

Board of Education President, 2024-2025	Okemos Public Schools board@okemosk12.net http://okemosk12.net	4406 Okemos Road Okemos, Michigan 48864 Phone: 517-706-5010
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This agenda is for general informational purposes only. Based on board policy, the board of education may revise this agenda and may take up other issues at the meeting.

6:15 PM

**MEETING AGENDA
Monday, April 14, 2025**

Community Conference Rm

CALL TO ORDER

Tom Buffett, Jason Burns, Katie Cavanaugh, Shulawn Doxie, Andrew Phelps, Leeni Shrestha and Jillian Winn

WELCOME AND MEETING FORMAT (2 Min)

Welcome to this regular meeting of the Okemos Board of Education held in public for the purpose of conducting the business of the school board.

There are two opportunities for public comment: Citizens who wish to address agenda or non-agenda items will have an opportunity at the beginning of the meeting, as well as near the end of the meeting. In-person individuals who wish to address the board must complete a blue form, located with the agendas near the room entrance, and present it to the board’s secretary prior to the start of the agenda item. Virtual participants must submit their name and address in a message through the chat box located in Zoom’s meeting controls prior to the start of the agenda item.

At the appropriate point in the agenda, the board president will call upon individuals who have submitted a blue card or chat message and that individual’s microphone will be un-muted for their comments.

ADJOURN TO EXECUTIVE SESSION – Contract Negotiations & Attorney-Client Privileged Information

Pursuant to Section 8(c) and 8(1)(h) of the Open Meetings Act, the board of education may adjourn to Executive Session for the purpose of contract negotiations and to review attorney-client privileged information.

That the board adjourn to Executive Session pursuant to Section 8(c) of the Open Meetings Act for the purpose of discussing contract negotiations (Roll Call).

RECONVENE

Tom Buffett, Jason Burns, Katie Cavanaugh, Shulawn Doxie, Andrew Phelps, Leeni Shrestha and Jillian Winn

DISCUSSION MOVED FORWARD: 2022 Bond Projects

Representatives from Veridas, TowerPinkster and Christman will provide an update regarding the 2022 bond, including bid packages #3 and 4 and an above ground storage fuel tank update.

DISCUSSION MOVED FORWARD: Technology Purchases (5 Min)

Media & Technology Director Tom Isom will provide information regarding technology purchases to be funded through the 2022 bond including firewall and data center upgrades, and phone systems.

CITIZENS ADDRESS AGENDA AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS

At this time in the meeting, citizens have an opportunity to address the board regarding items of interest that that may or may not be part of the evening’s agenda. Citizens are required to limit comments to three minutes, except when this requirement is waived by the board president during the meeting. A designated timekeeper will communicate to the individual who is addressing the board at three minutes. The board highly values public comment and input; however, the board meeting format is designed to facilitate the evening’s agenda and, therefore, restricts board members from engaging in conversation with speakers or immediately responding to questions. Questions and concerns may be addressed by the board later in the agenda and may be assigned for follow-up by the board or superintendent at a later date.

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT REPORTS/REQUESTS (5 Min)

The high school student representative will highlight events and issues of interest and take questions from the board.

SUPERINTENDENT REPORTS/REQUESTS (10 Min)

The superintendent will highlight events and issues of interest and take questions from the board.

BOARD REPORTS/REQUESTS (10 Min)

The board will acknowledge receipt of correspondence.

Individual board members may highlight other events and issues of interest and request follow-up on other matters of concern.

ACTION ITEMS

Within Action Items, there is a Consent Agenda to expedite the business of the board which groups a number of items together to be dealt with by one action of the board. However, items in the consent agenda may be extracted by individual board member request for further discussion or clarification.

CONSENT AGENDA (5 Min)

In an effort to expedite the business of the board of education, but in no way meant to diminish the importance of each item, a Consent Agenda has been developed.

That the board approve items 1 through 6 for immediate implementation and appropriate action.

Item 1: Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of March 10, 2025; Item 2: Approval of the Minutes of the Executive Session Meeting of March 10, 2025; Item 3: Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of March 17, 2025; Item 4: Approval of the Minutes of the Executive Session Meeting of March 17, 2025; Item 5: Approval of the Minutes of the Special Meeting of April 1, 2025; and Item 6: That the board acknowledge receipt of the March financial statement and approve payment of bills for March.

OTHER ACTION ITEMS

The Other Action Items require additional discussion prior to board action.

Physics Student Trip

OHS Science Teacher Molly Turner provided information regarding a physics student trip to Cedar Point proposed for May 5th.

That the board endorse the OHS Physics student trip to Cedar Point, scheduled for May 5, 2025 with the understanding the students will abide by all school policies and procedures.

