

Oyster River Cooperative School Board

Regular Meeting Minutes

November 2, 2022

DRAFT

SCHOOL BOARD PRESENT: Michael Williams, Denise Day, Brian Cisneros, Dan Klein, Yusi Turell, Heather Smith, Matt Bacon

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE: Paige Burt

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT: Dr. Morse, Suzanne Filippone, Catherine Plourde, Sue Caswell, Rachael Blansett, Misty Lowe, David Goldsmith, Jay Richard, Rebecca Noe

STAFF PRESENT:

GUEST PRESENT:

ABSENT:

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

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Denise Day 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

Loren Selig, a Durham resident and candidate running for state representative, announced it will be Election Day on Tuesday November 9th. She reminded the audience that is a Teacher Workshop Day and asked everyone to please come out and vote. The polls will be open from 7am - 7pm in Durham, Lee, and Madbury with the respective voting locations ORHS, Mast Way, and the Madbury Town Hall.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Denise Day moved to approve the October 19th, 2022, Regular Meeting Minutes as written, 2nd by Brian Cisneros. Motion passed 7-0 with the student representative voting in the affirmative.

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS, COMMENDATIONS AND COMMENTS

A. District

David Goldsmith of Moharimet provided an October update sharing that an all-school open house took place for the first time and students really enjoyed taking their parents on a tour of the school. It was pumpkin month and he thanked Jim Davis and Ms. Whalen for all the efforts that go into harvesting the school's pumpkins. Seeds that were planted by students last June grew into over 200 pumpkins during the summer. Students harvested and carved them in school alongside the help of 50+ volunteers. He recognized the PTO for doing an amazing job setting up and running the Pumpkin Stroll event and thanked everyone in the community for their support and participation. Parent teacher conferences will be held next Tuesday during the Teacher Workshop Day.

Misty Lowe of Mast Way said they had a tremendous outcome at their two-day open house. Approximately 300-400 people showed up to support the PTO sponsored Fall-O-Ween event and she stated how great it was having community back in the building. Misty provided the following important dates:

11/8 – Election Day (no school)/Conferences and voting will be taking place in the building

11/11 – Veteran's Day (no school)

12/7 – Coding & Cocoa (school district event)

PTO event at Clark's restaurant in Durham (10% of proceeds go to the PTO)

TBD - Family movie night

Jay Richard of ORMS announced that parent conferences will be held on Tuesday. The school will send home printed copies of progress and Star reports on Monday for parents to review prior to the conference. Jay thanked Durham town officials for their participation in a student mock vote at the town hall. During recess students are enjoying using the turf field and field hockey was the first sport to play a game on it. The counseling team is preparing for a school assembly honoring local leaders, officials, and veterans who have and continue to serve our community and country.

Rebecca Noe of ORHS announced the co-op Spirit Team will advance to state finals. The XC Girls placed 2nd and will advance to the champions along with the XC Boys. A Barrington Information Night will be held on Nov. 9th and school tours for Barrington students will take place during the day on Nov. 17th.

Rachael Blansett, district DEIJ coordinator, announced that Tona Brown has been secured for a visit to Durham March 22 – 26th. Through a partnership with UNH, she will meet with student groups, hold a master class with select students and provide an evening performance both at Oyster River and the university. The DEIJ committee held their second meeting and an agenda of items discussed is available online. The next meeting will be held on Nov. 29th at 6:30pm in the library. The teacher needs assessment responses were collected and she will be working with NH Listens to develop key themes. On Nov. 14th Rachael will be in Concord at the NH School Administration Association presenting on the growing capacity for DEIJ work along with teachers Val Wolfson and Kyra Dulmage.

Suzanne Filippone acknowledged Rebecca Noe for her completion of an Ironman on Oct. 28th that took place in Utah and congratulated her on behalf of the school district.

B. Board

Denise Day thanked the students on the DEIJ Committee, they add so much to the committee.

Matt Bacon clarified the Madbury voting location and times.

