

Official Minutes of the
Oak Park Board of Education District 97
260 Madison Street, Oak Park
November 16, 2021 Regular 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.

President Kim called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: Kim, Kearney, Ross Dribin, Hurd Johnson, Kinhal, Spurlock, Moore

Absent: None

Also Present: Interim Superintendent Dr. Griff Powell, Associate Superintendent of Education Felicia Starks Turner, Interim Senior Director of Human Resources Cathie Pezanoski, Senior Director of Technology Michael Arensdorff, Senior Director of Communications Amanda Siegfried, Chief Academic and Accountability Officer Ebony Lofton, Senior Director of Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment Tawanda Lawrence, Senior Director of Equity Carrie Kamm, Senior Director of Buildings & Grounds Jeanne Keane, Senior Director of Finance Patrick King, Security and School Safety Manager Jim Hackett, Rob Grossi, Mike Powell, Michael Colucci, Fred Arkin, Dr. Theresa Chapple Director of Oak Park Public Health and Lonya Boose Board Secretary.

EXECUTIVE
SESSION

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Spurlock moved, seconded by Moore that the Board move into executive session for the purpose of Appointment, Employment, Compensation, Discipline, Performance, or Dismissal of Specific Employees, Collective Negotiating 5 ILCS 120/2(C)(1)(2) at 5:40 p.m.

OPEN SESSION

OPEN SESSION

President Kim motioned that the Board move into Open Session at 6:55 p.m. All present members of the Board were in agreement. The Board convened in Open Session at 7:03 p.m.

RESOLUTION

3. Resolution – School Board Appreciation Day

Proclamation School Board Members Day
November 15, 2021

WHEREAS, The District 97 School Board members are elected to sit in trust for our diverse communities, and in that capacity are charged with meeting the community's expectations and aspirations for the public education of their children; and

WHEREAS, The District 97 School Board members are entrusted with the guardianship and wise expenditure of scarce tax dollars, and they are responsible for maintaining and preserving the buildings, grounds, and other areas of the school district that the community has put in their trust; and

WHEREAS, The District 97 School Board members are responsible for providing leadership that ensures a clear, shared vision of public education for our schools, that sets high standards for the education of all students, and requires the effective and efficient operation of their districts; and

WHEREAS, The District 97 School Board members adopt public policy to give voice to that leadership and employ a superintendent to administer board policy, and are also responsible for the regular monitoring of the district's performance and compliance with state policy; and

WHEREAS, The District 97 School Board members selflessly volunteer countless hours to public service by attending board meetings, committee meetings and community meetings with no compensation; and

WHEREAS, Decisions made by school Board members directly impact the quality of life in our community, placing them at the front line of American democracy;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Administrators of Oak Park Elementary School District 97, that we proclaim November 15, 2021, as "School Board Members Day" as a way to honor President Jung Kim, Vice President Venus Hurd Johnson, and Board members Shyla Kinhal, Gavin Kearney, Cheree Moore, Nancy Ross Dribin and Holly Spurlock who devote their time and energy for the successful education of our children.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

PUBLIC COMMENT

I am a 23 year Oak Park resident, parent, and now grandparent of students in District 97. I am a retired pediatric nurse practitioner that has volunteered as a vaccinator for the Covid vaccines clinics both for the adults and recently for the pediatric clinics. I want to commend Dr. Chappell for her dedication and organizational skills. I have truly enjoyed working with her.

Thank you,
Lynn Heald

As an infectious disease epidemiologist and mom, I wanted to congratulate and thank the Department of Public Health and D97 on the amazing vaccine clinics for the 5-11 year old kids last week. This has been a long and trying pandemic. The vaccine clinics were a breath of relief, that our kids were finally getting protected - and a lovely chance to see our community come together. Unfortunately, there will be more challenges ahead this winter, as the data from Europe clearly show. I look forward to D97 and our strong Public Health leadership working together to keep our children as safe as possible and to adjust mitigations as appropriate and based on data.

Thank you,
Dr. Maria Pyra, MPH PhD

As a physician (pediatrician), parent, and member of this community, I am asking the Board to extend Dr. Chapple-McGruder's temporary authorization to make reasonable rules, regulations and orders related to COVID mitigation measures. This pandemic is unfortunately not over, and I have been extremely grateful to be living in Oak Park under the guidance of Dr. Chapple.

