



March 24, 2026

Dear Okemos Community,

As you may know, Okemos teachers are working with an expired contract. Okemos Public Schools deeply values and appreciates the dedication and hard work of our teachers and professional staff. We care about our employees and want to pay them more. At the same time, we also have responsibility for the financial health of the district and are working to address both through negotiations. We are seeking an agreement with our teachers as soon as possible!

Our negotiations with the teacher's union, the Okemos Education Association (OEA), are utilizing a state-appointed mediator to assist in reaching a compromise in ongoing contract negotiations. This process is designed to help both parties work toward an agreement that reflects the district's strong commitment to its educators while maintaining long-term financial stability for the district. We remain hopeful that the continued efforts of both parties will lead to an amicable agreement in the near future.

We have received concerns and questions from community members seeking additional information about the district calendar. The start date for the 2026-27 school year will be Wednesday, August 26, 2026 (half day K-12). Winter break is Monday, December 21, 2026 - Friday, January 1, 2027, and spring break is Monday, March 29 - Friday, April 2, 2027 (as [published on our website](#)) as part of the Ingham ISD common calendar. We will continue to negotiate the remainder of the school calendar with the OEA and provide updates as soon as we can.

While proposals exchanged during mediation remain confidential between the parties, we would like to share some facts that may increase transparency and understanding. To help keep our community informed, we have developed a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document that is posted to our website and will be periodically updated. The FAQ includes:

- [Background information \(General clarifications regarding negotiations\)](#)
- [District Budget \(Updates on the state budget, district impacts, current challenges\)](#)
- [Calendar Updates \(Information on calendar development for 26-27\)](#)
- [Negotiations Update \(Proposal costs and projected financial impacts\)](#)

In addition, we welcome you to join us for our board meetings where budget updates are presented regularly. You can join us in person or watch the [board meetings online](#). Meeting materials, including past budget presentations, can be found online on our [BoardBook page](#). Meetings are also recorded for you to view at your convenience on our district's [YouTube channel](#).

We value our teachers and are working diligently to reach an agreement that supports all Okemos employees while also promoting a fiscally responsible, sustainable, and healthy district. We remain thankful to our professional staff and supportive community and look forward to a resolution soon.

John J. Hood
Superintendent