



**Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Board of Education
Oswego Community Unit School District 308
Kendall, Kane and Will Counties
February 27, 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 6:17 p.m. by President LaTonya Simelton

1.1 Roll Call:

Upon Roll Call the following members answered present:

Lauri Doyle, Eugene Gatewood (by phone), Jared Ploger, LaTonya Simelton, Alison Swanson

Members Absent (at roll call):

Dominick Cirone, Jennifer Johnson

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 Ms. Lauri Doyle, second by Mr. Jared Ploger, 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, Ms. Lauri Doyle, Mr. Eugene Gatewood,
Mr. Jared Ploger, Ms. LaTonya Simelton, Ms. Alison Swanson

The Board of Education entered closed session at 6:19 p.m.

2.2 Return to Open Session

A motion was made by Ms. Jennifer Johnson, second by Mr. Jared Ploger, to return to Open Session.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried 7-0

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

The Board of Education returned to open session at 7:34 p.m.

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

The meeting was called to order at 7:39 p.m. by President LaTonya Simelton

3.1 Roll Call:

Upon Roll Call the following members answered present:

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

Members Absent (at roll call):

None

Administration Present:

Superintendent of Schools, Dr. John Sparlin
Associate Superintendent of Educational Services, Faith Dahlquist
Assistant Superintendent for Student & Staff Services, Dr. Heather Kincaid
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. Recognitions

4.1 PRIDE Recognition

The following individuals were recognized this month:

- *Alli Anderson - Teacher - TOSA District Administration Center*
- *Erin Gleason - Teacher - TOSA District Administration Center*
- *Dominique Rquibi - Teacher - TOSA District Administration Center*
- *Raggin Sondgeroth - Teacher - TOSA District Administration Center*
- *Mike Bailey - Employee - Mechanic Maintenance*
- *Dan Long - Employee - Building Engineer Boulder Hill*

5. Public Comment

5.1 Opportunity for the Public to address the Board of Education

Michelle Trager – commented on FASD, stating that she presented on FASD the first week of February at the Illinois Counsel for Behavioral Disorders Conference and that she did not see anyone from our

district in attendance. Ms. Trager spoke about the Neuro-behavioral model at the conference which is different from the Learning-theory model. While they are different, there is a way to merge the two philosophies.

6. Comments/Reports

6.1 Superintendent Report

The Community Advisory Committee met and learned about the 5 Essentials Survey which seeks feedback from parents, teachers and students. The committee members researched the results from two schools and shared what they learned.

At the February 6 Board meeting a public comment was made in regards to dollars spent for contractual services in our district. It was expressed that the district was spending 1.4 million dollars on contracted services for teaching assistants. That is not the case. The actual expenses for contracted services from August 15 through December 22 at OH was \$60,958.90 and at OE for the same period was \$40,003.54. On Thursday, Feb 9, Dr. Petzke, Dr. Hildebrand, Ms. Bankowski, and Ms. Dahlquist met with many of the teaching assistants at OE to hear concerns as well as address some misinformation that had been shared during public comment. The administrators listened to concerns about how teaching assistants were being utilized as well as the concern about low pay. Ms. Dahlquist had follow up meetings with Ms. Bankowski to dive further into the utilization questions and work on plans for improvement. Ms. Dahlquist is also meeting with special education leaders to review schedules and prioritize student needs. Congratulations to 2015 OEHS graduate Ebony Graves who will represent the State of Illinois in the Black Women’s Pageant.

Congratulations to OEHS students Jensen Coonradt, Aarin Bothra; Ahmed Faisal; Denise Gutierrez; Marc Townsend; Oliva Schwab; and Mr. Scott Johnson as winners of the Lemelson MIT InvenTeam Competition for group projects. These students from the Stem Club, worked on developing a device to improve poor school air quality using algae biofiltration. Out of hundreds of proposals submitted for consideration, their project was awarded \$7,500 in order to further develop the project as well as receive MIT mentorship.

6.2 Student Ambassador Report

Feb. 15 the SSAC met to discuss student mental health surveys to push out this semester. The primary question is what is the cause of mental health concerns in students? The discussion included how SEL will be discussed in classrooms. Students have expressed the desire to have SEL intertwined in classroom discussions, rather than standalone SEL lessons. They discussed safe spaces, relationships between students, students and staff.

