

Oyster River Cooperative School Board

Regular Meeting Minutes

December 21, 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, Rebecca Noe, Josh Olstad

STAFF PRESENT: Rachael Blansett, Gen Brown,

GUEST PRESENT:

ABSENT:

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

I. 5:30pm Manifest Review/Approval at Each School Board Meeting

Ia. PUBLIC HEARING for Policies:

- **BBA-School Board Member Authority Revision & Policy BDB – Board Officers for Deletion**

Denise Day presented policy changes and clarifications.

Brian Cisneros made a motion to open the public hearing, 2nd by Matt Bacon. Motion passed 7-0 with the student representative voting in the affirmative.

There were no public comments.

Denise Day made a motion to close the public hearing, 2nd by Brian Cisneros. Motion passed 7-0 with the student representative voting in the affirmative.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chair Michael Williams added Yusi Turell to the Discussion & Action Items.

Michael Williams moved to approve the agenda as amended, 2nd by Denise Day. Motion passed 7-0 with the student representative voting in the affirmative.

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS – None provided

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Brian Cisneros moved to approve the November 17th, 2022 Budget Workshop Notes, 2nd by Matt Bacon. Motion passed 7-0 with the student representative voting in the affirmative.

Brian Cisneros moved to approve the December 7th, 2022 Regular Meeting Minutes, 2nd by Matt Bacon. Motion passed 7-0 with the student representative voting in the affirmative.

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS, COMMENDATIONS AND COMMENTS

A. District

Rebecca Noe of ORHS spoke about her recent participation in Celeste Best's Forensics class. In a hands-on simulation she served as a suspect in the murder case of "Dead Fred" in which students learned all about crime scenes and fingerprinting. The Program of Studies for fall course selection will be available early to end of January. Rebecca thanked the board on behalf of the school for making Friday a half day.

B. Board

Michael Williams attended Moharimet's 4th grade concert and last night's ORHS band & chorus and they both were outstanding.

VI. DISTRICT REPORTS**A. Assistant Superintendent/Curriculum & Instruction Report(s)**DEIJ Semester in Review – Rachael Blansett

DEIJ Coordinator Rachael Blansett made a presentation to the board that summarized her first semester of work in the district. Her goals have largely focused around getting to know the schools and the community at large, as well as identifying needs in the district to guide professional development plans. Rachael plays a key role in the DEIJ Committee and has attended the high school JEDI group as a resource and mentor. She has also met with middle and high school advisories, attended Mast Way's all-school assembly and Open Circle, read to kindergartners, and visited the high school writing club. Rachael has spent a great deal of time working with faculty, in fact she has met with over twenty teachers to serve as a thought partner to address difficult situations and answer curriculum questions. She has attended several classrooms and even facilitated lessons in various English classes. Regarding her community outreach, Rachael has met with numerous groups such as statewide DEIJ Directors, New Hampshire Listens, and Seacoast Outright, and presented at the New Hampshire School Administrator Association. Within the school community Rachael has established relationships with school professional learning communities, principals, and counselors, as well as local community members and parents.

A big component of Rachael's work has been centered around creating and delivering a needs assessment. She has used the data to identify topics most useful to the district's curriculum & instruction, educator leadership, learning environment, and models of professional development. Over 150 teachers completed the survey and race, disability, and gender were the three highest ranked topics of interest. Results also showed that regarding curriculum and instruction, teachers would find value in strategies to hold meaningful conversations, face conflict, and confront prejudice. In terms of educational leadership, teachers overwhelmingly favored practices that would build relationships and address bias, and in the learning environment a focus on gender and socioeconomic inclusivity was of importance. Teachers voiced the need for having age and classroom appropriate resources; diversifying the curriculum to be more representative of various identities, backgrounds, and cultures; talking about topics of race, gender, disability, and class in legal, inclusive, and developmentally appropriate ways, and having more interdisciplinary time to discuss topics across grades and classrooms. Themes that surfaced in the school buildings include having more diversity in music and books at the elementary level, supporting gender identity at the middle school, and talking about race and racism at the high school. Part II of Rachel's presentation will take place on January 18th, and it will include a draft of the professional development plan.

