

Oyster River Cooperative School Board
Regular Meeting Minutes

September 1, 2021

DRAFT

SCHOOL BOARD PRESENT: Michael Williams, Al Howland, Brian Cisneros, Yusi Turell, Dan Klein, Tom Newkirk, Denise Day

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE: Olivia Gass

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT: Jim Morse, Suzanne Filippone, Sue Caswell, Misty Lowe, Catherine Plourde, Jay Richard, Rebecca Noe, David Goldsmith, Josh Olstad

STAFF PRESENT:

GUEST PRESENT:

ABSENT:

I. CALL TO ORDER at 7:00 PM by Michael Williams

Michael took a moment to welcome our new student representative from Barrington and thanked her for filling this role.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Michael Williams reminded the Board that there would be a non-meeting at the end of the regular meeting for negotiations and then asked the Board if they had any changes. There were no changes.

Tom Newkirk moved to approve the agenda as written, 2nd by Brian Cisneros. Motion passed, 7-0 with the student representative voting in the affirmative.

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Giana Gelsey thanked the Board for their time and the work that they have been doing. She asked that the Mask mandate not be lifted until certain conditions were met. She also stated that she fully supported DEI in the School District. She strongly recommended that we consult with the Epidemiologist as misinformation is dangerous and that Brian misspoke about COVID and that he should recant and apologize for his statements.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Denise Day moved to approve the regular meeting minutes from August 18th, 2nd by Tom Newkirk

Corrections:

Michael Williams stated that Sue Caswell submitted a correction to a motion that was made by Brian Cisneros on page 4 which omitted the amount of \$200,000 from the original motion.

Vote on motion to approve the regular meeting minutes as amended from August 18th passed, 7-0 with the student representative voting in the affirmative.

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS, COMMENDATIONS AND COMMENTS

A. District:

Misty Lowe stated that the teacher workshop days were very successful. They are thrilled to have the students back and opening day was very successful.

David Goldsmith also expressed how well opening day went and that it was great to have all the staff back in the building. The new and returning staff in other positions was successful.

Jay Richard stated that opening day was awesome and appreciated having staff and students present. A soccer fundraiser and open house for alumni's will be on Friday, 9/24 from 3:30 – 5:00 and Saturday, 9/25 from 11:00 – 2:00 PM.

Rebecca Noe stated that she has met all of her staff and has received wonderful feedback. They ordered t-shirts with this year's motto, "Better Together" that everyone wore the first day of school. She stated the first three days have been enjoyable.

B. Board:

Brian Cisneros updated the Board on the status of the middle school completion which is at 74% complete.

Tom Newkirk relayed to the Board that he had the opportunity to speak with three separate teachers within a 15-minute time span about the individual projects that they created and implemented with our students. He encouraged our staff to create their legends.

VI. DISTRICT REPORTS

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

Suzanne relayed to the Board that the district-wide teacher workshop days were a great success. They provided staff trauma training, reviewed the required district policies that all staff need to review and sign off on. She expressed thanks to Theresa Proia for a wonderful Health Fair that had activities and prizes for all to enjoy. She stated that new this year is an on-line, on-demand opportunity for professional development for staff and that she is working with Mike Anderson. She recognized and thanked all of the principals who do a lot of work behind the scenes.

At this point Jim asked Catherine to follow Suzanne's update to inform the Board about the Covid Metric.

Catherine referenced the Metric that was in all of the Board's folders and explained the findings. She did state that we do have staffing issues right now as we are not only short 10 bus drivers, but we are short 11 para-educators. She went on to update the Board on the UNH S.A.S.S. program and where we are in getting this implemented. She informed the Board that parents need to opt-in for this program. Once the consent is approved and provided by UNH, for is approved the District will move forward informing parents.

The Board asked if another vaccine clinic would be offered, the assistance, if any from DHHS that the District is receiving, if a parent opted in, is the cost submitted to the parents insurance, and what the District nurses responsibilities were in terms of logging test results.

Catherine stated that in terms of the vaccine clinic, right now the state will contact us if we choose to do that. In terms of support from DHHS, there was very little assistance given last year and that will be the same situation this year. The parent will not need to provide their insurance information as the state through Federal Funds is covering this. The nurses will only log requests from positive Binax tests when we begin this process.

