



# Oshki Ogimaag Community School

*The mission of Oshki Ogimaag Community School is to create a learning environment of excellence based upon traditional teachings. Rooted in Anishinaabe language and culture we will prepare students through hands-on, community-based projects to be lifelong learners that reach their personal and academic potential; preserve the Anishinaabe language and culture; and contribute to the wellness of future generations.*

## **OOCS Board Meeting Minutes**

**Meeting Date: Wednesday, November 19, 2025**

- 1.0 Call Meeting to Order, Roll Call of Board Members, Quorum Declaration:**
  - 1.1 Call to Order:** 4:36pm
  - 1.2 Board Members Present:** Agatha Armstrong Joanne Czeswik, Tesha Dickenson, Tina Gatzke, John Morrin, Patty Winchell-Dahl, ex-officio Cherie James  
**Board Members Absent:** Kristin Lindenmuth (Excused)  
**Community Members Present:** Pam Zahn (OOCS Business Manager), Peter James (OOCS Strategic Planing Consultant), Gabby Christensen
- 2.0 Reading of the Mission Statement by:** Joanne Czeswik
- 3.0 Declaration of Conflict of Interest:** No conflicts declared.
- 4.0 Community Comment:** N/A
- 5.0 Ms. Winchell-Dahl moved to approve the agenda.** Motion seconded by Mr. Morrin. Motion passed unanimously. (Voting aye: Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Czeswik, Ms. Dickenson, Ms. Gatzke, Mr. Morrin, Ms. Winchell-Dahl).
- 6.0 Ms. Armstrong moved to approve minutes from the October 29, 2025 Regular Board Meeting.** Motion seconded by Mr. Morrin. Motion passed unanimously. (Voting aye: Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Czeswik, Ms. Dickenson, Ms. Gatzke, Mr. Morrin, Ms. Winchell-Dahl).
- 7.0 Discussion of Business and Finance:**
  - 7.1 Finance Committee Recommendations:** In October, the Board approved OOCS joining MSBA (Minnesota School Board Association) in order to access their resources. Business Manager Zahn explained that in clarifying costs with MSBA, there is an additional \$2100 policy subscription cost, bringing the total cost to over \$4000, much higher than initially projected. Ms. Gatzke spoke to a rep from MSBA in April 2025 about membership and policy subscription, at that time they were willing to give a small reduction of cost due to the small size of the school. However, at that time it was ultimately decided the cost was too great. It was decided that Ms. Gatzke would reach out to that representative to see if they are still willing to provide the school a reduction in cost. With the government shutdown over, Business Manager Zahn will request emergency funding from Impact AID, as soon as it is opened up. Business Manager Zahn will present budget line item reallocation next month.

- 7.2 **October 2025 Financial Reports:** Business Manager Zahn presented financial reports including Reconciliation Worksheet Report, Outstanding Payments, Trial Balance Summary Report, Payment Report, Receipt Listing Report, Journal Entry Listing Report, Cash Flow Projection Report, and YTD Budget to Actuals. Discussion of cash balance decrease of about \$7500 in the absence of Impact AID due to government shutdown. Discussion of American Indian Aid and that there doesn't appear to be any funds coming in from this revenue stream. Business Manager Zahn responded this Aid is based upon the prior school year and there were not enough students identified as American Indian to be eligible for this Aid. **Ms. Winchell-Dahl moved to approve October 2025 Financial Reports.** Motion seconded by Mr. Morrin. Motion passed unanimously. (Voting aye: Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Czeswik, Ms. Dickenson, Ms. Gatzke, Mr. Morrin, Ms. Winchell-Dahl).
- 8.0 **Discussion of Instructional Programming and Policy:**
- 8.1 **Discussion of Director's Report.** Discussion that Director James is working with staff, teaching Ojibwe lessons. Director James reported there is more Ojibwe being spoken in the building than ever before. Discussion of events such as attendance of the Bizhiki Concert at the Arrowhead Center for the Arts, an author visit to the school, finishing a book with Ann Brataas from the MN Children's Press, and currently working on the Annual Holiday Program. Discussion of continuing to work on IT issues, Director James is on the agenda for the next RTC meeting to work on resolving IT issues.
- 8.2 **Discussion of Assistant Director's Report:** Discussion that one student is currently in-process of a comprehensive special education evaluation to determine eligibility for special education supports and services. Discussion of Assistant Director's schedule, duties and SEL curriculum topics. Discussion that on average there are three staff absences per week, and Assistant Director has been subbing in to provide coverage for these roles. Discussion that the Administrative Task List between Director James, Assistant Director, Business Manager, and Peter James has been completed. Discussion that emails and flyer notices have served as family communication versus weekly newsletters due to time spent subbing for absent staff and student support needs. Discussion that 53% of the Assistant Director's time has been spent subbing for absent staff since last Board meeting. Discussion of need for trauma-informed training and integrating trauma-informed practices as part of the mission of the school, to best support the student and family population OOCs serves. Business Manager Zahn commented that there is some funding available that would support this area of need.
- 8.3 **Discussion of Environmental Education Report, Environmental Education Performance and Goals.** Discussion of progress on EE goals and current projects.
- 9.0 **Board Training and Development:**
- 9.1 **Board Observation Feedback Discussion:** Discussion of Observation Feedback provided by Erin Anderson, Director of Charter School Authorizing. Discussion

