

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF ORONO  
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 278  
HELD ON JANUARY 22, 2024

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

Absent: None

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of Orono Independent School District No. 278 was held on Monday, January 22, 2024 and called to order by Board Chair, Mike Bash, at 7:00 PM.

3. – Consideration of the Agenda

4. – Consent Agenda

UPON MOTION by Sarah Borchers, seconded by Laura Wallander the Consent Agenda was approved as follows:

- Approved Minutes from the Regular Meeting held on January 8, 2024
- Approved the appointment of Brooke Reimann, as full-time Long-Term Substitute Special Education Teacher at Orono Intermediate School, effective January 8, 2024 through June 7, 2024
- Approved the appointment of Linda Zilverberg, as part-time Cook at Orono High School, effective January 16, 2024
- Approved the termination of Jonah Eskola, full-time Custodian at Orono Elementary Center, effective January 11, 2024
- Accepted Donations Totaling: \$29,579.08
- Approved Bill Vouchers: 317584-317783, 1752-1761, EFT Vouchers: 264-265, 6475-6482 and Capital One: 52647-52670

6. – Superintendent’s Report on Excellence

Dr. Flesher began her report by sharing that this week Community Conversation events continue as part of Orono’s Strategic Planning process, Phase 2: Stakeholder Input. Last week kicked off a successful event for middle school and preceding tonight’s board meeting tonight was a meeting with high school parents. Thursday the district will be hosting the K-5 event.

Next, Dr. Flesher gave a special shout-out to Senior Carys Summers–the Orono High School Student Body Co-President–who also serves as president of the Minnesota Association of Student Councils. She, and other members of the MASC student board, recently participated in a panel at a Minnesota School Board Association meeting. The students presented on topics including school culture, safety, student involvement and engagement, and student activities. Congratulations to Carys for representing Orono so well in this role!

Dr. Flesher then provided a winter sports and activities update. Orono’s campus was busy this weekend hosting a speech invitational and Spartan YBB classic. Many activities were busy this weekend.

The Alpine Ski team has a conference race this afternoon at Buck Hill, with senior night.

Orono Dance Teams are having a great season so far. This weekend, JV Red, JV Blue, and JV Kick teams had their final performances of the season at Totino-Grace and ALL teams placed in the top 4! Varsity Jazz, gold; Varsity kick, bronze; JV, gold; JV Blue, bronze; JV Red, Silver; JV Kick, Fourth Place

Boys Basketball is going strong with a 9-4-0 record. They play their next Conference game against Waconia tomorrow at Waconia. Girls Basketball will also play Waconia tomorrow at home. Their record is currently 9-5-0.

The Boys Hockey team is 12-5-0 with their next home game against St. Cloud this Wednesday. The Girls Hockey team celebrated senior day with a 5-4 win in overtime vs. Dodge County. Senior Macy Rasmussen was awarded the hard hat for her excellence as a role model, as she was welcomed back to the team after winning *gold* with the U.S. U-18 Women's National Team in Switzerland. Congratulations, Macy! Next up for the girls is Gentry Academy this Thursday at Morrison Ice Arena.

Nordic Ski has the West Metro conference section meet this week - Classic Sprint Relays on Tuesday and the Pursuit race on Thursday, both at Hyland. Best wishes to all skiers.

Congratulations to the boys swimming and diving team for earning the True Team Section Championship last week and placing fourth in the True Team State Class A meet over the weekend. Top-10 finishes at the State meet were Walter Royal with a fourth-place finish in the 100 Fly and fifth place in the 200 Free, Owen Gagne finished 6th in the 100 Breast; 5th in the 100 Fly, Mitchell Volk placed 10th in the 50 Free. Orono relays placed 4th, 5th and 6th.

This Saturday, January 27, Orono Wrestling will host an all-day varsity and JV invitational.

The One Act Play, "The Final Call," went on the road this past weekend, placing 5th at the Metro West One Act Play Festival. Cast, crew, and Director Kelsie Balon Peck will be back in New Prague this weekend to compete at the Subsection tournament.

Next, Dr. Flesher offered congratulations to the Orono speech team on a great season opening tournament hosted by Stillwater and Mounds Park Academy Speech Teams. Sophie Middleton "picket-fenced" her preliminary rounds, earning a top score in all three rounds. Ruby Gehrman finaled in Varsity Drama at her first tournament. She was competing as a Novice; however, she did well enough to final in Varsity. Grace Fisher finaled in Varsity Discussion Consolation at her first tournament. Both Isaac Hess and Axel Duke added "Discussion" as a category this year and both finaled: Isaac in Novice and Axel in Varsity. Thank you to Head Speech Coach, Barb Shofner.

