

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF ORONO
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 278
HELD ON DECEMBER 11, 2023

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

Absent: None

Community Members Questions and Comments

No members of the community addressed the board.

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of Orono Independent School District No. 278 was held on Monday, December 11, 2023 and called to order by Board Chair, Mike Bash at 7:00 PM.

Mr. Bash shared that there are several band concerts taking place this evening, and several board members with students performing will be in and out of the board meeting in order to attend.

4. Consideration of the Agenda

5. Consent Agenda

UPON MOTION by Laura Wallander, seconded by Todd Madson, the Consent Agenda was approved as follows:

- Approved Minutes from the Regular Board Meeting held on November 13, 2023
- Approved the appointment of Jennifer Justen, as full-time Long-Term Substitute Special Education Teacher at Orono Middle School, effective November 27, 2023 through June 7, 2024
- Approved the leave of absence for Carrie Senske, full-time Physical Education Teacher at Orono Schumann Elementary School, tentatively effective December 14, 2023 through February 2, 2024
- Approved the leave of absence for Philip Troy, full-time Special Education Teacher at Orono High School, tentatively effective January 28, 2024 through February 12, 2024
- Approved the appointment of Jonah Eskola, as full-time Class II Custodian at Orono Elementary Center, effective November 14, 2023
- Approved the appointment of Debra Underwood, as part-time Cook at Orono Schumann Elementary School, effective December 4, 2023
- Approved the appointment of Melissa Lacina, as part-time Classroom Paraeducator at Orono Schumann Elementary School, effective December 1, 2023
- Approved the leave of absence for Anna Williams, full-time Special Education Paraeducator at Orono High School, effective December 20, 2023 through June 5, 2025
- Approved the leave of absence for Heather Jackson, full-time Special Education Paraeducator at Orono High School, effective December 20, 2023 through June 6, 2024
- Approved the termination of Yesica Ruiz, full-time Custodian at Orono Elementary Center, effective October 13, 2023
- Approved the termination of Thomas Harvey, full-time Custodian at Orono Elementary Center, effective November 29, 2023
- Approved the termination due to retirement of Carol Sulander, full-time Technology Systems Specialist at Orono Public Schools, effective January 1, 2024
- Accepted donations totaling \$8,620.52
- Approved the Resolution Providing Notice of Intent to Offer Subsequent Contract
- Approved Treasurer's Reports for June-October of 2023
- Approved Electronic Fund Transfers for October 2023
- Approved Bill Vouchers: 317235-317443, 1742-1751, EP Register: 902125-902192, EFT Vouchers: 259-261, 6467-6474 and Capital One: 52589-52617

6. – Superintendent’s Report on Excellence

Dr. Flesher began her report by sharing that Orono High School Business Teacher Leslie O’Meara incorporated the Stock Market Game in her ninth-grade Intro to Business class. The game introduces students to saving and investing through a simulation of the stock market and bond market. Students get to trade and manage their own virtual \$100,000 investment portfolio. They develop skills in math, economics, and personal finance while gaining a greater awareness of current events and global news.

One of the Orono teams came in 4th place out of 836 teams! Congratulations to:

- Hayley Aseltine
- Dominic Roux
- Ethan Weber and
- Jackson Von Kaenel

Dr. Flesher noted that there were several band concerts taking place tonight at Orono High School.

Next, Dr. Flesher shared that two Orono students were awarded the MSHSL Academics, Arts, and Athletics Award, commonly known as the Triple 'A' Award, which honors high school seniors throughout the state who have a 3.0 or higher-grade point average and who participate in league-sponsored athletic and fine arts activities. Lila James is an outstanding student and AP Scholar who is on Student Senate, participates in band, is the Tri-M president, and competes on the Orono Girls Swimming and Diving and Lacrosse teams. She was named captain for both teams this year. Victor Ruhland is a driven student and AP Scholar who has a passion for choir, participating all four years of high school. He is a two-sport athlete, competing in football and track and field. In addition, Victor is Chair of the Orono Unified Club and has been dedicated to sustaining the environment of inclusion at OHS.

Next, Dr. Flesher noted that the MSHSL ExCEL Award – Excellence in Community, Education and Leadership – is a unique recognition program designed exclusively for Minnesota high school juniors who are active in school activities, leaders in their schools, and who demonstrate a strong commitment to community service. Junior Ashley Ishaug is this year’s ExCEL winner from OHS. Ashley has played varsity softball since 8th grade and is a captain on the team this year. She moved up to varsity volleyball in the fall after two years on the JV team. Ashley also holds leadership roles in the Student Council and has contributed hundreds of hours to Letters of Love. She is currently the varsity Girls Hockey team manager.

