

**Official Minutes of the  
Oak Park Board of Education District 97,  
970 Madison Street, Oak Park, Cook County, Illinois  
Meeting June 9, 2015**

President Gates called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

Present: Spatz, Brisben, Gates, O'Connor, Spurlock, Felton  
Absent: Datta (participated by phone)  
Also Present: Superintendent Dr. Al Roberts, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations  
Therese O'Neill, Senior Director of HR Steve Cummins, Senior Director of Special  
Services Mike Padavic, Senior Director of Policy, Procedures and Communication Chris  
Jasculca, Senior Director of Administrative Services Felicia Starks Turner, Director of  
Technology Michael Arensdorff, Director of Curriculum and Instruction Carrie Kamm  
and Helen Wei, and Board Secretary Sheryl Marinier

ROLL CALL

EXECUTIVE  
SESSION

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Felton moved, seconded by Brisben, that the Board of Education move into Executive Session at 6:32 p.m. to discuss (Appointment, Employment, Compensation, Discipline, Performance, or Dismissal of Specific Employees 5 ILCS 120/2/(c)(1), Collective Negotiations 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(2)). Roll call vote.

Ayes: Felton, Brisben, O'Connor, Spurlock, Gates, and Spatz  
Nays: None  
Absent: Datta  
Motion passed.

OPEN SESSION

**OPEN SESSION**

Brisben moved, seconded by Felton, that the Board of Education move into Open Session at 7:00 p.m. All members of the Board were in agreement. The meeting reconvened at 7:05 p.m. with member Datta participating by phone.

APPOINTMENT  
OF PRINCIPAL TO  
BROOKS MIDDLE  
SCHOOL

2.3.1

**APPOINTMENT OF PRINCIPAL TO BROOKS MIDDLE SCHOOL**

O'Connor moved, seconded by Brisben, that the Board of Education of Oak Park District 97, approve the appointment of LeeAndra Khan as the Brooks Middle School Principal, effective July 1, 2015 at a salary of \$131,950. Roll call vote.

Ayes: O'Connor, Brisben, Datta, Felton, Spatz, Gates, and Spurlock  
Nays: None  
Absent: None  
Motion passed.

LeeAndra Khan shared her excitement, and the parent participants in the audience were recognized.

SPECIAL  
REPORTS

**SPECIAL REPORTS**

**FACILITIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE (FAC) UPDATE**

Chairperson Dena Bell and committee member Ralph Muehleisen came to the table. The mission of the FAC committee was shared, and Jamil BouSaab was acknowledged for his dedication to this committee.

Bell reported that the 2014-15 accomplishments of the committee included review of the new administration building specifications, ADA accessibility, Voice Over IP upgrades, and recommended efficiencies for grouping of summer work projects, specifically electrical systems. Additionally, the committee has continued with their ongoing review of Operation and Maintenance expenses prioritization, and review of the 5/10 Year Capital Plan.

It was noted that FAC has reviewed and made recommendations on all of the district's capital projects. Recent work has included: new two-story four classroom addition to Lincoln School, installation or improvement of secured entrances at all school buildings, classroom furniture and playground equipment.

## **FACILITIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE (FAC) UPDATE (Continued)**

Bell reported that FAC has been working through the evolution of the new administration facility for a number of years. The initial reviews were site-specific, looking at different buildings, configurations and options for a new space. Once the Board selected the Madison Street site, FAC interviewed architects, and recommended STR as the architect for the new building. Recently, more detailed studies have come before the FAC committee for review, including: floor plans and “massing” concepts, comparison of different heating and cooling options, and the contract structure between D97 and construction manager.

FAC reviewed many options for classroom air conditioning. The systems were evaluated on efficiency of systems integration with other building components, cost of installation and operation, and sound output to classrooms. Air conditioners were installed in 25 classrooms over the summer of 2014. Installations were then evaluated for cooling capacity. A separate detailed document of the classroom sound levels was reviewed, and temperature sensors were installed in every classroom in the district to record and maintain real-time temperature data. It was noted that the Board could use this data to consider how to move forward with the air conditioner installation.

