



**Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Board of Education
Oswego Community Unit School District 308
Kendall, Kane and Will Counties
February 6, 2023**

The Board of Education of Community Unit School District 308, Kendall, Kane and Will Counties, Illinois, met in a regular session in the Community Room at Oswego East High School.

Note for file: *All roll call votes are shown in alphabetical order in these minutes; however, during the Board Meeting votes are called out in accordance with Board Policy 2:220*

1. Call to Order – Executive Session (6:15 p.m.)

The meeting was called to order at 6:21 p.m. by President LaTonya Simelton

1.1 Roll Call:

Upon Roll Call the following members answered present:

Dominick Cirone, Eugene Gatewood, Jennifer Johnson (by phone),
Jared Ploger (by phone), LaTonya Simelton, Alison Swanson

Members Absent (at roll call):

Lauri Doyle

2. Closed Session

- 2.1 Enter Closed Session under statute(s): 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1) The appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance or dismissal of certain employees and individuals; 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(2) Collective negotiating matters between the public body and its employees or their representatives, or deliberations concerning salary schedules for one or more classes of employees

A motion was made by Mr. Eugene Gatewood, second by Ms. Alison Swanson, to enter Closed Session under statute(s): 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1) The appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance or dismissal of certain employees and individuals; 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(2) Collective negotiating matters between the public body and its employees or their representatives, or deliberations concerning salary schedules for one or more classes of employees

Final Resolution: Motion Carried 6-0

Aye: Mr. Dominick Cirone, Mr. Eugene Gatewood, Ms. Jennifer Johnson,
Mr. Jared Ploger, Ms. LaTonya Simelton, Ms. Alison Swanson

The Board of Education entered closed session at 6:23 p.m.

- 2.2 Return to Open Session

A motion was made by Mr. Eugene Gatewood, second by Mr. Dominick Cirone, to return to Open Session.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried 5-0

Aye: Mr. Dominick Cirone, Mr. Eugene Gatewood, Mr. Ploger,
Ms. LaTonya Simelton, Ms. Alison Swanson

The Board of Education returned to open session at 6:45 p.m.

3. Call to Order – Public Session (7:15 pm)

The meeting was called to order at 7:15 p.m. by President LaTonya Simelton

3.1 Roll Call:

Upon Roll Call the following members answered present:

Dominick Cirone, Eugene Gatewood, Jennifer Johnson (by phone),
Jared Ploger (by phone), LaTonya Simelton, Alison Swanson

Members Absent (at roll call):

Lauri Doyle

Administration Present:

Superintendent of Schools, Dr. John Sparlin
Associate Superintendent of Educational Services, Faith Dahlquist
Assistant Superintendent for Student & Staff Services, Dr. Heather Kincaid
Assistant Superintendent for Operations/CSBO, Dr. John Petzke
Director of Communications, Theresa Komitas

Others Present:

Attorney Maureen Lemon, Ottosen DiNolfo Hasenbalg and Castaldo, as well as employees of the District and members of the community.

Recording Secretary:

Ursula Studer

3.2 Pledge of Allegiance

Pledge of Allegiance was led by Board President LaTonya Simelton

4. Public Comment

4.1 Opportunity for the Public to address the Board of Education

Shelly Dvorak – is a Teacher Assistant at OEHS. The issue of using contract staff to fill open TA positions has been talked about for many months and is very frustrating. The contracted staff receives a much higher pay than the TA’s employed by the district and the lack of quality has been discussed as well.

The district needs to decide what is important and what the priorities are. Good staff is lost and going to other districts for higher pay.

Joanne Johnson – shared that her experience and success of her 5 children has been great. All of her children have gone through the honors programs and that is likely a big part. General Education and Special Education are lacking and falling behind.

Ms. Johnson was present when the Superintendent Search Firms were interviewed. She stated that it’s most important to hire the very best person to handle our challenges. The relationship between the Superintendent and the School Board is very critical to the success of the District.