Next, Dr. Flesher shared that the OHS Theater program participates in the Hennepin Theater Trust Spotlight Education program, which provides evaluation, feedback and encouragement to actors and backstage crews. This year’s fall musical was “Bright Star.” The following students received accolades from the evaluators:

- For Outstanding Performance in a Leading Role, Lily Quale in the role of Alice Murphy
- Outstanding in Technical Leadership
 - Adam Charrier, for Sound Design
 - Klaire Hillman, for Stage Design
 - Lucy Keating, as Costume Crew Head

The overall production received an Honorable Mention award, as well as students Henry Shafer, Axel Duke, Julie Metcalf, Greta Rolfzen, Noah Feldman, Mara Newcomer and Maisie Wellman.

Next, Dr. Flesher shared a winter sports update and noted that winter sports are off to a great start. More than 350 students are participating in nine different activities.

The Orono Dance Team competed in the season opening conference meet: Varsity Jazz finished in first place, Varsity Kick finished in second place. Orono is hosting the Metro West Conference Championship Meet this Saturday, December 16.

Boys Basketball picked up their first win of the season against Minnehaha Academy. They are currently ranked 4th in state and Girls Basketball won three games in a row to improve their record to 3-1 to start the season. They are currently ranked 10th in state.

Boys Hockey started their season with a 3-1 record and are currently ranked 5th in state. Girls Hockey is 7-2-0 overall and ranked 1st in state.

Wrestling participated in their first meet of the season at Saint Michael-Albertville. Brett Kiecker (3rd place) and Brady McPherson (3rd place) were the top finishers for the Spartans.

Boys Swim and Dive will host their first meet of the season on Thursday, December 14 against New Prague.

Nordic and Alpine Ski have started practices, but are patiently waiting for more snow.

Finally, Dr. Flesher shared some outstanding news regarding Orono Football. At the season-closing banquet, Coach McPherson reported that the Orono Football team earned the Gold award for team GPA through the Minnesota State High School Coaches Association. Orono was #1 in Class 4A with a team GPA of 3.39. The threshold for the Gold award is 3.25. The MSHSL recognizes students as Academic All-State based on top GPAs and accomplishments. All players in the Class of 2024 earned this honor. The Minnesota Football Coaches Association's 2023 Class 4A Individual Academic All-State honors went to Victor Ruhland and Brady McPherson for leadership and academic excellence. These players secured two of only 17 awards across the state in Class 4A.

7. – Board Members Questions and Comments

Policy Committee Meeting Update: Sarah Borchers shared that as always, the work of the Policy Committee will be shared later in the meeting.

Finance & Facilities Meeting Update: Todd Madson shared that at the most recent meeting, the group discussed the 2024 property tax levy, which will be presented in detail later in the meeting. Sarah Borchers also noted that the committee finalized a nutrition services audit.

Wendy Lundsgaard was not present during this portion of the meeting.

Laura Wallander shared that she attended a recent Minnetonka Beach city council meeting to share information about the strategic planning process the district is engaging in and encouraged community participation. Ms. Wallander also shared that she attended a recent Meet & Confer meeting where they discussed the recent change to open houses and noted that the response was positive. Finally, Ms. Wallander summarized the work done at a recent meeting of the Orono Action Committee by noting that they are working to refine their platform to take the capitol in March.

Sarah Borchers did not have anything to report.

Mike Bash shared that he attended a recent meeting of the Long Lake city council to encourage participation in the district's strategic planning process. Mr. Bash also commented on an Open House hosted by the district in November for prospective students, and was very impressed by the event and the turnout.

Ali Howe did not have anything to report.

Todd Madson shared that he attended a recent meeting of the PTO, and noted that they have been working to provide support to teachers during the holiday season.

8. – Old Business

8. A – Policy Review

The following revised policies were presented to the board for a second reading and approval.

- Policy 707: Transportation of Public School Students
- Policy 708: Transportation of Nonpublic School Students
- Policy 709: Student Transportation Safety Policy
- Policy 710: Extracurricular Transportation

UPON MOTION by Sarah Borchers, seconded by Ali Howe, the board approved the proposed changes to policies 707, 708, 709 and 710.