Dr. Chapple has been proactive and professional in leading Oak Park, following the science to promote the health of this community and keep the residents of Oak Park safe. She has made difficult choices, when necessary, in order to do her job with the utmost integrity and adherence to recommended guidelines.

Thank you.
Sincerely, Dr. Robin Kalish

Hello D97 Board and fellow Community Members,

As a parent of a D97 student and a medical professional, I want to give Dr. Theresa Chapple and her team kudos for an amazing job at the vaccine clinics last week. Also, I greatly appreciate all the volunteers who provided their time and enthusiastic support.

For busy parents, the clinics allowed us to avoid the headache of trying to find a vaccine location, schedule a time, arrange transportation/time off work. By having a set date at a local school, a lot of the administrative work was averted.

For children, they were in a familiar environment with friendly faces both of the staff and their friends. My daughter was actually excited to get a shot (until the needle came out)! She especially liked Pawfficer Howie and said that next time she wants to pet him more.

Sincerely,
Taylor Heald-Sargent

End Virtual School for Children under 8!

Why do we continue to apply High School processes to young children. The APA and Teacher's Associations all agree that a lot of screen time is unhealthy and not educational for young children. Reports include screen time being bad for eyesight, hindering mental health, and harms brain development.

At the beginning of Covid I, like many other women, were unable to continue to work to enable teachers and children the ability to continue their jobs and education. I was in full support. But no more. I can no longer be amenable to processes suited for adults and older children.

Young children should not spend their educational careers tied to electronics. If there is a quarantine, then why are we not supporting children doing healthy educational activities, resting, or healing? Honor their educational assignments with excused absences and credit for being there.

We do not want your ipads in our homes. My 6 year old was able to access a video of a dog being hit with a brick, I accidentally undressed once in front of a class, and ipads pick up what we are saying in our home. That was proven in Congress. This is unethical, untenable, and shows a disregard of pediatric medical, psychological, and educational recommendations.

The district is bound to do what is best for our children. Honor your promises.

Tara Humphrey

It's recently come to my attention that the OPDPH was granted emergency *temporary* authority in all pandemic related regulations. It is my understanding that that authority was set to expire yesterday, at which point any decisions related to pandemic measures, including masking, testing, and quarantine regulations in schools, would have to be agreed upon by both the village board AND the health department. The expiration was not listed on the board's agenda, and plans for what would happen after the expiration were not conveyed. After community pushback, it appears the village has decided to allow the temporary authority to continue, as long as the governor declares IL to be under a state of emergency.

It is crucial that Dr. Chappel, who is an epidemiologist, continue to have the authority to make timely decisions regarding outbreaks, variants, and other mitigation measures. I hope that D97 will openly and loudly support Dr. Chappel, condemn all harassment of Dr. Chappel (because she has been repeatedly

threatened and harassed by parents who are unhappy with her enforcement of ongoing regulations), and ask the Village Board to enact policy changes commensurate with the other three health departments in Cook County (all of whom have automatic authority in this situation).

Respectfully, Kelley Clink

Hello. My name is Gary Arnold. I am a resident of Oak Park. I am a biker. I am a driver. I am a pedestrian on the streets of Oak Park. As of this Fall, I am also the parent of a District 97 Student. I urge District 97 to underscore the urgency of transportation dangers in Oak Park and to work with the Village of Oak Park on a Vision Zero Plan that creates a path to zero traffic accidents.

Thank you, Gary Arnold

Dear District 97 Board of Education,

We would like to express our support of Dr. Chapple. As parents and volunteers, collectively we participated in many of the pediatric vaccine clinics last week. We witnessed firsthand how thoughtfully and efficiently the team at the OP Health Department worked to vaccinate thousands of Oak Park children. It's been a herculean effort, and we are so fortunate to have the leadership of an expert like Dr. Chapple at the helm.