VI. DISTRICT REPORTS

A. Assistant Superintendent/Curriculum & Instruction Report(s) – None provided

B. Superintendent's Report –

Introduce Genevieve (Gen) Brown ~ Communication Specialist

Dr. Morse introduced Gen Brown, our new Communication Specialist, who started on Oct. 24th. He welcomed her to the district and shared how excited he is to have her on the team. Gen has over a decade of experience in communications, marketing, and educational program management, most recently at UNH. She has begun a full review of the ORCSD web site, as well as begun meeting with digital learning specialists and the district IT team.

Dr. Morse reminded the board of the Barrington Workshop being held on Monday, Nov. 7th at Barrington. A packet will be available on Thursday or Friday. On a side note, our Counseling Director Shannon Caron is a resident from Barrington, and she provides a valuable bridge between the school communities.

C. Business Administrator –

FY'23 Budget Update

Sue Caswell provided the board with a budget handout updated 10/28/22.

D. Student Representative Report

Paige Burt announced that Girls Volleyball, Boys Soccer and Unified Soccer all have playoff games tomorrow. In recent class meetings students discussed bullying & prevention and Principal Noe talked about the graduation date. On Nov. 3rd there will be a Coffee House from 6-8pm with a \$5 admission, on Nov. 10th a Winter Sports

Night will be held at 6:30pm, and on Nov. 17th, 18th, and 19th the Drama Department will feature the fall play *CLUE*.

E. Finance Committee Report

Brian Cisneros didn't have any additional updates other than what was already shared at the recent budget workshop.

F. Other – None provided

VII. UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGENDA

Chair Michael Williams asked board members if any items needed to be pulled and discussed separately. There was no objection from the Board.

- Mast Way School and Transportation Office Plowing bid
- List of Policies for Second Read/Adoption: JLDBB – Suicide Prevention and Response, EBBB – Indoor Air and Water Quality.

Michael Williams made a motion to approve the Mast Way School, Moharimet School and Transportation Office Plowing bid and the List of Policies for Second Read/Adoption: JLDBB – Suicide Prevention and Response, EBBB – Indoor Air and Water Quality, 2nd by Brian Cisneros. Motion passed 7-0 with the student representative voting in the affirmative.

VIII. DISCUSSION & ACTION ITEMS

Special Education Overview

Special Education Director Catherine Plourde provided a general overview of the special education process.

(Michael Williams announced that regarding the agenda the consultation with legal counsel will be a non-public session.)

Catherine explained that referrals to special education can be made by anyone, such as a teacher or a parent, and a referral team will determine whether to accept the referral and evaluate the student or not accept it because the student's needs can be met in the general education. For preschool, a referral is part of early supports and unless a parent opts out, a child that is found eligible will need to have an IEP in place prior to turning 3 years old.

In the instance that a referral team decides to accept a referral and evaluate, members meet to review assessments that were conducted and decide eligibility. If a student is not found eligible for special education, a 504 referral can be made to determine classroom accommodations. For students that do qualify for special education, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) is developed and reviewed annually. Evaluations are typically conducted once every three years to redetermine eligibility and update a student's IEP. If parents want to have an outside evaluation done, they should be aware that it is costly, often not covered by insurance, and not covered by the school. Catherine referred to two handouts that describe the special education process overview, which can be found at the Parent Information Center website www.picnh.org.

Catherine also reviewed caseload history from as far back as the 2015-2016 school year to the present. She explained a few discrepancies in numbers, such as a jump in the number of special education students from elementary school to middle school, which in some years more than doubled. She expects to see numbers even out now that tutors are in place at ORMS. An increase in middle school cases can also be explained by the transition from elementary school to middle school. At the elementary level students may have had a lot of interventions while in one classroom and in the middle school environment they may witness fewer interventions across multiple classrooms, which can explain why more students needing services surface at the middle school level. Other reasons for a jump in numbers can be linked to the COVID pandemic, move-ins from other districts and states, and the age in which students can receive special education that recently changed from 21 to 22 years of age.

