

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF ORONO
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 278
HELD ON FEBRUARY 26, 2024

Present: Mike Bash, Kristine Flesher, Sarah Borchers, Laura Wallander, Wendy Lundsgaard

Absent: Todd Madson, Ali Howe

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of Orono Independent School District No. 278 was held on Monday, February 12, 2024 and called to order by Board Chair, Mike Bash, at 7:10 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 February 12, 2024
- Approved the leave of absence for Tayler Leach-Smith, full-time Special Education Teacher at Orono Schumann Elementary School, tentatively effective March 15, 2024 through June 7, 2024
- Approved the leave of absence for Brandy Randall, full-time Gifted/Talented Teacher at Orono Middle School and Orono High School, tentatively effective March 15, 2024 through April 12, 2024
- Approved the leave of absence of Abigail Schoenberg, full-time Executive Assistant to the Superintendent at Orono Public Schools, tentatively effective March 19, 2024 through June 7, 2024
- Accepted Donations Totaling: \$4,639.93
- Approved Bill Vouchers: 318016-318160, EP Register: 902245-902301 and Capital One: 52700-52710

6. – Superintendent’s Report on Excellence

Dr. Flesher began her report by sharing that last Tuesday Orono Schools hosted a February professional day for staff with a focus on belonging, connections, and relationships. Thank you to the keynote speaker–Ali Chorley Dzieweczynski, Director of The Orono Coalition—who shared very personal experiences as a student in Orono Schools. Her uplifting messages about the “Power of Positive” and the impact of positive childhood experiences were so welcome and inspiring. Thank you to all the staff members who attended, presented breakout sessions, and contributed to the day. Special shout-out to the Orono Well-being Committee for planning important outreach to all staff. Their aim was to raise awareness for mental health supports and other well-being resources.

Next, Dr. Flesher offered congratulations to Orono’s musicians, who auditioned and were selected to perform with other outstanding musicians in the state. Performing this month in the All-State Choir at Orchestra Hall were:

- Junior Henry Shafer. He performed with the Minnesota TTBB All-State Choir under the direction of Dr. Maurice Simmons.
- Senior Lily Quale sang in the Minnesota SATB All-State Choir under the direction of Jessica Napoles.
- Senior Isabelle Courteau was in the Minnesota SSAA All-State Choir under the direction of Nicole Thietje.

These students auditioned in February 2023 and attended a week-long camp with other selected students last August on the campus of St. John's University. Students performed a concert at the end of that camp and

came back together during the Minnesota Music Educators Convention this month for rehearsals and a performance at Orchestra Hall on February 17. Freshman Miriam Naisbitt auditioned this fall and was selected for the Minnesota 9-10 SSAA Honor Choir. Miriam rehearsed with other ninth- and tenth-grade students this month, and they performed last Saturday at the Minneapolis Convention Center under the direction of Maria Ellis. On the instrumental side, congratulations to Junior J.T. Burns who auditioned and played trombone in the All-State Orchestra. J.T. is a member of the Orono High School Wind Ensemble.

Next, Dr. Flesher offered congratulations to the Orono High School Music Listening team of Junior Jorja Kenworthy, Senior Ella Johnson, and Senior Claire Erb for scoring in the top 10% nationwide in the 2024 music listening contest. In music listening, students develop skills in active listening and critical analysis by learning to identify composers, cultures, periods, and styles. This year's team from Orono competed against 68 teams from Minnesota, Iowa, Wisconsin, and Utah. All three Spartans are members of the OHS Wind Ensemble and have an amazing passion for music. Thank you to Tim Arnold for supporting students through this activity.

Finally, Dr. Flesher offered a sports update. The Boys basketball team is still in regular season play with two more away games, including tonight at St. Louis Park. Orono will host the Section quarterfinals on Wednesday, March 6 at 7 p.m. Girls basketball has received the #3 seed in the Section 6AAA Tournament. The Spartans will host a quarterfinal game against Cooper this Wednesday, February 28, beginning at 7:00 p.m.

