

Oyster River Cooperative School Board

Regular Meeting Minutes

August 2, 2023

DRAFT

SCHOOL BOARD PRESENT: Denise Day, Brian Cisneros, Dan Klein, Heather Smith, Matt Bacon, Tom Newkirk, Giana Gelsey

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE:

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT: Dr. Morse, Suzanne Filippone, Amy Ransom, Rebecca Noe, Bill Sullivan, Alida Carter, Misty Lowe

STAFF PRESENT:

GUEST PRESENT:

ABSENT:

I. CALLED TO ORDER at 7:00 PM by Chair Denise Day.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Giana Gelsey made a motion to approve the agenda as written, 2nd by Tom Newkirk. Motion passed 7-0.

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS – None provided.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Heather Smith made a motion to approve the July 17th, 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes, 2nd Matt Bacon.

Heather Smith made the following revision:

On page 1, under the second paragraph of Giana Gelsey's revision, change the word "brining" to "bringing" in item #3.

Motion passed with correction 7-0.

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS, COMMENDATIONS AND COMMENTS

A. District

Principal Misty Lowe of Mast Way informed the Board that summer workshops and planning are going well. Also, the following building projects are on track for completion this month: a new shed, repairs to the parking lot, replacement of air handlers, and the renovation of a cafeteria wall. She let families know that student registration is underway and if there are any questions, they should call the school's front office. In a few weeks, teachers will send home personalized letters introducing themselves. New family tours will be held on Monday, August 21st from 9:00-9:30 and 1:00-1:30 and on Wednesday, August 21st from 2:00-2:30 and 5:00-5:30. A meet and greet opportunity for students to meet their teachers and see their classrooms will be advertised soon, as well as a PTO networking event for families.

Principal Rebecca Noe of ORHS announced that orchestra teacher Andrea von Oeyen is a semi-finalist for Teacher of the Year. Counselors will be back in the building starting August 21st and they will be available by appointment to discuss class schedules and answer questions.

Please note the following dates for August:

11th – Football practice begins.

14th – All other sports' practices begin.

16th – "Career/College Planning 101" for students applying to jobs/colleges. Students can attend one or both sessions from 8-11am or 12-3pm. Registration with a school email is required, see district website.

17th – “Welcome to High School” info session for students and parents from 1-3pm or 5-7pm.

25th – “Freshmen Orientation/Field Day” from 11:30-3:00pm.

30th – First day of school.

Interim Principal Bill Sullivan introduced Interim Assistant Principal Alida Carter of ORMS. He announced that the summer ESY and R.E.A.C.H. programs held at the middle school will be ending tomorrow, and the building will be cleaned and ready for the first day of school. A New Family Orientation event will be held the morning of August 24th with more details to follow. New bleachers and a retaining wall by the turf field are under construction and should be completed for early September. A considerable amount of ledge has slowed the project down.

B. Board – None provided.

VI. DISTRICT REPORTS

A. Assistant Superintendent/Curriculum & Instruction Report(s)

Suzanne Filippone announced that the online student registration window is now open for parents/guardians, and it needs to be completed by August 16th. Families should reach out to the school the child will be attending if they need assistance or have any questions. Teacher placement letters will be sent out this Friday or early next week since technical issues have stalled the process.

Heather Smith shared her appreciation for the new email format for parent communication and felt the registration process was fast and painless. Handbooks are available to read electronically by a link in the registration page, and the Board encouraged parents to review them.

B. Superintendent’s Report

Enrollment Update/Staff Update

Dr. Morse announced that the district enrollment numbers are stable, and he has no great concerns. Regarding the elementary schools, kindergarten numbers crept up at Mast Way and Moharimet is at maximum. The 3rd and 4th grade numbers are on the edge of class size policy, so he will be monitoring these grades as we approach the start of school. The middle and high school are in great shape for class size. Overall, enrollment is in a good place and there is no need for action at this time.

Regarding staffing, Dr. Morse stated that the district is struggling to fill paraprofessional and bus driving roles, which has been a longstanding issue. Due to greater technology interests, a middle school course has been altered to be a more hands-on technology class versus a hands-on building class, and this has altered the teaching role. This type of re-envisioning could occur at the high school in the coming years. The district may contract out for the one-year Spanish position at the middle school. Dr. Morse stated that the job market has had an impact on new hires, resulting in employing three novice teachers for the upcoming school year. He said administration will be making sure the new teachers have the supports necessary to be successful. He cautioned the Board of similar hiring concerns as they move forward in the current job market.

