

**Official Minutes of the
Oak Park Board of Education District 97,
970 Madison Street, Oak Park, Cook County, Illinois
Special Meeting - July 13, 2011**

Vice President Spatz called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m.

Present: Sacks, Reddy, Spatz, O'Connor and Traczyk

Absent: Gates, Barber

Also Present: Superintendent Al Roberts, Director of Policy, Planning and
Communication Chris Jasculca, Director of Special Education Mike
Padavic and Board Secretary Sheryl Marinier

ROLL CALL

EXECUTIVE SESSION

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SESSION

Reddy moved, seconded by Traczyk, that the Board of Education move into executive session at 6:06 p.m. Roll call vote.

Ayes: Reddy, Traczyk, Sacks, O'Connor, and Spatz

Nays: Gates, Barber

Motion passed.

OPEN SESSION

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Reddy moved, seconded by Sacks, that the Board of Education move into open session at 6:56 p.m. Roll call vote.

Ayes: Reddy, Sacks, O'Connor, Spatz, and Barber

Nays: None

Absent: Gates, Traczyk

Motion passed.

SPECIAL REPORTS

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PIONEERING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

Jan Pate, Elizabeth Lippitt and Gary Cuneen gave an overview of the initiative to address the childhood obesity epidemic. Pate explained that this committee is associated with several other cohorts. In 2008, the YMCA of the United States received funding from Robert Wood Johnson to launch the community-based Pioneering Healthy Communities initiative with funding for six states and 32 communities over five years. In 2010, West Cook YMCA was awarded a grant as one of 16 communities in Illinois, Michigan and Ohio. The committee attended a national conference in February 2010.

Lippitt shared research that indicated that obesity in children is on the rise. More than eight states indicate that the majority of the residents are considered obese and Illinois is ranked fourth out of all the states. Lippitt shared a list of health issues that can occur due to obesity and discussed the financial and academic consequences. She explained that the purpose of Pioneering Healthy Communities is to raise awareness, and reverse trends in physical inactivity, poor nutrition and obesity; as well as develop community level policy and environmental change strategies for physical activity and healthy eating by leading policy makers in the community, strengthen community capacity to initiate and sustain promising practices for healthy communities, identify cost effective practical

PIONEERING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

solutions and tools that teams can replicate in the community. A policy team has been developed, a community assessment is being conducted, the team is being expanded, community partnerships are being made, and a community action plan is being created. Pate explained that this initiative is not about a program, but making system and policy changes. She gave an example of a walking school bus as a way for children to travel between school and home safely while getting exercise. Examples were shared to demonstrate how teachers can be role models. Dr. Roberts explained how the process needs to be more about helping parents, businesses and all of our citizens to think about being healthy. The goal is to change the thinking process to thinking about being healthy.

It was reported that the Early Childhood Education and Care Spring Symposium will focus on growing healthy children and include a green town conference to combine healthy communities and the green initiative. The symposium is scheduled for October 12, 2011 with Mark Fenton as the keynote speaker.

Audience members suggested that the committee encourage government participation, and that one or two of the supporting locations be public works buildings. A public awareness campaign was suggested to encourage people to walk or bike to their destinations when traveling less than a mile from home. It was suggested that churches be included in the planning, and that the school districts support bike riding to school. Regarding the high school, it was suggested that driver's education be renamed to transportation education and that the high school coaches could nominate a representative from each of their athletic teams to be members of the initiative team. It was recommended that the non-for-profit groups be asked for support as they have connections to other groups. The committee was encouraged to consider the diversity and cultures within the community as they prepare initiatives. Sharing information at block parties and the use of the conservatory were also suggested.

Board comments and suggestions included concern that the district policies are not always enforced. It was suggested that the parent organizations lead the way to healthy eating and school gardens, but concern was expressed that some of the groups rely on food fundraising. Concern was expressed over how to help the parents and community change their mindset. A school wide program was suggested. A suggestion was made to consider expanding the busing limitation to a mile and a half and for children to ride their bikes to school. Grade level centers and the recess policy were suggested as areas of consideration. Member Traczyk volunteered to be on a committee that will study various options.

It was suggested that students be asked for input regarding this initiative.

The committee expressed their gratitude for the opportunity to present their plans and explained that their efforts will be evaluated. They will need to demonstrate their efforts on being able to make changes in childhood obesity and be able to prove that changes have occurred. In closing, they reminded all in attendance that it will take the entire community to make this initiative successful.

COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

This item was tabled until the July 26, 2011 meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

PUBLIC COMMENT

BOARD RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENT

None

BOARD RESPONSE
TO PUBLIC
COMMENT

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to conduct, Vice President Spatz declared the meeting adjourned at 8:33 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board will be held on Tuesday, July 26, 2011, beginning at 7 p.m. at the district office located at 970 Madison Street, Oak Park, Illinois.

Board President

Board Secretary