Official Minutes of the
Oak Park Board of Education District 97
260 Madison Street, Oak Park
October 27, 2026 - Regular Meeting

This meeting was held in-person and virtually using Livestream. Board members met in person along with D97 Administration.

1. CALL TO ORDER

President Moore called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

ROLL CALL

Present:	Kim, Ross Dribin, Hurd Johnson, Kearney, Moore
Absent:	Spurlock, Gay
Also Present:	Dr. Terri Bresnahan, Superintendent; Dr. Natacia Campbell Tominiov, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources and Equity; Dr. Crystal LeRoy; Chief Finance Officer; Michael Arensdorff, Chief Operations and Equity Officer; Lee-Ann Roskopf, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent and Board Secretary.

3. EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Kim moved, seconded by Kearney to enter Executive session for the: Appointment, Employment, Compensation, Discipline, Performance, or Dismissal of Specific Employees; Collective Negotiating Matters; Matters Relating to Individual Students; and Litigation of an Action against a Public Body; Discussion minutes lawfully closed under Open Meetings Act. 5 ILCS 120/2 (C)(1), (C)(2), (C)(10), (C)(11), (C)(21) at 6:03 p.m.

4: OPEN SESSION

OPEN SESSION

Kearney motioned, seconded by Kim, that the Board move into Open Session. All present members of the Board were in agreement. The Board reconvened in Open Session at 7:03 p.m. Joining the meeting was Dr. Patrick Robinson, Assistant Superintendent of Schools; Dr. Eboney Lofton, Chief Learning Innovation Officer; Dr. Felicia Starks Turner, Chief Safety Officer and Amanda Siegfried, Senior Director of Communications and Engagement.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

PUBLIC COMMENT

Connor Fuller, District 97 employee, spoke to the Board in connection with his recommendation for termination. He shared about his role in the community and the cause of, and reflection on, his actions.

Michelle Olson, District 97 parent, addressed the Board about the overuse of screens inside and outside of school.

Brielle Osting, District 97 parent spoke to the Board about screen usage and the ability to monitor time on devices. She discussed the challenge experienced in using the applications on the devices that are intended to inform parents on the amount of screen time used.

Megan Jackson, Oak Park community member, addressed the Board about the importance of recording IEP and 504 meetings in order to have an accurate record.

6. BOARD RECOGNITION/PRESENTATIONS

BOARD PRESENTATIONS

There were no Board Recognitions or presentations.

7. SUPERINTENDENT REPORTS

SUPERINTENDENT REPORTS

7:1 Monthly Update

Dr. Bresnahan presented on the work taking place in each department this month.

Superintendent's Office

- PEA/Recess: Collaborative discussions with Ed Council and the teacher representative group resulted in updated guidance that balances instructional minutes and student well-being. This guidance was shared with the task force, with upcoming communication scheduled for staff and families.
- Family-Teacher Conferences were well attended across all schools; thanks was extended to staff for the late night and partnership with families.
- The Illinois State Report Card will be released on October 30. More communication will be shared.
- Staff Celebrations:
    - The communications team won two awards from INSPRA. Congratulations to Amanda Siegfried.
    - Enrichment Specialist, Arnetta Thompson, was named the only Illinois educator (and one of just 50 nationwide) to receive the NEA Foundation's Global Learning Fellowship.
    - Rocío Jacoby, Lincoln school's Spanish teacher was named the 2026 Teacher of the Year by the Illinois Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ICTFL).
    - The "We are D97" staff award has been rejuvenated. Hatch school's Art teacher, Michaela Ruff, was this year's first recipient.
    - The principals were celebrated for Principal Appreciation.

Core Instruction & Curriculum

- SIP & Chat: Core instructional leaders (under Dr. Robinson) visit school building leadership teams once per trimester to review School Improvement Plans.
- Access to Algebra: A family meeting was held on Oct 19th at Julian Middle School highlighting pathways to Algebra 2.
- Bridges in Mathematics: Positive feedback has been received, noting increased student engagement.

Human Resources:

- The Teacher Mentor program is underway for our 1st and 2nd year teachers. There was a focus on preparing for Parent Teacher conferences and embedding our Equity Policy into instruction.
- The Professional Learning Committee is focusing on staff needs in building Institute Day schedules.
- We are working collaboratively with D200 and D90 to align our calendars and to have a two year calendar.

Business Office:

- FY26 audit is completed. Baker Tilly is scheduled to present to the Board in December.
- There is a continued focus on multi-year budget reduction.

Operations and Technology:

- Continuing to move forward with the 2026 capital project plan. Dr. Bresnahan expressed gratitude to the Facility Advisory Committee for their work.

