

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

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

Absent: Todd Madson

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of Orono Independent School District No. 278 was held on Monday, April 22, 2024 and called to order by Board Chair, Mike Bash, at 7:03 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 Meeting held on April 8, 2024
- Approved the appointment of Joseph Huber full-time Marketing and Business Teacher at Orono High School, effective August 21, 2024.
- Approved the appointment of Brooke Reimann, as a full-time Special Education Teacher at Orono Intermediate School, effective August 21, 2024.
- Approved the appointment of Shauna Condry, as a full-time Counselor at Orono High School, effective August 21, 2024.
- Approved the termination due to resignation of Jeffrey Aman, full-time Associate Principal at Orono High School, effective June 30, 2024.
- Approved the termination due to resignation of Kathryn Steele, full-time Special Education Teacher at Orono Middle School, effective June 7, 2024.
- Approved the leave of absence for Chelsea Palmer, full-time MAC Teacher at Orono Schumann Elementary School, tentatively effective May 28, 2024, through November 1, 2024.
- Approved the leave of absence of Bailey Busse, full-time Second Grade Teacher at Orono Schumann Elementary School, effective August 26, 2024, through November 18, 2024.
- Approved the change of assignment of Pamela Byrnes part-time Associate Receptionist/Cashier at Orono High School to full-time Associate Principal Secretary at Orono High School, effective April 8, 2024.
- Approved the appointment of Nikolas Taintor, as full-time Director of Business Services at Orono Public Schools, effective April 29, 2024.
- Accept Donations Totaling \$25,028.76
- Approve Treasurer's Report for March 2024
- Approve Electronic Fund Transfers for March 2024
- Approve Bill Vouchers: 318433-318609, 902352-902366, EP Register: 902342-902351, EFT Vouchers: 271, and Capital One: 52752-52779

5. – Superintendent's Report on Excellence Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Dr. Flesher began her report acknowledging that it was Earth Day. She reported that in recognition of this special day, Schumann Elementary once again partnered with Neighborhood Forest whose mission is to "give every child the priceless joy of planting and watching trees grow." Interest and participation was so high at Schumann that EVERY student was able to take home a beautiful, healthy red maple seedling this year. Dr. Flesher thanked Kindergarten teacher Ms. Allison Koester for once again coordinating the delivery and distribution of these trees to our students.

She noted that it was also BizTown Day for Orono 6th graders. Dr. Flesher offered a special thank you to Orono parent Kasey Beeler, Principal Kim VanEyll, Sarah Hunstiger and grade-level leader Laurie Jenson for the planning and preparation, as well as the many OMS parents who volunteered to participate in the field

trip and real-world experiences. Biztown is an immersive experience in which students operate banks, businesses, manage restaurants, write checks, and even vote for mayor. Students are able to connect dots between what they learn in school and the real world. That day, students traveled to a downtown lab, playing roles as citizens, workers, and consumers in a community, learning practical economic concepts, building money management skills and relating these roles to free enterprise. It was an awesome day!

Next, Dr. Flesher shared an exciting recap from Theater Director Ms. Kelsie Balon-Peck regarding the high school spring play, *The Play that Goes Wrong!*

- 854 tickets were sold over the 4 shows. Dr. Flesher noted that the previous record for a spring play was 403. And the Friday evening performance sold out, which was a first for a spring play.
- Dr. Flesher continued by quoting Kelsie: "The community support and positive feedback we received was overwhelming, and the kids had an absolute ball performing this show. It was a great way to close out a strong season of OHS theater!"
- She offered her congratulations to Kelsie and the entire student cast and crew on this tremendous success.

Dr. Flesher reported the IS Math Masters team, advised by Ms. Angie Kalthoff, had a great competitive season. Angie is proud to report that a record 34 fifth-grade students joined this year forming 7 teams of hard-working mathematicians who competed against 34 teams this year. Dr. Flesher shared the top 5 results:

Fast Fact Competition

Linden Hermansen, 5th place

Individual Round Winners

Leo Phillips, 1st place

Nathan Ratcliffe, 2nd place

Tommy Menozzi, 5th place

Team Round Winners

1st place - Linden Hermansen, Nathan Baird, James Vossen, Frank Whiting, and Leo Phillips

3rd place - Henry Masica, Nathan Ratcliffe, Jacob Severtson, Tommy Menozzi, and Wyatt Blanchard

5th place - Nolan Naughton, Harold Campbell, Jake Johnson, Henrik Nohre, and Henrik Swenson

A complete list of participants can be found on the website. Congratulations to all the outstanding mathematicians.

Next, Dr. Flesher shared the the Orono Speech Team has concluded a memorable competitive season. They finished 3rd overall at the Section tournament with 10 finalists and 5 State qualifiers:

- Maddie Dore - Creative Expression (Section champion)
- McKenna Monger - Champion in Drama (Section champion)
- Maya Haugen - Champion in Storytelling (Section champion)
- Sydney Sloneker - Original Oratory
- Oliver Berg - Creative Expression

The State speech meet was held on Saturday, April 20. The team finished in 11th place overall out of 38 teams. Three students broke into the final rounds with the following outstanding results:

- Maddie Dore placed 2nd overall in Creative Expression
- Maya Haugen placed 7th overall in Storytelling
- Oliver Berg placed 8th overall in Creative Expression

Dr. Flesher offered thanks to Speech Coach Barb Shofner for continuing to build momentum and leading our students in this activity.

