

**Official Minutes of the
Oak Park Board of Education District 97,
970 Madison Street, Oak Park, Cook County, Illinois
Meeting April 14, 2015**

President Spatz called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Present: Spatz, Brisben, Sacks (7:47 p.m.), Gates, O'Connor, Iseli, and Felton (6:03 p.m.)
Absent: None
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, Planning and Communications Chris Jасulca, Senior Director of Administrative Services Felicia Starks Turner, Director of Technology Michael Arensdorff, Director of Curriculum and Instruction Helen Wei, and Board Secretary Sheryl Marinier

ROLL CALL

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Gates moved, seconded by O'Connor, that the Board of Education move into Executive Session at 6:00 p.m. to discuss (Collective Negotiations 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(2), Appointment, Employment, Compensation, Discipline, Performance, or Dismissal of Specific Employees 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1), Setting Price for Sale or Lease of Real Property 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(6)). Roll call vote.

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

OPEN SESSION

OPEN SESSION

Gates moved, seconded by Iseli, that the Board of Education move into Open Session at 6:56 p.m. All members of the Board were in agreement. The meeting reconvened at 7:01 p.m.

2.3.4 APPOINTMENT OF PRINCIPAL TO HATCH SCHOOL

APPOINTMENT OF PRINCIPAL TO HATCH SCHOOL

Brisben moved, seconded by O'Connor, that the Board of Education of Oak Park District 97 approve the appointment of Sarah Mendez as the Hatch School Principal, effective July 1, 2015 at a salary of \$121,800. Roll call vote.

Ayes: Brisben, O'Connor, Sacks, Felton, Iseli, Gates, and Spatz
Nays: None
Motion passed.

PUBLIC COMMENT

PUBLIC COMMENT

David Pope, an Oak Park resident, expressed his gratitude to the Board for their service and to President Spatz and Jim O'Connor for choosing to continue on the Board. He expressed his excitement that Rupa Datta and Holly Spurlock will be joining the Board. Pope thanked Dr. Roberts for what he brought to the community. He asked the Board to think about those skills when hiring the new superintendent. He noted that Dr. Roberts is the best chief executive that he has ever worked with. He reminded the Board that the schools are not about administrators, but about children. He shared that from the day Dr. Roberts walked into this community, he has been locked on like a laser and never lost focus. Pope suggested that his focus on early childhood, Success for all Youth, and his ability to communicate with the high school are key. He noted that Dr. Roberts is a visionary leader, and reminded the Board that IB started with him.

PUBLIC COMMENT (Continued)

Leslie Sutphen, an Oak Park resident and parent of an eighth grade student at Julian, expressed concern about the district's dress code. She referenced a petition with 900 signatures requesting that the Board read some of the comments. She asked the Board to make the code clear and more fair. She shared that the dress code is not enforced consistently or respectfully, not easy to find, and many parent and students do not know that it exists. She noted that students are asked to wear gym clothing or are sent home when staff believes they are not dressed appropriately. She expressed concern that the way the dress code is enforced makes students ashamed at school. She reported that her daughter has been singled out wearing leggings and a sweatshirt.

Sheela Raja, an Oak Park resident and parent of a sixth grader at Julian, also encouraged the Board to read the petition and thoughtful comments. She expressed her concern that the girls are made to feel inhumanized. She noted that girls are being called out because their bra straps are showing, and suggested that the dress code was poorly implemented. She explained that the code requires shoulder straps to be three fingers wide, and expressed concern that people have different width fingers. She suggested that everyone learn how to interact with respect, and that the dress code should reflect the values of Oak Park.

Lynn Olson, an Oak Park resident and a parent of an eighth grader, also expressed concern about the dress code. She explained that she expected to collect about 20 signatures on the petition, and was surprised to receive 900 signatures. She asked the Board to review the comments. She shared that hearing the stories from the girls indicates that they are suffering in silence. Olson explained that she was not aware of the dress code when her son was in middle school, and expressed concern that the dress code is directed at the girls. She explained that her daughter is wearing some of the same clothes that she wore in elementary school, and was never called out for her attire. Her daughter was told that her clothing distracts the boys. Olson expressed concern that the teams at the school have different rules. She shared that the girls are concerned that they will be pulled out of class.