6.3 Board Committee Reports

Equity Committee Report – 02.16.23

<p>Equity and Managing Complex Change was discussed again as we did not finish the last time. We reviewed some of the progress in professional development, policy, and community partnerships.</p>	<p>Student Voice is a powerful way to provide the “why” change is needed. We need to continue to amplify their voice and act on their feedback.</p>	<p>We decided a future meeting would highlight students and their perspectives.</p>
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Policy Committee Report – 02.13.23

<p>The agenda contained the remainder of section 2 and section 8, comparing language in our district policies to PRESS language. Each difference was discussed and suggestions were made as to what district specific</p>	<p>3 additional meetings are scheduled in March. 3/1 second review of</p>	<p>Action will not be taken until the Policy Manual is complete and can be</p>
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language should be moved into the draft PRESS Policy Manual. A few policies from section 8 were brought back to the cabinet level and will be discussed again at the next meeting.	some policies from section 8 and section 4 - operational services. 3/13 Sections 5 and 6 3/23 Section 7	adopted as a whole.
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6.4 Board Member Comments

- Ms. Johnson shared that on Feb. 21 she joined the Community Chat online. The topic was self-care and why it is important, she felt it was a very moving experience. Attendees were from a diverse background but shared a common goal for the wellbeing of their students. It is a safe place to share, be vulnerable and support one another. The next meeting is on March 22.
- Mr. Ploger visited Long Beach, where he used to volunteer years ago as a parent. He visited classrooms, toured the building. He also inquired with Dr. Sparlin regarding the roof issues, which are being addressed by the Operations Department.
- Ms. Simelton discussed the scheduled Public Forum that was to be hosted by students on March 6. Students are now planning an event the week after that for candidates to the Board, so the student-planned public forum event will not be held. Several board members shared their opinions on the forum, and the format to be used. The board landed on hosting a meeting on the original date, March 6 as a “community circle”. More information will be sent out soon.

7. Approval of Consent Agenda

7.1 Approval of Minutes from previous Meeting

A motion was made by Ms. Jennifer Johnson, second by Mr. Jared Ploger, to approve all items under consent, including Minutes from the Board of Education Meeting on February 1, 2023 and from February 6, 2023, open and closed session and to acknowledge the FOIA request received by the district

Final Resolution: Motion Carried 7-0

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

8. Information

8.1 High School Social Studies Materials

Executive Director of High School, Mr. Dan Arntzen explained the process for determining the need for new curricular resources and how they are chosen. Student choice and voice were big factors in choosing potential resources.

Several textbooks were chosen for review by committees for each subject; each made a recommendation for an appropriate text (Contemporary Human Geography, Civics, US History) which are provided in both printed text and electronic format. Mr. Arntzen shared the names of the committee members as well as the textbooks considered along with the ones ultimately chosen. Ms. Swanson requested more information and cost on Newsela. The materials will be available for public viewing at the district office starting on February 28. This item will be brought back to the Board for approval on April 11.

The resources will then be available to the teachers sometime in May. Ms. Swanson requested to look into buying hard copies for teachers as well.

The complete presentation on the High School Social Studies Materials, including audio, can be found at the following link: <https://go.boarddocs.com/il/oswego308/Board.nsf/Public>

8.2 Advertising Costs Associated with Superintendent Search

The Board of Education reviewed potential paid advertising options for the search. Dr. Kevin O'Mara, President of School Exec Connect answered questions about the recommendations. A link to the job listing will be included on the district website, in addition to the recommended sources.

8.3 Thinking Upstream – District Climate

Faith Dahlquist, Dr. Heather Kincaid and Theresa Komitas, presented information about the Executive Leadership Team's identified priorities, concerns and asks of the Board. The presentation includes data on the high turnover rates of building and district administrators, the impact on the culture in the district, as well as the salary disparity between SD 308 and comparison districts. If our priority is to increase student achievement, we need to decrease administrator turnover. We can reduce turnover by:

- Valuing and developing staff
- Hiring the right people
- Staying competitive in salary and benefits
- Help with achieving work/life balance

Salary closer to competitive for our Principals and Assistant Principals: \$378,000

Salary closer to competitive for our other administrators: \$213,000

Additional portions of the presentation will be discussed in closed session.

Mr. Cirone shared that this is a very important piece that is needed for our district to move forward.

Ms. Simelton commented that this was one of the reasons she wanted to become a Board member, to see these types of changes. The Board has a responsibility to give administrators what they need to succeed.

Mr. Ploger reiterated again how much it hurt the district when we did not levy years ago.

Ms. Doyle shared some background on how we got here, with the budget cuts that needed to be made a few years ago. The Board was trying to keep the cuts as far away from students as possible. The education piece with this plan is important, this is still new to our community.

Ms. Swanson stated that she felt the new superintendent needed to be hired first before any new positions are approved.