The FAC committee studied each school building for compliance with ADA statutes. They have been working with the district architect to help define areas needing improvement, developing pricing studies and timing for phase-in of needed ADA improvements. Recent and planned improvements include improved access to building entries and upgraded accessible paths to outdoor play equipment. It was noted that the noise level could become an ADA issue in the future.

FAC members drafted a request for qualifications for an architecture firm in 2013, and a landscape architect in 2012. FAC members reviewed the submittals, ranked the applicants, and interviewed the prospective firms.

FAC recommended improvements to the playgrounds at all schools, reviewed and commented on construction documents, design and pricing. The district landscape architect worked closely with school staff and PTO members to develop playground plans. All projects were completed on schedule.

The committee has continued its ongoing review of the 5-10 Year Capital Plan with assistance from the maintenance team. The committee has evaluated the capital projects using the Cap-Ex prioritization tool, and then looked for efficiencies in similar trades or spaces. Evaluation continues of the long-term life safety and ADA compliance needs, review of site improvements, and oversight of the Cap-Ex projects.

Bell reported that the future initiatives for this committee include remaining as an asset during the construction of the administration facility, and providing thoughtful study and recommendation to the Board as needed. The committee will refine the plans for the air conditioning improvements. It was noted that adding a number of classrooms on an annual basis could provide enhanced cooling centers. FAC will also continue their work with ADA improvements to the facilities and work with the district to phase in ADA improvements as needed. The committee will also work with the Board to identify and follow best practices for implementing efficient building systems and policies.

It was noted that Bob Spatz and Peter Traczyk wrote the charge for FAC in 2008, and that Jamile BouSaab was the first chairperson. Additionally, it was noted that hundreds of thousands of dollars have been saved because of the time and effort put forth by the members of this committee.

## **FORECAST 5 UPDATE**

Therese O’Neill came to the table and shared a brief overview of the Forecast 5 analysis. She noted that the comparison was done against 18 comparable school districts.

O’Neill reported that Oak Park had the most significant growth in enrollment over an eight year period, and ranked eighth as far as revenue per student. She noted that property taxes per student is below the average by about \$1,000, and the total tax rate and operating tax rate fall in the middle of the comparable districts. O’Neill noted that the General State Aid per student is about three times the average of the comparable districts, but the expenses per student falls in the average range. She noted that the change in expenditures per student is second from the bottom, noting that the district is not growing its expenses per student, but maximizing its efficiencies.

**FORECAST 5 UPDATE (Continued)**

Member Spatz was acknowledged for being the catalyst behind this effort.

Board comments included an explanation that the team needed to wait for a tool to be created that would supply the data included in this report. The importance of this data was recognized, suggesting its usefulness when preparing for a referendum. It was suggested that this information be shared with the Dashboard committee for possible inclusion to the dashboard.

A variations/summary of the Forecast 5 report was suggested for a future FYI insert. The Board agreed that members Spatz and Spurlock will work with Chris Jasculca to complete this task.

Formal acknowledgements of appreciation were suggested for future reports.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Barbara Mullarkey, an Oak Park resident, requested answers to the questions submitted to the Board regarding the safety of artificial turf fields. She asked if synthetic turf is harmful to the Oak Park children, and asked the Board to consider how hot turf could hurt the children. She shared an article about U.S. Soccer star Abby Wambach, who was injured on an artificial turf field. Mullarkey expressed interest in hearing about the safety precautions the district plans to put in place. She requested that the district ask the right questions and not take the word of the turf manufacturers. She shared that she has been communicating with the Park District as well.

Additionally, Mullarkey noted that she did not hear a report on turf fields during the FAC report, and suggested that public comment be moved to the beginning of the meeting so guests do not have to sit through the special reports.

**ACTION ITEMS**

**ACTION ITEMS**

**2.1.1 APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE MAY 26, 2015 BOARD MEETING**

Spatz moved, seconded by Brisben, that the Board of Education of Oak Park District 97, approve the minutes from the May 26, 2015 Board meeting. Roll call vote.