We also appreciate all the unseen work she has done leading up to the clinics. We know her job is difficult, and at this time when all public health officials are under attack nationwide, our community is no different. We are grateful for all the difficult decisions she has made, and the hardship she has endured, to keep our children safe. We also appreciate the strong supportive statement from District 97 at last night's Village Board meeting. Thank you, Dr. Chapple, and thank you to the D97 Board, administration, teachers, and staff. This has been such a challenging time, and we appreciate you.

Sincerely,

Amy Butler, Anne McNamee, Elle Morton, Erin Sowers, and Suzanne Feeney

Bike Walk Oak Park: Statement to D97 School Board

After a scary and sobering week of traffic violence across Oak Park – two crashes involving students; one involving a D97 employee; and a vehicle crash into the front of a longtime family-owned bicycle shop – Bike Walk Oak Park (BWOP) calls on D97 to develop a plan for pedestrian and bicycle safety around schools. As parents and community members who chose Oak Park for, among other things, our neighborhood schools, BWOP volunteers are eager to work with D97 to make the schools and their surrounding environments safer. We have an enormous opportunity right now to improve safety for students and people walking and biking, increase opportunities for people to be physically active, make it easier for kids to get to and from school, and make streets safer for everyone, regardless of how they get around.

We applaud the steps the District has taken to make the physical environment of schools safer: curb bump-outs at Irving and temporary road closures at Beye and Lincoln are examples of places where small-scale improvements can have a big impact on student safety. However, as evidenced by this week's incidents, our streets are still not safe; there are many opportunities to do more, and BWOP calls on the District to take a proactive stance on traffic violence around schools.

We propose that the D97 Trustees take the following steps to make commuting to school safer. We are eager to lend our support in the form of expertise, technical knowledge, educational programs, capacity,

or school-specific advocacy and are available for conversations with the board or individual members about how we can best work to make D97 schools more safely accessible.

1. Vision Zero for Youth Commitment: The Village is currently making a commitment to the ambitious goal of eliminate traffic fatalities and serious injuries, Vision Zero. A growing group of cities have opted to focus on improving safe walking and bicycling in school zones and other places where youth are present. Starting with youth also can be the spark that creates community support for a broader Vision Zero program. The Vision Zero for Youth initiative encourages communities and their elected officials to focus safety improvements and efforts to slow traffic speeds where children and youth travel.

2. Infrastructure improvement toolkits: BWOP volunteers (many of whom are also parents at D97 schools) can help PTOs identify safety improvements to their specific schools, with a focus on ‘low hanging fruit,’ or ‘rapid deployment’ infrastructure (the Irving bump-outs are an example of rapid deployment infrastructure). These types of safety improvements can be done more quickly and affordably than traditional infrastructure projects, without compromising on safety outcomes. Temporary Road Closures (as at Beye) are an example of temporary mitigations that can have big effects. Closing down a section of roadway adjacent to schools at the beginning and end of the school day using temporary barriers has the effect of dispersing traffic rather than concentrating it around schools. ‘School Streets’ programs have been introduced in the UK and have met with substantial success.

3. Safe Routes to School (SRTS): SRTS is a national program (part of the Department of Transportation). Here in Illinois, a state-administered SRTS grant program exists for making infrastructure improvements around schools. BWOP is eager to lend our technical and grant-writing expertise to apply for future rounds of SRTS funding, which can then be used to fund the safety improvements identified in the Infrastructure Improvement Toolkits recommended above.

4. Education and Outreach: The District has participated in Walk to School Day in the past, but the majority of students in Oak Park go to their neighborhood schools and could be walking or biking to school throughout the year. To support student commutes, the Village should consider policies to encourage walking and biking. As it currently stands, school policies are inconsistent on the topic of walking and cycling to school. Some D97 elementary schools explicitly discourage students from cycling, and do not offer bicycle racks/safe storage. Adopting a consistent policy stating that students may walk or bike to school and encouraging this over driving would be an easy first step to addressing road safety around schools. (Also Jenna’s text about education in school.)

The spate of traffic incidents has served as a wake-up call to our community and to the BWOP team, and we are eager to ensure that we are working with D97 board members, administrators and PTOs to address the issues that these crashes have laid bare. We are eager to support and partner with D97 and look forward to working with you.

