Okemos Board of Education Okemos, Michigan 48864
REGULAR MEETING NOVEMBER 10, 2025

The regular meeting of the Okemos Board of Education was called to order by President Buffett at 6:01 p.m.

Members Present:	Tom Buffett, Katie Cavanaugh, Shulawn Doxie, Andrew Phelps, Leeni Shrestha and Jillian Winn
Member(s) Absent:	Jason Burns
Administration:	Superintendent John Hood

MOVED by Andrew Phelps, SUPPORTED by Katie Cavanaugh that the board adjourn to Executive Session pursuant to Section 8(c) of the Open Meetings Act for the purpose of reviewing attorney-client privileged communications.

Roll Call	Tom Buffett	Yes	Leeni Shrestha	Yes
	Katie Cavanaugh	Yes	Jillian Winn	Yes
	Shulawn Doxie	Yes	Jason Burns	Absent
	Andrew Phelps	Yes		

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

The board adjourned to executive session at 6:03 p.m.

The board reconvened at 6:58 p.m.

Members Present:	Tom Buffett, Jason Burns, Katie Cavanaugh, Shulawn Doxie, Andrew Phelps, Leeni Shrestha and Jillian Winn
Administration:	Superintendent John Hood; Finance Director Elizabeth Lentz, Operations Director Brian Lieber, Human Resources Director Jennifer Emmendorfer, Director of Media and Technology Tom Isom

Members highlighted recent events and activities including: the 5th grade band concert, the district championship for volleyball, and the OHS production *The Play That Goes Wrong*. Additionally, Digital Communications Specialist Nathan Brown was recognized for his work streaming the Kinawa concert along with other events throughout the district. Director Corrinne Karpinski was recognized for going above and beyond in helping a family find a vest with house keys that got left on the bus.

Superintendent Hood introduced Jennifer Emmendorfer as the new Director of Human Resources.

Director Tom Isom presented the need for 75 additional computers due to increased enrollment. The purchase of the devices will be covered by the 2022 bond funds. The devices will be the same Lenovo L13 Yoga, Gen 6 (Gen 4 is no longer made). The purchase includes a four-year warranty and accidental damage protection. The devices cost $1,200 a piece, and the total amount requested is not to exceed $90,000.

Director Brian Lieber provided an update on the fire alarm system replacement at Okemos High School. Damage to the 30+ year old system occurred by a lightning strike this past spring. Parts are no longer available and the system was already identified for replacement in the scope of the 2022 Bond. During installation, the state requires the district to be in fire watch, which costs $5,600 per week (coverage time is 6:00 am to 10:00 pm, seven days per week). Insurance covers the fire watch cost. The state is requiring the district to move quickly as installation must be completed by the end of summer 2026, with the goal being completion in July 2026. Work cannot start until devices are in hand. Due to the emergency declaration imposed by the fire marshall, there was no normal bidding process. Boynton Fire Safety is the contractor as they know the current system. The new system installation costs $360,000. $70,000 will be covered by

insurance; $290,000 will be covered by either the bond program or the sinking fund, to be determined once the invoices arrive.

No one addressed the board.

High School Representatives reported on the following: ACTION hosting Santa's First Responders bake sale; Love for our Elders hot chocolate bar and letter writing; NHS's annual bottle drive; Senior photos were due; Financial Youth Foundation (FYF) hosting a teach-in on budgeting basics at Cornell Elementary; Okemos High School leading Crunch the Hunger Community Food Drive November 17-25. A brick memorial was placed at the high school for a student who passed away last November. Okemos Athletics has launched a new app called Okemos Wolves to improve communication and boost reach. Trustees asked for student opinions on moving high school finals before winter break.

Superintendent Hood thanked Interim HR Director Peter Trezise for his support as the HR Director for the past nine months and also Finance Director Elizabeth Lentz for her extra effort moving the budget preparation up by a month.

Superintendent Hood reported on the following: an Edgewood Early Childhood Center update on enrollment and budget will be presented at the November 24 board meeting; the authorization to opt into the PowerSchool Lawsuit will also be included at the November 24 board meeting.

President Buffett acknowledged correspondence from the following: Krista December regarding school start times and Roman Gill regarding accessibility.

Members discussed the first Trust-Teas event and that more will be scheduled; discussed the ISOA's tour of the Beekman Center; discussed that the Policy Committee is starting to look at next steps for reviewing additional board policies once the committee completes the Thrun policy updates. The Policy Committee is seeking input from the board on Policy 2202.

MOVED by Andrew Phelps, SUPPORTED by Jillian Winn 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 October 27, 2025; Item 2:Approval of the Minutes of the Executive Session Meeting of October 27, 2025; Item 3: That the board acknowledge receipt of the October financial statement and approve payment of bills for October.

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

MOVED by Jillian Winn, SUPPORTED by Shulawn Doxie that the board endorse the 8th Grade Orchestra student trip to Cleveland, proposed for April 30th through May 1st, 2026 with the understanding that the students will abide by all school policies and procedures.

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

MOVED by Leeni Shrestha, SUPPORTED by Andrew Phelps that the board waive the reading and adopt the resolution for collection of summer property tax as appropriate from Alaiedon Township, Meridian Township, and City of Lansing and to negotiate a reasonable expense for such collection of the district's tax levy.

Roll Call	Tom Buffett	Yes	Andrew 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**

MOVED by Jillian Winn, SUPPORTED by Katie Cavanaugh that the board waive policy 2503A requirements and take action on whether to approve the student device purchase.

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

MOVED by Katie Cavanaugh, SUPPORTED by Leeni Shrestha that the board award the purchase of 75 student devices to Trafera, in an amount not to exceed $90,000 and to be funded through the 2022 bond.

Roll Call				
	Tom Buffett	Yes	Andrew 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**

MOVED by Jason Burns, SUPPORTED by Katie Cavanaugh that the board waive policy 2503A requirements and take action on whether to approve the OHS Fire Alarm System replacement project.

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

MOVED by Andrew Phelps to amend the motion to include sinking funds.

MOVED by Jason Burns, SUPPORTED by Katie Cavanaugh that the board award the OHS Fire Alarm System replacement to Boynton Fire Safety Service, in an amount not to exceed $360,000 and to be funded by the 2022 bond, sinking funds, and an insurance reimbursement.

Roll Call				
	Tom Buffett	Yes	Andrew 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 board continued its development of the 2025-2026 budget. Finance Director Elizabeth Lentz shared the updates on the 2025-2026 budget revisions. The state provided one-time funding allocations which help offset the previous proposed 2025-2026 budget.

Superintendent Hood discussed the tradition of having board members present as observers during the financial proposals phase of bargaining unit negotiations. It was discussed that the added perspective and engagement demonstrates to bargaining teams that both the administration and the board are involved and care about the process.

No one addressed the board.

President Buffett announced his intention to form an ad hoc personnel committee and requested that interested trustees volunteer.

President Buffett adjourned the regular meeting at 8:10 pm.

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Shulawn Doxie, Secretary