- Solar project update. The middle school installations are wrapping up, and the installation at Beye and Irving will start next week.
- Health Life Safety visits are scheduled for February 8th. This year we will also have compliance visits from West 40.

Community-Based Learning and Entrepreneurialism:

- The Story Walk's have launched - where a whole story is read while you walk the track with students.
- Brooks is introducing the Eagle Flyer, student run newspaper.
- Elementary schools are engaged in basketball.

Safety:

- Members of the Safety team attend the annual Illinois School Safety Conference and focused on crisis management and prevention strategies,
- Students will complete their annual safety lessons on the Standard Response Protocol (SRP) in October and November.
- 8th grade graduation dates are Brooks (June 7, 2027) and Julian (June 8, 2027) at the Oak Park River Forest High School at 6:30 p.m.

8. CONSENT AGENDA

CONSENT AGENDA

Kim motioned, seconded by Ross Dribin, to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

8.1 Approval of Minutes from the September 22, 2026 and October 13, 2026 Board Meeting
8.2 Approval of Closed Session Minutes from the September 22, 2026 Board Meeting
8.3 Bill List: 10.13.26 and 10.27.26.
Payroll: 9.18.26, 10.2.26 and 10.16.26
8.4 Personnel Report
8.5 Curriculum Disposal Request
8.6 Operations Disposal Request

Ayes: Hurd Johnson, Kearney, Kim, Ross Dribin, Moore
Nays: None
Absent: Gay, Spurlock
Motion passed.

9. ACTION ITEMS

ACTION ITEMS

9.1 Adoption of Press Plus Policy Amendments Issue 121

It was moved by Kim, and seconded by Ross Dribin, that the Board of Education of Oak Park Elementary School District 97 approve the proposed changes to Board Policy as provided in Press Plus Issue 121 including the additional district edits to policy 7:50.

Ayes: Hurd Johnson, Kearney, Kim, Ross Dribin, Moore
Nays: None
Absent: Spurlock, Gay
Motion passed.

9.2 Update to Policy 6:120

It was moved by Kim, and seconded by Ross Dribin, that the Board of Education of Oak Park Elementary School District 97 approve the changes to Board Policy 6:120 Education of Children with Disabilities.

Ayes: Ross Dribin, Hurd Johnson, Kearney, Kim, Moore
Nays: None

Absent: Spurlock, Gay
Motion passed.

9.3 Resolution Authorizing Intervention in Property Tax Assessment Appeals
It was moved by Kim, and seconded by Ross Dribin, that the Board of Education of Oak Park Elementary School District 97 adopt the Resolution Authorizing Intervention in Property Tax Assessment Appeals as presented.
Ayes: Kim, Ross Dribin, Hurd Johnson, Kearney, Moore
Nays: None
Absent: Spurlock, Gay
Motion passed.

DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS

10. DISCUSSION ITEMS AND ACTION

10.1 Resolution Expressing Official Intent Regarding Certain Capital Expenditures to be Reimbursed From Proceeds of an Obligation to be Issued by the District
Elizabeth Hennessy, from Raymond James, and Dr. Crystal LeRoy discussed the funding options for the recommended Capital Plan from the Facilities Advisory Committee (FAC) and Financial Oversight Review Committee (FORC). The source to fund the almost $92,000,000 in capital improvements will be a combination of fund balance, Working Cash Bonds and Health Life Safety Bonds.

At their October 6, 2026 meeting, FORC reviewed the timeline for the repayment of Health Life Safety Bonds and Working Cash Bonds (for improvements not covered by HLS bonds). Ten year and 15 year options were reviewed, and FORC recommended the 10 year payback option due to lower interest payments and the fact that the District has Health Life Safety every 10 years. The tax impact to homeowners was discussed.

Over the summer, the district completed a $5.4 million capital project for leaking roofs. Insurance will cover $1.4 million. The Reimbursement resolution gives the District the option to pay back themselves for the $3.6 million for these projects. This resolution has specific federal tax requirements where reimbursements are only allowed for payments made 60 days prior to the approval of the resolution. The approval of this resolution provides the option, not the obligation, to refund the $3.6 million spent on the roof projects. This repayment will take the pressure off the SY27 budget.

Elizabeth Hennessy presented two options for Working Cash Fund Bond repayments, discussing the impact of each option and answered questions from the Board.

The timeline was discussed.

- November 17, 2026 Board Meeting. Resolution of Intent to issue working cash bonds will be presented to the Board for approval. The decision will be for $20 million, $23.6 million or $29.6 million.
- November 19, 2026: Publication of Notice of Intent and Public Hearing for the issue of Health Life Safety Bonds and Working Cash Bonds in the newspaper. The legal process is that the resolution of intent must be published with an amount on it. This will start a 30 day petition period. If 10% of registered voters submit a petition, this will force a referendum.
- December 8, 2026: A Public Hearing will be held on the issue of Working Cash Bonds and Health Life Safety Bonds.
- January 12, 2027: Approve the bond resolution authorizing the issuance of Working Cash and Health Life Safety Bonds.