Jeanine Pedersen, an Oak Park resident and parent, expressed concern about the dress code. She shared that she has sent a letter to the Board members. She acknowledged that Principal Fitzgerald did not make the dress code, and when concern was expressed, Dr. Roberts responded immediately. She expressed concern that as the year progressed, the words became less meaningful and older staff members reverted back to the old way. She noted that the current code does not address leggings; however, the morning announcements report that you may not wear leggings unless you have a tunic top. She encouraged enforcement that does not include measuring. Pedersen noted that some parents measure girl's clothes daily and takes pictures. Some parents measure and still receive a call from the school indicating that the child is dressed inappropriately. Pedersen suggested that the dress code issue is a Title 9 issue. She suggested that by pulling girls out of class, the district is valuing the boy's education more than the girls. She expressed concern that the dress code issue will not be addressed before the new superintendent begins with the district.

Sergio Hernandez, an Oak Park resident, requested to know the progress on reviewing the "sit and stare" policy. He acknowledged receipt of a report that details the common tests administered within the district, and noted that COGAT was missing from the list. Additionally, he requested that prep time be added to the list.

Anne France, an Oak Park resident, also requested that the Board revisit the "sit and stare" policy, and asked for more information. Additionally, she asked the Board if they are aware of the recent news about Pearson and the strategy for grading the PARCC test.

PUBLIC COMMENT (Continued)

Dr. Roberts reported that the district is working on the dress code. He explained that the district has reviewed other district's codes and find them to be quite similar. He shared that he is the parent of a girl and he understands the concerns. He reported that the administrators met with the principals at least three times recently on this topic. He credited Chris Jasculca for his efforts, and explained that the district is working on something that is specific enough but leaves room. Dr. Roberts expressed concern about the enforcement issues. He asked that if parents or a child have eye witnessed an administrator mistreating a student; he wants to hear about it. He explained that the district has a respect code, that needs to be followed. He explained that the district plans to be done with a dress code that they think is appropriate in the next week or two; in time for the warm weather.

Regarding the PARCC testing, Dr. Roberts shared that the district checked with 18 comparable districts, and response was received from 12 of them. Five of the 12 districts support the "sit and stare" policy, one allowed reading immediately. If many students refused to take the test, some removed them from the room. Dr. Roberts noted that the administrators have discussed this very comprehensively at their meetings. He explained that as the superintendent, he needs to do two things; he needs to follow the rules of the state, and maintain the testing environment. He reported that the administrators determined that it takes about 30 minutes for students to complete an assessment. He shared that a new plan is being created, but the district needs to work through some of the kinks before it can be made public. The district needs to balance those who did not take and those who do. Dr. Roberts shared that he supports authentic testing, and suggested that the district needs to strike a balance.

SPECIAL REPORTS

5-YEAR PROJECTIONS UPDATE

Steve Miller from PMA came to the table. The updated 5-year projections, inclusive of the impact of the recently ratified collective bargaining agreement with the Oak Park Teachers' Association (OPTA) was shared. It was reported that these projections were reviewed by FORC at its meeting of Monday, March 23, 2015. Miller walked the Board through the assumptions, as vetted and approved by FORC.

Member Sacks arrived at 7:47 p.m.

Therese O'Neill came to the table. Member Iseli shared a PowerPoint on the referendum performance recap. He shared the projections and actuals of annual expense, and noted that the 2012-2014 numbers came in below the assumptions because all employees took a pay freeze during that time. Additionally, he noted that state funding is not coming in as projected, however, the district fund balances have been able to compensate for the lack of state funding. He reported that the committee referenced Policy 4:12 for guidelines. He led a discussion on the boundary conditions. Member Iseli suggested that possible next steps might include having FORC review the financials and consider what other districts are doing in comparison. He noted that there is no need to take current actions.

