

**Okemos Board of Education  
Okemos, Michigan 48864  
SPECIAL MEETING AUGUST 30, 2021**

The Special meeting of the Okemos Board of Education was called to order by President Bolton at 6:30 p.m. Call To Order

Members Present: Dean Bolton, Katie Cavanaugh, Mary Gebara, Melanie Lynn, Vincent Lyon-Callo, Andrew Phelps and Jayme Taylor

Administrators: Superintendent John Hood; Assistant Superintendent Stephen Keskes; Finance Director Elizabeth Lentz

MOVED by Melanie Lynn, SUPPORTED by Mary Gebara that the board adjourn to Closed Session pursuant to Section 8(a) of the Open Meetings Act for the purpose of discussing a personnel matter. Closed Session

Roll Call Vote

Dean Bolton	Yes	Vincent Lyon-Callo	Yes
Katie Cavanaugh	Yes	Andrew Phelps	Yes
Mary Gebara	Yes	Jayme Taylor	Yes
Melanie Lynn	Yes		

AYE: 7 NAY: 0 ABSENT: 0 **MOTION CARRIED**

The board adjourned to closed session at 6:31 p.m.

The board reconvened from closed session at 7:09 p.m., Reconvene

Members Present: Dean Bolton, Katie Cavanaugh, Mary Gebara, Melanie Lynn, Vincent Lyon-Callo, Andrew Phelps and Jayme Taylor

Administrators: Superintendent John Hood; Assistant Superintendent Stacy Bailey; Assistant Superintendent Stephen Keskes; Finance Director Elizabeth Lentz

During the July 15th meeting, Dan Troia from Ingham County Road Commission presented the board with three different options that pertain to an upcoming road construction project. Operations Director Mark Fargo presented clarifying information regarding each option, and the board discussed which option the district should pursue. Option C included upgrades to the crosswalk and lighting systems and does not require any easements. Option B is a moderate rebuild of the intersection with an easement from the district required. Option A includes the most significant rebuild of the intersection and is the most functional and safest of the options, but also requires an easement with both OPS and Consumers Energy. It was determined that Option A, a rebuild of the intersection with an easement with both Okemos Public Schools and Consumers Energy would be ideal; with Option B as the second choice. Road  
Construction  
Project

Members inquired about how often Consumers visits the substation next to Central.

Operations Director Mark Fargo presented an update on the status of facilities projects throughout the district funded by the district's Facilities/Technology/Security/Transportation and Capital Outlay Bond and Sinking Funds. Projects included HVAC and restroom renovations; Phase 4 renovations at CMS and OHS; moving the print shop; painting at Cornell and tennis court prep. Director Fargo also reported on challenges encountered including materials shortages, shipping delays, increased costs, cleaning delays due to construction, etc. To install required electrical Summer  
Facilities  
Projects

upgrades to match with what Consumer supplies; it will be necessary to shut the power down at Central Montessori for several days, hopefully to align with a break so as not to disrupt school. Future considerations were discussed including a new ticketing system, staff scheduling, landscaping and grounds maintenance. Concerns with the district's 3<sup>rd</sup> party cleaning crew were shared and strategies for improvement and accountability were outlined.

Members inquired about groundskeeping; mosquito and weed control; and frustrations with the 3<sup>rd</sup> party cleaner.

Stephanie Oles addressed the board regarding equity and a hybrid learning option.

Citizens Address  
Agenda & Non-  
Agenda Items

Superintendent Hood reported on the following: expressed gratitude to students, staff and families for a successful start of the school year; expressed condolences to the Pignataro family; ESSR3 Covid relief funding delays; upcoming presentation regarding Covid relief fund uses; the Covid dashboard; mitigation measures to support safe lunches; heat index protocols; vaccination status among staff; student section at recent football game; quarantining students and meeting educational needs; and Covid or safety protocol concerns.

Superintendent's  
Report

Members inquired about the following: lunch; shared buses; notifications and access to the Covid dashboard; confirmation that mask and safety protocols are being followed; recent football game; policy regarding masking when students are grouped together outside and in higher density situations; land acknowledgments at games and events; clarity regarding communicating of Covid cases and what is considered a close contact.

