

**Official Minutes of the  
Oak Park Board of Education District 97  
970 Madison Street, Oak Park, Illinois  
April 13, 2010**

President Traczyk called the meeting to order at 6 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: Gates, Spatz, Clouser, Reddy, Harton, Barber (6:15 p.m.), and Traczyk  
Absent: None  
Also Present: Superintendent Constance R. Collins, Director of Human Resources Trish Carlson, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning Kevin Anderson, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations Therese O'Neill, Communications Coordinator Chris Jasculca, Director of Special Education Mike Padavic, Buildings and Grounds Director Norman Lane, Principal Cathy Hamilton, Technology Specialist Cao Mac, and Board Secretary Sheryl Marinier

**Executive Session**

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Harton moved, seconded by Reddy, that the Board of Education move into executive session at 6:07 p.m. Roll call vote.

Ayes: Harton, Reddy, Gates, Spatz, Clouser, Barber, and Traczyk  
Nays: None  
Motion passed.

**Open Session**

OPEN SESSION

Reddy moved, seconded by Barber, that the Board of Education move into open session at 6:51 p.m. Roll call vote.

Ayes: Reddy, Barber, Gates, Spatz, Harton, Clouser, and Traczyk  
Nays: None  
Motion passed.

**1.1.0 Approval of Minutes of March 16, 2010**

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MARCH 16, 2010

Barber moved, seconded by Reddy, that the Board of Education approve the minutes from the March 16, 2010 meeting. Roll call vote.

Ayes: Barber, Reddy, Spatz, Harton, Gates, Clouser, and Traczyk  
Nays: None  
Motion passed.

### **1.2.0 Approval of Minutes of March 23, 2010**

Reddy moved, seconded by Clouser, that the Board of Education approve the minutes from the March 23, 2010 meeting with revisions. Roll call vote.

Ayes: Reddy, Spatz, Harton, Gates, Barber, Clouser, and Traczyk

Nays: None

Motion passed.

#### **Public Comment**

PUBLIC COMMENT

Tom Purrenhage, Oak Park resident and parent, shared a letter on behalf of the Irving School parents expressing concern about possible disparities across the District and whether the PTOs should be expected to financially support the technology plan.

Joan Slanina, Oak Park resident and parent, shared her support for the addition of space at Lincoln and the use of ARRA funds.

Susan Oxnevad, Oak Park resident and staff member, spoke in support of the technology plan, stating that the current resources are inadequate.

Sue Tresselt, LaGrange Park resident and Oak Park Teacher's Association president, spoke in support of the technology plan, sharing that the current ratio of students to computers is nine to one. She reminded the Board members that the District policy states that the District will supply acceptable technology tools. She also suggested that if the technology is not affordable, the expectation that the teachers use technology must be removed.

Anna Clissold, Oak Park resident and parent, spoke on behalf of the parents of students with IEPs. She shared that the parents would like to keep their students at Lincoln School. The parents are concerned that the additional space adheres to the instructions for funding as delineated by ARRA. Several suggestions were made regarding the Lincoln space needs and use of the funds. It was also suggested that the special education parents be consulted and a task force be considered.

John Boluver, Oak Park resident, spoke regarding the Lincoln School construction and special needs students, expressing his concern that the District be cognizant of the students' needs and make the transition easy for the students.

Ana Chavarria, Oak Park resident and officer of the Longfellow PTO, spoke in support of the technology plan. She shared that literacy is defined as being able to interact with technology, and that technology should enhance learning.

Kathy Madura, Bensonville resident and Lincoln school staff member, shared a letter from the Lincoln staff thanking the Board for approving the additional space at Lincoln. Madura shared ways that the Lincoln staff has worked together to solve the space issues in the past, showing that the staff has exhausted all other options for consolidating space.

**Public Comment** – ( Continued)

Peggy Kell, Oak Park resident and staff member, expressed her interest for hiring a superintendent from within the District. She reminded the Board that the District has two qualified candidates who have experience working in community. She suggested that a smooth and quicker transition would result from hiring an internal candidate.

**Action Items**

ACTION ITEMS

**4.1.1 Approval of Consent Agenda**

President Traczyk read the items on the consent agenda. Clouser moved, seconded by Gates, that the following items be approved on the consent agenda.

- 3.1.1 Bill Lists and Related Reports
- 3.2.1 Personnel Action as presented

Roll call vote.

Ayes: Clouser, Gates, Harton, Barber, Spatz, Reddy, and Traczyk

Nays: None

Motion passed.

New staff members in attendance were introduced to the Board.

**4.2.2 Suspension Without Pay – Employee 1002**

Barber moved, seconded by Clouser, that the Board of Education approve a five-day suspension without pay for employee 1002. Roll call vote.

Ayes: Barber, Clouser, Spatz, Reddy, Gates, Harton, and Traczyk

Nays: None

Motion passed.