Dr. Morse shared his gratitude for Rachael's presence not only in the district but also in the state. It wasn't a role he anticipated, and he appreciates the added value.

B. Superintendent's Report

Dr. Morse congratulated Student Rep. Paige Burt for her early acceptance to NYU.

He recognized Mast Way's Digital Learning Specialist Susan Leifer for being selected as a 2022 New Hampshire State Finalist for the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics & Science Teaching.

The high school was commended by Dr. Morse and Laurie Grant, PEP program Director, for its involvement in making the 3 & 4 year-olds feel included and special in the building.

Dr. Morse spoke highly of the recent Robotics State Competition that was hosted by ORMS. He thanked the high school students that volunteered at the event.

All the building's recent winter concerts were attended by Dr. Morse to which he remarked the performances were off the charts. He credited the music staff for all their hard work.

The district has received a \$15k grant from the state. Dr. Morse said the funding will first allow Moharimet to receive the software program Mutualink, which will provide a more instant and sophisticated access to emergency response. Buildings in Lee and Durham have similar access through similar software, and over the summer they will be upgraded to Mutualink as well.

Communication/Website Update – Josh Olstad/Gen Brown

Communication Specialist Gen Brown and IT Director Josh Olstad made a website update presentation to the board. The digital overhaul has been a collaborative effort from digital learning specialists, Amy Sterndale, leadership, and the community who provided feedback in a 2021 survey. After reviewing the survey results and comments, Gen identified the biggest “pain points” as the following: confusing organization and layout, unable to search for information and PDF's, and missing content such as a calendar, news, sports, and after school activities. Four service providers were reviewed by Gen and Josh, and they rated their features and functionalities against one another to select a provider that would best serve the district's needs. Campus Suite was favored to be the best solution for the largest number of current issues. It offers many usable features, such as a centralized and customizable calendar, enhanced search features, a clean and personable layout, while also being a cost-effective option. To view a demo of another school's website using Campus Suite visit www.d64.org.

Amy and Josh provided a timeline entailing the months of production work that will be necessary for a full launch on June 19th, 2023. Gen spoke about the scope of responsibilities essential to creating and maintaining the new website. While there will be areas of overlapping support from digital learning specialists, webpage editors and the IT Director, the Communication Specialist will be the website owner required to create, edit, upload, and publish content. Identifying roles and responsibilities will better ensure the right channels have time to provide technical assistance, support, and security for the district.

Board members voiced their excitement to see the product and thanked Gen, Josh, and everyone involved with the progress that has been made so far. The next website update will be available at the February 1st school board meeting.

C. Business Administrator - Update was later provided during Discussion & Action Items

D. Student Representative Report

Paige Burt performed in the recent band and chorus concert and let the board know that it was a great experience being surrounded by the audience in the recital hall. All winter sports are under way and a Basketball Holiday Tournament will start Dec. 26th. The advisory food drive collection was very successful, and the Junior class ran a candy cane fundraiser for the school. Paige invited the community to the “Paint and Pizza” fundraiser on January 12th from 6-8 pm in the high school cafeteria. Art teacher Mari Rosi will provide a painting lesson and the \$30 participation cost will support the Senior class.

E. Finance Committee Report – None provided

F. Other – None provided

VII. UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGENDA – Michael Williams asked if any items needed to be discussed separately and the board had no concerns.

- List of Policies for Second Read/Adoption and Deletion: B.1 – Acknowledge School Board Candidates for Office, ICA – School Calendar, BBAA – School Board Member Authority, BBAB – Roles and Duties of the School Board Chairperson {Selection & Duties of Officers} and Policy for Deletion: BDB – Board Officers.
- 2023-24 School Calendar for Second Read/Adoption.

Michael Williams made a motion to approve the Unanimous Consent Agenda, 2nd by Brian Cisneros. Motion passed 7-0 with student representative voting in the affirmative.

