



# 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, January 15, 2025**

- 1.0 **Call Meeting to Order, Roll Call of Board Members, Quorum Declaration:**
  - 1.1 Call to Order: 4:40pm
  - 1.2 **Board Members Present:** Jeana Van Dyne, John Morrin, Tina Gatzke, Joanne Czeswik, Tesha Dickenson, ex-officio Cherie James  
**Board Members Absent:** Patty Winchell-Dahl (excused), Agatha Armstrong  
**Community Members Present:** Pam Zahn (OOCS Business Manager)
- 2.0 **Reading of the Mission Statement by:** John Morrin
- 3.0 **Declaration of Conflict of Interest:** No conflicts declared.
- 4.0 **Community Comment:** Discussion that there was positive Community feedback regarding the OOCS Annual Holiday Program and that the sound equipment was very helpful.
- 5.0 **Officer Elections:** Vice Chair Van Dyne preceded over officer elections, in Chairperson Winchell-Dahl's absence. It was discussed that Chairperson Winchell-Dahl would prefer for another Board member to take on the role of Chairperson, but would be willing to do it if all other Board members were unable to fill the vacancy. Ms. Gatzke nominated Ms. Dickenson as Chairperson, Ms. Dickenson accepted the nomination. Ms. Gatzke nominated Ms. Van Dyne as Vice Chair, Ms. Van Dyne accepted. Ms. Van Dyne nominated Ms. Gatzke as Secretary, Ms. Gatzke accepted. Ms. Gatzke nominated Mr. Morrin as Treasurer, Mr. Morrin accepted. **Mr. Morrin moved to elect Ms. Dickenson as Board Chairperson, Ms. Van Dyne as Vice Chairperson, Mr. Morrin as Treasurer, and Ms. Gatzke as Secretary.** Motion seconded by Ms. Czeswik. Motion passed unanimously. (Voting aye: Mr. Morrin, Ms. Czeswik, Ms. Dickenson, Ms. Van Dyne, Ms. Gatzke).
- 6.0 **Ms. Czeswik moved to approve the agenda.** Motion seconded by Mr. Morrin. Motion passed unanimously. (Voting aye: Mr. Morrin, Ms. Czeswik, Ms. Dickenson, Ms. Van Dyne, Ms. Gatzke).
- 7.0 **Approval Meeting minutes from December 18, 2024 Regular Board Meeting. Ms. Dickenson moved to approve minutes.** Motion seconded by Mr. Morrin. Motion passed unanimously. (Voting aye: Mr. Morrin, Ms. Czeswik, Ms. Dickenson, Ms. Van Dyne, Ms. Gatzke).
- 8.0 **Discussion of December Financial Reports:**
  - 8.1 **Approval of December Financial Reports.** Business Manager Pam Zahn presented Financial Reports, discussing details of each report. There were

questions and explanations of a couple of line items (yoga, housing), Discussion of lowered food costs despite higher enrollment, and increased the nutritional value of menu, as a significant accomplishment. Discussion of the high costs of health benefits for employees, and the sustainability of the current benefits program. Discussion of inquiring if OOCS would be able to join Tribal health insurance. **Mr. Morrin moved to approve December Financial Reports.**

Motion seconded by Ms. Gatzke. Motion passed unanimously. (Voting aye: Mr. Morrin, Ms. Czeswik, Ms Dickenson, Ms. Van Dyne, Ms. Gatzke).

**8.2 Plumbing Repairs Discussion:** Discussion of plumbing issues (sinks, disposal, dishwasher) in the kitchen from last school year remain unfixed, Community Center repair person has not been able to address the issues as of yet. Director James will seek an outside plumber to work on the issue.

**8.3 Distribution of Final Audit Report.** Final Drafts of the Audit Report were distributed. No changes are included from the draft the Board reviewed, discussed and approved.

