

**Official Minutes of the
Oak Park Board of Education District 97
260 Madison Street, Oak Park, Cook County, Illinois
January 23, 2018 Meeting**

President Spurlock called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: Spatz, Spurlock, Liebl, Broy, Datta (arrived at 5:37 p.m.), O'Connor (arrived at 6:18 p.m.)
Absent: Breymaier
Also Present: Superintendent Dr. Carol Kelley, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations Dr. Alicia Evans, Assistant Superintendent for HR Laurie Campbell, Chief Academic and Accountability Officer Dr. Amy Warke, Senior Director of Special Services Ebony Lofton, Senior Director of Policy, Procedures and Communication Chris Jasculca, Senior Director of Administrative Services Dr. Felicia Starks Turner, Senior Director of Equity Dr. Carrie Kamm, and Board Secretary Sheryl Marinier

EXECUTIVE SESSION

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Spatz moved, seconded by Broy, that the Board of Education move into Executive Session at 5:32 p.m. to discuss (Appointment, Employment, Compensation, Discipline, Performance, or Dismissal of Specific Employees or Legal Counsel 5 ILCS 120/2(C)(1), Collective Negotiations 5 ILCS 120/2(C)(2), Student Matters 5 ILCS 120/2(C)(10), Pending or Probable Litigation 5 ILCS 120/2(C)(11).

Ayes: Spatz, Broy, Liebl, and Spurlock
Nays: None
Absent: O'Connor, Breymaier, Datta (absent at time of motion)
Motion passed.

OPEN SESSION

OPEN SESSION

Datta moved, seconded by Spatz, that the Board of Education move into Open Session at 5:57 p.m. All members of the Board were in agreement. The meeting reconvened at 6:05 p.m. Member O'Connor arrived at 6:18 p.m.

RECOGNITION
NATIONAL
BOARD
CERTIFICATION

RECOGNITION – NATIONAL BOARD CERTIFICATION

Carrie Kamm acknowledged the teachers who achieved National Board Certification. Each teacher was given a certificate to recognize their achievement. Dr. Kelley thanked the community and the Board for recognizing the importance of what happens in the classroom on a day to day basis, and thanked the teachers for the hours of work they put into achieving this goal.

- Caroline Baker
- Seth Baker
- Jessica Britl
- Tim McDonald
- Katie Noonan
- Seth Robey
- Shannon Saliny
- Laura Stamp
- Amber Schweigert
- Natalie Campbell

LEARNING
SESSION

VISION97 4ALL LEARNING SESSION

Dr. Kelley reported that this portion of the meeting relates back to the vision plan, and she shared a longer version of the district's vision plan. She shared that the plan is to turn the words printed in the document into reality. She reported that the Board will be hearing about a few initiatives this evening, but there are written reports in the Board packet that covers all of them.

CO-TEACHING

Eboney Lofton and Donna Middleton came to the table. They introduced Kindergarten teachers Clair Downs and Julie Dunn, and middle school teachers Pam Gaffney and Rachel Youngberg. A video was shown that demonstrates classroom settings where two teachers (general education teacher and special education teacher) co-teach in one classroom with students with and without IEPs. Lofton explained that co-teaching is considered best practice, but the teachers have to keep in mind that the law requires them to consider the general education space first. The teachers explain that they plan, teach, and work together in the space to provide an inclusive education to children. In doing so, they are designing things that are accessible to all learners. They shared that the students enjoy the setting and being able to engage in different ways. They explained that before co-teaching, the special education children would have been in a separate setting, and the regular education students and special education students were not given an opportunity to really get to know each other. Now, everyone in the classroom are friends and sometimes the regular education students even have the opportunity to help the others get what they need. It was reported that co-teaching supports the social emotional rhelm.

Middleton shared that co-teaching has been the norm at the middle school for the past four or five years. The elementary teachers advocated for this opportunity and administration listened. It was reported that a focus group was held with the elementary teachers in December, 2017 to solicit their feedback. The following was noted as benefits of co-teacher for the students;

- All students are benefitting from the supports implemented, such as the use of visuals
- All students are displaying more empathy
- Students are not being labeled as general education versus special education and all students feel more included. This is especially seen at recess when students are on the playground
- Students are growing at a faster pace particularly in their functional performance

It was noted that there is a huge decrease in behavioral outbursts.