She thanked some Board members for their support in including the candidates in the selection.

5. Presentation

5.1 Community Relationships/Partnerships Annual Report

Presented by Associate Superintendent Faith Dahlquist and Communications Director Theresa Komitas. An update was shared on community partnerships as part of the Envision 308 strategic plan, including progress from last year and anticipated progress by next year.

The complete presentation on the Community Relationships Annual Report, including audio, can be found at the following link: <https://go.boarddocs.com/il/oswego308/Board.nsf/Public>

6. Comments/Reports

6.1 Superintendent Report

February is Black History Month. Many stories are being shared on our website.

Celebration: Those Who Excel Awards given by the Illinois State Board of Education. Southbury Principal – Samantha Sinovich: Award of Meritorious Service in the administrative category, Dual Language Instructor at Hunt Club - Diana Calvillo: Award of Meritorious Service in the Early Career Educator category, First Grade Teacher at The Wheatlands - Barbara Richmond: Award of Meritorious Service in the Teacher category and the members of BIONIC - Wendy Monn, Colleen Predl, and Rachel Zeifert- Award of Special Recognition in the Team category.

Congratulations:

Oswego Co-Op Gymnastics Team- IHSA Regional Championship- the 5th consecutive Regional Title
OHS Panther Cheer- IHSA sectional champions and qualified for the State finals
Oswego and Oswego East students recently earned multiple awards at the national Scholastic Arts & Writing Competition in the Midwest Region. Eight students who won the Gold Key will have their work advanced to the National Competition which takes place in March.
30 High School student athletes joined in national signing day on February 1st, as they committed to the verbal scholarship offers they have received from their colleges for the next academic school year.
Reminder that the 5 Essentials Survey is underway and open to all parents now through March 31st.

6.2 Student Ambassador Reports

SSAC meeting this week. Working through mental health analysis, introducing the YPAR research method to members, this process was used last year. Working through mental health, learning how it is approached across the district.

6.3 Board Committee Reports

The following committee meetings took place since the last Board meeting. The reports are shared in board docs at the following link: <https://go.boarddocs.com/il/oswego308/Board.nsf/Public>
President Simelton asked if anyone had any questions and there were none.

- Equity Committee
- Finance & Facilities Committee
- Policy & Legislative Committee

6.4 Board Member Comments

Mrs. Swanson shared the accomplishments of the wrestling teams at both high schools.
Mrs. Simelton attended a leadership panel at Bednarcik, students shared concerns about transportation, the driver shortage results in significant delays. Mrs. Simelton shared that she speaks for the entire board, and that they represent the whole community. She explained the importance of having the board candidates involved and a part of the search for the next superintendent.

Mr. Ploger visited Traughber, the library was engaging with so many things to do. He toured the building, visited with a class discussing local civics, and the students there expressed concerns with transportation. Some parents have shared feedback that there were some improvements. Students and staff at Traughber were all impressive.

Mrs. Johnson shared that she was at Hunt Club watching the HIKE student program and the positive impact it has on students. Mrs. Johnson also met and spoke with a number of candidates running for the election, finding commonalities between people. She indicated that as she meets and speaks with parents and students, their primary concern is transportation.

7. Approval of Consent Agenda

7.1 Approval of Minutes from previous Meeting

A motion was made by Mr. Eugene Gatewood, second by Mr. Dominick Cirone, to approve all items under consent, including 7.1 Minutes from the Board of Education meeting on January 23, 2023, open and closed session and 7.2 the acknowledgement of FOIA requests received by the district

Final Resolution: Motion Carried 6-0

Aye: Mr. Dominick Cirone, Mr. Eugene Gatewood, Ms. Jennifer Johnson,
Mr. Jared Ploger, Ms. LaTonya Simelton, Ms. Alison Swanson

8. Information

8.1 Financial Statements

Ms. Johnson asked for more transparency when it comes to spending and she requested a variance report with the financial statements. Ms. Johnson also asked about information regarding our ESSER Funds.

