

# OLENTANGY SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION UPDATE

MEETING DATE: MAY 20, 2021

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## BOARD PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

Board President Julie Wagner Feasel began the meeting by addressing the Board, district leadership and the community with the following remarks:

*The mission of Olentangy Schools is to facilitate maximum learning for every student. That is what we expect of ourselves and what our community expects of us. Our district is committed to graduating students who are purposeful, resilient, curious, and kind. We want our graduates to have unlimited opportunities for their future. Our work begins with students as young as 3 and as old as 22; every one of our students deserves a school environment where they feel accepted and capable of realizing their full potential. Our students deserve to learn how to think critically and should never be told what to think.*

*For five years, the district's strategic plan has declared our commitment to creating a culture of inclusive excellence. By that, we mean that every student and staff member have a sense of belonging within our schools. It is a part of our strategic plan because it is a tall order. There are nearly 24,000 students and adults in our schools each day. Not one of them is the same but they all deserve fair treatment and a positive experience. Sometimes these individuals can be unkind to one another, so working toward a culture of inclusive excellence means taking purposeful action to reduce incivility and increase belonging.*

*There is ongoing concern amongst some members of our community demanding the removal of Critical Race Theory. That is a term I had never heard before this year so it is something I have been learning about. I am afraid that many parents are confusing Olentangy with schools in New York or California and conflating what they are hearing in the media with what is really happening in Olentangy. In the same way that I reject the claim that our district is "systemically racist" I also reject the claim that our district has adopted Critical Race Theory. Let me be very clear: there have been instances where staff members have made students feel alienated through sharing of personal political views, and that is wrong. I accept that we can always do better. But anyone claiming that Critical Race Theory has permeated every facet of our organization, including our curriculum, is also wrong.*

- *Olentangy does not teach students to hate themselves or to hate their country.*
- *Olentangy rejects the idea that anyone should be judged by their race. Every student should have strong character and a positive self-image. Students should never be identified as "oppressors" or "oppressed."*
- *Olentangy does not teach students to embrace Marxism or anti-capitalism. We are not preparing our students to overthrow our Constitution or to advocate for "white abolition."*

*These claims have been repeated so often that there are some in our community who believe it is true. Olentangy will never be a district that values one race over another or that teaches students what to think rather than how to think.*

*We encourage those who have experienced, or have children who have experienced, specific instances of concern in the classroom to talk to their child's teacher and/or principal. We remain steadfast in our efforts toward our mission, to facilitate maximum learning for every student. And, together, with civil discourse and open communication, we will be successful.*

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## CURRICULUM UPDATE

Dr. Jack Fette walked the Board through what comprises Olentangy's district curriculum, breaking it into three sections; written curriculum, taught curriculum and assessed curriculum.

Dr. Fette began by explaining that all Olentangy teachers are taught the Olentangy Foundations, which is the presence of quality curriculum, instruction, and assessment in an inclusive environment, which ensures every student the opportunity to maximize their learning. Ohio learning standards are adopted by the Board, and the curriculum team creates Olentangy curriculum blueprints that outline how teachers are expected to implement those standards. The assessment systems of Ohio state tests, performance descriptors and teacher created assessments provide feedback on how the district is accomplishing our mission.

Written Curriculum is the courses of study, which are intended to provide a basic framework for instruction and learning. This framework is based upon Ohio's Academic Content Standards. The district's Portrait of a Learner initiative teaches character dispositions, and is also part of the written curriculum.

Taught Curriculum is derived from the written curriculum, but then enacted and delivered. Teacher autonomy and decision making play a critical role as they use the written curriculum to create unit and lesson plans to meet instructional goals.

Board policy 2211 addresses multicultural and inclusive education, stating: "The Board of Education believes that multicultural education is a vital importance to the process of the development of students and staff, the achievement of harmony within our community and the stability and success of our nation. The school curriculum, instructional materials and professional development should reflect an inclusive perspective. The goal of an inclusive perspective is to help students understand themselves and others, and appreciate and value similarities and differences in all people."

Board policy 2240 addresses controversial issues in the classroom. The Board recognizes that there is a time and place when controversial issues are appropriate. Teachers should communicate with their principal and parents if controversial issues will be discussed in class. These discussions encourage open-mindedness, and can be utilized in the pursuit of scholarly inquiry, not indoctrination.

Assessed Curriculum tells the district how teachers and students are performing. Ongoing feedback, reflection, and formative assessment play an essential role in the process of learning.

Teachers have access to district level curriculum resources, and can also research supplemental resources that are not scripted programs and may be utilized in the taught curriculum. Olentangy Schools believes in transparency, and curriculum blueprints are linked on the [Curriculum page](#) of the district website.

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## BOARD PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Julie Wagner Feasel thanked all of the Olentangy staff, students and parents for their work throughout this school year.

With the Governor's health orders changing on June 2, Mrs. Wagner Feasel announced that social distancing protocols will allow for community members to be in attendance at Board of Education meetings, beginning at the June 10 meeting.

Board members are participating in school funding conversations with Senator Brenner and representatives from other school districts. The Senate is expected to release their version of the budget around June 1, and must pass by June 30. In the proposed plan, Olentangy Schools would receive approx. \$2,500/pupil.

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## SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Superintendent Mark Raiff shared that Olentangy Schools will continue to follow all social distancing and face mask policies through the end of the 2020-2021 school year. The district will follow guidance from the Delaware Public Health District for the 2021-2022 school year, and will communicate information throughout the summer.

The high school brand committees will begin sharing the new mascot imagery for their schools beginning Monday, May 24. Be on the lookout for the exciting reveals on Wednesday, May 26.

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## TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Emily Hatfield shared that the district continues to advocate for the Fair School Funding Plan, and has reached out to the media for support. Information on school funding and how it affects Olentangy Schools can be found on the [Treasurer's webpage](#) of the district website. Olentangy Schools is not eligible for COVID relief funding from ESSER II or ESSR III relief funds, and must draw from the general fund to pay these expenses.

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## SCHOOL FEES UPDATE

Chief Academic Officer Dr. Jack Fette requested the Board to approve the school fee schedule.

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## SECOND READING OF THE FIVE-YEAR FINANCIAL FORECAST

Treasurer Emily Hatfield reminded the Board of Education that the purpose and objective of the Five-Year Financial Forecast is to engage the community and Board in financial planning, and provide a method to determine potential financial issues.

Updates to the district's revenue streams include the state catching up to the FY19 levels, 2020 property valuations currently being collected, and the timing of the Polaris II TIF revenues being brought forward. Expenditures that were under budget include pandemic use of substitute teachers and field trip costs.

The Five-Year Forecast ends with 65 days cash on hand, and the district is confident that it will meet the 3 year promise from the 2020 Levy campaign.

In evaluating risks, enrollment growth over the next few years is difficult to predict, and real estate valuation fluctuations will affect the district's revenue stream. Mrs. Hatfield said that she will continue to advocate for state funding and legislative changes in Olentangy's favor. The district has approved and settled contracts with its associations, creating stability over the next year. The ESCCO contracted services is a large component of other expenditures, and provides staff for the preschool program and special education services.

The Board of Education meeting is available on the district website [Board of Education meeting livestream](#).