The Boys Hockey team won the 2A Section Semifinal against Providence. They will advance to the Section final against Minneapolis on Wednesday, February 28 at 7 p.m. at the St. Louis Park Recreation Center. In Girls Hockey, after winning the state Quarterfinal vs. Willmar 4-1, the girls were defeated by Dodge County 4-2. This was an amazing game with Orono having 37 shots on goal. The girls won Third Place in state on Saturday by defeating Academy of Holy Angels 3-2. OGH Assistant Coach Claire Bjerke was named the Class A coach of the year.

In Boys Swimming and Diving, Orono placed 2nd as a team at the section championship. In addition, the following athletes will represent Orono in the state championship at the U of M Aquatic Center:

- Justin Barry
- Eli Fish
- Owen Gagne
- Ben Mitchel
- Stewart Royal
- Walter Royal
- Mitch Volk
- Bjorn Jaenchen

In wrestling, Orono hosted the 2AA Individual Section Tournament this past Saturday. Brady McPherson has qualified for the state wrestling tournament and will compete at the Xcel March 1-2.

7. – Board Members Questions and Comments

Mike Bash shared that the board participated in its annual meeting with the OHS Student Senate prior to the board meeting. Mr. Bash noted that this is an event that the board looks forward to each year, and that he was very impressed with the work the students put into the preparation.

Laura Wallander shared that she attended a recent meeting of Meet and Confer with Orono teachers. She noted that topics of discussion included the academic calendar and conferences. Ms. Wallander also shared that she attended a Community Education Advisory Council meeting, where the group was given updates on recent happenings within Community Ed such as the first ever sweetheart dance, an upcoming cribbage tournament and the tech buddies program. Ms. Wallander also noted that the Community Ed summer brochure will be coming out very soon.

Wendy Lundsgaard shared that she attended a meeting of the Curriculum & Accountability Council and provided an update on what was discussed at that meeting, highlighting the magnitude of the READ Act and noting the profound impact this new legislation will have.

Sarah Borchers commented that she attended the opening workshop portion of Orono's February professional day and found the keynote address to be extremely powerful and inspiring.

7. – Old Business

7. A – Policy Review (ACTION)

The following revised or rescinded policies were presented to the board for a second reading and approval of the recommended action.

- Policy 711: Advertising, Sponsorships and Fundraising
- Policy 714: Check Signing
- Policy 715: Emergency School Closing
- Policy 716: Establishing of Meal Prices
- Policy 718: Petty Cash
- Policy 719: Purchasing
- Policy 720: Salary Payments and Deductions
- Policy 721: Naming Rights
- Policy 722: Video Recording on School Buses
- Policy 723: Uniform Grant Guidance Policy Regarding Federal Revenue Sources
- Policy 730: Post-Issuance Debt Compliance

UPON MOTION by Laura Wallander, seconded by Wendy Lundsgaard, the board approved the proposed changes to policies 711, 714, 715, 716, 718, 719, 720, 721, 722, 723 and 730.

Motion approved unanimously.

7. B – Other Old Business as Necessary

No other old business was brought forward.

8. – New Business

8. A – Presentation of Character Award

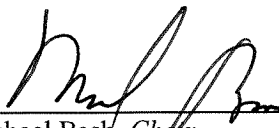
The Orono Schools have been named an exemplary school district by the Character Counts! program. Several staff members who have been heavily involved in the district's work through this program spoke about its merits and the board was presented with a certificate and a banner that displays this prestigious designation.

8. B – Other New Business as Necessary

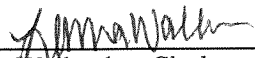
No other new business was brought forward.

The next Regular School Board Meeting will be held on Monday, March 11, 2024 at 7:00 PM in the District Office Assembly Room.

UPON MOTION by Laura Wallander, seconded by Sarah Borchers, the meeting was adjourned to a Work Session for the purpose of an Administrative Mid-Year Report at 8:04 PM.



Michael Bash, *Chair*



Laura Wallander, *Clerk*