Motion approved unanimously.

8. B – Other Old Business as Necessary

No other old business was brought forward.

9. – New Business

9. A – Policy Review

Dr. Aaron Ruhland, Executive Director of Learning and Accountability presented to the board the following revised or reviewed policies for first reading and review by board members. Dr. Ruhland offered a brief overview of the proposed revisions for each policy.

- Policy 711: Advertising, Sponsorships and Fundraising
- Policy 712: Canvassing or Selling on School Premises
- Policy 713: Student Activity Accounting
- Policy 714: Check Signing
- Policy 715: Emergency School Closing
- Policy 716: Establishing of Meal Prices
- Policy 717: Fund Balance

9. B – Resolution to Establishing Combined Polling Places

Member Todd Madson introduced the following resolution and moved its adoption:

**RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING A COMBINED POLLING PLACE FOR MULTIPLE
PRECINCTS AND DESIGNATING HOURS DURING WHICH THE POLLING PLACE
WILL REMAIN OPEN FOR VOTING FOR SCHOOL DISTRICT ELECTIONS NOT
HELD ON THE DAY OF A STATEWIDE ELECTION**

BE IT RESOLVED by the School Board of Independent School District No. 278, State of

Minnesota, as follows:

1. Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Section 205A.11, the precincts and polling places for school district elections are those precincts or parts of precincts located within the boundaries of the school district which have been established by the cities or towns located in whole or in part within the school district. The board hereby confirms those precincts and polling places so established by those municipalities.

2. Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Section 205A.11, the board may establish a combined polling place for several precincts for school district elections not held on the day of a statewide election. The combined polling place must be a polling place that has been designated for use as a polling place by a county or municipality. The following combined polling place is established to serve the precincts specified for all school district special and general elections not held on the same day as a statewide election in the calendar year following the adoption of this resolution:

Combined Polling Place: Orono Council Chambers
 2780 Kelley Parkway
 Orono, MN 55356

This combined polling place serves all territory located in Independent School District No. 278; Hennepin County, Minnesota.

3. Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Section 205A.09, the combined polling place will remain open for voting for school district elections not held on the same day as a statewide election between the hours of 7:00 o'clock a.m. and 8:00 o'clock p.m.

4. The clerk is directed to file a certified copy of this resolution with the county auditor of Hennepin County, within thirty (30) days after its adoption.

5. As required by Minnesota Statutes, Section 204B.16, Subdivision 1a, the clerk is hereby authorized and directed to give written notice of new polling place locations to each affected household with at least one registered voter in the school district whose school district polling place location has been changed. The notice must be a nonforwardable notice mailed at least twenty-five (25) days before the date of the first election to which it will apply. A notice that is returned as undeliverable must be forwarded immediately to the appropriate County Auditor, who shall change the registrant's status to "challenged" in the statewide registration system.

The motion for the foregoing resolution was duly seconded by Member Sarah Borchers.

and upon vote being taken thereon, the following voted in favor thereof: Sarah Borchers, Mike Bash, Laura Wallander, Ali Howe, Todd Madson

and the following voted against the same: None

whereupon said resolution was declared duly passed and adopted.

Mr. Jim Westrum, Director of Business Services, presented information regarding Truth in Taxation. The district is required by Minnesota State Statute to hold a Truth in Taxation meeting annually. The public was given an opportunity to comment. There were no comments.

9. D – 2023 Pay 2024 School Property Tax Levy for Fiscal 2024-2025

UPON MOTION by Sarah Borchers, seconded by Wendy Lundsgaard, the Board of Education approved the final 2023 pay 2024 property tax levy of \$22,278,058.75 as presented, and directed the Clerk to certify to the Hennepin County Auditor in that amount.

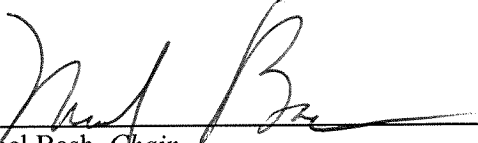
Motion approved unanimously.

9. E – Other New Business as Necessary


No other New Business was brought forward.

The next Regular School Board Meeting will be held on Monday, January 8, 2024 at 7:00 PM in the District Office Assembly Room.

UPON MOTION by Laura Wallander, seconded by Todd Madson, the meeting was adjourned at 7:52 PM.



Michael Bash, *Chair*



Laura Wallander, *Clerk*