President Spatz noted that both the Madison Street TIF and the Downtown TIF expire between 2017-2019, and he shared some external factors.

It was agreed that President Spatz and member Iseli will work with Steve Miller from PMA on the financial piece through May 4, 2015.

SPECIAL
REPORTS

ADMINISTRATION BUILDING – CONSTRUCTION MANAGER

Therese O’Neill reported that STR shared a report with the Board during the last meeting. This report included the recommendation for a Construction Manager. Since that time, STR supplied the names of six firms. O’Neill and Dr. Roberts will review the names, interview at least three of them, and bring a recommendation to the Board on May 5, 2015. Dr. Roberts invited the Board members who sit on the FAC committee to participate in the interview process.

O’Neill reported that Jennifer Costanzo from STR will supply a construction manager expectation list so questions are asked the same to all who are interviewed. O’Neill reported that she has worked with construction managers in two districts and will incorporate her concerns into the interview process.

ACTION ITEMS

ACTION ITEMS

2.1.1 APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE MARCH 17, 2015 BOARD MEETING

Felton moved, seconded by Sacks, that the Board of Education of Oak Park District 97, approve the minutes from the March 17, 2015 Board meeting. Roll call vote.

Ayes: Felton, Sacks, O’Connor, Gates, Brisben, and Spatz

Nays: None

Abstains: Iseli

Motion passed.

2.1 APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA

Sacks moved, seconded by Felton, 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.

2.2.3 Adoption of Policies

Policy 2:140 (Communications To and From the Board)

District 97 Board of Education Responsibilities, Procedures and Protocols

It was noted that the last bullet on page 51 should read “committee” review annually.

2.2.4 Approval of special meetings to be held on April 17 at 5 p.m. and 18, 2015 at 8 a.m.

Ayes: Sacks, Felton, O’Connor, Iseli, Gates, Spatz, and Brisben

Nays: None

Motion passed.

2.3.1 NON-REEMPLOYMENT OF FIRST, SECOND OR THIRD YEAR PROBATIONARY TEACHERS

Gates moved, seconded by O’Connor, that the Board of Education of Oak Park District 97, approval and adopt the resolution to dismiss the probationary teachers listed in the attached resolution at the end of the 2014-2015 school term. Roll call vote.

Ayes: Gates, O’Connor, Felton, Sacks, Brisben, Iseli and Spatz

Nays: None

Motion passed.

2.3.2 NON-REEMPLOYMENT AND REEMPLOYMENT OF PARTIAL ASSIGNMENT TEACHERS

O'Connor moved, seconded by Felton, that the Board of Education of Oak Park District 97, approve and adopt the resolution to dismiss and re-employ the partial assignment teachers listed in the attached resolution at the end of the 2014-2015 school term. Roll call vote.

Ayes: O'Connor, Felton, Sacks, Gates, Brisben, Iseli and Spatz

Nays: None

Motion passed.

2.3.3 RESOLUTION OF HONORABLE DISMISSAL OF EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT PERSONNEL (TEACHER ASSISTANTS)

Felton moved, seconded by O'Connor, that the Board of Education of Oak Park District 97, approve the following resolution.

Whereas, the Board of Education of Oak Park Elementary School District No. 97, Cook County, Illinois, has made a decision to decrease the number of educational support personnel employees employed thereby and/or to discontinue some particular type of educational support services, pursuant to Section 10-23.5 of The School Code of Illinois (105 ILCS 5/10-23.5); and

Whereas, the hereinafter named employees are educational support personnel employees in School District No. 97; and

Whereas, the Board must first dismiss all educational support personnel employees with the shorter length of continuing service with the School District within the respective category of position, or in the sequence established in the collective bargaining agreement between the Board and Any exclusive bargaining agent; and

Whereas, the Board has determined that the hereinafter named educational support personnel employees shall be honorably dismissed within the designated category of position effective as of the end of the 2014-2015 school term.