**4.3.1 Asbestos Abatement – Summer 2010 Capital Projects**

Gates moved, seconded by Harton, that the Board of Education of Oak Park award a contract to Celtic Environmental in the total amount of \$100,525 (\$87,085 Base bid plus Alternate 1 of \$10,900, Alternate 2 of \$840, and Alternate 3 of \$1,700) as recommended by the District’s asbestos abatement consultant, Environ Corporation, and supported by the District’s legal counsel. Roll call vote.

Ayes: Gates, Harton, Clouser, Reddy, Barber, Spatz, and Traczyk

Nays: None

Motion passed.

### **4.3.2 Selection of Superintendent Search Firm**

Discussion took place regarding the selection of a search firm. Hazard, Young, Attea and Associates Ltd and School Exec Connect were discussed in detail.

Gates moved, seconded by Harton, that the Board of Education of Oak Park hire the search firm of Hazard, Young, Attea and Associates, Ltd to conduct a superintendent search for District 97. Roll call vote.

Ayes: Gates, Harton, Reddy, Barber, Spatz, and Traczyk

Nays: Clouser

Motion passed.

President Traczyk shared that the District will be charging the firm of Hazard, Young, Attea and Associates, Ltd to conduct a fast track search with the goal of the new superintendent beginning employment in July. He encouraged those in attendance to participate in the process by speaking up, filling out surveys, etc. He explained that if the fast track is not successful, Hazard, Young, Attea and Associates, Ltd will continue with a full search.

The Board secretary will contact the search firms to report the results of the vote.

### **District Activity STAFFING PLAN**

DISTRICT ACTIVITY

Trish Carlson shared the Cabinet's recommendation to add a few staff members due to enrollment. The recommendation included adding staff at Hatch, Holmes, and Irving. The Title 1 funds will be used to hire additional tutors. Carlson reported that the projected employee FTE is 1.4.

Dr. Collins reported that during the 2010-11 school year, the District will hire 41 new teachers and 35 second year teachers, making a need for 76 mentors. She recommended a second teacher leader for mentoring. She also made the recommendation for two assistant principals, one at Lincoln where the current enrollment is 550 and one at Longfellow where the enrollment is 600. A student support specialist was recommended at Mann where the enrollment is at 500. Collins reminded the Board that a .5 Web master will be needed next year. The salary for this position would come from the retirement of the current staff member who updates the Web site on a part-time basis, using half of the current salary, approximately \$45,000 to \$50,000. One additional nurse would also be needed within the District.

It was suggested that retired teachers be hired to perform the mentorship tasks. After a brief discussion, it was agreed to consider one full-time teacher mentor.

After a brief discussion, the Board agreed to move forward with the additional staffing.

## **POLICY REVIEW**

Suggestions were made for revisions to the proposed Copyright policy, the Video Security Camera policy, and the Instructional Digital and Analog Video policy. The Copyright policy and Instructional Digital and Analog Video policy will be presented to the Board on April 27 for a second reading and approval. The Video Security Camera policy will be presented to the Board on May 25 for a second reading and approval to provide members of the community time to provide feedback on the policy and proposed plan to install cameras in the middle schools.

## **LINCOLN SPACE NEEDS**

Therese O'Neill, Norm Lane, Mike Padavic, Trish Carlson, and Cathy Hamilton reported on the space needs at Lincoln school. Ms. Hamilton shared that the Lincoln staff has been dealing with space issues for at least 20 years. The staff has done a great job of adjusting and fitting teachers and classrooms in wherever possible. Hamilton reported that she has met with Cabinet members, staff, and the PTO regarding this issue with the goal to do what is best for the students. She explained that moving special education classes into the mobile units was never considered.

O'Neill reported that she has been working collaboratively with Norm Lane and the Facilities Advisory Committee to come up with a solution to the Lincoln space issue. Mike Padavic has been working to secure funding through an IDEA grant. It was reported that the revised IDEA proposal, including funds for a secured entrance to the school, was approved on March 17.

Construction plans prepared by DLA were shared. The plans include a first floor addition. In looking to the future, this addition will be built to support a second floor. Areas that will be funded by the IDEA grant were identified with the remainder of the construction project funded by federal dollars or allocated district funds. The estimated completion date for the addition is August 2011.

A brief discussion took place regarding the prep work for a second floor. Interest was expressed in hearing more about these plans. Mr. Lane will supply additional information.

The need for additional kindergarten space was discussed. It was suggested that the kindergarten needs be determined, as it would be easier to add additional space during the construction process if necessary.

A task force will be assembled to help with communication of this project and help determine the best use of the new space.

Updates on the project were requested via the Superintendent's Reports, along with a timeline and a schedule of when the task force will meet.

Concern was expressed about misconceptions that this is a District issue, not a special education issue.

## **FINANCIAL EFFICIENCIES**

Therese O'Neill along with several Cabinet members, reported on recommendations for cost efficiencies. O'Neill reported that the plan was prepared with the help of the administrative leadership team. It is their belief that the students need to be equipped with the tools they need, and that academic success of the students is paramount.