VIII. DISCUSSION & ACTION ITEMS

Review FY24 Default Budget for Public Hearing

Sue Caswell presented the FY24 Default Budget as it stands and asked for any questions or comments from the board. At the next meeting it will be finalized with board signatures.

Review 2023 Warrant Article for Public Hearing - No new update

List of Policies for First Read: IHBA – Programs for Pupils with Disabilities, IHBAC – Developmental Delays as Qualifying Disabilities, IKFC – Alternative Diploma for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities, JICK – Bullying and Cyberbullying – Pupil Safety and Violence Prevention and Deletion of Current Policy IHBA – Programs for Pupils with Disabilities and ACE – Non-Discrimination on the Basis of Handicap/Disability

Denise Day summarized policies for first read and deletion. She clarified changes and informed the board members that the policies have been vetted by legal counsel and Catherine Plourde.

Denise Day made a motion to approve List of Policies for First Read: IHBA – Programs for Pupils with Disabilities, IHBAC – Developmental Delays as Qualifying Disabilities, IKFC – Alternative Diploma for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities, JICK – Bullying and Cyberbullying – Pupil Safety and Violence Prevention and Deletion of Current Policy IHBA – Programs for Pupils with Disabilities and ACE – Non-Discrimination on the Basis of Handicap/Disability, 2nd by Heather Smith. Motion passed 7-0 with the student representative voting in the affirmative.

Board member Yusi Turell read a letter of resignation effective March 3rd. (Letter is available below the meeting minutes.) She encouraged the audience to identify and recruit residents that would be strong candidates for the seat.

Brian Cisneros made a motion to approve Yusi Turell’s resignation effective March 3rd, 2nd by Matt Bacon.

Denise Day thanked Yusi for her service and stated that she’s learned a lot from her.

Matt Bacon thanked Yusi for her hard work and support to the community, as well as her mentoring role.

Motion passed 6-0-1. Yusi Turell abstained.

IX. SCHOOL BOARD COMMITTEE UPDATES

Heather Smith provided updates from the Sustainability Committee including student attendance at a Youth Leadership Conference, a goal of purchasing compost bins for elementary classrooms and middle school team spaces, and the year’s first Community Dinner which will take place Feb. 2nd at 5pm. Details for the dinner are still being worked out but they hope to invite local farmers and have club members talk about reducing waste.

The next meeting will be held on Jan. 17th, 2023.

X. PUBLIC COMMENTS - None provided

XI. CLOSING ACTIONS

A. Future Meeting Dates: January 4, 2023 – Regular Meeting – ORMS Recital Hall @ 7:00 PM
 January 11, 2023 – Public Budget Hearing – ORMS Recital Hall @ 7:00 PM
 January 18, 2023 – Regular Meeting – ORMS Recital Hall @ 7:00 PM

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

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Heather Smith made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:41 pm, 2nd by Brian Cisneros. Motion passed 7-0 with the student representative voting in the affirmative.

Respectfully Submitted,
Karyn Laird, Records Keeper

December 21, 2023

Dear Dr. Morse and members of the ORCSD School Board,

As of today, I resign my seat effective March 3rd, 2023 – with the intention that I will continue to serve through March 3rd and that community members will select the next Durham representative in the March 7th municipal election. This long advance notice helps avoid the time-consuming process of selecting an interim member (or the prospect of an empty seat), while also enabling my seat to be added to the municipal ballot and candidates to come forward in January.

I joined off-cycle in October 2020 and will be leaving off-cycle after 2.5 years. During this challenging period for the Oyster River community, we were able to get students back to school, prioritizing their mental health while managing physical risk using our COVID dashboard. We invested in DEIJ and communications capacity and held events to celebrate and bridge the many facets of diversity in our community.

Along the way, I am grateful to have had the opportunity to work with and learn from each of you, as well as Tom Newkirk, Al Howland, and all the incredible staff, students, and parents I had the honor to work alongside. On a personal note, I am eager to restart my PhD dissertation, which has been on hold since COVID began.

With Bobcat pride,

Yusi Turell