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the Board of Education of Oak Park Elementary School District No. 97, Cook County, Illinois, as follows:

Section 1: That the following educational support personnel employees are hereby honorably dismissed within the designated category of position effective as of the end of the 2014-2015 school term and not re-employed for the 2015-2016 school term by reason of the decision of the Board of Education to decrease the number of educational support personnel employees employed thereby;

Section 2: That the Board of Education of School District No. 97 hereby authorizes and directs the Superintendent to give such educational support personnel employees the written Notice and Statement of Honorable Dismissal, in the form attached hereto as Exhibit 1 and incorporated herein by this reference, by certified mail, return receipt requested, at least thirty (30) days before the employee is removed or dismissed.

Section 3: That the Superintendent, or designee, shall also personally deliver a copy of said notice to each employee honorably dismissed pursuant to this resolution.

Section 4: That this resolution shall be in full force and effect forthwith upon its adoption.

Roll call vote.

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

2.4.1 APPROVAL OF A GENERATOR BID AT JULIAN MIDDLE SCHOOL

Felton moved, seconded by Sacks, that the Board of Education of Oak Park District 97, authorize the award of a contract with Evans Electric in the amount of \$68,580, for the purchase and installation of a stand-by generator at Julian Middle School as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools in his memorandum dated March 17, 2015. Roll call vote.

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

It was noted that the generator at Julian Middle School is a life safety issue identified four years ago. Generators are not required at the elementary schools, and Brooks Middle School already has one installed.

2.4.2 APPROVAL OF MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH THE OAK PARK TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION REGARDING TRANSITIONAL POSITION SALARIES

This item was tabled until April 28, 2015.

2.4.3 ACTION ON STUDENT RESIDENCY HEARING

O'Connor moved, seconded by Gates, that the Board of Education of Oak Park District 97, approve the findings of the Residency Hearing for family 04142015. Roll call vote.

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

COMMITTEE / WORK GROUP REPORTS
2014 – 2015 PRIORITIES

COMMITTEE /
WORK GROUP
REPORTS

COMMON CORE AND IB IMPLIMENTATION

Dr. Roberts reported that the IB evaluation visits went very well. He noted that the inspectors saw consistency and they identified no major issues with what has been done. He shared that he was impressed with how the principals and staff responded to the questions asked, and anticipates that the district will receive authorization.

Member Brisben was part of the parent group that was interviewed, and he noted that the evaluators were favorably impressed. He reported that he was able to share that IB is present in the Boards Super Seven priorities. Member Brisben acknowledged Jennifer DeBruin and Patty Freierberg for the great job they are doing at leading the efforts.

It was reported that the district should not expect to receive a response until sometime during the summer.

EVALUATION

Dr. Roberts reported that a team went to the PERA training, and will put together a report and timeline to share with the Board. The report will be included as “information only” on April 28, 2015. It was reported that a PERA pilot will be implemented during the next school year.

Vice President Gates shared an article on PERA.

ADMINISTRATION AND FACILITIES

O’Neill came to the table. She updated the Board on the status of the ADA ramp concerns. She reported that it was suggested that the bid specifications be prepared to ensure that the work is done correctly. She shared that four bids were received and noted that the entryway to Holmes School was expressed as a concern. She shared that Norm Lane assessed all the building for needed cement work and his findings were attached to the ADA work as an alternate. She noted the estimated cost to be about \$259,665, and reported that the IDEA funds can be used to pay for this work. She reported that FAC will review the proposal on April 21, 2015, and noted that the Cap-EX scoring was completed. This item will return to the Board for action on April 28, 2015.

EQUITY AND EXCELLENCE IN STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Vice President Gates, member Brisben and Dr. Roberts shared a document that addressed equity and excellence, and identified what is the Board’s responsibility versus what is administrative in nature. Dr. Roberts reminded the Board that they are the policy makers and the day to day operations fall under the responsibility of administration.

ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE

Member Brisben reported that last week concluded the active search for superintendent applicants. He reported that 48 applications were received; 23 were given interviews by Hazzard, Young and Attea (HYA) and six were presented to the Board for consideration. Over the next two weeks, the Board will interview all six applicants, and three or four will return for a second interview. The Board is expecting to make an announcement of their choice by the May 5, 2015 Board meeting. It was noted that HYA reported that two, perhaps four of the candidates would not have applied if the process was not a confidential search.

Dr. Roberts reported that he has participated in discussion with Steve Cummins and Therese O’Neill regarding the job description for the Data Analyst position. Additionally, he has met with member Brisben about defining what is important about this position. He suggested that consideration be given to Harla Hutchinson’s position and how the two will interact. Dr. Roberts asked the other Board members to share their thoughts, and reported that HR is working on the job posting for the position with the hopes of bringing a recommendation to the Board by the end of May.

CONTRACT IMPLEMENTATION AND MAINTENANCE

The Contract/IGA chart was modified and reviewed. It was noted that the Auditors need to be added to the list.

It was noted that administration is working on the legal RFPs, and the transportation RFP will be completed later this month. Higher priority was placed on Hanover Research, ECRA and Fast ForWord.

Assessments for the PERA pilot were identified as a need.

STANDING BOARD COMMITTEES

FACILITIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE (FAC)

The FAC will be meeting next Tuesday.

FINANCIAL OVERSIGHT AND REVIEW COMMITTEE (FORC)

It was reported that the FORC has met since the last Board meeting, and reviewed the assumptions and projections. Member Brisben met with Mike Laughlin who reviewed the Debt Policy edits, and Therese O'Neill shared some thoughts from Liz Hennessey. A final draft of the Debt Policy will be presented to the Board for review on April 28, 2015 and brought for action on May 5, 2015.

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

A draft of the revised charge was presented to the Board and revisions were suggested. This item will return to the Board for action on April 28, 2015.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

ADMINISTRATIVE
ITEMS

REVIEW OF VOICE OVER IP PROPOSAL

Michael Arensdorff came to the table. He shared the history of the 5-year technology plan and noted that the Voice Over IP was in the 2011-12 plan but was never implemented. After much consideration, Arensdorff made the recommendation to move forward with this project. He noted that the district could consider tying the security doors and fire alarms into the system. By doing so, the system would initiate a conference call with key administrators when an alarm is tripped.

Arensdorff explained that a bid process is not necessary for this project, but he shared it with three vendors and completed a unified comparison. An ERATE evaluation was also completed. He explained that this is a cost effective project and will create efficiencies over the years. Additionally, Arensdorff explained that with the current line item, ERATE, and the annual cost of the current system, the new system would be fully funded.

It was noted that a financial savings would be immediate, that add-ons would be a plus, classrooms would see less disruptions and communication between home and school could be increased. Arensdorff reported that the system would be easily transitioned to the new administration building.

Board comments included interest in thinking about the goals that the district want to achieve and sharing the objectives. This item will return to the Board on April 28, 2015 for action.

POLICY REVIEW

Chris Jасulca came to the table. The calendar for policy review and monitoring was reviewed with no comments. The exhibits were also reviewed. A Board mentoring program exhibit was considered and supported. These items will return to the Board for action on April 28, 2015.

REVIEW OF DONATION REQUEST – HOLMES PTO OUTDOOR CLASSROOM INITIATIVE

Dr. Roberts explained that the Holmes PTO would like to donate \$60,000 to the district to expand the Holmes School outdoor courtyard, and is seeking Board approval to move forward. He noted that the plans have been vetted through Therese O'Neill, who will help with the bid documents. Dr. Roberts noted that there should be minimal ongoing maintenance and/or repair. This item will return to the Board for action on April 28, 2015.