Dr. Collins began by reporting administration's recommendations to eliminate administrative performance bonuses along with building assistant stipends. The school improvement stipends would be reduced to seven per building. There would be a teacher assistant reduction, and the student data consultant would be cut by \$5,000. It was recommended that the Ethnic Festival be held every three years, with a smaller scale event held annually. There was also discussion about the possibility of asking the Village to help fund the festival.

It was reported that the technology plan is currently at \$855,417. Out of that, \$159,120 will be supported by ARRA stimulus funds. It was recommended that the savings from the staffing changes above also be applied to the technology plan along with the projected savings from this year's budget. It was reported that this plan has been reviewed by the Facilities Committee.

Concern was expressed regarding the assumptions surrounding the crossing guard situation. Final figures were requested.

Member Barber left at 10 p.m.

## **TECHNOLOGY UPDATE**

Kevin Anderson and Cao Mac shared their recommendation to cut costs out of the original technology plan. Major cuts included reducing costs for professional development by training staff as trainers opposed to hiring outside trainers, and cutting the purchase of laptops from 3,000 to 1,500. Mac explained that this quantity would still supply the District with a 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning environment.

Mac explained that the District must make a determination as to phone system needs. He suggested moving to a voice over IP staged approach. He explained that by using this approach, the phone system could be paid for in five years or less. In year three of the plan, the District will need to evaluate the computer labs, and review the leasing agreements in year four.

Anderson explained that the District would like to begin training during the April 23 Institute Day. His goal would be to have approximately 300 staff members trained by the end of September.

Concern was expressed regarding the use of internal trainers. It was suggested that the plan be considered year by year.

The Board agreed that the technology plan should be brought to the Board for approval on May 11. Additional information will be forwarded to the Board in the coming week.

**Board of Education Priorities**  
**BOARD MEETING CALENDAR**

The Board agreed that the proposed 2010-2011 Board calendar is acceptable and will approve the calendar during the April 27 meeting.

**COMMITTEE FOR COLLABORATIVE COMMUNICATION**

This item was tabled until May 11, 2010.

**Superintendent's Report**

The District received a FOIA request regarding the 2008-09 climate survey. The District is working with legal counsel on an appropriate response.

Details about the additional resources given to Irving and Whittier Schools this school year in support of academic achievement to meet AYP were presented to the Board.

A new Board room microphone system will be installed on April 15. Sheryl Marinier and Cao Mac were commended for their hard work in making sure the Board room has an effective system while being cognizant of costs.

The District has not received notification of the IDEA grant funding for next year. Based on communications from ISBE, it is anticipated it will be very similar to last year's allocation, which was \$1,261,655 for Part B Flow-Through and \$50,645 for Part B Preschool.

The Brooks Best Buddies program attended an event at Brookfield Zoo and Susan Diehl received an award for adviser of the year. It was the first time that this award has been given to a middle school chapter.

The District received notification today from IASB that the District's Share the Success Panel Proposal titled *10 Steps for Creating an Effective District Strategic Plan* was accepted for presentation at the November Joint Conference.

The Choral Festival is tomorrow evening at 7 p.m. at OPRF High School.

The Joint Review Board meeting with the Oak Park Village Board is April 28 at 6:30 p.m. at the Village Hall. Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations Therese O'Neill will be representing the District administration.

The District 97 retirement party is April 29 at the DoubleTree in Oak Brook. A reminder notice was distributed to the Board.

**Superintendent's Report** – (Continued)

On April 23, the District will hold an Institute Day with a focus on school improvements and technology.

The OPEF Staszak Dinner is April 24. Board members were encouraged to contact the foundation at 524-3026 if they are planning to attend. The cost is \$125 per person.

The Reconsideration Committee will review questionable books and videos.

**Board Concerns / Announcements**

BOARD CONCERNS/  
ANNOUNCEMENTS

Therese O'Neill attended the ED-RED meeting last week. She will forward materials to everyone. During that meeting, HB174 was discussed.

Board members agreed that the National School Board Convention was wonderful.

All were encouraged to attend the upcoming Substance Abuse Forum.

The League of Women Votes requested data on State budget cuts and what they mean in relationship to staffing. Therese O'Neill will prepare a document and share the draft with the Board prior to sending it to the League.

It was suggested that the Equity of Gifts Policy be revisited as some PTOs are expressing concern. It was agreed that inequity across the board should be reviewed at another time.

**Board Response to Public Comment**

BOARD RESPONSE TO  
PUBLIC COMMENT

Both concerns shared during public comment were discussed during the meeting. The Board secretary was asked to communicate with the two parents who had requested a response from the Board acknowledging their concerns and informing them that the Board policy is to consider discussion at the table as response to public comment.

There being no further business to conduct, President Traczyk declared the meeting adjourned at 11:48 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board will be on Tuesday April 27, 2010 beginning at 7 p.m. at the District office, located at 970 Madison Street.

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Board President

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Board Secretary