Best,
The BWOP Advocacy Team

Dear School Board Members,

I'm reaching out to you as a parent of two D97 children. Last week I had the pleasure of volunteering at three of the vaccination clinics in our elementary schools. It was a true expression of community and made me a proud Oak Parker. I appreciate all the volunteers, D97, village and school staff. It is a truly

remarkable feat to have 90% of our 5-11 year-olds, including my children, vaccinated in less than two weeks after the vaccine was approved for this age group. Having seen the clinics first hand, I credit our Health Department and its nationally recognized Director for being able to mobilize the clinics, coordinate the efforts of multiple state and local agencies, and procuring the actual vials to administer. It is a commendable achievement.

Unfortunately, we are still in the throes of this pandemic and our transmission continues to remain in high territory. In fact, we had a solid six weeks of substantial transmission only to see a jump back to high transmission. I want to reiterate my support of the board continuing to collaborate and work with the public health department in regards to rules around quarantine, masking and other mitigations to ensure our children remain safe. As we enter the winter and are inside for longer periods, this airborne virus will continue to be a threat. I sincerely hope that we can get back to low transmission before we start discussing removing mitigations.

Thank you for your service,

Regards, Ranga Bodla (Oak Park resident and parents of two Holmes Hawks)

Hello-

Dear Board Members:

I am writing to share my support for Dr Theresa Chapple-McGruder, who was the driving force behind the extraordinary D97 vaccine clinics held last week. As a pediatrician and parent, I want to recognize her effort and the District for their roles in this achievement. We are fortunate to have a professional with her expertise advising D97 during a pandemic. She has been blamed unfairly for decisions that were made by D97, such as denying the test to stay plan. Overall, I appreciate that both Dr. Chapple-McGruder, the D97 Board and the Administration have done the best they could, in accordance with scientific consensus and government policy, during these difficult times.

Thank you, Kelley Staley

I think we can all agree the past 18 months have been very challenging. The federal response was chaotic, confusing and insufficient. When our national leadership failed us, we looked to our community leaders and they responded, working hard to make the best decisions for the health and safety of our community. Six months ago, our village hired a highly-regarded, highly-educated, highly-experienced expert in epidemiology and public health to lead our community through the pandemic.

When Dr. Chapple-McGruder moved here, she called it her dream job in her dream community. She was so excited to live and serve here, to care for this community, and what an incredible job she has done. Because of Dr. Chapple-McGruder's efforts, I have felt safe in Oak Park, and I know I am not alone. Most recently I am celebrating the success of the school clinics where thousands of students received their first dose of the long-awaited vaccine.

It has not been easy for Dr. Chapple. She has suffered threats, screaming, name-calling, investigations, lawsuits, demeaning emails, dismissal of her credentials. People have showed up on her doorstep, angrily confronting her in front of her children. She has been accosted on the street. She pauses when she meets someone new, anxious about revealing her name, unsure of what anger might follow.

Those of us who support Dr. Chapple-McGruder, and her care for our community, are now speaking up. I greatly appreciated the D97 Board statement in support of Dr. Chapple read at the Village Board of Trustee meeting last night. I also want to acknowledge the ongoing efforts of the D97 Board,

Administration and staff to keep our children safe. I recognize how challenging the past 18 months have been for you, and I am grateful for all you do.

Thank you, Laura Sakiyama

Dear Board of Education.

My name is Greg Kolar and I am a member of FORC. I write to you this evening as the memo of the Tentative Tax Levy does not include that I was a vote against FORC's recommendation to capture all of CPI and tax New Growth in the upcoming 2021 Levy request. I should have made my case at the FORC meeting, but after a long meeting dragging on because of the Peer Group Analysis I didn't want to further extend the meeting out much longer. I voted no because when final numbers came out in regards to the 2020 Levy, D97 got an extra \$600K due to "new growth" that wasn't expected. As presented in tonight's levy we always estimate that New Growth will bring in 300K and due to the mechanics of how the Levy Request paperwork was filled out and a strong year of New Growth, roughly One Million dollars was added to the levy from new growth.