MANN SCHOOL OVERNIGHT FIELD TRIP REQUEST

Dr. Roberts referenced his update on the Mann – Odyssey of the Mind World Competition in his weekly report to the Board. He recommended a donation of \$500 to such events and suggested that a donation be made to Mann for this purpose. This item will return to the Board for action on April 28, 2015.

CONCLUDING ITEMS**SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

Dr. Roberts reported that this year's IB Conference of the Americas will be held in Chicago on July 23 and 26, 2015. He indicated that over 20 staff members have expressed interest in attending, and he suggested that some of the Board members might be interested in attending as well. Additionally, he noted that the BRAVO group has been invited to participate. He acknowledged Patty Feierberg, noting that her efforts at Brooks are paying off.

The district choral concert is tomorrow at the high school. A turf meeting is scheduled at Julian at the same time. Member O'Connor reported that he will be attending the concert.

Dr. Roberts shared the resignation letter from Principal Michowski. He will be accepting a position with District 102 and returning to his elementary roots. A tentative timeline for seeking his replacement was shared. It was noted that a recommendation should be made in May.

It was reported that enrollment is up by 23 students over last year.

18 legal RFPs were received. Members O'Connor, and Felton, Therese O'Neill and Dr. Roberts will be meeting on April 16, 2015 to review.

The Staszak dinner was a success. The Oak Park Education Foundation board meeting will be held tomorrow.

BOARD CONCERNS / ANNOUNCEMENTS

The election results will not be certified until April 28, 2015, but the tentative results indicate that Bob Spatz, Jim O'Connor, Rupa Datta and Holly Spurlock were chosen by the community to sit on the District 97 Board of Education. The other six candidates were acknowledged for their efforts and interest in the Board. The new Board will be seated at a special meeting on May 5, 2015.

Interest was expressed in knowing Dr. Roberts' plan for using the 5Essentials data that will be received in May.

Member Sacks attended the collaboration meeting in March. They discussed the possible budget cuts across the state and ideas to give legislators a picture of what the cuts would look like. Their next meeting will be held on April 24, 2015, however, member Sacks will not be able to attend. She reminded the Board that they will need to assign a new representative.

Vice President Gates shared the Citizen Council Liaison Report and noted a presentation on life skills.

Vice President Gates reported that the IASB representatives are not available to facilitate a Board retreat in June or July; August 15 or 29, 2015 were suggested as possible dates. Vice President Gates will initiate a Doodle to check the availability of the Board.

Vice President Gates will send an update from IGOV. He noted that the next all Board meeting is May 9, 2015 from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the Township office. Gil Herman will be the moderator.

President Spatz, Vice President Gates and member Felton attended the IASB West Cook meeting on March 30, 2015, where the presentation was titled *Vision 20/20*. Discussion occurred regarding their effort to be proactive to legislation. It was suggested that CLAIM review this topic.

BOARD RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENT

Interest was expressed in the public comment about adding prep time (test practice) to the assessment piece. Felicia Starks Turner came to the table. She reported that she spoke to Mr. Hernandez regarding his public comment. She noted that there is some prep time for PARCC, but usually not for the other tests. It was noted that the district is teaching to the Common Core standards, and that should prepare the children for taking the standardized tests. The need to communicate that prep time for testing is minimal was suggested.

President Spatz attended ED-RED this morning and was elected chairman of the Executive Committee. Conversation at this meeting included Senate Bill 1 and testing opt out options.

President Spatz is leaving tomorrow for Boston to attend the Math Conference. He will return on Friday afternoon.

Interest was expressed in knowing what is being done to get the least engaged families to become involved in the summer offerings. It was suggested that scholarships be considered.

PREVIEW AGENDAS

The draft agenda for April 28, 2015 was reviewed and modifications were recommended.

ADJOURNMENT

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to conduct, President Spatz declared the meeting adjourned at 10:27 p.m.

Board President

Board Secretary