

OUUSD BOARD MEETING

Via Zoom

October 21, 2020

Present:

Board Members: Angela Colbeth, Danielle Corti, Carol Cottrell, Melissa Gordon, Timm Judas, Chelsea Perry

Administration: Emilie Knisley, Bruce Williams, Nicole Bell, Morgan Moore, Marla Ianello, Brian Emerson, Jean Wheeler, Lori Blood

Others: Thomas Watkin, Bud Haas, Bob Wing, and other members of the public

- I. The meeting was called to order at 5:30 PM by Danielle Corti, Chair. Those present were welcomed, and the protocols of Zoom meetings were reviewed.
- II. Board Business
 - A. The agenda was reviewed. It was noted that the agenda might need to be adjusted, moving the Upbeat report later in the meeting.
 1. Timm Judas: If Board members are commenting on Facebook, is that disregarding meeting rules? Danielle Corti: If there is a quorum of Board members commenting, that would be violating Board meeting laws. It is OK to comment on social media expressing your own opinion, but don't speak on behalf of the Board
 - B. Motion by Melissa Gordon, seconded by Angela Colbeth to approve the Board minutes of October 5, 2020.
 1. Corrections:
 - a. II, C, 4: Jean Carlan (corrected spelling)
 - b. II, C, 5: Candis Allard (corrected spelling)
 - c. VII, A: Reps to OESU Board are Danielle Corti, Timm Judas (who will be taking over for Angela Colbeth in November), and Melissa Gordon (Chelsey Perry will be the alternate for her after negotiations are completed).
 2. Motion voted on and approved with one abstention (Timm Judas)
 - D. Correspondence—two letters were received from students, but were received late enough so they were not able to be shared tonight. The Chair will invite the two students to the next Board meeting, so they can participate in the discussion.
- III. Public Comment
 - A. Thomas Watkin: The Curriculum Section on the OESU website says it's not available and is under development. Is it the plan of the SU to have the Copeland Building be long term? Danielle Corti: Decision on the Copeland Building was at the OESU level, and the lease was for 5 years. She suggested talking to the SU about this.
 1. T. Watkin: Who approves the OESU budget? D. Corti: OESU Board has representation of 3 members from each Board in the SU. They approve the SU budget, and it is not voted on the by public. T. Judas: There is a plan to have a

year-round budget committee. If Mr. Watkin or anyone is interested in serving on that committee, T. Judas encouraged him to contact the OUUSD Chair.

2. T. Watkin: The OESU website is difficult to navigate. Emilie Knisley: Feels it is not ideal, but have decided not to use funds to have that worked on at this time. The first SU curriculum documents will be going to the OESU Board next month.

IV. Principal reports

A. Morgan Moore—Newbury Elementary. They are working to increase academics and to decrease behavioral issues. They are using the Illustrative Math Program, which is being used across the SU. 5th graders are being given ukulele lessons. A Forest School grant has been received to develop a Forest School curriculum. Kelly Houde is leading “Finding Our Stride” running group. The Nurse’s office is completely done.

1. Carol Cottrell: How would you assess the morale of the students and the faculty? M. Moore: It is up and down depending on the day. There is certainly a lot on teachers right now with the addition of remote learning. They are working on possibly having some teachers work with remote learners and some with in-person learners.

2. Timm Judas: Are remote parents requiring assistance with the new curriculum? Is there elevated concern with COVID cases in the area? M. Moore: The virtual open house included teachers giving tips to parents on ways they could work with kids at home. T. Judas: Has anyone reached out to Illustrative Mathematics to see if there are materials for remote learning? Nicole Bell: Yes. They have turned some of the lesson components into remote friendly materials.

B. Marla Ianello—Bradford Elementary: Teachers have been adding 6-12 hours a week to their work load to accommodate remote learners. She has been talking with Morgan Moore about separating instruction for in-person and remote learners. They are trying to meet internet speed needs, especially pushing information out.

1. Carol Cottrell: Morale? M. Ianello: The students are doing great, keeping masks on, playing together. Teachers are flexible and are a really strong team. There are up days and down days.

C. Brian Emerson--River Bend: RAB meeting. The new state-wide math assessment is going forward. Tech Centers are now being held accountable for standardized math scores. The strategic plan is being worked on. RBCTC has a lot of input from community businesses, etc. Mr. Emerson shared that he has been chosen as one of 3 Tech Center Directors in the state to serve on the Tech Center Directors’ Legislative Committee.

1. The Board Chair congratulated B. Emerson on his appointment to the Legislative committee

2. Carol Cottrell: Morale? B. Emerson: I have the best staff in the state. The reality is that most kids that come to the Tech Center want to be there. Students want to be able to come all 5 days and are not able to be there and be involved as much as they want to.

D. Jean Wheeler—Oxbow: The facilities team has worked so hard to keep the building safe and clean. Students are remote this week. School climate is one of teamwork and

family. Parents and students have been great. School counselors, office staff, and others all work together. They are exhausted, but it's not toxic stress. Technology—a lot of work has been done and things are running smoothly. Remote teaching is now able to be done from the school. Parent and community connections are strong. PTA and Booster Club are looking for members. The VT Dept. of Health triage team told Oxbow that they were doing the right things as they coped with the health issue over the weekend. A “Bud” is trying to close the equity gap with families, who don't have good wifi access.

1. Brian Emerson: Unsung heroes are Emilie Knisley, Bruce Williams, Jean Wheeler, and Robin Wozny, who worked innumerable hours over the weekend. They did the job so well that River Bend didn't have to shut down.

2. Jean Wheeler: November 1st marks her 4th anniversary at Oxbow. She has never before felt a part of such a strong and supportive team.