Ayes: Spatz, Brisben, Datta, Felton, Gates, O’Connor, and Spurlock  
Nays: None  
Absent: None  
Motion passed.

**2.2 APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA**

Gates moved, seconded by Spurlock, that the Board of Education, District 97, approve the consent agenda as presented.

2.2.1 Approval of Bill List  
2.2.2 Personnel Action as amended during executive session.

Ayes: Gates, Spurlock, O’Connor, Brisben, Felton, Datta, and Spatz  
Nays: None  
Absent: None  
Motion passed.

**2.4.1 APPROVAL OF STAFFING RECOMMENDATION FOR THE 2015-2016 SCHOOL YEAR**

Spatz moved, seconded by Gates, that the Board of Education of Oak Park District 97, approve the 2015-2016 staffing recommendation as presented. Roll call vote.

Ayes: Spatz, Gates, Brisben, Datta, Felton, O’Connor, and Spurlock  
Nays: None  
Absent: None  
Motion passed.

**COMMITTEE / WORK GROUP REPORTS**

**2014 – 2015 PRIORITIES**

**FINANCIAL STABILITY (SS3)**

Member Spatz reported that he met with Member Spurlock today to review documents and get her up to speed. Spatz and Spurlock will work with Therese O’Neill to plan a report for the Board during the month of August.

**ADMINISTRATION BUILDING AND FACILITIES (SS4)**

It was reported that the building located at 260 Madison Street has been torn down and the site is being remediated before it is turned over to the district. A meeting of this team will occur before June 23, 2015.

**EQUITY AND EXCELLENCE IN STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT (SS5)**

President Gates reported that he will request that Chris Jasculca update the Board on progress toward an Equity and Excellence policy. President Gates noted that such a policy will underpin and inform the district’s direction on this issue, which was initiated by Dr. Roberts, and Dr. Kelley has indicated a desire to move it forward.

**CONTRACT IMPLEMENTATION AND MAINTENANCE (SS7)**

It was noted that some of the outstanding items on the Contract/IGA implementation sheet are being addressed (technology, transportation, etc.), and the document will be updated accordingly.

**STANDING BOARD COMMITTEES**

**FINANCIAL OVERSIGHT AND REVIEW COMMITTEE (FORC)**

It was reported that the FORC committee needs two additional members. This committee will not be meeting again until August, 2015.

**COMMITTEE FOR LEGISLATIVE ACTION, INTERVENTION, AND MONITORING  
(CLAIM)**

It was reported that Zach Messersmith, IASB Assistant Director of Governmental Relations, is drafting Data Equity language related to (105 ILCS 10/6) (from Ch. 122, par. 50-6). Zach is working with Senator Harmon. Appreciation was extended to member Spatz and Anne Desmond of CLAIM, for joining President Gates in offering feedback to Mr. Messersmith on the draft language. Vice President Felton will provide updates, as appropriate, on the status of this issue over the summer.

A hearing was held today in the House addressing the property tax freeze. It was noted that this change could increase inequity between the schools. The Board was encouraged to pay attention to ED-RED and IASB, and react when necessary.

It was noted that the CLAIM committee needs one additional member.

**FACILITIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE (FAC)**

It was noted that FAC is in need of one additional member.

**ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS**

**BOARD AGENDA DISCUSSION**

Vice President Felton reported that the need for a discussion on the board agenda was identified after the Board Agenda Work Team reviewed the notes from last year’s Board self-evaluation, considered current and former Board member’s comments, participated in discussions with the superintendent, board secretary, and Board committee members. Additionally, the team referenced literature on board governance published by the IASB.

President Gates reported that the Board will be reviewing the board agenda format. He noted the need for review of the agenda is because the mission of the Board is to provide every student with a world class educational experience rooted in excellence and equity. Additionally, the Board will dedicate more time and thought to, and at board meetings than any other board activity, and the board agenda will play a central role in the district’s ability to move from mission to reality in service of children.