On December 18, 2018, the special education administration met with elementary parents to solicit feedback. Parents shared a range of experiences; yet, there were some common themes;

- Inclusion is not based on merit. Everyone deserves to be there
- There should be a dedicated teaching pair for each grade level across the district
- Children are experiencing increased social connections

The efficacy of this service delivery model will be analyzed in the following way:

- Once winter benchmark data is available, a comparative analysis will be completed that examines the growth trajectory for students with disabilities in the co-taught setting versus students with similar learning profiles who have received instruction via a different service delivery model
- Continued collection of qualitative data that includes teacher/parent/student focus groups and surveys

Barriers to implementation were defined as; the need for additional staff, establishing true co-teaching partnerships/models or implementation, and the ability to provide teachers with the time and space to create unit and lesson plans that are universally designed and reflective of specially designed instruction for students who require additional support to access the general education curriculum.

Lofton expressed interest in fully implementing the program at Whittier and Irving. She explained that to be successful, they would need to add an additional 3.5 teachers. They would also like to consider another Julian feeder school, starting at Kindergarten. She explained that the cost of this implementation would be \$425,645.30, less \$45,000 that would be supplied by the state. Lofton explained that she has also been talking to the Longfellow pre-Kindergarten staff about co-teaching. She noted that no additional costs would be incurred to implement that change.

Lofton noted that the goal would be for all general education students to have an opportunity to experience co-teaching, but she noted that the decision to do so would need to be made at the local level. Dr. Kelley shared that

CO-TEACHING (Continued)

Oak Park values inclusion and the district will not be honoring request to not have students in those classrooms. She shared that her own sons participated in co-teaching and are now very empathetic. President Spurlock shared that her two children have experienced co-teaching classrooms and she is very supportive of the process. It was noted that all parent feedback to date has been positive. Lofton explained that the Special Education population in the district is at 15 percent.

Lofton explained that besides the two teachers in the classroom, students who require one on one aids would keep them. She explained that having the Special Education teacher in the classroom is also proven beneficial when regular education students need a little extra support, and in identifying students in regular education who may require more services.

Board comments included interest in seeing the full Special Education budget.

MTSS SY19 RECOMMENDATION MASTER SCHEDULE

Amy Warke came to the table with principals Sarah Mendez, April Capuder and Catherine Zelaya. They explained how a common master schedule supports Pillar 1: Equitable Access to Rigorous Responsive Instruction.

Warke updated the Board on the history of Response to Intervention (RtI), noting that the Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) replaced RtI around 2011. She explained that MTSS is education from pre- Kindergarten through high school, and involves collaboration to ensure that systems and structures are successful so teachers can do their job to ensure that students have the access to equitable inclusion. MTSS is the overarching system that assures that that can happen.

She explained that a common master schedule;

- Promotes core instruction for all
- Provides consistent allocation of time
- Allows time for intervention and enrichment
- Allows for common plan time (job embedded professional learning)
- Promote collaboration for staff by offering a common plan time
- Allows for allocations of needs and resources
- Uninterrupted/solid blocks of time to teach math and ELA

Warke noted the causes of elementary scheduling problems;

- Lack of a master schedule
- Issues with scheduling core instruction
- Issues with scheduling services
- Issues with scheduling “encores”
- No time for collaboration
- Inconsistencies at grade levels

Principal Mendez shared that the principals were seeing inconsistencies in the children’s routines and explained the importance of consistency. She noted that the use of a master schedule is making for a more inclusive culture in the school. It was noted that master scheduling is helping with the equity goal, with a consistent or common plan at all levels.

Sample elementary and middle school master schedules were demonstrated. It was noted that the schedules are tailored and intentional for all students needs and is changing the school culture, not just the scores. It was noted that last year, students with IEPs surpassed the general education students’ scores on MAP.

The Education Council was acknowledged for their input to this report. It was noted that they support the common plan time and solid block for core instruction.

