

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF ORONO  
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 278  
HELD ON SEPTEMBER 25, 2023

Present: Mike Bash, Kristine Flesher, Laura Wallander, Ali Howe, Todd Madson, Wendy Lundsgaard

Absent: Sarah Borchers

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of Orono Independent School District No. 278 was held on Monday, September 25, 2023 and called to order by Board Chair, Mike Bash at 7:00 PM.

3. Consideration of the Agenda

4. Consent Agenda

UPON MOTION by Laura Wallander, seconded by Ali Howe, the Consent Agenda was approved as follows:

- Approved Minutes from the Regular Board Meeting held on September 11, 2023
- Approved the leave of absence for Logan Hoegh, full-time Fourth Grade Teacher at Orono Intermediate School, effective October 9, 2023 through November 21, 2023
- Approved the leave of absence for Kelli Silva, full-time English Language Teacher at Orono Schumann Elementary School and Orono Intermediate School, effective November 20, 2023 through December 20, 2023
- Approved the leave of absence for Andrew Stitt, full-time Fourth Grade Teacher at Orono Intermediate School, effective December 11, 2023 through January 19, 2024
- Approved the appointment of Angela Turner, as part-time Classroom Paraeducator at Orono Intermediate School, effective September 21, 2023
- Approved the appointment of Yesica Ruiz, as full-time Class II Custodian at Orono Elementary Center, effective September 11, 2023
- Approved the resignation of Jaime Peters, full-time Class III Custodian at Orono Discovery Center, effective September 22, 2023
- Approved the leave of absence for Rebecca Schweitzer, full-time Custodian at Orono Elementary Center, beginning August 22, 2023
- Approved the appointment of Meghan Wilson, as full-time Early Learning Student Support at Orono Discovery Center, effective September 18, 2023
- Approved the leave of absence for Katherine Hofmann de Bustamante, full-time Assistant Teacher at Orono Discovery Center, tentatively effective September 18, 2023 through December 22, 2023
- Accepted donations totaling \$9,415.00
- Approved Bill Vouchers: 316687-316807, EP Register: 902080-902089, EFT Vouchers: 255-256 and Capital One: 52498-52519

5. – Superintendent's Report on Excellence

Dr. Flesher began her report with an announcement of eight National Merit Scholars - three Semifinalists and five Commended Scholars. These students in the Class of 2024 are recognized by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation for outstanding results on the PSAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Exam taken last fall. Semifinalists are the highest-scoring entrants in each state. The nationwide pool of Semifinalists represents less than one percent of U.S. high school seniors. The Semifinalists are Jack Eugster, Emily Middleton and Walter Royal. Semifinalists will work with Ms. Brandy Randall, Orono's secondary Orono Challenge Coordinator, to complete an extensive application packet and move forward in the competition.

Commended Scholars this year are Leah Barry, Dexter Benson, Spencer Bowe, Alexander Engle and Joseph Mariani. These students will receive a Letter of Commendation from National Merit in recognition of their outstanding academic promise.

Next, Dr. Flesher highlighted Orono's Unified program, and noted that it has been instrumental in supporting the culture of inclusion and respect for students with and without intellectual disabilities. The program has provided opportunities for students to not only have fun and experience the joy of Special Olympics competition, but develop leadership skills, empathy, and trust. Dr. Flesher thanked Advisor Michelle Swenson for submitting a robust application to Special Olympics and helping the high school earn the national honor of "Unified Champion School." Orono is one of only a handful of schools in Minnesota to earn this designation.

Next, Dr. Flesher shared that homecoming is next week, October 2-7. In keeping with tradition, secondary schools will have dress-up days all week and other fun activities. Our elementary students will show their Spartan spirit on Friday. The parade is scheduled for 1 p.m. Friday and members of the community is welcome to attend. The Community Tailgate Party — co-sponsored by the Orono Foundation and the OHS Student Senate — is from 5-6:30 p.m. with food trucks and other family activities. The homecoming football game kicks off at 7 p.m. against the Providence Lyons. Tickets are on sale through our GoFan site.

Finally, Dr. Flesher concluded her report by sharing a fall sports update. The Spartans Football team is 4-0 on the season with their most recent win over Delano on Friday. The team is currently ranked #3 in the latest Class 4A rankings. The Girls Swim & Dive team has won their last three dual meets against Westonka, Waconia, and New Prague. They are currently ranked #3 in Class 1A. In their last meet, the Boys Cross Country team finished with a 16:51 team average, which was the fastest team average in Orono history. The Boys are currently ranked #5 in Class 2A. The Orono Boys Soccer team is still undefeated on the season, with an 8-0-2 overall record. They are currently ranked #2 in Class 2A.

#### 6. – Board Members Questions and Comments

Facilities and Finance Committee Meeting Update: Todd Madson provided an update to fellow board and community members regarding items discussed at the most recent meeting of the Facilities & Finance Committee. Mr. Madson shared that the group will be learning more about the required preliminary levy certification later in the meeting prior to voting to approve it. Mr. Madson also provided an update pertaining to the planned building improvement projects.

Policy Committee Meeting Update: Mike Bash noted that there would be a detailed summary later in the meeting regarding the discussion that took place at the most recent meeting of the Policy Committee.

Mike Bash did not have any additional updates.

Todd Madson commented on a recent PTO meeting that he attended, noting that he is grateful for the work the PTO has done to have a Spanish teacher from Spain working in the Orono Schools. Mr. Madson also shared that he attended a "Coffee and Conversation" event hosted by the Orono Foundation for Education last week and noted that it was a wonderful event that showcased the remarkable opportunities the Orono Educator Excellence grant has provided to our staff.

Wendy Lundsgaard shared that she attended a meeting of the ECFE Parent Advisory Council, and noted that they are hard at work planning for fundraisers and events, and welcoming new families into the program.

Ali Howe did not have any updates to share.

Laura Wallander provided an update from the most recent meeting of the Orono Action Committee, where they began their discussion by refocusing on the purpose of their committee. Ms. Wallander also shared that the group is planning a breakfast this fall to keep lines of communication open with our local legislatures.

7. – Old Business

7. A – Policy Review

The 2023-2024 Superintendent Goals were presented for a second reading and approval.

UPON MOTION by Todd Madson, and seconded by Laura Wallander, the board approved the 2023-2024 Superintendent Goals as presented.

Motion Approved Unanimously.

7. B – Other Old Business as Necessary

No other old business was brought forward.

8. – New Business

8. A – Policy Review

Dr. Scott Alger, Executive Director of Human Resources brought the following policy to the board for a first reading and shared proposed revisions.

- Policy 506: Student Discipline

9. B – Preliminary Levy Certification

Jim Westrum, Executive Director of Business Services, presented the 2023 Pay 2024 Property Tax Levy and highlighted key points regarding the levy.

UPON MOTION by Todd Madson, and seconded by Wendy Lundsgaard, the board approved the proposed 2023 Pay 2024 Property Tax Levy.

Motion Approved Unanimously.

9. C – Other New Business as Necessary

No other New Business was brought forward.


The next Regular School Board Meeting will be held on Monday, October 9, 2023 at 7:00 PM in the District Office Assembly Room.

UPON MOTION by Wendy Lundsgaard, seconded by Laura Wallander, the meeting was adjourned to a work session for the purpose of a report on learning and accountability at 7:47 PM.



~~Michael Bash~~, *Chair*

Sarah Borchers



Laura Wallander, *Clerk*