## BOARD AGENDA DISCUSSION (Continued)

He explained that the goal of the discussion will be to draft a meeting agenda which builds upon and recognizes prior Board expectations and accomplishments while striving to operate at the highest level of board governance, as outlined in the IASB “Principles of Effective Governance” via a purposeful and constant “Balcony” mindset. Additionally, the agenda should add an increased focus on board governance centered on the district’s mission, vision, goals, policy and budget.

President Gates shared thoughts about adding items to the board packet that will help the Board stay on task, such as including the mission statement to the beginning of every board packet. He asked the Board to consider changing the board committees to administrative committees. He requested 60 minutes during the August 29, 2015 Self Evaluation, to lead a discussion regarding the agenda revision options. He expressed interest in sending each board member a one-page Board Agenda Interest Survey.

It was agreed that member Spatz offered to meet with Vice President Felton and member Brisben prior to the August 29, 2015 retreat to share the history behind past board agenda modifications.

Vice President Felton left the meeting at 8:15 p.m.

## TREASURER’S REPORT (Q AND A)

It was noted that the numbers on the June Treasurer’s Report may appear odd because the final payments to the teachers for July and August occur during the month of June.

## TRANSPORTATION BID

Therese O’Neill came to the table. She shared the timeline for the transportation bid process, reporting that the district requires this contract to go out to bid every five years. She noted that 22 questions were raised by the five attending vendors during the pre-bid meeting. Four vendors indicated that they were choosing not to bid, leaving Lakeview as the only bidder. O’Neill noted that the vendors indicated that their lack of interest in bidding was due to the fact that this year has seen a large quantity of bids and the timeframe for this bid was tight. Additionally, one vendor indicated that the lead time to order busses with lifts is eight months. Additionally, it was reported that there is a shortage of bus drivers across the State of Illinois.

O’Neill reported that the bid was for a period of three years. Dr. Roberts noted that the district has had some problems with this vendor, and recommended awarding them a two year contract. A new bid process would begin in November, 2017 for the next three year contract.

O’Neill explained that the district will continue to supplying transportation to children who live one mile or more from the school. The need for additional routes has not yet been determined.

Board comments included interest in knowing if the district is maintaining performance metrics, and if there is an incident review process. The need to maintain hard data for review of this vendor was recommended. It was suggested that performance clauses be added to the contract. It was suggested that an annual calendar be published for vendors that would indicate upcoming contracts.

## NEW 3-YEAR TECHNOLOGY PLAN

Michael Arensdorff came to the table. He acknowledged the Technology Advisory Committee, shared the history of the 5-year plan, and shared the future vision that includes; professional development and ensuring that the network supports the goals of the district, especially instructionally. Numerous devices will be refreshed, professional development will be continuous, the K-2 access will be enhanced, and up time will be maximized through infrastructure maintenance and enhancements. He shared that the last five years was focused on infrastructure. The future focus will be on how to get the tools into the hands of the students. He noted that everything identified in the referendum has been accomplished.

He shared that the technology team can see how many people are connected during the day, and usage data is collected. He reported that there is no time restriction for usage at this time, and parent surveys on usage are being submitted.

### NEW 3-YEAR TECHNOLOGY PLAN (Continued)

Arensdorff reported that beyond the three year window, the department will continue with staff and student device refreshes, network maintenance, and upgrades.

Board comments included interest in additional data, more clarity regarding the requested purchases and additional information regarding how the devices are used for instructional purposes. It was agreed that Arensdorff will supply additional information to the Board, including Cap-Ex data, during the June 23, 2015 meeting with action being taken by the Board on July 7, 2015.

Concern was expressed about the supervision of the device usage. Interest was expressed in sharing fiber costs with the other village boards. Additional devices for the teacher assistant's was suggested.

It was suggested that the parent survey be utilized periodically over the school year, and the design be a bit more neutral. Additionally, some of the questions need a response that indicates that the question is not applicable. Rewording of some of the questions was suggested, so the question addresses how the parent preserves the usage of technology.

A discussion on how detailed board reports need to be was suggested for the August retreat agenda.