BPA Member Trip

BPA Advisor Sharon Murchie provided information regarding a BPA National Leadership Conference trip to Orlando, Florida for BPA Chapter Members proposed for May 7th through the 11th.

That the board endorse the OHS BPA member trip to Orlando, Florida, scheduled for May 7th through May 11, 2025 with the understanding the students will abide by all school policies and procedures.

3rd-Party Custodial Contract Renewal

Operations Director Brian Lieber provided information regarding the extension of the district's contract with 3rd party cleaning contractor GRBS at the March 17th meeting.

That the board authorize the Superintendent to extend the existing contract with Grand Rapids Building Services (GRBS) for 2 additional years in accordance with Section 1.A. of the Custodial Services Agreement at an annual cost of \$1,247,094 Roll Call).

Operations Purchases

Operations Director Brian Lieber will provide information regarding the purchase of a mower to be funded by the general fund.

Section 127 Education Assistance Plan

Director Lentz provided information about how adoption of a Section 127 Educational Assistance Plan would benefit district employees who are being reimbursed for educational expenses under existing agreements or through State tuition reimbursement programs flowing through the District.

That the board waive the reading and establish the Educational Assistance Plan to provide eligible employees with educational assistance benefits under Section 127 of the Internal Revenue Code.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Discussion items are intended to provide an opportunity for review of material and interaction concerning the individual items. Action is not taken during the board meeting. Discussion items may be acted upon by the Board of Education at a later date. The board president may move a discussion item forward in the meeting agenda to facilitate timely discussion and/or community input on that discussion item.

Textbook Recommendations

Assistant Superintendent Stacy Bailey will present the new textbook recommendations for 2025-2026. It is not assumed that funds will be available in the general fund to purchase textbooks. Recommendations include:

- Creative Writing
- Contemporary Literature
- AP Statistics
- French 1
- Spanish I
- Algebra

2025-2026 Budget Development

Finance Director Elizabeth Lentz will provide information regarding the development of the 2025-2026 budget, including preliminary assumptions.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

At this time in the meeting, citizens have an opportunity to address the board regarding any item(s) of interest. Individual comments at this time will be limited to three minutes but may be extended at the discretion of the board president. A designated timekeeper will communicate to the individual who is addressing the board at three minutes. The board highly values public comment; however, our meeting format does not allow the board to engage in conversation with speakers. Questions or concerns may be assigned for follow-up by the board or the administration at a later date.

OTHER MATTERS (5 Min)

- Reminder of April 26th Board Retreat

ADJOURN

OKEMOS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

2022 Bond Program Update

April 14, 2025

TowerPinkster
Architecture · Engineering · Interiors

CHRISTMAN
BUILDING SINCE 1894

 **VERIDUS**
GROUP



Agenda

- Introductions
- BOE Roles and Responsibilities
- BP3 - CMS Project Schedule
- BP3 - CMS Construction
- BP4 - OHS PoolPak Update
- Transportation Fuel Tank Update
- Next Updates