Board Reports &  
Request

President Bolton acknowledged correspondence from the following: Nathan Mahn, Steve Zimmerman, Ray and Pat Hammerschmidt, Ting Shen, Jason Nicholas, Burcu Tasoluk, Sunmee Han, Jia Xu, Tom Buffet regarding Covid safety protocols, masking, vaccines or related procedures; Stephanie Oles, Chen Jing regarding virtual learning opportunities; Jenny Wise regarding an Autism article; and Meridian Township regarding a zoning board hearing.

Mary Gebara reported on treats to OPS staff from the OEF. Jayme Taylor inquired about a presentation on how public schools are funded. Melanie Lynn asked for the board to receive copies of communications sent to families.

MOVED by Mary Gebara, SUPPORTED by Katie Cavanaugh that the board approve item 1 for immediate implementation and appropriate action:  
Item 1: Approval of the minutes of the Special Meeting of August 16, 2021.

Consent Agenda

AYE: 7 NAY: 0 ABSENT: 0 **MOTION CARRIED**

MOVED by Andy Phelps, SUPPORTED by Mary Gebara that the board approve the employment of Anthony Andrus, English Teacher at Okemos High School at Division I, Step 1; Kyle Long, Science Teacher at Okemos High School at Division I, Step 1; Mary Jo Mills, 51% Exploratory Teacher at Bennett Woods Elementary at Division II, Step 4; and Adrienne Watkins, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Teacher at Central Montessori at Division II, Step 4 of teacher salary schedule, effective August 30, 2021 in accordance with sections 1230 (2) and 1230 a (2) of the Revised School Code conditioned upon receipt of acceptable criminal history checks and criminal records checks.

Employment –  
Certified

AYE: 7 NAY: 0 ABSENT: 0 **MOTION CARRIED**

MOVED by Jayme Taylor, SUPPORTED by Katie Cavanaugh that the board enter into an agreement with the TowerPinkster Architecture, Engineering and Interiors for architect and engineer services for the 2022 bond planning.

AYE: 7 NAY: 0 ABSENT: 0 MOTION CARRIED

MOVED by Katie Cavanaugh, SUPPORTED by Mary Gebara that the board approve the 2021-2022 elementary level, Kinawa, Chippewa Middle School, and the Okemos High School Student-Parent Handbooks for distribution to students and parents.

Student-Parent  
Handbooks

AYE: 7 NAY: 0 ABSENT: 0 MOTION CARRIED

MOVED by Mary Gebara, SUPPORTED by Katie Cavanaugh that the board award the purchase of 100 Lenovo Desktop Computers, submitted by Trafer not to exceed the following: \$124,000 funded by the district’s Facilities/Technology/Security/Transportation and Capital Outlay Bond.

Technology  
Purchases

Roll Call Vote

Dean Bolton	Yes	Vincent Lyon-Callo	Yes
Katie Cavanaugh	Yes	Andrew Phelps	Yes
Mary Gebara	Yes	Jayme Taylor	Yes
Melanie Lynn	Yes		

AYE: 7 NAY: 0 ABSENT: 0 MOTION CARRIED

MOVED by Andy Phelps, SUPPORTED by Mary Gebara that the board waive the reading and adopt the resolution of August 30, 2021, terminating the employment of Michael Wensel with Okemos Public Schools.

Contract  
Termination

Roll Call Vote

Dean Bolton	Yes	Vincent Lyon-Callo	Yes
Katie Cavanaugh	Yes	Andrew Phelps	Yes
Mary Gebara	Yes	Jayme Taylor	Yes
Melanie Lynn	Yes		

AYE: 7 NAY: 0 ABSENT: 0 MOTION CARRIED

Superintendent Hood presented the considerations for mandating vaccinations for district staff and provided an update on the current status of vaccinated staff. Based on the district’s screener, approximately 95% of staff are fully vaccinated, and another 1-2% are partially vaccinated. Considerations include waivers; testing for unvaccinated; legal challenges; and staffing impacts. The board provided feedback and agreed that they would like to pursue this mandate. Members inquired about the mandating and the status of EduStaff employees and substitute teachers; liability; how long the policy would remain in effect; next steps; and how the Covid booster would be handled.

Mandating Staff  
Vaccinations

No one addressed the board.

Member Lynn requested the agenda planning calendar; and Member Lyon-Callo inquired about the high school student representative.

Public Comment

President Bolton adjourned the special meeting at 9:19 p.m.

Other Matters

Adjourn