Denise Day wondered if freshmen have the option to take an intro level woodworking class through the CTE program. Suzanne explained that the CTE programs are not offered to freshmen, nor are they designed as intro level exploratory classes. Since most are 2–3-year programs, CTEs begin during the sophomore or junior year. Dr. Morse stated that they could reach out and see if a host school would be interested in offering an intro woodworking class should it no longer be offered at the high school.

With increasing numbers in tuition students, Dr. Morse said the size and space of the middle school could make it marketable as a charter or private school. He encouraged the Board to consider this moving forward.

C. Business Administrator – None provided.

D. Student Representative Report – None provided.

E. Finance Committee Report –First meeting for the upcoming school year will be August 30th.

F. Superintendent Search Committee

Review Superintendent Search Advertisement

Heather Smith provided a draft advertisement for the hire of a new Superintendent. Giana Gelsey felt that stating the district has a DEIJ Director would be important to communicate, especially since it's a unique role. Heather said the advertisement was at its 2-page maximum and she could not fit an additional line. Dan Klein agreed with Giana that the DEIJ Director is a unique role, and he said it gives prospective candidates an idea what they will be working with. He wondered if it should replace the "School Board of the Year" achievement. Brian Cisneros said the superintendent works for the school board and the candidates would want to know if it's a good board or not. He felt the school board reputation would be more of a deciding factor for a candidate verses a DEIJ Director. Heather pointed out that a candidate would need to do background work to know details not included in the advertisement and this could be a good way of screening candidates. After further discussion, most board members voiced wanting to include the DEIJ Director on the advertisement, and Heather was able to add it by altering the formatting. Dr. Morse and several board members praised Heather's work stating the advertisement was exceptional and it truly reflected the district. Heather went over a tentative timeline for the Superintendent search.

Tom Newkirk made a motion to approve the Superintendent Search Advertisement, 2nd by Matt Bacon. Motion passed 7-0.

G. Other: None

VII. UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGENDA – Chair Denise Day asked if any items needed to be discussed separately or if a board member had any question.

Giana Gelsey asked if there was a metric used to determine stipends.

Dr. Morse explained that stipends are determined through the guild negotiations based on a variety of variables.

No items were pulled out of the consent agenda for approval.

- **ORMS One year Maternity Leave of Absence for the 2023-24 School Year.**
- **MOH Maternity Leave of Absence from Approximately November 20, 2023 through April 8, 2024.**
- **Nomination of ORHS Department Heads and Activity Stipends for the 2023-24 school year.**
- **Nomination of ORMS Activity Stipends for the 2023-24 school year.**
- **Nomination of Mast Way and Moharimet Elementary Schools Activity Stipends for the 2023-24 school year.**

Denise Day made a motion to approve the unanimous consent agenda, 2nd by Tom Newkirk. Motion passed 7-0.

VIII. DISCUSSION & ACTION ITEMS

Discussion on School Board Goals for the 2023-24 school year.

Board members discussed the 2023-24 goals and timeline, with special consideration to a new Superintendent. Tom Newkirk felt a new Superintendent would need time to learn the district before drafting a strategic plan and

suggested taking out the goal. Board members agreed to remove “Strategic Plan” from the draft. The Board discussed refining “Competency Based Learning and Reporting” and adding bullet points to “Communications” to include an implementation plan for Parent Square. The Board also added “Facility Fee” and “DEIJ Board Workshop” as separate goals. A revised draft of the 2023-24 school board goals will be available at a future meeting for further discussion.

IX. SCHOOL BOARD COMMITTEE UPDATES – None provided.

X. PUBLIC COMMENTS – None provided.

XI. CLOSING ACTIONS

A. Future Meeting Dates: August 16, 2023 – Regular School Board Meeting @ 7:00 PM MS Recital Hall
September 6, 2023 - Regular School Board Meeting @ 7:00 PM MS Recital Hall

XII. NON-PUBLIC SESSION: RSA 91-A:3 II {If Needed}

NON-MEETING SESSION: RSA 91-A2 I {If Needed}

XIII. ADJOURNMENT:

Heather Smith made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:12 pm, 2nd Giana Gelsey. Motion passed 7-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Karyn Laird, Records Keeper

The School Board reserves the right to take action on any item on the agenda.