Catherine reviewed the current caseloads by grade level and building for the 2022-23 school year, noting a total of 69 elementary students, 126 middle school students and 133 high school students. She also reviewed the special education funding sources which range from a local budget and medically billed services to special education reimbursement aid and federal grants. Services for students 18 years and older may include transition-based opportunities often provided by Easter Seals and Vocational Rehabilitation, such as volunteering, paid work, life skills, and recreational therapy.

Catherine thanked the district's special education staff for their creativity and hard work.

FY'24 Budget Discussion

Last Thursday board members participated in their first budget workshop for the 2023-24 fiscal year. Tonight, the board had the opportunity to continue their discussion with the understanding that no decisions would be made. Next week, they will look at revenue from adequacy aid. A few key discussion points made by board members are provided in the following summary.

Brian Cisneros encouraged members to think in terms of prioritization and identify their "must haves."

It was discovered that the Mast Way cafeteria expansion is now off the budget list since the \$300,000 estimate has gone up to \$650,000 due to increased construction costs in the economy.

Chair Michael Williams shared his thoughts on "must haves," which included costs associated with the superintendent search, three middle school positions, professional development for teachers, and measures around safety. He'd also like to look at the capital plan and increase the budget to compensate for construction costs going up.

Denise Day thanked the PTO for providing travel funds for art classes that traveled to Boston on Coach busses and would like to see the field trip line increase per student from \$10 to \$15.

Regarding foreign language at the elementary school, Brian wondered how important it was for it to happen this year versus next year, and although he values it, he was curious where it should fall under priorities. Yusi Turell felt they should move ahead this year with the Spanish Teacher and that a lot could be learned as the process goes. She didn't feel moving forward required the addition of a second teacher the following year, as the plan currently states. Heather Smith favored delaying it in order to roll out a new program the right way. Denise Day also favored delaying foreign language noting the importance of SEL post pandemic. She worried it may be too soon to replace the SEL sessions at one of the elementary schools in order to teach a new skill.

Brian Cisneros agreed with an increase to the capital improvement plan and Michael's opinion that funding for professional development was an investment back into the district.

Yusi encouraged the board to look at areas that could be cut, such as costs associated with tech. integration. She also pointed out that language instruction falls under SEL since students are developing empathy while learning about other cultures.

Discussions will continue at the next board meeting on Nov. 16th. Board and audience members were asked to send any questions to Dr. Morse so information can be provided to help make informed decisions.

IX. SCHOOL BOARD COMMITTEE UPDATES

Manifest Committee reviewed the following Manifests.

Payroll Manifest #9- \$1,538,015.52

Vendor Manifest #10 - \$1,479,273.16

Heather Smith shared that the Sustainability Committee met on Oct. 25th and they reviewed the goals that were set and the progress that has been made. Composting bins are now available in rooms outside of the cafeteria and the community dinner will not take place in November as previously mentioned.

X. PUBLIC COMMENTS - None provided

XI. CLOSING ACTIONS

A. Future Meeting Dates: November 7, 2022 – Joint Meeting w/Barrington @ Barrington SAU @ 6:00 PM
 November 16, 2022 – Regular Meeting – ORMS Recital Hall @ 7:00 PM
 November 17, 2022 – Board Budget Workshop – ORMS Recital Hall @ 7:00 PM

XII. NON-PUBLIC SESSION: RSA 91-A:3 II (I)

- Consideration of legal advice provided by legal counsel

Michael Williams made a motion to enter Non-Public Session at 8:45pm under RSA 91-A:3 II (I), Consideration of legal advice provided by legal counsel, 2nd by Brian Cisneros. Motion passed 7-0 by roll call vote.

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

XIII. ADJOURNMENT:

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

Michael Williams made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:12 pm, 2nd by Brian Cisneros. Motion passed 7-0.

Respectfully Submitted,
Karyn Laird, Records Keeper