

**Official Minutes of the
Oak Park Board of Education District 97
260 Madison Street, Oak Park
June 29, 2021 Special Meeting**

This meeting was held in-person and virtually using Zoom during the time of the Coronavirus pandemic. One or more of the board members met in-person and everyone else were virtual.

ROLL CALL

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

Present: Kim, Hurd Johnson, Kearney, Ross Dribin, Moore, Spurlock, Duffy
Absent: Lonya Boose, Board Secretary
Also Present: Dr. Griff Powell Interim Superintendent, Amanda Siegfried

EXECUTIVE SESSION

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SESSION

Spurlock moved, seconded by Hurd Johnson that the Board move into executive session for the purpose of Appointment, Employment, Compensation, Discipline, Performance, or Dismissal of specific Employees of the District. 5 ILCS 120/2(C)(1), at 6:02 p.m.

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

OPEN SESSION

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Hurd Johnson motioned that the board move into Open Session at 7:09p.m. The motion was seconded by Moore. All members of the Board were in agreement. The Board reconvened in Open Session at 7:29 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT

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COMMENT

Dear District 97 Board of Education,

I am asking that the district takes at least one day each year to educate students on gender identity and sexual orientation.

My name is Hannah Gordon. I am a student who graduated 8th grade this year and I noticed that during my time at Beye and Julian there was a significant lack of education on LGBTQIA+ themes and identities.

Many students in our district have a very limited knowledge of these concepts despite the number of kids who identify under LGBTQIA+ labels. I may have educated myself on these topics, but not every student will go out of their way to do that.

Kids, especially middle school kids, need to know what it means to be gay, or trans, or ace, because they need to know what they're going through. Kids who are LGBTQ may not identify with their birth sex or not experience attraction the way that their peers or adults tell them is "normal." They end up confused as to what is "wrong" with them. This can cause a whole ton of other issues with mental health. Imagine a trans boy wondering why their body feels wrong, why they don't fit in, and why they feel completely alienated in their own skin. Or a bisexual kid who can't figure out why their sexuality is "broken" and they like both girls and boys. The best way to solve this issue is education. Education on this topic will help

prevent homophobia and transphobia in the next generation of students, since hate tends to stem from misunderstanding and lack of education.

All I ask is that the district takes one day a year, minimum, to educate students on LGBTQ+ identities so that they can know that what they or their peers are going through has a name and that they aren't alone. The best case scenario that I would really love to see is an LGBTQ+ unit added to the health class curriculum at our middle schools. This curriculum would need to teach about these topics: gender identity and sexual orientation. A person's identity is such a huge part of them. To not be educated on that is completely unacceptable, in my opinion. I strongly believe that this needs to change.

Here are some links to educational resources provided by The Trevor Project that could be used to teach about LGBTQIA+ topics such as gender identity and sexual orientation:

A Guide to Being an Ally to Transgender and Nonbinary Youth - (a resource on gender identity) -

<https://www.thetrevorproject.org/resources/trevor-support-center/a-guide-to-being-an-ally-to-transgender-and-nonbinary-youth/>

How to Support Bisexual Youth - (A resource about sexual orientation) -

<https://www.thetrevorproject.org/resources/how-to-support-bisexual-youth/>

The Coming Out Handbook (A resource that goes into much greater detail about gender Identity, sexual orientation, coming out, healthy relationships, self-care, and a page of other resources and organizations) -

<https://www.thetrevorproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Coming-Out-Handbook.pdf>

Sincerely,
Hannah Gordon

ACTION ITEM

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Approval of Beye Co-Interim Principals: Cheryl Sullivan and Sheila Carter for 2021-2022

Moore moved, seconded by Ross Dribin that the Board of Education of Oak Park Elementary School District 97 approves the appointment of Beye Co-Interim Principals Cheryl Sullivan and Sheila Carter for 2021-2022 School Year.

Ayes: Kim, Kearney, Moore, Spurlock, Ross Dribin, Hurd Johnson, Duffy

Nays: None

Absent: None

Motion passed

CONCLUDING ITEMS

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ITEMS

BOARD REMARKS

Board mutually decides to further hear from three Search Firms. These Search Firms would be present at the July Board Meeting, and present in open session, their proposals for District 97 Superintendent Search.

1. BWP & Associates
2. School Exec Connect
3. Hazard, Young, Attea, and Associates (HYA)

ADJOURNMENT

Spurlock moved, seconded by Duffy that the meeting be adjourned. There being no further business to conduct, President Kim declared the meeting adjourned at 8:02p.m.

Board President

Board Secretary