MASTER SCHEDULE (Continued)

Challenges of schedule for staff at the elementary level are;

- Some elementary schools only have one hour of common plan time a week
- The fourth and fifth grade students are pulled out for band and orchestra, missing the classroom instructional time
- Challenges occur in scheduling Science and Social Studies
- Lack of flexibility for teacher
- PE is not held every day, replaced by PEA on other days
- Traveling teachers have less prioritization with scheduling
- The new specials schedule is challenging with beginning after lunch and teaching to the end of the day
- Specials teachers find it challenging not to have grade level classes back to back 2,2,2 or 5,5,5
- Teachers find transition times challenging
- Art teachers would like to have the same classes to teach year after year
- Uneven distribution of plan time
- No equity in interventionists across district
- Time of day some of the blocks are scheduled

Capuder explained that the International Bacaloriette program was approved in 2012. A grant was secured and over the three year preparation period and IB was rolled out in school year 2016. Currently, Foreign Language is offered as a year-long course to all students. During the 2016-2017 implementations, a schedule was created that enables common planning time by team, common planning time by grade level content areas, and an intervention, What I Need (WIN) period for students, and Health for sixth grade students.

In 2019-2020, the middle school will need to qualify for reauthorization to the IB program. Until then, the middle schools will need to ensure that all requirements for IB recertification are being met while ensuring that PE and advisory are offered daily, no more than three class periods are taught in a row, if possible, EL services are being offered, and the length of the periods are extended in some areas to meeting requirements.

Capuder noted that Ed Council has shared their feedback and noted the benefits of scheduling as;

- Loved team approach
- Time to meet with teams
- One advisory period per week at Brooks
- WIN
- Super grade level meetings
- Common plan time/department plan time
- Two plan periods

Challenges of Scheduling from the middle school teacher perspective include;

- Cross teaming of students
- Short class periods
- Locked schedules
- Inequitable class periods – some small number of students, some larger number of students
- Field trips
- Lack of common plan time for all departments
- Lack of equity in choice for students who need support

Warke asked the Board to consider adding a policy to address MTSS. She shared the financial implications for a two year period at a cost of \$2,500,000 that would include;

- Staffing additions for MTSS
- Purchase interventions for Reading

MASTER SCHEDULE (Continued)

- Purchase interventions for Math
- Purchase of enrichment materials
- Professional development

Board comments included interest in hearing parent feedback. Concern was expressed about the student experience in such a tight schedule. Interest was expressed in a discussion with other peer districts regarding the time allotted for physical education and how other districts are affording this expense. Concern was expressed that the per FTE cost in the Special Education report does not match that in this report. A pilot was recommended.

Warke explained that MTSS focuses on the 10-15 percent of students in Tier two and three. She explained that the process would help the district strengthen its core, and in the long run will focus on the five percent that need additional support. Dr. Kelley shared that in mid-February the team will be going back to the 12 strategic objectives and invited the Board to participate if available.

BREAK

BREAK

The Board took a short break to transition into the second half of the meeting, and reconvened at 8:06 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT

PUBLIC COMMENT

Amy Green, an Oak Park resident and parent of a BRAVO student shared how valuable the BRAVO program is to the students. She noted that the program gives her child a place to be herself. She has learned about dance, music choreography and being a woman from different times. Green shared that students always get a role, but they have to audition which takes them out of their comfort zones. Greed shared that people who come from other places are blown away by the instruction the kids receive in this program. She noted that the bar is set really high for them. Green shared that the community understands how valuable the BRAVO program is. She noted that the program is known nationally and is a gift to the community.

David Osta an Oak Park resident and member of the Ad Hoc GTD Committee shared that he is a professional educator, proud graduate of the district and parent of two District 97 students. Osta wanted to provide voice from the Ad Hoc GTD Committee. He shared that the district's work on this topic is still very incomplete. He suggested that a continuation of the Ad Hoc GTD Committee or something like it is needed to get to the level of depth, detail, and consensus required to advance this topic.

Osta noted that the memo in the Board packet on this topic does not address the changes made to the GTD program for third graders, an update on the implementation, or plans to evaluate the changes, nor future plans. He suggested that the memo was too general and the program has not progressed much since the district announced changes last spring.

Osta noted that the memo in the Board packet was not shared as a courtesy with the GTD Ad Hoc Committee members, and they were not informed that this topic would be coming to the Board this evening. He noted that the committee did not have sufficient time for applying the processes to discussion or problem-solving, and the memo does not reflect the discussion held during their meetings. Although it was one of the agreed upon norms of the committee, the considerations the Board received this evening were not the product of consensus of the committee. Osta expressed concern about the process and suggested that the memo reflects the ideas of the district administration chosen among the ones they preferred.