- February 23, 2027: Approval of resolution transferring Working Cash Fund Bond proceeds from the Working Cash Fund to the Capital Projects Fund.

Kim motioned, seconded by Ross Dribin, that the Board of Education of Oak Park Elementary School District 97 adopt the Resolution expressing official intent regarding certain capital expenditures to be reimbursed from proceeds of an obligation to be issued by the District, as presented.
Ayes: Kearney, Kim, Ross Dribin, Hurd Johnson, Moore
Nays: None
Absent: Spurlock, Gay
Motion passed.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

11. DISCUSSION ITEMS

11.1 Summer 2027: OmniaPartner Bid Purchasing

Michael Arensdorff discussed the pre-purchase equipment procurement for the summer 2027 mechanical replacement project at Julian Middle School and Mann Elementary School . This request is just for equipment, not for installation, and follows the master facilities plan. This bid timeline is required due to lead time issues with equipment purchases. By initiating this strategy, it places District 97 in the manufacturing queue and ensures equipment will arrive prior to summer 2027 construction.

11.2 Communications: Parent Square

Amanda Siegfried discussed the recommendation to move to Parent Square for the district website and communication services. The District needs a more consistent, accessible, reliable way to share information with staff and families. The district currently uses multiple tools that have different purposes and do not work well together. The website is 10 years old. Ms. Siegfried shared the process that led to the Parent Square recommendation, and highlighted that the high school uses Parent Square. In response to questions, she shared that Parent Square is an integrated platform that has a built- in newsletter and puts language choice in the hands of parents and not linked to the parent survey. The cost of the three year agreement was outlined for the Board.

11:3 Summer Programming

Dr. Eboney Lofton shared a presentation reviewing the summer programming from 2026, and the recommendations for the programming for summer 2027. Dr. Lofton expressed gratitude for the staff, families, student and community partners who make the summer programing a success. She was joined by Maureen McCarthy, the Deputy-Director of Recreation at the Oak Park Park District. The enrollment summary of 88 participants in Park District programs was reviewed. Ms. McCarthy thanked Carla Ellis, Mayra Delgado and Tracy Hamm for their help and support for families.

Dr, Lofton shared that there were 900+ participants in 12 programs over the summer. An analysis of enrollment and results from parent surveys was presented. The Board discussed the reasons for the take up rates, why families do not enroll, over and under representation, the Equity Policy and gender representation.

11:4 Board Protocols and 11:5 Board and Superintendent Communication Expectation

Gavin Kearney discussed the updates to the Board Protocol and Superintendent Communication Expectation documents. These updates were the result of the discussion at the Board Retreat on October 13, 2026.

12. CONCLUDING ITEMS

CONCLUDING ITEMS

Ross Dribin shared about her experience at the Story Walk.
Kim gave a shout out to Lincoln teachers who were celebrated earlier.
Moore shared that Bravo's performance of Beetlejuice would be in November.

13. BOARD ASSIGNMENTS

BOARD ASSIGNMENTS

IGOV - Ross Dribin shared that the referendum event will be moved to January or February.
PTOC - Dr. Bresnahan shared that Dr. Lofton and Marvin Childress presented information on the Portrait of a Graduate.
D97 Sustainability Task Force - Ross Dribin highlighted the solar panel installations.
Collaboration for Early Childhood - Ross Dribin shared that as a result of the updated IGA, the contact needs with the CEC needs to be updated. The team from the CEC, D200 and D97 will meet to complete the contract.
OPEN - Kim shared updates on the expanding of programming offered and the upcoming SteamFest on November 7th.
ED-RED - Dr. Bresnahan shared that she attended the kick off luncheon

14. AGENDA

NEXT MEETING AGENDA

Action items:
Summer 2027 - OmniaPartner Bid Purchasing
Communications - ParentSquare
SY27 Summer Programming Recommendations
Board Protocols
Board and Superintendent Communication Expectations
Resolution declaring the Intent to issue Working Cash Bonds.

Discussion:
Press Plus 122

15. EXECUTIVE CLOSED SESSION OF THE BOARD

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Not required for this meeting.

16. ADJOURNMENT

All present members of the Board were in agreement that the meeting be adjourned. There being no further business to conduct, Moore declared the meeting adjourned by voice vote at 8:53 p.m.

Cheree Moore
Cheree Moore - Board President

LeeAnn Roskopf
Lee-Ann Roskopf - Board Secretary