8.2 Roof Bids for Oswego High School and Homestead Elementary School

Mr. Queen, Director of Operations and Charli Johnsos from Kluber Architects are here to provide information on the Roof Bids for OHS and Homestead.

The low base bid for OHS was submitted by JL Adler from Joliet in the amount of \$531,407.

The low base bid for Homestead was submitted Metalmaster Inc. from McHenry in the amount of \$769,423. OHS was under budget and Homestead was over, but pretty close.

8.3 Draft District Mission Statement

Mrs. Dahlquist shared that work was done on the Mission Statement over the last few months. Many groups were involved; Executive Leadership Team, the Board, the Student Ambassadors, the Community Advisory Committee and finally the Superintendent's Student Advisory Committee for the final touch.

The current statement that will be brought for approval at the next Board meeting is; Together we empower, support, and motivate all students to thrive along their unique educational journey.

Ms. Johnson feels that voting on this now is not in our best interest. She asked to wait until we have a new Superintendent/Board to make this decision. No other Board members were in favor of delaying it.

9. Action Items

9.1 Approval of Bills for Payment

A motion was made by Mr. Eugene Gatewood, second by Mr. Dominick Cirone, to authorize the payment of bills in the amount of three million, one hundred sixty-nine thousand, three hundred two dollars and twenty-five cents (\$3,169,302.25) as presented

Final Resolution: Motion Carried 6-0

Aye: Mr. Dominick Cirone, Mr. Eugene Gatewood, Ms. Jennifer Johnson,
Mr. Jared Ploger, Ms. LaTonya Simelton, Ms. Alison Swanson

9.2 Approval of Superintendent Search Firm

The Board members did not have any concerns with the Search Firms, but they voiced concerns about the quality of candidates that will be brought forward within the short amount of time provided to them. The last time a Search Firm was hired was in 2013 when Dr. Wendt was brought in. That search also had to be completed within 4 months. We will have a new Board that needs to have input in this decision. For many districts, the process starts in October or November, therefore there will be a shallow pool by April or May. The Board members were discussing a plan in case a suitable candidate could not be found. Everyone agreed that the best possible candidate needs to be hired for our district and if that is not possible, an alternative solution needs to be found. The suggestion was made to have the new Board handle the process completely and put an interim in place. President Simelton stated that at this point, a decision needs to be made and we need to get started with the process. The rubrics were handed in before the meeting and everyone agreed on their first choice.

A motion was made by Mr. Eugene Gatewood, second by Mr. Dominick Cirone, to approve School Exec Connect as our Superintendent Search Firm, contingent on the reference checks.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried 6-0

Aye: Mr. Dominick Cirone, Mr. Eugene Gatewood, Ms. Jennifer Johnson,
Mr. Jared Ploger, Ms. LaTonya Simelton, Ms. Alison Swanson

9.3 Approval of Personnel Report

A motion was made by Mr. Eugene Gatewood, second by Ms. Alison Swanson, to approve the Personnel report as presented

Final Resolution: Motion Carried 6-0

Aye: Mr. Dominick Cirone, Mr. Eugene Gatewood, Ms. Jennifer Johnson,
Mr. Jared Ploger, Ms. LaTonya Simelton, Ms. Alison Swanson

10. Adjournment

10.1 Adjourn

A motion was made by Mr. Eugene Gatewood, second by Ms. Alison Swanson, to adjourn.

All were in favor unanimously to adjourn.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried 6-0

Aye: Mr. Dominick Cirone, Mr. Eugene Gatewood, Ms. Jennifer Johnson,
Mr. Jared Ploger, Ms. LaTonya Simelton, Ms. Alison Swanson

Meeting Adjourned at 8:48 p.m.

President

Attest: _____
Secretary