Veridus Group

- Allison Duncan - Project Executive

Tower Pinkster

- Ed Talaga - Senior Project Manager

The Christman Company

- Shane Lounsberry - Project Manager





BOARD OF EDUCATION

INFORMATIONAL UPDATES

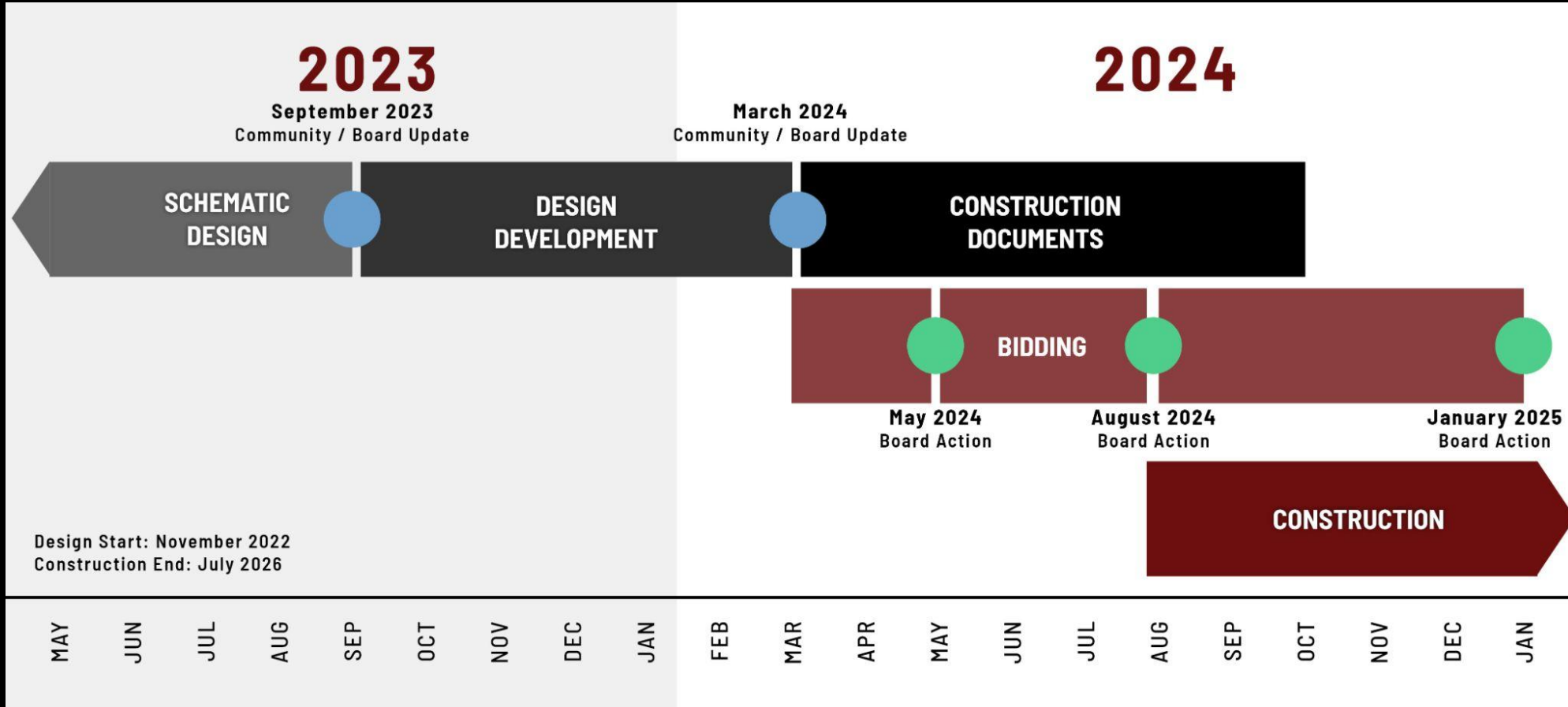
- Bond Draw Schedule
- Design Milestone Updates
- Bid Results
- Construction Update
- Communication Plans

BOARD ACTIONS

- District Guiding Principles
- 2022 Bond Program
- Permit & Inspection Services
- Bond Sales, 4 Series
- Approve Bids > \$29,000

