Okemos Board of Education Okemos, Michigan 48864
REGULAR MEETING JUNE 16, 2025

The regular meeting of the Okemos Board of Education was called to order by President Buffett at 7:00 p.m.
Members Present: Tom Buffett, Jason Burns, Katie Cavanaugh, Shulawn Doxie, Andy Phelps, Leeni Shrestha and Jillian Winn
Administration: Superintendent John Hood; Finance Director Elizabeth Lentz

Annick Anctil and Katie Shahinian addressed the board concerning proposed budget reductions.

Representatives from Veridas, TowerPinkster and Christman provided an update regarding the 2022 bond, including the status of Chippewa Middle School floors, high school pool work and music addition, as well as fuel tank progress. Upcoming projects such as interior improvements, kitchen work, mechanical updates and energy savings projects were discussed. Budget and timelines were reviewed. The board discussed priorities, temporary classrooms, transportation plans and signage.

Athletic Boosters President Joe Katelus and Athletic Director Ken Hintze presented information regarding a donation towards the renovation of the high school weight room, as well as equipment. Timelines and fundraising efforts were reviewed. The board is being asked to approve the donation per board policy.

Superintendent Hood and Coordinator Christina Alighire presented an update regarding childcare programming and enrollment including a recent parent forum, licensing and star rating system, classroom transitions, tuition increases, enrollment, and application process improvements. Budget, staffing and financial sustainability were also reviewed.

Interim HR Director Peter Trezise described the district's current exit interview process, as well as challenges with it. The board discussed possible improvements including electronic submission, incentives, alignment with strategic planning goals, focusing efforts on director-level collection and an anonymous space.

The board continued its discussion regarding developing the 2025-2026 budget. Director Lentz reviewed the budget development process and timeline to date. Additional information was provided regarding substitute days. Updated assumptions were presented including: foundation allowance, savings from teacher retirements and resignations, reductions and revenue enhancements, and a reduction in class sections.

Members inquired about the following: rationale regarding substitute cost; club funding; sections at the high school; what clubs charge fees and why, as well as what is considered a club; requested additional participation information; and enrollment.

Superintendent Hood reported on the following: upcoming vaccination clinic; HR Director and OPM Principal hiring update; high school fire alarm update; opening assembly; and Begindergarten program communication.

Board Members reported on the following: recent debate team competition; recent Protect The Pack event; and the upcoming board retreat.

MOVED by Jillian Winn, SUPPORTED by Leeni Shrestha that the board approve endorse the OHS French student trip to France proposed for June 10-18, 2026 with the understanding that students will abide by all school policies and procedures while abroad.

AYE: 7 NAY:0 ABSENT 0 MOTION CARRIED

MOVED by Katie Cavanaugh, SUPPORTED by Andy Phelps that the board waive the reading and adopt the

Cardiac Emergency Response Plan as required by board policy 3402.

AYE: 7 NAY:0 ABSENT 0 MOTION CARRIED

MOVED by Jillian Winn, SUPPORTED by Shulawn Doxie that the board approve the 2025-2026 District Student-Parent Handbook for distribution to students and parents.

AYE: 7 NAY:0 ABSENT 0 MOTION CARRIED

MOVED by Katie Cavanaugh, SUPPORTED by Jillian Winn that the board waive the reading and adopt the strategic plan goals, mission statement, vision, and value statements.

AYE: 7 NAY:0 ABSENT 0 MOTION CARRIED

MOVED by Andy Phelps, SUPPORTED by Katie Cavanaugh that the board accepts the donation of new weight room equipment generously donated by the Okemos Athletic Boosters.

AYE: 7 NAY:0 ABSENT 0 MOTION CARRIED

MOVED by Andy Phelps, SUPPORTED by Katie Cavanaugh that the board conducts a Budget/Truth-in-Taxation Hearing for the purpose of public input on the coming year's budget.
Roll Call

Tom Buffett	Yes	Andy Phelps	Yes
Jason Burns	Yes	Leeni Shrestha	Yes
Katie Cavanaugh	Yes	Jillian Winn	Yes
Shulawn Doxie	Yes		

AYE: 7 NAY:0 ABSENT 0 MOTION CARRIED

The budget truth in taxation hearing was opened at 8:21 p.m.

Director of Finance Elizabeth Lentz provided information regarding the proposed 2025-2026 budget including general fund; debt retirement; building and site sinking fund; capital projects; student/school activity fund; and food service budgets. The projected impact on the general fund balance is a positive approximately $1,700,000. She also described the State budget legislative proposals and their potential impact to the district's budget.

There were no public comments.

The budget truth in taxation hearing was closed at 8:43 p.m.

MOVED by Katie Cavanaugh, SUPPORTED by Jason Burns that the board waive the reading and adopt the general appropriations resolution for the General Fund of $67,912,605; Debt Retirement Fund of $12,016,400; Building and Site Sinking Fund of $1,555,000; Capital Projects Fund of $66,576,000; Student/School Activity Fund of $1,024,400 and Food Services Fund of $2,910,851 for the 2025-2026 fiscal year.
Roll Call

Tom Buffett	Yes	Andy Phelps	Yes
Jason Burns	Yes	Leeni Shrestha	Yes
Katie Cavanaugh	Yes	Jillian Winn	Yes
Shulawn Doxie	Yes		

AYE: 7 NAY:0 ABSENT 0 MOTION CARRIED

There were no public comments.

The board scheduled a meeting for Wednesday, July 16th at 6:00 p.m.

President Buffett adjourned the regular meeting at 8:54 p.m.

_____

Shulawn Doxie, Secretary