He noted that one request made to the committee was engage an independent outside evaluator to examine the changes underway this year. To his knowledge, the district administration did not respond.

Osta asked the Board to consider declaring the work to date incomplete and continuing with a process that better engages all stakeholders in developing recommendations – not considerations for the future GTD supports. He shared that he is in favor and ready to support the district's efforts to end racial and gender disparities in achievement and offered to make himself available for further discussion and support of the district's work.

PUBLIC COMMENT (Continued)

Juan Gonzalez, an Oak Park resident and Co-President of the BRAVO program shared that he has been involved with the program for 10 years. He shared that the program gave his three children self-esteem, helped to build their personalities and improve themselves. He noted that the program has other enrichment benefits as well. Gonzalez defined the program as a gem. He noted that there are program in other nations that recognize BRAVO as a gem and are trying to get involved with BRAVO. He encouraged the Board to continue on this path.

Lizzie Campbell, and Esme Fox-Robertson, both Brooks Middle School eighth graders shared a video they made that demonstrated the need for water fountain repairs at the middle school and for additional water bottle fillers. They noted the importance of drinking water daily and asked the Board to consider selling reusable water bottles to encourage the drinking of water and better hydration.

Munirah Curtis, an Oak Park resident and parent of a first graders at Whittier, shared that one of her children has Downs Syndrome and an IEP. She expressed the importance of inclusion, noting that inclusion is when a child is in the classroom and getting what they need. She expressed the importance of striving for academic excellence in both regular and special education as vital to our society.

She reported that her children were in a co-teaching classroom last year and it was a positive experience. She suggested that the district is on the right path and encouraged the Board to supply the adequate financial needs so that all children can be fully functional adults and the classrooms can be educationally rigorous.

Jason Wulkowicz, an Oak Park resident with a daughter in sixth grade at Julian Middle School thanked administration for the co-teaching plans. He shared that he attended the community meeting that was held last Saturday, and suggested that it is a great start for the district to change the mind set of having these separate tracks, looking at the whole child and eliminate some of the stigma of tracking. He reported that his daughter has a 504 plan and needs some support. He suggested that it would be wonderful for the mind shift to change the way teachers look at each student and identify what they individually need to be successful. Additionally, Wulkowicz asked the Board to consider hiring teachers of color and with disabilities.

Kate Ronan Sizemore, an Oak Park resident thanked the Board for their efforts. She reported that she moved from the city to Oak Park because of the schools, and she currently has a third grade daughter at Lincoln. Sizemore recently attended a coffee where concerns about the Lincoln student population growth and lack of support staff were discussed. Sizemore thought that this would be a topic of discussion this evening and asked the following questions;

- What does equitable rigorous instruction mean? She noted that when her daughter was in second grade she did not have access to a reading specialist, and felt that there were not enough reading supports to support her daughter. She expressed concern that her child might slip through the cracks.
- She noted that Lincoln School only has one phycologist and one nurse, and asked if the lead in the pipes have been fixed since the issue with frozen pipes occurred.

Lisa Pearah, an Oak Park resident expressed interest in knowing what the minimal degree will be for the MTSS hires and if their salaries will be according to the current schedule. If so, she questioned where the number in the report came from as it appears to be too high.

Stephanie Kiesling, an Oak Park resident and member of the CAST board shared that she had two sons who participated in CAST. She shared that CAST is a fantastic program and supports the vision of the district. Kiesling reported that she attended a Board meeting last May as a member of the CAST Council parent advisory group. She expressed concern that the memo in the Board packet for this evening that references the May meeting does not reflect what was discussed. Kiesling reported that she has kept in communication with her colleagues at BRAVO who were also at the meeting and they have agreed that these points may need clarification.

Kiesling pointed out that the memo indicates that the current CAST and BRAVO staff are to be retained for two years during which time the programs would have to find a way to support their own activities and staff. CAST and BRAVO would also be encouraged to consider options like 501c3 status. Kiesling shared that the CAST Council

PUBLIC COMMENT (Continued)

does not now, nor has it ever believed that these programs can exist without the support, in the form of staff and financial oversight provided by the district. The Council also does not feel that abandoning CAST and BRAVO to become independent organizations reflects the overwhelming support these programs have garnered in both the last two referenda.

