

**Official Minutes of the  
Oak Park Board of Education District 97,  
970 Madison Street, Oak Park, Cook County, Illinois  
Meeting July 17, 2012**

President Barber called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: Barber, Gates, Felton, Sacks, Spatz, and O'Connor

Absent: Traczyk

Also Present: Superintendent Dr. Al Roberts, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations Therese O'Neill, Assistant Superintendent of HR and General Counsel Joanne Schochat, Director of Policy, Planning and Communications Chris Jasculca, Director of Special Education Mike Padavic, Curriculum Coordinators Duane Meighan and Felicia Starks Turner, and Board Secretary Sheryl Marinier

EXECUTIVE  
SESSION

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Sacks moved, seconded by Felton, that the Board of Education move into executive session at 6:31 p.m. Roll call vote.

Ayes: Sacks, Felton, Gates, Barber, O'Connor, and Spatz

Nays: None

Absent: Traczyk

Motion passed.

OPEN SESSION

**OPEN SESSION**

Sacks moved, seconded by O'Connor, that the Board of Education move into open session at 7:03 p.m. All members of the Board were in agreement.

**SPECIAL REPORTS**

SPECIAL  
REPORTS

**INTERNAL CONTROL AUDIT**

Therese O'Neill and Brian Guastella from McGladrey and Pullen came to the table. Guastella explained that O'Neill made substantial changes to the business office policies and procedures in 2008. An internal audit was conducted afterwards to ensure that the new procedures were being utilized effectively. At that time, it was agreed to perform another internal audit in 2012 to check the procedures again. This audit included the payroll process at no extra cost.

Guastella reported that the purpose of the audit was intended solely for the use of the Board of Education and management of the District, and is not intended to be and should not be used by anyone other than these specified parties. He reported that there were no exceptions or findings noted as a result of the audit. Guastella commended the procedures and the business office team for implementing them. He reported that O'Neill had a medical procedure during the year and the procedures were followed in her absence.

## SPECIAL REPORTS (Continued)

O'Neill commended Marcy Shannon, Sandy Merges and Cindy Moczarney for their hard work and dedication. She reported that the next internal audit will take place in three years.

### PKP REPORT

Dee Dee Farmer, Angela Dolezal and Jill Pacyna came to the table. They explained that the Pre Kindergarten Partnership (PKP) is an ISBE funded Preschool For All early intervention program for children ages three – five. The program focuses on providing a high-quality educational program for children who are identified as being at risk of academic failure. Farmer reported that the curriculum aligns with the Illinois Early Learning Standards. The program meets two and a half hours per day, five days a week and serves 120 children and families.

Farmer shared the history of the program, reporting that the district initially received funding for 80 students in 1985. There is current funding for 200 children, including 12 children with IEPs.

It was reported that the early childhood rating scale used for assessment and the state guidelines are followed. The program also utilizes state approved Creative Curriculum and Teaching Strategies Goals. Students are tracked through SIS, noting grades, behavior and ISAT scores. It was reported that teacher feedback is an essential part of noting the program's success.

Eligibility criteria for admission is based on local need and the ability to identify children at risk for academic failure. At-risk children were defined as those who, because of their home and community environment, are subject to such language, cultural, and economic disadvantages. Low-income families, including low-income working families, homeless families, families where English is not the primary language spoken in the home, or families where one or both parents are teenagers or have not completed high school are also factors to be considered. Farmer explained the screening process, noting that the criteria checklist is used and governed by the state. Enrollment is prioritized based on weighted criteria and data is used to make recommendations to ECSE diagnostic teams or the school nurse. If there is a question about enrollment eligibility, the state is contacted for guidance.

The PKP program is a member of the Collaboration for Early Childhood and the Publically Funded Programs Committee. Additional partnerships include Head Start, Hephzibah, and Parenthesis.

Program challenges were identified as the possibility of decreased funding, transient families, parents' limited understanding, limited access to transportation, social isolation, "at-risk" identifiers and reaching families as they tend to seek anonymity. Dr. Roberts reported that the grant that funds this program will be \$28,000 less this year.

**SPECIAL REPORTS** (Continued)

It was reported that 650 at-risk children between the ages of three and five reside in Oak Park. Approximately 450 of them are from low income families.