### PRESENTATION OF CLIC

O'Neill reported that the approval of CLIC is for the annual property liability insurance. She shared that the premium will drop by 6 percent, and credited Norm Lane's focus on safety for this decrease. This item will return to the Board for action on June 23, 2015.

### PRESENTATION OF SELF

Steve Cummins reported that the approval of SELF is for the workers compensation and will decrease 10.5 percent next year. He reported that the district does a good job of following up on claims. This item will return to the Board for action on June 23, 2015

### TRANSFER RESOLUTION REVIEW

O'Neill reported that the transfer resolution review is an annual process that is required to move funds at the end of each school year. The items involved include DSEB borrowing, leases for copiers and computers, and the annual transfer of interest. This item will return to the Board for action on June 23, 2015.

### RESOLUTION TO ADOPT PREVAILING WAGE RATES

O'Neill reported that the adoption of the Prevailing Wage Rates is required by law. Each school district must declare that all work will be completed in accordance with the Prevailing Wage Rates. This item will return to the Board for action on June 23, 2015.

### APPOINTMENT OF DISTRICT TREASURER

It was reported that prior to 2008, the Cicero Township trustee was also the district's treasurer. Once the Township was dissolved, the district began appointing a treasurer. It was noted that the Treasurer and the Chief Financial Officer do not need to be the same person, however, Therese O'Neill has been appointed to this position for a number of years. This item will return to the Board for action during the June 23, 2015 Board meeting.

### DONATION OF BOOKS TO THE DISTRICT 97 SCHOOL LIBRARIES

Judy Chrisman, a retired district teacher librarian has expressed interest in donating books from the 2014 Jane Addams Children's Book Award list to each of the district libraries. This item will return to the Board for action during the June 23, 2015 Board meeting.

### CONCLUDING ITEMS

#### SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Roberts reported that the two middle school graduations went well. President Gates was acknowledged for his speech.

Steve Cummins is working on a substitute teacher study and will report to the Board in the near future.

Felicia Starks Turner is looking into the early admission, and the PKP process.

## SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT (Continued)

Helen Wei is working on the ELA Calendar.

Carrie Kamm is working on Math Enrichment with seven teachers.

Administration is still working on the stipend data. There has been some difficulty connecting with Matt Hanser, and a meeting date still needs to be determined.

The Equity and Excellence Policy is under review.

The Data Analyst position will be filled this week.

Dr. Roberts reported that Julian Middle School has been certified as an IB school, and he is waiting to hear about the status of Brooks Middle School.

## BOARD CONCERNS / ANNOUNCEMENTS

Member Datta is attending the Collaboration for Early Childhood meetings where they are setting some new targets to strive for.

Michael Arensdorff was complimented on already expanding the outreach for the parent survey, and member Datta is looking forward to the results.

It was suggested that Dr. Kelley be involved in the hiring process between now and her start date.

Concern was expressed about the district losing teachers because of the compensation system. Interest was expressed in knowing how many teachers are leaving the district, how many students taught in the district, the teacher retention rate, how teachers are chosen for Prep For Success, and if they have a high evaluation rating.

Interest was expressed in an update on PERA during the month of June.

Principal Fitzgerald was complimented for encouraging decorum during the graduation ceremony.

Members Spatz and Felton, will work with Chris Jасulca to complete the IASB Governance Award application which is due by August 3, 2015.

Member Spatz will attend the I-ECO meeting on July 1, 2015.

It was reported that Day in Our Village was a success. The Board members in attendance received many positive comments.

Interest was expressed in knowing the difference in technology needs and educational needs in relation to the Technology report.

## BOARD RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENT

Dr. Roberts will determine who will respond to the turf field request. He noted that the Irving parents asked for a partnership when updating the Irving field, and they are delighted with the results. He reported that there has been no concern for safety. He noted again, that the Brooks and Julian fields will be using Nike Grind, which is ground up tennis shoes, and reported that he is not aware of any schools that have removed this material once it has been installed.

## PREVIEW AGENDAS

The draft agenda for June 23, 2015 was reviewed and modifications were recommended.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to conduct, President Spatz declared the meeting adjourned at 9:46 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

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Board Vice President

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Board Secretary