

**Okemos Board of Education
Okemos, Michigan 48864
REGULAR MEETING APRIL 12, 2021**

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4-12-2021

The regular meeting of the Okemos Board of Education was called to order by President Bolton at 7:02 p.m. Call To Order

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

Members Absent: Vincent Lyon-Callo

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

Superintendent Hood provided an overview of the Building and Site Sinking Fund ballot proposal, as well as an overview of the Operating Millage Renewal on the May 4th ballot for the Okemos community to consider. Key points regarding the operating renewal were shared including: this is not a new tax, but a renewal; the proposal maintains 18 mills to be incurred by non-homestead properties; headlee rollbacks were explained; the millage generates approximately \$9.3 million annually, for a period of 10 years for operating expenses; and voter approval is required. Key points of the Building & Site Sinking fund millage proposal were also shared and include: what the funds can be used for, for example renovations, repairs, technology and security; generates approximately \$1.4 million annually over a period of 10 years; and the proposed millage is not an increase to taxpayers. Mr. Hood compared millage rates across the county and where Okemos falls. Ballot
Proposals

Assistant Superintendent Bailey provided information regarding summer learning opportunities available. The multi-tiered systems of supports that describe the level of support needed by students was described. She also explained how students are identified and what programs the district currently has. New programs the district plans to implement during the summer of 2021 were reported on including an Elementary Learning Camp and Elementary Summer Tutoring; Middle School Math Camp, Middle School Summer Tutoring, How To Be Successful in Middle School, and How To Be Successful in High School offerings. Next steps were described, as well as information on transportation. Summer
Learning
Opportunities

Members inquired about the length of the sessions; funding sources; and online programs versus in-person.

Superintendent Hood, along with Dr. Angela Hall and Dr. Terry Flenbaugh provided an update regarding the district's equity work and planning, including short term and long term initiatives and the progress or status of each of those initiatives. Equity Update &
Planning

Dr. Hall and Dr. Flenbaugh provided background information, and timelines as they pertain to the rewrite of the district's equity plan and facilitating the process including data collection. A comprehensive and intuitive survey has been developed, piloted by DEIAC members, and translated into five different languages. The survey will be launched to multiple stakeholder groups in the next few weeks. The goals of the survey were provided, as well as information on focus group data, other sources of data, accountability measures, and systemic changes.

Members discussed the following: timelines; accountability mechanisms; plans versus action; and focus group data versus community forum input.

Superintendent Hood and Assistant Superintendent Bailey provided an update to the Board and community regarding implementation of the plan and the current status of the Safe Return to School
Plan

Return to School plan. Mr. Hood followed up on special education inquiries, an updated Covid19 dashboard and reported on the upcoming selection window of April 21-25th. Updates regarding transportation; staffing; antigen testing; calendar impacts; and standardize testing were given.

Superintendent Hood reviewed current realities including recent recommendations from the Ingham County Health Department and the Governor's office. The district's approach to decision-making regarding sports, and the return to online learning 5-12 was discussed. It was determined that the district would look at testing data at the end of the week and allow sports to continue if the data and Health Department support it and it is safe. Regarding the 2021-2022 school year, the state has not changed any requirements or pupil accounting rules to allow for flexibility or remote learning. At this time the district is planning for in-person learning next year. Next steps were explained.

Members discussed: other extra-curriculars; surgical versus broad sword approach; athlete testing; expanding testing to other extra-curriculars; and advocacy opportunities.

Barrett Bonemer, Rick Balesky, Marcy Kinzer, Mario Migaldi, Mike VanAntwerp and Chris Nugent regarding the two-week pause to in-person learning and athletics.

Citizens Address
Agenda & Non-
Agenda Items

Superintendent Hood reported on the following: principal hiring processes and timelines; upcoming community informational meetings regarding the mascot recommendation; Ramadan; upcoming equity professional development; and an upcoming board presentation regarding start times.

Superintendent's
Report

Members inquired about the following: possible vaccination clinic at OHS; and involvement in hiring committees.

Student Representative Catherine reported on the following: spring break and access to PowerSchool; decision-making regarding athletics; senior activities; upcoming AP exams; and the transition to in-person for students.

High School
Student Report

President Bolton acknowledged correspondence from the following: John Gustafson, Ginger Vary, Pat Emaus, Pamela McNab, Fred Funston, Rustin Wolfe, Emily Bell, Amy A., Dennis Hart, Anita Lang, and Mel House regarding the mascot; Deep Grewal concerning a student situation; Damia Genia regarding an athletics situation; Kelly Bianchi regarding a Girls Scouts donation; Luke Snyder regarding an interview request; Christine Mason regarding athlete testing; Barrett Bonemer regarding board meetings; and Christine Mason, Amy Basel, Mary Michner, Lisa Theis, and Bridget Balesky regarding the return to virtual learning and athletics.

Board Reports &
Request

President Bolton reported on a recent Meridian Township meeting with local districts and organizations

MOVED by Mary Gebara SUPPORTED by Melanie Lynn that the board approve items 1 through 3 for immediate implementation and appropriate action:
Item 1: Approval of the minutes of the Regular Meeting of March 22, 2021;
Item 2: Acknowledge receipt of the leave of absence report and approve the requested leave of absence for Breanne Mason, 3rd Grade Teacher at Cornell Elementary for the period of June 1st through June 11, 2021; and Lamanzer Williams, Assistant Principal at Okemos High School for the period of March 14th through June 22, 2021; and
Item 3: Acknowledge receipt of the March financial statement and approve payment of bills for March.

Consent Agenda

Roll Call Vote

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

AYE: 6 NAY: 0 ABSENT: 1 **MOTION CARRIED**

MOVED by Andrew Phelps, SUPPORTED by Mary Gebara that the bid for the 1850 Lenovo 300e Chromebooks, not to exceed \$776,100 to be funded through the Facilities/Technology/Security/Transportation and Capital Outlay Bond, be awarded to Trafera.

Technology
Purchases

Roll Call Vote

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

AYE: 6 NAY: 0 ABSENT: 1 **MOTION CARRIED**

The board discussed diversity, equity and inclusion policies, practices and procedures in response to community feedback regarding the experiences of students in our school system and our continued focus on action and impacting outcomes. Mr. Hood reviewed the district's current policies pertaining to diversity, equity and inclusion, as well as introduced a potential policy for board consideration. Mr. Hood addressed additional support for teachers and staff including accountability and reporting mechanisms beyond professional development. A board policy to address expectations and the process for reporting, will go to the policy committee for review.

DEI Policies,
Practices &
Procedures

Member discussed the following: evidence of actionable steps or work that has been done, and suggested a quarterly update to the board; reviewing of all policies from an equity lens; accountability; and making policies more gender neutral.

The board continued their discussion regarding the development of the 2021-2022 budget. Director Lentz briefly discussed revisions to the 2020-2021 budget including a Childcare Relief grant, IISD special education funding, savings in staffing and its carryforward effect on the 2021-2022 budget. Updated assumptions for 2021-2022 were shared and include: better than expected health insurance rates and loss of rental revenue resulting in a negative impact on the general fund of \$81535. Director Lentz also described impending budget discussions including staffing, negotiations, possible expenses if there is a mascot change, state budget and board priorities.

2021-2022
Budget
Development

Member Lynn inquired about student enrollment considering the state has not been flexible with pupil accounting rules.

No one addressed the board.

Public Comment

Superintendent Hood expressed thanks to Matt Ottinger and student helpers for facilitating and simulcasting the meeting.

Other Matters

President Bolton adjourned the regular meeting at 10:57 p.m.

Adjourn

Katie Cavanaugh, Secretary