Dr. Flesher concluded her report by sharing that earlier this month, 35 Orono students in grades 8-12 attended the YMCA's Youth in Government 2024. Once again, it was a huge success for Orono. Students debated bills, passed proposals, and presented their court cases. Community Education staff Genna Torney and Sierra Myers—along with Orono parents Stephanie Klaers and Kelley Kell—had the opportunity to watch our delegation in action as they represented Orono. Several students served in appointed positions - Senior Madeleine Dore, Floor Leader of the Knutson Senate, Sophomore McKenna Monger, Clerk of Myers House, and four students served as Committee Leaders: Junior Eshaan Ambrose and freshmen Hannah Ferber, Simon Forbes and Ella Palm. In addition, Junior Adaline Stavitzski organized a voter registration drive, eighth-graders Adaline & Jane Stavitzski performed a song in the talent show, and eighth-grader Pepper Kell was recognized as an outstanding delegate.

## 7. – Board Members Questions and Comments

Facilities & Finance Committee Meeting Update: Sarah Borchers shared that at the most recent meeting of the Facilities & Finance Committee, the group spent time reviewing the applications the district received from community members to serve on the Curriculum & Accountability Council as well as the Strategic Planning Committee. Ms. Borchers noted that there was discussion surrounding the need for variability in the makeup of both committees, and was very impressed with the number of applications and the quality of candidates. Mike Bash also noted that there was a discussion surrounding the most recent enrollment figures now that the open enrollment deadline for next school year has passed and provided a summary of that information to the group.

Policy Committee Meeting Update: Sarah Borchers noted that the group recently finished its review of the 700 policy series, and the results of that review will be shared at the next regular board meeting.

Mike Bash shared that he recently attended the annual MSBA (Minnesota School Boards Association) conference. Mr. Bash noted that he attended a number of sessions on rather complex topics and shared a summary of his overall experience. Mr. Bash concluded his report by acknowledging how appreciative he is that community members have had the opportunity to participate so heavily in this year's strategic planning process.

Laura Wallander shared that she recently attended an Orono Action Committee meeting, and that the board would be hearing from that group later in the evening. Ms. Wallander also noted that she attended a meeting at the Discovery Center where there was discussion surrounding several topics including a book fair, an upcoming super Saturday event, the junior spartan closet initiative and planning for an open house to be hosted at the Discovery Center.

Wendy Lundsgaard had nothing to report.

Sarah Borchers shared that she attended a recent SPA (Spartan Parent Association) meeting where there was information about the activities being planned by that group. Ms. Borchers thanked Grace Nohner, Dr. Steiner and Dr. Flesher for their update to parents in the group and noted it was a very positive meeting. Ms. Borchers also commented that the discussion that occurred at a recent meeting of the Curriculum & Accountability Council will be highlighted later in the meeting.

Ali Howe shared that she attended a recent Co-Curricular Committee meeting, where AD Paul Brunner presented on several topics including his program purpose and philosophy, a fall and winter sports update, a concessions update and booster relationships. Ms. Howe also noted that she attended a Orono Healthy Youth meeting where there was discussion surrounding the upcoming wellness expo followed by various presentations.

Todd Madson shared that he attended a meeting of the PTO (Parent Teacher Organization) where there was discussion surrounding Glowfest. Mr. Madson also noted that he attended a recent OFE (Orono Foundation for Education) meeting where they discussed details of this year's spring bash. Finally, Mr. Madson shared that he attended the Community Conversation event held earlier in the evening at Orono High School and noted that he was very impressed with the turnout and the student facilitation.

## 7. – Old Business

### 7. A – 2023-2024 School Board Meeting Dates

Board meeting dates for 2024-2025 were presented for a second reading and approval.

UPON MOTION by Wendy Lundsgaard, seconded by Todd Madson, the Board of Education approved the 2024-2025 school board meeting dates.

Motion carried.

### 7. B – Other Old Business as Necessary

No other old business was brought forward.

## 8. – New Business

### 8. A – Orono Action Platform

Members of the Orono Action Committee presented the 2024 Orono Action Legislative Platform.

UPON MOTION by Sarah Borchers, seconded by Todd Madson, the Board of Education endorsed the 2024 Orono Action Legislative Platform as discussed.

Motion carried.

8. B – Orono High School Registration Guide

Dr. Amy Steiner, Principal of Orono High School and Dr. Aaron Ruhland, Executive Director of Learning & Accountability, presented the 2024-2025 Orono High School Course Catalog.

UPON MOTION by Laura Wallander, seconded by Ali Howe, the 2024-2025 Orono High School Course Catalog was approved as presented.

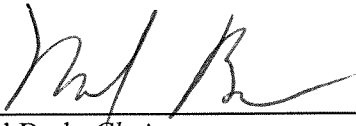
Motion carried.

8. C – Other New Business as Necessary

No other new business was brought forward.

The next Regular School Board Meeting will be held on Monday, February 12, 2024 at 7:00 PM in the District Office Assembly Room.

UPON MOTION by Laura Wallander, seconded by Sarah Borchers, the meeting was adjourned at 8:11 PM.



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Michael Bash, *Chair*



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Laura Wallander, *Clerk*