B. Superintendent's Report

Dr. Morse began by thanking the parents that followed the protocol of having their children remain at home because they had symptoms. He thanked Jay Richard for continually sending out information about the new traffic pattern that was initiated with this school year, it is working great. He also thanked Todd Selig for running the new traffic pattern in the Friday

Update. He thanked the Durham Police Department for their assistance with helping to make the new pattern run smoothly.

Opening Day Enrollment

Jim began by stating that the elementary schools numbers are relatively the same as last year, the middle school is down by approximately 30 students, and the enrollment number for the high school are up significantly by about 40 students with students coming from Singapore, Ottawa, New York and Connecticut. He is giving himself a task later in the year to send a note to these parent to ask what drew them to Oyster River. He reminded the Board that we will have the official enrollment numbers on October 1st.

When he did his opening day welcome, he was overwhelmed at the number of faculty present. It was wonderful to see them and be together for the 1st time since March 2019. Numerous staff thanked him for the opening. He went on the say that he has learned that, when praising people, be very specific. He also seen a difference compared to the opening day from last year and that the emails received have been very positive.

DEI Memo

The community memo before you has been a work in progress all summer and is pleased that the DEI work that is being done in the District is compliant with the new law. He will be sending this letter out to parents next week.

Bus Run Status

He updated the Board on the current status of the buses and that we are operating at a 2/3 capacity of staff. He gives credit to Lisa Huppe for the smooth running of our buses. The morning runs are flawless, and the afternoon runs are a little harder to accomplish and there are still a few kinks to work out.

Strategic Plan Board Review:

Curriculum Subject Area Coordinators – District (Suzanne)

Suzanne referred to the summary that is in the back up and referenced the individual columns and explained where we stand for the past year, what we are looking at achieving for the current year. The positions are in the budget and she will be filling them soon.

World Language

Dr. Morse began by stating that the power point that is in the back up is the same one that was presented by Todd Allen in November 2019, again in May of 2021 and is being resubmitted tonight. He spoke about expanding this program to the 5th grade and having the middle school shift to an A/B Schedule to bring it more in line with the current high school schedule. Three language opportunities will be offered, Chinese, French, and Spanish. Jay outlined to the Board how the schedule rotation will work.

The Board asked that the plan be refined and brought back to them.

Technology

Josh Olstad began by stating that a lot of time was spent on professional development and technology. He reviewed what has been completed, what is currently in the works and the plans for the current school year. He stated that they have worked on efficiency, device issues, and have learned about accessibility and what that looks like. He stated that they have pushed aside

infrastructure updates and storage for next year. The new middle school has a lot of details that are happening, and we are in year 4 of a 4-year lease at the middle school. These need to be replaced. Josh clarified the Board's questions.

CBE Elementary, MS and HS (Principals)

Elementary: David spoke on behalf of both him and Misty and reviewed where the schools currently are for this year.

Middle: Jay Richard spoke on their progress with CBE and that they have a culture of collaboration and the next step is educating the parents.

High: Rebecca Noe stated that they are getting to know the aspects needed for CBE and are in the process of reinvigorating those discussions.

Barrington Meeting Report

Dr. Morse informed the Board that both Michael and Tom had attended this meeting with him. It was a tough conversation at the beginning with Barrington feeling that there was a lack of communication and follow up from Oyster River. An agreement was reached outlining 5 components for consideration. The Dover Superintendent asked if Barrington was going to drop their request for a tuition discount. Barrington will go back to their Board for an answer.

Tom expressed concern that if this goes further the District will spend more money on legal representation. He suggested that this be a future agenda item.

C. Business Administrator

Sue Caswell reported out on the DOE25/MS25 and that they are due today and is looking for the Board to authorize the Chair to sign on behalf of the Board.

Brian Cisneros made a motion to authorize the Chair Michael Williams to sign both the DOE25/MS25 on behalf of the Board, 2nd by Denise Day. Motion passed, 7-0 with the student representative voting in the affirmative.