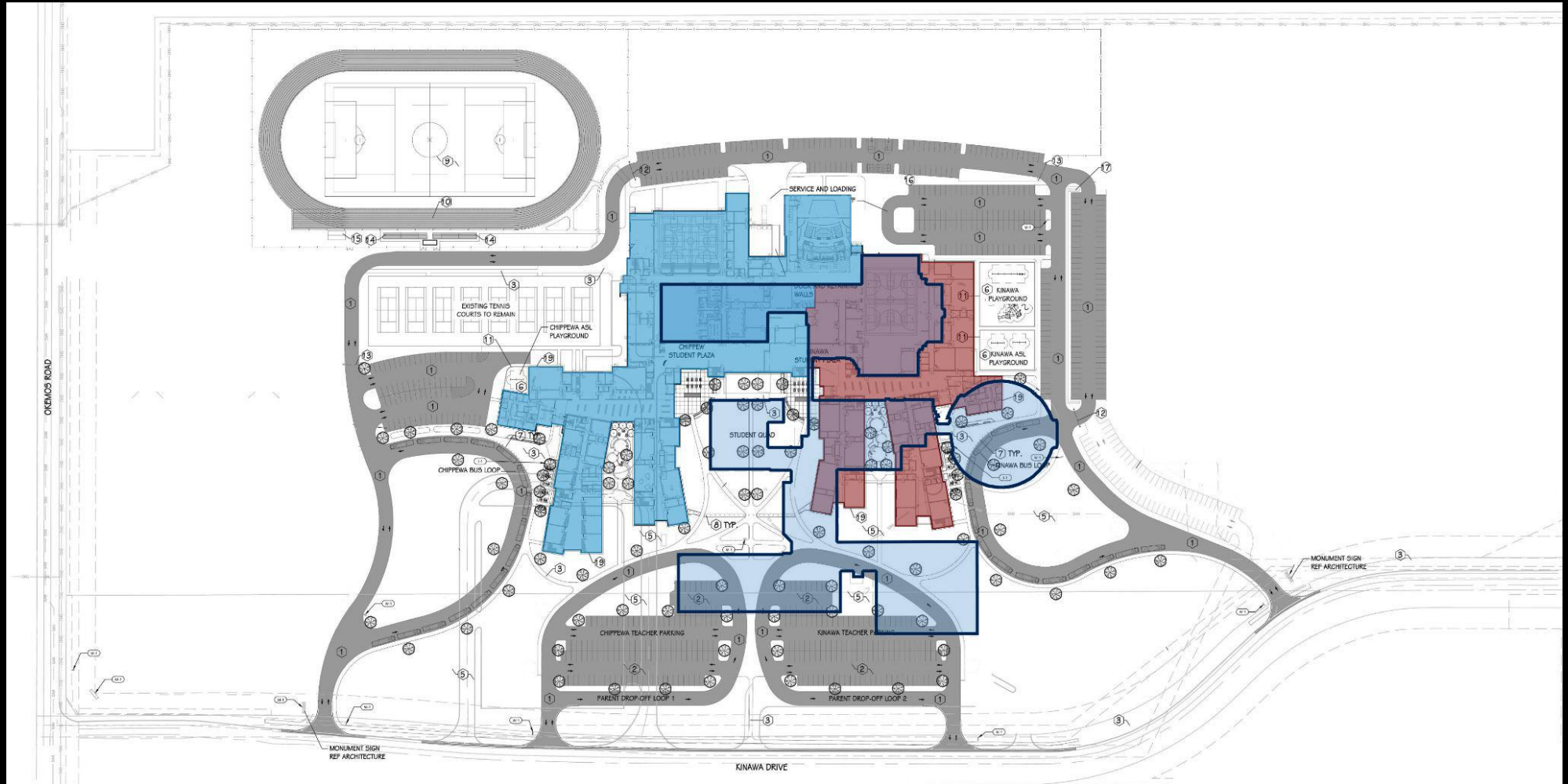


Bid Package 3: New Chippewa Middle School





CHIPPEWA SITE OVERVIEW





Chippewa Middle School - New Gym / Community Room





Chippewa Middle School - Cafeteria / Kitchen





Chippewa Middle School - New Competition Gym / Weight Room





Chippewa Middle School - Loading Dock / Mechanical Spaces





Chippewa Middle School - Existing West Gym/STEM/Woodshop



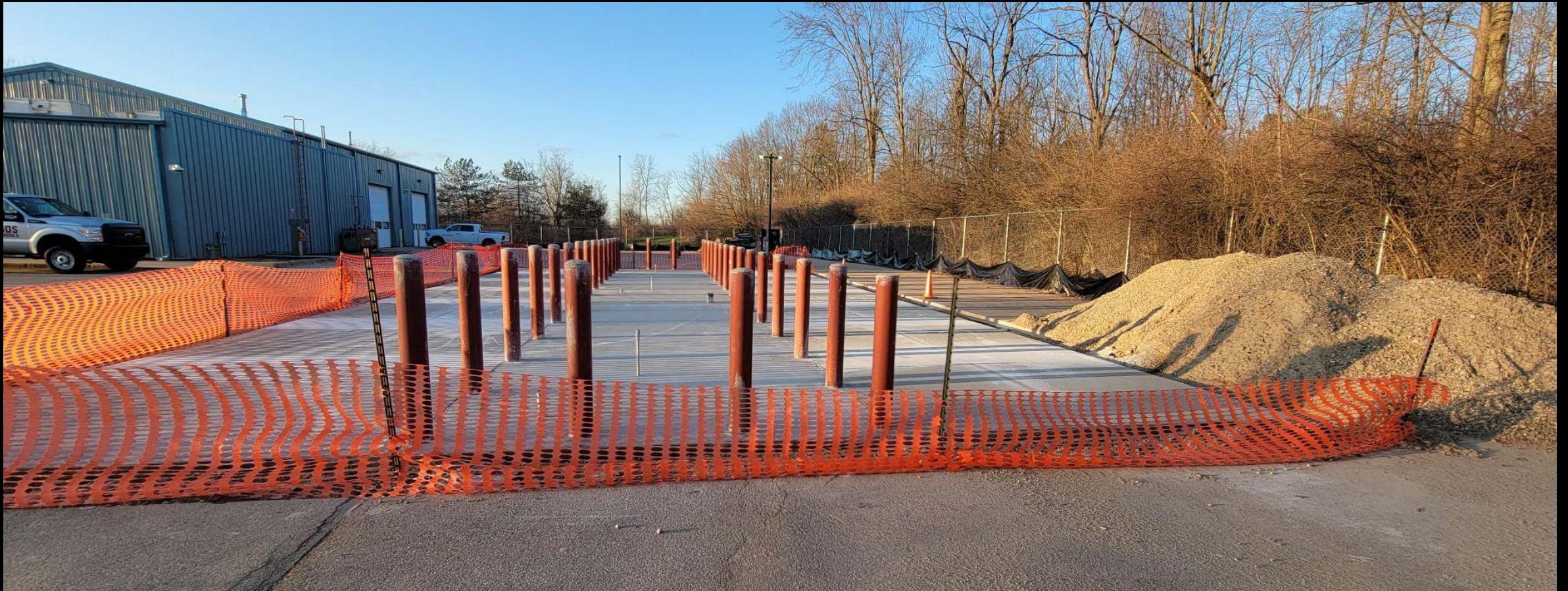


High School - Pool Painting / Mechanical Upgrades





Transportation Update - Above Ground Storage Fuel Tank





OKEMOS PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOND CONSTRUCTION
AT A GLANCE

NEW CHIPPEWA MIDDLE SCHOOL
Construction begins: **Summer 2024**
Construction complete: **Summer 2026**

TEMPORARY CORNELL ELEMENTARY
Students/Staff relocate to existing Chippewa Middle School:
Summer 2026

NEW CORNELL ELEMENTARY
Demolish existing Cornell: **Summer 2026**
Construction complete: **Summer 2028**
Cornell students start in new school: **August 2028**

NEW KINAWA MIDDLE SCHOOL
Demolish existing Chippewa: **Summer 2028**
Construction Complete: **Summer 2030**
Kinawa students start in new school: **August 2030**

UNDER CONSTRUCTION

STAY UP TO DATE WITH CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS AT OKEMOSBOND.NET

BOND MILESTONE DATES

2022 BOND PROGRAM UPDATES

okemosbond.net



2025 BOE Projected Bond Update Schedule

Month	Date	Bid Package	BOE Agenda
June	6/23/25	2022 BOND	Bond Overview Update
August	8/25/25	BP8 OHS Music	Construction Update
August	8/25/25	BP7 New Cornell	DD Update - New Cornell Elementary
August	8/25/25	KMS Furniture	Classroom Furniture Update
October	10/13/25	BP3 New CMS	BOE Walkthrough and Construction Update
October	10/13/25	BP8 OHS Music	Construction Update
February	2/9/26	BP7 New Cornell	Bid Results
February	2/16/26	BP7 New Cornell	Bid Approval - BOARD ACTION



QUESTIONS

QUESTIONS



Okemos Public Schools

Media & Technology Department

4406 North Okemos Road, Okemos, Michigan 48864

Phone: 517-706-5005 | Fax: 517-349-0609

Date: 04/14/25
To: Board of Education
From: Thomas Isom