Ms. Johnson shared that money won't fix everything, that there is much more work to be done to achieve a successful culture.

Mr. Gatewood shared that he personally understands the impact turnover has on culture and climate in an organization. A clear visual is needed for the leadership team to do what is asked of them. In the unique position that we are in, there is work that needs to be done simultaneously.

Ms. Komitas shared that she agrees with Ms. Johnson, as far as being vulnerable and having systems in place etc. The leadership team has sort of taken the role of insulation. When the cost cutting happened, it hit the administrators because we wanted to keep it away from the classroom. The problem is that the "us" is changing. We have interviews with candidates that are a great fit and have new ideas, but they won't take the job because of the limited salary we can offer. Or they do come in and learn great things here and leave for higher pay in a couple of years. We will not be able to attain the ability to be vulnerable and to have clear direction if the people around the table change every year. It's impossible for it not to impact the classroom.

The complete presentation on Thinking Upstream – District Climate, including audio, can be found at the following link: <https://go.boarddocs.com/il/oswego308/Board.nsf/Public>

9. Action Items

9.1 Approval of Roof Bids – Oswego High School and Homestead Elementary School

A motion was made by Ms. Jennifer Johnson, second by Mr. Dominick Cirone, to approve the bid from J.L. Adler Roofing & Sheet Metal, Inc. for the OHS Roof replacement in the amount of \$531,470.00

and the bid from Metalmaster Roofmaster, Inc. for the Homestead Roof Replacement in the amount of \$769,423.00

Final Resolution: Motion Carried 7-0

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

9.2 Approval of District Mission Statement

A motion was made by Ms. Jennifer Johnson, second by Mr. Dominick Cirone, to approve the District Mission Statement as presented

Final Resolution: Motion Carried 6-1

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

Nay: Ms. Jennifer Johnson

9.3 Ratification of Letter of Agreement with School Exec Connect

A motion was made by Ms. Jennifer Johnson, second by Ms. Alison Swanson, to ratify the Letter of Agreement with School Exec Connect

Final Resolution: Motion Carried 7-0

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

9.4 Approval of Advertising Costs Associated with the Superintendent Search

A motion was made by Ms. Jennifer Johnson, second by Mr. Dominick Cirone, to approve the following advertising for the Superintendent Search; AASA Job Flash, National Alliance of Black School Educators and Association of Latin-American Superintendents, for a total cost of \$999.00

Final Resolution: Motion Carried 7-0

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

9.5 Approval of MOU (Memorandum of Understanding)

A motion was made by Ms. Jennifer Johnson, second by Mr. Jared Ploger, to approve the MOU as presented

Final Resolution: Motion Carried 7-0

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

9.6 Approval of the 2022-2026 Collective Bargaining Agreement with the OTA (Oswego Transportation Association)

A motion was made by Ms. Jennifer Johnson, second by Mr. Jared Ploger, to approve the 2022-2026 Collective Bargaining Agreement with the Oswego Transportation Association as presented, pending attorney review

Final Resolution: Motion Carried 7-0

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

Mr. Cirone shared that he is excited to present a contract with 90% of the OTA voting yes.

10. Closed Session

10.1 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

A motion was made by Ms. Jennifer Johnson, second by Mr. Jared Ploger, 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

Final Resolution: Motion Carried 7-0

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

The Board of Education entered closed session at 10:07 p.m.

10.2 Return to Open Session

A motion was made by Ms. Jennifer Johnson, second by Mr. Jared Ploger, to return to Open Session.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried 4-0

Aye: Mr. Dominick Cirone, Ms. Jennifer Johnson, Mr. Ploger, Ms. LaTonya Simelton,

The Board of Education returned to open session at 11:44 p.m.

11. Action Item

11.1 Approval of Personnel Report

A motion was made by Ms. Jennifer Johnson, second by Mr. Jared Ploger, to approve the Personnel report as discussed in closed session

Final Resolution: Motion Carried 4-0

Aye: Mr. Dominick Cirone, Ms. Jennifer Johnson, Mr. Jared Ploger, Ms. LaTonya Simelton,

12. Adjournment

12.1 Adjourn

A motion was made by Ms. Jennifer Johnson, second by Mr. Jared Ploger, to adjourn.

All were in favor unanimously to adjourn.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried 4-0

Aye: Mr. Dominick Cirone, Ms. Jennifer Johnson, Mr. Jared Ploger, Ms. LaTonya Simelton,

Meeting Adjourned at 11:48 p.m.

President

Attest: _____
Secretary