My request tonight is simple. Lower the Levy Request from 84,605,000 to 84,005,000 which in essence excludes from this year's levy and future levy's the extra \$600K that was not anticipated in last year's levy. While not much in the grand scheme of things it's a gesture that this board is cognizant of the burden to the residents of Oak Park. If anyone followed last year's levy, the Township got an extra \$70,000 in last year's levy due to mechanics of the Levy Calculation and they made sure to correct it this year and adjusted their levy for 2021 accordingly. Correcting the extra in the current year is the cleanest route forward as outside of one current board member still around I'm sure most don't remember the 2017 Referendum and the extra amount that has been permanently baked into the levy request to this day.

Thank you for your consideration.

5. ACTION ITEMS

5.1 APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA

Spurlock moved, seconded by Moore that the Board of Education, of Oak Park Elementary School District 97, approves the consent agenda as presented.

- 5.1.1 Approval of Minutes from October 26, 2021 Board Meeting
- 5.1.2 Bill List
- 5.1.3 Personnel
- 5.1.4 Authorization to Pay Bills and Hire
- 5.1.5 Supporting Organizations Approval
- 5.1.6 Disposal of Materials

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Motion passed.

6. ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

ADMINISTRATIVE
ITEMS

6.1 Middle School Sports Proposal - Wrestling

(available online)

Presented by: Little Huskies Head Coach Michael Colucci, OPRF Girls Head Coach Fred Arkin and Executive Director of Beat the Streets Coach Mike Powell.

Summary:

We envision a program that can provide young teens guidance and direction during a pivotal time in their lives. Across the country fantastic results with young men and women in SEL and academic growth have been shown from participating in after-school activities. We aim to target all students, with an emphasis on our population of marginalized students. This team will include a co-op of students from Brooks and Julian.

Brooks & Julian Survey of Interest Results:

Interest: 17 yes (5.7%), 53 maybe (17.9%) combined total 23.6% of 296 responses

Gender identity breakdown shows interest from many marginalized groups

- NEXT STEPS:

- Identify students in the yes and maybe groups and determine academic and further demographic information
- Track data during season on SEL and Academic growth

Need:

Female wrestling is one of the fastest growing sports in the world. The NCAA has been looking to start female wrestling across all divisions. At OPRF a female student earned a scholarship to wrestle. Fostering this experience in Middle School will increase female students' chances of scholarships to attend college. There are no tryouts in wrestling. It is a sport that anyone regardless of gender identity, size, ability and body type can prosper.

Program Needs & Budget:

- 2 coaching stipends per OPTA Contract
- 2 wrestling mats
- Wrestling storage
- Transportation costs
- IESA entry/annual fees
- Custodial cost

Middle school programs in the area practice before and after school. Locations vary from schools to cafeterias, gymnasiums, stages or hallways. Some schools schedule practice at area high schools where space is limited.

Why now, in District 97, we are striving towards equitable experiences for our students. A wrestling team will not only bring together students of diverse backgrounds, but can directly impact SEL and academic performance. This investment will help our students become role models for peers and lead to positive interactions between our two middle schools.

6.2 Amended Draft FY23 School Calendar

Cathie Pezanoski presented to the Board of Education, the proposed changes to the FY23 calendar. These changes are due to additional holidays that are added to the school year, that previously were not included in the calendar that was submitted to the state for approval. These changes also allow District 97 Calendar to be more aligned with District 200.

7. SPECIAL REPORTS

7.1 Special Report w/ Action: Presentation of Tentative Tax Levy

(Documents Available Online)

On November 16, 2021, Administration presented the proposed tax levy for the 2021 levy year. On that date, the Board of Education will be asked to approve the tentative tax levy and to direct publication of the notice of the tax levy hearing to be held on December 14, 2021, which is the same date the Board will adopt the final tax levy.

FORC met on November 3, 2021 and recommended that the Board of Education approve a tax levy that would capture the allowable 1.4% growth allowed under the property tax extension limitation laws (PTELL). Please note that you will only be approving the tentative levy on that date and the final tax levy approved in December can be different from the tentative levy.

The tax levy will be recommended with consideration of maintaining long-term fiscal and academic stability with the ability to address future capital projects within the District's fund balance policy of maintaining 3-6 months' worth of operating expenditure reserves.

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Motion passed.