Board questions and concerns included interest in knowing which risk factors apply to the participants. Interest was expressed in access to a list of book titles that could be donated to the PKP learning library.

PUBLIC COMMENT

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

**ACTION ITEMS**

ACTION ITEMS

**2.1.1 Approval of Minutes of June 26, 2012**

Gates moved, seconded by Felton, that the Board of Education, District 97, accept the minutes from the June 26, 2012 meeting. Roll call vote.

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

**2.2.1 Approval of Consent Agenda**

President Barber read the items on the consent agenda. Sacks moved, seconded by Spatz, that the following items be approved on the consent agenda.

- 2.3.1 Bill Lists and Related Reports
- 2.2.1 Personnel Action as presented are revised

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

**2.2.2 Approval of Superintendent's Contract**

This item was tabled until the August 21, 2012 meeting.

**2.4.1 Approval of Hazardous Crossing**

Felton moved, seconded by Spatz, that the Board of Education, District 97, recertify its Hazardous Routes for the 2012-13 school year per the attached memorandum dated June 26, 2012. Roll call vote.

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

**2.4.2 Acceptance of Donation to Whittier School**

O'Connor moved, seconded by Sacks, that the Board of Education, District 97, accept a \$10,000 donation from the Whittier PTO to make technology purchases for the school. Roll call vote.

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

**2.4.3 Approval of Modification to Facilities Advisory Committee Charge**

Sacks moved, seconded by Spatz, that the Board of Education, District 97, approve a modification to the Facilities Advisory Committee (FAC) charge to increase its community membership from five (5) to seven (7) members. Roll call vote.

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

**2.4.4 Endorsement of the International Baccalaureate Program**

Barber moved, seconded by O'Connor, that the Board of Education, District 97, endorse the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program. The implementation of the International Baccalaureate Program is intended to impact all middle school students and provide a focal point for teacher training linked to social-emotional learning, higher expectations and academic success. The program supports 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills and positive behavior. It emphasizes community service, hands-on projects, and inquiry-based learning. It will help Oak Park remain a school district of distinction. Roll call vote.

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

The Board secretary was asked to email the Oak Park-River Forest Community Foundation to let them know that the Board formally endorsed the International Baccalaureate program.

**TOPIC REPORTS**

TOPIC  
REPORTS

2011-12 YEAR-END REPORT AND PRESENTATION OF PRELIMINARY BUDGET  
O'Neill presented a preliminary year-end report that will be finalized during the August 21 meeting. She shared an analysis of 2011-12 Amended Revenues and Expenditures compared to the actuals received/expended as of June 30, 2012. Three iterations of the overall Summary Budget for 2011-12 and preliminary 2012-13 budget comparing actual 2011-12 revenues and expenditures to preliminary 2012-13 revenues and expenditures, by fund, and overall funds compared to most recent PMA projections dated May 15, 2012 were shared. O'Neill reported that the projections need to be updated with the

## **TOPIC REPORTS** (Continued)

new state data, and cautioned that the district is losing General State Aid and will need to pay more for insurance next year. She reported that her expenditures are about \$1 million under the projections.

Board comments included a reminder that the pay freeze taken by the district employees helped save \$1 million. Additionally, the district should remain cautious, as the state revenues will continue to be challenged in future years.

## **EVALUATION OF BOARD GOALS**

President Barber reported on the status of the following Board goals.

- 1) Data usage  
The Board is doing well with this goal. The Data First workshops were noted as examples of meetings held this year that supported this initiative.
- 2) Communications  
The Board was successful with the unveiling of a new Web site and did a great job of attending PTO meetings. It was also noted that the Day In Our Village event was successful. It was noted that the Board did not focus on the performance indicators.
- 3) Facilities  
It was noted that the Board made a lot of progress in this area, and has clear direction on the needs of the administration building / warehouse.
- 4) Compensation and Performance  
This goal was put on the back burner and will be included in the goals for the 2012-13 school year.

President Barber recommended a mini Board retreat with the Cabinet members. He recommended a Saturday in the near future and shared that member Traczyk had offered his home for a BBQ.

The Board secretary will send the Board availability to President Barber. A two-member committee will gather information before scheduling the retreat. Member Spatz volunteered to meet with Dr. Roberts to brainstorm.