3. Timm Judas: asked administrators to consider a videotaping of artwork, presentations, etc. to put on the website to take the place of concerts. J. Wheeler: How do we maintain those traditions and still be safe and healthy? We just need to be creative in putting those together.

4. Danielle Corti: Gave a huge thank you to the administrators for all the wonderful work they are doing.

V. Curriculum Director's Report—Nicole Bell

A. Social Justice issues—A couple of teachers reached out asking for some ideas. They have met once and are working on scheduling a second meeting. The SU is trying to develop a professional learning community across the SU. There are now PreK-12 expectations for Language arts and through Gr 8 for math. Common assessments will be put in place. This year the focus is literacy. Ms. Bell wants to pull in at least one teacher from each building to work on developing the curriculum. They have partnered with All Learners Network for math. Training sessions for year one and year two are funded with the consolidated grant. Illustrative Math is used through Grade 8 across the SU.

1. STAR is being used as an assessment tool for literacy and math. T. Judas: When is the STAR assessment administered? N. Bell: In the fall and spring. The results are on a continuum. They will give the next steps.

2. D. Corti thanked N. Bell, saying that it's exciting and helps bring the schools together and consistency across the curriculum.

3. C. Cottrell: Wondering what the timeline is to determine if the commercial curriculum is successful? N. Bell: Once the framework is approved at the Board level, they can come up with a feasible review schedule. Integration will happen at the building level.

VI. Staffing Update in Regards to COVID (Melanie Elliott)

A. Subs are assigned to no more than two buildings. There are 181 teachers and staff in the OUUSD. Total absences and vacancies from July--October 19= 210 days. Absences and vacancies unfilled July--October= 74. Absence reasons: personal, vacation, CARES Act, floating holidays, etc. CARES Act time does not come from a person's sick days. 40 Current Staff currently have no absences. The numbers of absences this year is 20%-

30% higher than last year. Only 20 subs are available SU wide. 10 subs are assigned to OUUSD. River Bend has 1 floating sub. Only 10 additional subs are assigned to BMU, TES, and WRVS.

B. M. Elliott encouraged the Board to look at a higher sub pay rate, bringing it up to \$13.50 /day. T. Judas: Wondered about using some COVID funds. D. Corti: Will put sub pay rate on the next agenda.

C. The MAC Grant is available for medical or mental health. It is allocated to the SU, and the proposed uses of the grant are submitted to the Dept of Health. D. Corti: For one or our next agendas, we will get an estimate of what the amount of the fund is and what it is used for to serve our students. Directing how it should be used is not appropriate.

VII. Upbeat Report

A. Engagement or culture survey. The scores are used to help improve the engagement and culture. Goals are set to help people want to work here. It will be administered the first week of November. D. Corti: suggested discussing the elementary school results at one meeting and the high schools at a different meeting. The Board asked for a PDF of the questions and the SU results.

VIII. Budget Discussion

A. New information has been received about the summer lunch program extending through the school year.

B. Version #6 of the OUUSD budget was presented, reflecting a reduction of \$306,500 from Version #5

C. Equalized pupils per Agency of Education = 675.52. A budget of \$16,780,183 would result in estimated education spending of \$17,741 per equalized pupil

D. Amendment to Article 4 of Articles of Agreement

A. No school building conveyed to the OUUSD shall be closed prior to academic year 2024-2025.

B. The OUUSD shall not close any school building or cease using the building to provide direct instruction in at least one grade, prekindergarten through grade 12, unless each of the following occurs:

1. The OUUSD shall study the impact of school closure on the quality of student experiences, particularly regarding travel time and costs, student extracurricular activity participation, impacts on the most vulnerable students, impacts on food program participation, and broader community impacts. At least three public forums in each effected community shall be held to receive community input on the proposed closure. From the study, a report will be compiled with impact assessments, and may include proposals to mitigate any possible negative effects.

2. After consideration of the study described in subsection B1 above, closure of the school is approved by affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members of the OUUSD Board.

3. At a subsequent Annual or Special Meeting of the District, the qualified voters of the OUUSD voting at the meeting approve closure of the school by 60%. Following a positive vote of the district, a vote by

Australian ballot will be held in the town where the school closure is proposed. 60% of the voters who participate need to approve the closure of the school. This provision shall not limit the authority of the Board to “temporarily” close a school for a limited duration of time because the school is uninhabitable due to major structural damage or condition, loss of heat, water, or similar physical circumstance.

- IX. Warning and Meeting dates
 - A. An informational meeting was set for November 18, 2020 at 7:00 PM, with a budget vote set for November 24, 2020.
 - B. Motion by Timm Judas, seconded by Angela Colbeth to warn a budget in the amount of \$16,780,183, with per equalized pupil spending of \$17,741, which is a 5.5% increase in per pupil spending over the current year. Motion voted on and approved unanimously. Motion by Timm Judas, seconded by Angela Colbeth to amend the previous motion to include changes in Article 4 of the Articles of Agreement. Motion voted on and approved unanimously
- X. Motion by Carol Cottrell, seconded by Angela Colbeth to approve the contract for the sale of the Boltonville School and to authorize the chair to execute the necessary documents. Motion voted on and approved unanimously
- XI. Bud Haas: Recommends that Article 3 of the Articles of Agreement should be considered in the next 6 months. Danielle Corti: Yes, this is on the radar.
- XII. Public Comment
 - A. Bob Wing: Believes that voting while on a Zoom meeting should be a roll call. D. Corti: Will double check that.
- XIII. Motion by Timm Judas, seconded by Angela to adjourn the meeting at 9:12 PM. The next meeting will be scheduled through email.

Respectfully submitted:

Nancy Perkins, Minutes Clerk

The minutes are in draft format and are unofficial until formally approved by the Board at a subsequent meeting.