The Spring athletics are off to a great start! Nearly 400 students are participating in one of our nine spring sports. Here are a few highlights:

- Baseball won their season opener over St. Louis Park last week. Brady McPherson pitched five solid innings to pick up the win.
- Softball defeated rival Mound Westonka in a back-and-forth game by a score of 10-9 last week.
- Girls Lacrosse opened the season with a 17-16 thrilling win over Eden Prairie last week. In that game, Layla Nick scored 9 goals.
- Girls Golf has taken first place in each event that they have participated in this season. In their last meet hosted at Baker National Golf Course, Ava Hanneman shot a 69 (five under par) to earn medalist honors and help lead the girls to a 319 team score.
- Track and Field has hosted two invites so far—one indoor and one outdoor. In the outdoor meet last week, Orono boys took first place overall.
- Boys Tennis is off to an impressive start with wins over New Prague and St. Paul Academy. The boys are currently ranked 7th in Class AA state rankings.

Dr. Flesher shared that she is looking forward to the Orono Foundation for Education's annual Bash this weekend with a Great Gatsby theme. New this year is a silent auction that opened April 22 and runs through April 27 with more than 130 items. Dr. Flesher thanked Laura Kloss and the entire Foundation Board for their outstanding efforts this year to create a memorable event and raise funds that will benefit every Orono student.

Finally, Dr. Flesher expressed gratitude to two groups that are being recognized this week for their outstanding support of our staff, families, and students:

- Orono Schools Administrative Professionals: Thank you for your invaluable support and dedication in assisting students, staff, and families. The administrative professionals make a profound difference in our learning community every day.
- Volunteers: Dr. Flesher commented that she is continually amazed and grateful for the creativity and commitment to supporting our school every day. She noted that we are a stronger district because of these efforts.

6. – Board Members Questions and Comments

Wendy Lundsgaard reported that she was part of the third and final Meet & Confer session where the 2025-26 Academic Calendar went to a vote, ending the year on a positive note. She noted that she attended the curriculum and accountability meeting and reviewed survey data and key findings and that feedback will go back to the Core Planning Team. Ms. Lundsgaard also attended the BizTown interactive experience with sixth graders.

Laura Wallander attended the Community Ed. advisory council meeting. They discussed flexible staffing needs and discussed the need for volunteers at the Wellness Expo coming up on May 2 and included a presentation by Ali Chorley. She also mentioned the Tech Buddies event on April 25 and reported Community Ed is on track to meet last year's summer registration numbers.

Mike Bash took a moment to thank board members Laura Wallander, Wendy Lundsgaard and Ali Howe for their participation in district negotiation meetings.

Sarah Borchers attended a facility and finance committee meeting and also attended the spring play.

Ali Howe reported that she attended the Orono Healthy Youth meeting. She also attended the spring play and was very impressed.

Todd Madson was absent.

7. – Old Business

7. A – Other Old Business as Necessary

No other old business was brought forward.

8. – New Business

8A. Termination and Non-Renewal of Probationary Teachers (ACTION) (ROLL CALL VOTE)

Member Laura Wallander introduced the following Resolution and moved its adoption. Ms. Wallander read the following:

RESOLUTION NON-RENEWING PROBATIONARY TEACHING CONTRACTS

WHEREAS, Minnesota Statutes section 122A.40, subdivision 5, states that the first three consecutive years of a teacher's first teaching experience in Minnesota in a single district is deemed to be a probationary period of employment, and that the probationary period in each district in which the teacher is thereafter employed is one year; and hereby declines to renew the annual teaching contract of the following probationary teacher(s) effective at the end of this school year:

Kari Heitke
Juliann Luce

2. As a result of this Resolution, the District's employment relationship with the above-named probationary teachers will terminate effective June 30, 2023.

3. The School Board has reviewed and hereby approves the written notice of nonrenewal for each affected probationary teachers. Each teacher may make a written request that the Board of Education state its reasons for the non-renewal of her/his teaching contract. Such a request must be made, however, within ten (10) days after receiving notice of School Board action.

The School Board Clerk is directed to sign the written notices on behalf of the School Board. The reasons for non-renewal are classified as private personnel data under the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, unless the non-renewal represents the final disposition of disciplinary action.

4. The Human Resources Executive Director, or a designee, is directed to serve the affected teachers with a copy of this Resolution and the approved written notice for that teacher before July 1. If possible, the notice(s) should be hand-delivered.

The motion for the adoption of the foregoing resolution was made by Mike Bash and duly seconded by Wendy Lundsgaard and upon vote being taken thereon, the following voted in favor thereof: Mike Bash, Sarah Borchers, Ali Howe, Laura Wallander, Wendy Lundsgaard,

And the following voted against the same: None

8B. 2025-2026 Academic Calendar – First Reading

The 2025-2026 Academic Calendar was presented to the board for a first reading and review. No action was taken as the Calendar will be voted on in the May meeting.

8C. Strategic Planning Update

Dr. Aaron Ruhland and Dr. Kristi Flesher gave a summary of the Strategic Planning process to date. The process is currently in the Core Planning Team Phase. Dr. Ruhland remarked that the Core Planning team offers a wide range of perspectives. He thanked Dr. Mark Wolak for facilitating the two-day retreat of the Core Planning team and emphasized that more than 1,000 community members have contributed their perspectives to the Strategic Planning process in some way.

8D. Other New Business as Necessary

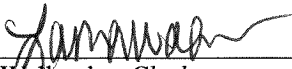
No other new business was brought forward.

The next Regular School Board Meeting will be held on Monday, May 13, 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 a field study presentation by Wold Architects and Engineers at 7:40 PM.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Michael Bash".

Michael Bash, *Chair*

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Laura Wallander".

Laura Wallander, *Clerk*