## **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

SUPERINTENDENT'S  
REPORT

The maintenance team is completing work at Whittier, Mann, Holmes, Longfellow, and Beye. The lighting boards at the middle schools are being replaced and district cleaning is underway. He reported that all work is currently on schedule. The old Beye furniture has been removed and the new furniture is being installed.

The Accessibility committee will consist of a citizen member of FAC with ADA experience, and an architectural firm with ADA experience. Mike Padavic will be the administrator on this committee. It was reported that the district may need to consider a consultant for this position.

## **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT** (Continued)

The district will take a comprehensive look at playground injury data. Procedures will be reviewed, nurses will receive additional training and injuries will be tracked and monitored. Padavic will report periodically to the Board on this topic.

Dr. Roberts recommended a new contract with Hephzibah. He explained that the current contract was never fully executed and therefore leaves areas of dispute. Padavic will provide an updated job description for the liaison position and will ask the Board to approve the salary for this position during the August meeting.

Dr. Roberts met with Rupa Datta from the C.L.A.I.M. committee regarding the sharing of student records with the high school. It was recommended that a district attorney and Felicia Starks Turner meet with the committee to help them understand the full scope of the problems related to sharing data between the two districts.

The first draft of the new policy manual has been received. Committee members are in the process of reviewing it.

Officer Jennings, the School Resource Officer (SRO), retired and the district is interviewing officers for this position.

OPTA representatives met with Dr. Roberts. It was noted that the new legislation and OPTA contract are in disagreement about sick leave.

## **BOARD CONCERNS / ANNOUNCEMENTS**

BOARD CONCERNS /  
ANNOUNCEMENTS

The procedure for choosing new members for the FAC committee was discussed. It was noted that an announcement will be published inviting interested parties to submit a letter of interest. Therese O'Neill was asked to find out if there are also openings on the FORC committee. The length of time members can stay on committees was questioned. The Board secretary will look into this.

The Music Man and Tempest were performed recently at the middle schools. Foot Loose was performed at the high school and the cast consisted of many BRAVO /CAST alumni. It was noted that the BRAVO summer program celebrated its 10th anniversary and acknowledged Tina Reynolds after a recent performance.

The Board was reminded that the parent piece is important when collecting data regarding injuries as children do not always report accidents that occur at school.

Member Spatz reminded the Board that he serves on the state-wide Early Childhood committee and offered to assist in bringing in speakers to meet with the C.L.A.I.M. committee.

**BOARD CONCERNS / ANNOUNCEMENTS** (Continued)

The Board’s recommendations to IGOV were shared with the committee and incorporated into their documents. An advertising opportunity was presented that would reach approximately 80 percent of the residents who do not have day-to-day contact with the district.

Dr. Roberts is working with the Park District regarding the Irving Schoolyard project. Grants are also being considered as a source of revenue. It was reported that the materials from the old playground are being recycled and there was a recommendation that the asphalt be removed.

It was reported that some staff members will be attending the IB training in Austin, Texas on July 22, 2012 and others will be attending a training in Denver, Colorado in late September. Dr. Roberts suggested that some Board members consider attending a training session.

Member O’Connor shared a hard copy of the proposed superintendent evaluation program. Members were asked to review the documents and share their comments with member O’Connor within the next two weeks. President Barber and member O’Connor will discuss how to move forward.

Dr. Roberts will look into the need for an extension of the Crossing Guard contract.

The Board Agenda Schedule was shared. Members were asked to review the document and share any suggestions with the Board secretary.

**BOARD RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

BOARD  
RESPONSE TO  
PUBLIC  
COMMENT

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Sacks moved, seconded by Felton, that the Board of Education move into executive session at 9:59 p.m. Roll call vote.

EXECUTIVE  
SESSION

- Ayes: Sacks, Felton, Gates, Barber, O’Connor, and Spatz
  - Nays: None
  - Absent: Traczyk
- Motion passed.

**OPEN SESSION**

Sacks moved, seconded by O’Connor, that the Board of Education move into open session at 10:50 p.m. All members of the Board were in agreement.

OPEN SESSION

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to conduct, President Barber declared the meeting adjourned at 10:50 p.m.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board will be held on Tuesday, August 21, 2012 beginning at 7 p.m. at the administration building located at 970 Madison Street.

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Board President

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Board Secretary