D. Student Representative Report:

Olivia reported that even though we have only been in school for a short period of time, there is a sense of normalcy across all grade levels. There is a wave of motivation and excitement with the face to face interaction. There is an increased amount of engagement in classes.

Yusi asked Olivia to tell us a little bit about herself and what she is involved in.

E. Finance Committee Report:

Al Howland reported out that the finance committee was originally scheduled to meet on 9/21 but has been moved to 9/7 at 5:30 at the high school. The main agenda item is going to be the budget goal.

F. Other: None

VII. UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGENDA

Michael Williams moved to approve the unanimous consent agenda for a Motion to affirm the hiring of two teachers: Moharimet Kindergarten Teacher and ORHS Chinese Teacher. Motion to approve ORMS Fall Coaches for the 2021-22 school year and addition of the affirmation of the Kindergarten Moharimet teacher, 2nd by Brian Cisneros. Motion passed, 7-0 with the student representative voting in the affirmative.

VIII. DISCUSSION & ACTION ITEMS

Pledge of Allegiance

Brian Cisneros asked if the pledge could be a part of the School Board Meetings and that it is fairly common at other public meetings. It could be optional for those that do not wish to participate. He did not know what the background was for it stopping as it was before his time.

Tom Newkirk briefly explained the background and referred back to the Oath of Office that all Board members sign.

The individual Board members expressed their reasoning behind their stand on the pledge of allegiance being done at a Board meeting.

Brian Cisneros made a motion to bring back the Pledge of Allegiance at School Board Meetings. There was no second. The motion was defeated.

Draft of a Board resolution on teaching about race

Tom Newkirk read his resolution and asked the Board for their thoughts and revisions. He also explained that this was reviewed by legal counsel and there were very minor changes made.

The Board members suggested some changes be made, which Tom will do, and this will be brought back to the Board for approval at the next meeting.

Policy BEDH – Public Participation at Board Meetings for Discussion

Michael Williams suggested that a Public Hearing be held for the review of this policy at the next meeting and asked Denise Day if she felt that would give the Policy Committee enough time to review and send back to the Board.

She stated that this is not enough time and Michael suggested the Public Hearing at the October 6th meeting. Denise was in agreement with that.

Michael Williams made a motion to hold a public hearing at the October 6, 2021 Board meeting for consideration of Review of the Policy BEDH – Public Participation at Board meetings, 2nd by Dan Klein. Motion passed, 7-0 with the student representative voting in the affirmative.

Brainstorming ways the Board can interact with the public

Brian Cisneros suggested that Board members be present at school open houses.

Yusi suggested that for a larger forum we stick with one big topic of discussion.

Tom suggested SEL as a topic.

Al suggested that we reengage the community in the strategic plan.

Michael suggested that we do not need to direct those types of events. We need to differentiate between Board and Administration.

Michael suggested possibly 3 a year.

Denise reminded the Board that we are still in a pandemic.

IX. SCHOOL BOARD COMMITTEE UPDATES:

The Manifest Committee met and completed the following manifests.

Payroll Manifest #2 Total is \$333,790.97

Payroll Manifest #3 Total is \$239,541.40

Payroll Manifest #4 Total \$316,798.17

Manifest #2 Total is \$325,457.41

Manifest #3 Total is \$686,925.35

Manifest #4 Total is \$3,661,359.31

Manifest #5 Total is \$2,676,903.16

Denise reminded everyone that there will be a policy meeting on September 9, 2021.

X. PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Giana Gelsey's opinion on the pledge in school is no.

XI. CLOSING ACTIONS

- A. Future Meeting Dates:** September 1, 2021 Regular Meeting – ORHS Library
September 15, 2021 Regular Meeting – ORHS Library

XII. NON-PUBLIC SESSION: RSA 91-A:3 II {if needed}

NON-MEETING SESSION: RSA 91-A2 I (a)

- Strategy or negotiations with respect to collective bargaining.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Al Howland moved to adjourn the regular meeting at 9:14pm, 2nd by Dan Klein. Motion passed, 7-0 with the student representative voting in the affirmative.

The School Board and Superintendent moved into a non-meeting session at 9:24pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Wendy DiFruscio
Executive Assistant