressed gratitude for getting the uniforms ordered and anticipated showcasing them soon.

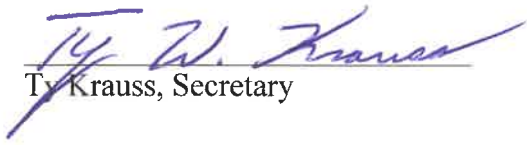
Additionally, Brooks announced upcoming community coffee hours, similar to an event held in the spring. He will be at Joe-Lee's Crosswinds Café next week, followed by another meeting at Itsa Deli Thing in a couple of weeks. These sessions will provide an opportunity for community members to ask questions while enjoying coffee together. He noted that the events are being promoted on the district's social media page, hoping for a good turnout.

### **Adjournment**

Moved by Ochodnický, supported by Henne, to adjourn at 6:20 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Minutes recorded by Stephanie Goetzinger.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ty W. Krauss". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Ty Krauss, Secretary