that in feedback provided stating minutes from FY26 were not posted to the website. Chairperson Dickenson commented after receiving this feedback looked to the website and confirmed FY26 minutes were posted. Discussion that the change of date for the October meeting was posted to several places, including on the front page of the website in large print and bright lettering but not in another page on the site, so was marked as non-compliant with Open Meeting Law on the feedback form. Discussion that the required website link referenced in the feedback form has since been posted to the OOCS website.

- 9.2 **Renewal Evaluation Discussion:** Discussion of next steps in the renewal process and when OOCS will have an opportunity to respond.
- 9.3 **Renewal Evaluation Email/Due Dates Discussion:** Discussion of contract renewal progress and required follow-up documentation. Discussion that in Cook County there is not an entity that provides a Certificate of Occupancy for buildings, and there is not a county building inspector. Discussion that in the school charter it states maximum capacity of students is 40, and this was based on square footage.
- 9.4 **Reading and Discussion of Sounding Board: *Supporting the School Leader:*** Reading and discussion of the Sounding Board article. Director James spoke about in what ways the article resonated for her, such as feeling guilty about missing school time for professional development opportunities. Director James spoke to specific ways she feels supported by Board members.
- 9.5 **School Leader Performance Discussion:** Discussion of developing information to share with the Board for the January meeting, regarding the administrative task list, so the Board is clear on accountability for different items. Director James stated her highest priority/goal is improving the false, negative narrative regarding Oshki Ogimaag and inviting the Community to participate in cultural learning opportunities for students. Community comment about how this is currently happening, and comment that the Community sees newsletters posted to Boreal, photos posted to social media depicting Community member involvement in the school. Director James also spoke about goals of connecting cultural learning with academic learning more cohesively and learning more about the relationship of the school and the school's authorizer.

- 10.0 **Operations Manager Proposal:** Discussion of the immense support that Mr. James provides to the school. Mr. James discussed how in working with the team in designating tasks on the administrative task list, that roles were clarified. It was discussed that Business Manager Zahn is focused on finances and bookkeeping, that there was a goal in narrowing the administrative scope of the Assistant Director's role to Human Resources, an Interface with the Board and Communications to the Community (via newsletters, flyers, emails, social media and website), and Director James as the outward face and voice of the school to the Board, families and Community, as well as instructional leader and support for teaching staff, working on curriculum development for interdisciplinary learning, and the Operations Manager role focusing on inward facing logistics, focusing

on deadlines, reports, policy development and updates, and engaged in staff development.

Discussion of chronic staff absenteeism, mostly due to local child care inconsistencies.  
Discussion of the need for a permanent sub to fill in for these absences. Discussion that in proposals for December, the Board should expect to see development of this role.


\* Chairperson Dickenson left the meeting during this discussion.

**Mr. Morrin moved to approve Operations Manager contract proposal presented by Peter James.** Motion seconded by Ms. Armstrong. Motion passed unanimously. (Voting aye: Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Czeswik, Ms. Gatzke, Mr. Morrin, Ms. Winchell-Dahl).

**11.0 Adjournment: Motion to adjourn made by Ms. Gatzke at 6:32pm.** Motion seconded by Ms. Winchell-Dahl. Motion passed unanimously. (Voting aye: Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Czeswik, Ms. Gatzke, Mr. Morrin, Ms. Winchell-Dahl).

**Highlighted Meeting Topic: School Leader Performance**

**Board Training Topic: The Board's Role in Supporting the School Leader**

  
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OOCS Board Secretary Signature

12/17/25  
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Date