Kiesling noted that what was decided in May was that CAST and BRAVO would explore, with the administration and the curriculum director, how they could expand their programming into the school day to support the new IB curriculum. It was recommended that an Ad Hoc Committee be formed with representatives from the Board and from the CAST and BRAVO Parent Organizations, as well as Dr. Evans and Laurie Campbell, and that they would meet to discuss this topic. Kiesling shared that the organizations continue to be willing to help make this happen, but have not been invited to do so.

She reported that at no time since last May has there been any discussion by actual representatives of all the parties involved that would ever conclude that CAST and BRAVO could become autonomous, noting that this option was never on the table and is not tenable. The organizations continue to be excited about expanding these unique programs into the school day. Kiesling requested that the memo in the Board packet be corrected, or that CAST and BRAVO be allowed to offer a summary that is more inclusive of the understanding of all relevant parties.

ACTION ITEMS

5.1 APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA

Spatz moved, seconded by Datta, that the Board of Education, District 97, approve the consent agenda as presented.

- 5.1.1 Approval of Bill List
- 5.1.2 Approval of Personnel
- 5.1.3 Approval of Three Additional Board Meetings

A brief discussion took place about the January 30, 2018 date. It was noted that the Board will be attending a training hosted by District 90 on that date and since the majority of the Board will be in attendance, a special meeting will need to be held.

Ayes: Spatz, Datta, O’Connor, Liebl, Spurlock, and Broy
 Nays: None
 Absent: Breymaier
 Motion passed.

5.2.1 APPROVAL OF SALARY REVISIONS

Broy moved, seconded by O’Connor, that the Board of Education, District 97, approve the New Pay Rates for Substitute Teaching Assistants, Playground Supervisors, Custodial Substitutes, and Lunchroom Workers as presented.

Ayes: Broy, O’Connor, Datta, Spatz, Liebl, and Spurlock
 Nays: None
 Absent: Breymaier
 Motion passed.

5.2.2 ACCEPTANCE OF PUBLIC WORKS AGREEMENT EXTENSION

Spatz moved, seconded by Broy, that the Board of Education, District 97, approve the Public Works extension IGA with the Village of Oak Park as presented.

Ayes: Spatz, Broy, Datta, O’Connor, Liebl, and Spurlock
 Nays: None
 Absent: Breymaier
 Motion passed.

5.3.1 APPOINTMENT OF BROOKS PRINCIPAL

Broy moved, seconded by Datta, that the Board of Education, District 97, appoint April Capuder as the Principal for Brooks Middle School at a salary of \$124,052 effective July 1, 2018 for the 2018-2019 school year.

Laurie Campbell reported on the search process, noting that the district received 35 applications for the Brook Principal position. Out of those, they screened 13 and six were interviewed by staff and parents. From that step, three finalists were invited to meet with the Cabinet team. During that step, applicants completed a performance task and shared their 90 day transition plan. Campbell acknowledged the interview team. Campbell introduced April Capuder as the recommended candidate for the position and shared some of her qualification.

Ayes: Broy, Datta, Spatz, O’Connor, Liebl, and Spurlock
Nays: None
Absent: Breymaier
Motion passed.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

CONCLUDING ITEMS

BOARD REMARKS

The Board was reminded that the Collaboration IGA Governing Board meeting is scheduled for February 28, 2017 and the agenda will be sent out for review soon. Board members were asked to let member Spatz and Dr. Kelley know if they had any questions or comments regarding the agenda.

It was noted that the EDI team is meeting on Thursday and another meeting is scheduled in February.

AGENDA MAINTENANCE

The draft agenda for January 30, 2018, January 31, 2018 and February 13, 2018 meetings were reviewed and revised.

It was noted that President Spurlock will need to leave the January 31, 2018 meeting around 8:15 p.m.

It was reported that the CCE committee met. They are excited about the upcoming training on March 14, 2018 with the Board and spent their time together planning for the meeting. The training will focus around the equity policy engagement.

Dr. Kelley noted that the definition of equity was revisited in the vision brochure (page 10) because concern was raised about the need to address students with disabilities. Additionally, it was noted that Dr. Kamm will be meeting with parents who poses skills in the field of equity. Concern was expressed that the CCE should be made aware of changes made to the draft equity policy as it might impact the direction of the March 14, 2018 training.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to conduct, President Spurlock declared the meeting adjourned at 8:57 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Board President

Board Secretary