**9.0 Discussion of Staff Reports (Director's Report, EE Reports, and Teacher Reports):** Director James communicated how much she enjoyed leading the Annual Holiday Program and how meaningful it was, and stated she finally feels that OOCS is moving in the direction to align with the mission statement. There was discussion of Elders reminiscing about their days in the Old Log School Building as they viewed the Annual Holiday Program, and their appreciation of seeing the students there. Discussion that Director James has taken on meeting the requirements for the Nutrition Program and it is taking a large portion of her time. Discussion that OOCS is fully staffed for the first time in several years. Discussion of increasing enrollment through communication with the Community.

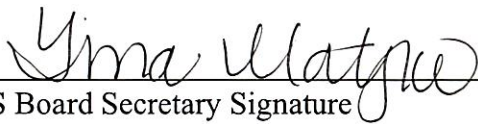
Discussion of the history of elementary education in Grand Portage, first as a school through Cook County ISD 166, eventually with Cook County closing the school after going into statutory debt and decreasing the school enrollment by grade level over a series of years. The Community of Grand Portage feeling strongly of the importance of having a school within the Community of Grand Portage, first researched opening a Tribal school, and then decided to open a charter school.

Discussion that out of 87 public school districts in Minnesota, Cook County is the only District (to the knowledge of the Board members) that has options for Ojibwe language from Kindergarten through graduation. Discussion of future goals of students becoming fluent in Ojibwemowin as our Ojibwe program continues to develop. Discussion of normalizing speaking Ojibwe within the Community, discussion of the history assimilation and the traumas related to the atrocities resulting from colonization and assimilation. Discussion of how speaking Ojibwe is part of a healing process.

Discussion of content of Teacher Reports. Discussion of what the Board would like to see in the reports, so that reports contain information other than what has been included in the

weekly school newsletters. Discussion of Teachers including challenges, successes, professional development, highlighting student outcomes monthly, including reports of outcomes after state testing, and areas in which Teachers feel they need additional support.

- 10.0 Approval of New Hire: Licensed Elementary School Teacher, Clara Lewis. Mr. Morrin moved to approve the new hire of Clara Lewis.** Motion seconded by Ms. Czeswik. Motion passed unanimously. (Voting aye: Mr. Morrin, Ms. Czeswik, Ms Dickenson, Ms. Van Dyne, Ms. Gatzke).
- 11.0 Discussion of Communication from Grand Portage IT Support.** Discussion of message sent by Grand Portage IT, communicating that as OOCS “is not part of RTC,” and that Grand Portage IT department serves all “Government owned and operated divisions,” and as OOCS is not one of those, is not a priority and OOCS should seek another entity to do IT work for the school. Discussion of how this change is abrupt and not consistent with the historical relationship Grand Portage IT has had with OOCS, for the minimal IT needs of OOCS. Discussion that Grand Portage IT has set-up all IT equipment in the school building, including internet, computers, and phone systems, for as long as OOCS has been open. Discussion that RTC has always been very supportive of OOCS. Director James will follow-up regarding this issue.
- 12.0 Star Tribune Data Request Discussion:** Director James and Assistant Director Gatzke met with legal counsel for guidance on data request from Star Tribune. Most or all charter schools in Minnesota received the same data request. All data requests to OOCS have currently been fully responded to.
- 11.0 Adjournment: Motion to adjourn made by Ms. Gatzke at 6:08pm.** Motion seconded by Mr. Morrin. Motion passed unanimously. (Voting aye: Mr. Morrin, Ms. Czeswik, Ms Dickenson, Ms. Van Dyne, Ms. Gatzke).



OOCS Board Secretary Signature

2/17/25

Date

*Oshki Ogimaag Community School Board Meetings are open to all. Oshki Ogimaag Community School greatly values the voices and perspectives of the families and community we serve. The Board will provide up to 15 minutes at the start of each meeting for public comment. The Board Chair may reduce or extend this time period and/or establish time limits on speakers to facilitate OOCS Board business. OOCS is authorized by Osprey Wilds Environmental Learning Center:*

<https://ospreywilds.org/charter-school-division/>