7.2 Board Meetings & Live Streaming Update

Michael Arensdorff updates the Board and Community on status of livestreaming Board Meetings and school events. In the near future, Board meetings will resume at the Board Table, and stream live on the Districts YouTube channel. The technology department is continuing to test audio and video, plans to begin livestreaming with January's meeting of the Board.

Brooks and Julian Middle Schools have already begun set up for livestreaming Sports and Music & Arts performances. More information will be shared with parents as this goes live.

7.3 School Update

Nearly 2,300 District 97 students ages 5-11 years received first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine at school clinics November 9-12, 2021. Second dose clinics will be held November 30, 2021 - December 3, 2021. Individuals are considered fully vaccinated two weeks or 14 days after second dose. Fully vaccinated students do not have to quarantine unless they are symptomatic.

Thank You's to the follow people that collaboratively assisted the District with student vaccinations.

Dr. Chapple-McGruder for providing vision and leadership, and securing thousands of vaccines for our students.

Oak Park Interim Village Manager Lisa Shelley, Deputy Fire Chief Joseph Terry, Pawfficer Howie, and the entire staff at the Village of Oak Park and Oak Park Department of Public Health.

District 97 Nurses and Community Medical Professionals who served as vaccinators.

District 97 Principals, Social Workers, Staff and Community Volunteers who filled key roles to ensure clinics ran smoothly.

District 97 School PTO's for providing prizes for students and meals for volunteers.

Safety and Security Manager Jim Hackett, our entire Buildings and Grounds team, and everyone at Central Office who helped plan and execute the clinics.

Mitigation Update

Middle school students may attend indoor athletic events regardless of vaccination status as long as social distancing can be maintained and masks are worn at all times. If this cannot be maintained, students will be required to show either proof of full vaccination, or a time-stamped negative COVID-19 PCR or antigen test within 48 hours of the school event. All adult spectators will need to show proof of full vaccination or a time-stamped negative COVID-19 PCR or antigen test within 48 hours of the event.

We will continue to track community transmission and internal metrics including school vaccination rates as we consider safety mitigations for the remainder of the school year.

8. BOARD ASSIGNMENTS

BOARD
ASSIGNMENTS

Peer Group Analysis Report (Presented at FORC)

Dr. Ebony Lofton and Dr. Tawanda Lawrence provided an examination of IAR Performance Root Causes to include:

1. Alignment to Illinois Learning Standards
2. IAR Prioritization
3. Test Refusals
4. Multiple Data Sources
5. Instructional Practice

After discussion on the above root causes, both Dr. Lofton and Dr. Lawrence touch on Community Support. By continuing to stress the importance of IAR while building support for the administration of the assessment. Also, supporting schools as they seek to understand root causes associated with test refusal, and partnering with the District as work is done to increase academic performance measures.

CLAIM meets 2nd Wednesday of each month. At the last meeting, ED-RED presented. Elections that typically take place in April are now in June. Item of interest, Black Caucus will release their report that combines legislature and guidance as we plan to move forward with the forum. Date is still pending and will be shared once confirmed.

OPEF had a good meeting on Strategic Planning.

Collaboration will meet tomorrow, November 17, 2021 via zoom.

OPRF Community Council met last week, discussion centered around change in curriculum for incoming freshman.

9. CONCLUDING ITEMS

CONCLUDING
ITEMS

9.1 BOARD REMARKS

Superintendent Search Update

On November 30, 2021 the Board will hold a special meeting in closed session. Durning this meeting the Districts Search Firm will present the Board with the candidate slate. Additional information will be provided as the Board continues through this process.

IASB Delegate Assembly Discussion (continued from 10/26/2021)

The Board went through all the resolutions that are up for vote at the Joint Conference, and provided its delegate, Venus Hurd Johnson, with consensus on vote for each of the items listed.

AGENDA MAINTENANCE

The draft agenda for the November 30, 2021 meeting was reviewed.

10. ADJOURNMENT

ADJOURNMENT

Kearney moved, seconded by Hurd Johnson that the meeting be adjourned. There being no further business to conduct, President Kim declared the meeting adjourned at 10:18 p.m.

Board President

Board Secretary