Re: Approval Request – Data Center, Firewall, and Phone System Upgrades

As part of our ongoing commitment to enhancing district-wide infrastructure through the 2022 bond program, we are recommending approval for a strategic modernization of our core IT systems. This initiative includes critical upgrades to our **data center**, **firewall infrastructure**, and **district-wide phone system**. These investments are vital to supporting current and future instructional technology, bolstering cybersecurity, and ensuring reliable, scalable communication systems across all buildings.

Over the past several months, our team conducted a comprehensive evaluation of available solutions. This process included technical reviews, stakeholder consultations, cost-benefit analyses, and formal RFP and bid processes where applicable. The final recommendations represent solutions that deliver the best value, highest reliability, and long-term sustainability for the district.

Project Components and Recommendations

1. **Data Center Upgrade** (*District Servers and Storage*)

Recommended Vendor: Sentinel Technologies (Hewlett-Packard Enterprise)

Cost: \$220,472 - 2022 bond program

After evaluating proposals from HPE, Dell, and Lenovo, we recommend Sentinel Technologies, leveraging HPE infrastructure and the MHEC pre-bid contract. Sentinel's solution demonstrated superior reliability, performance, and long-term cost efficiency. Their proposal includes a fully managed deployment with high-quality support, making it the most strategic and future-proof choice for the district.

2. **Firewall Upgrade**

Recommended Vendor: Sentinel Technologies, Inc.

Cost: \$228,057 - 2022 bond program with partial e-rate reimbursement

We issued a formal RFP and received proposals from Sentinel Technologies and Coquina Labs, both quoting Palo Alto hardware per specification. Sentinel's proposal was less than Coquina's and includes a fully managed solution, high-availability configuration, staff training, and complete E-Rate compliance. Their experience in the K-12 space and commitment to minimizing risk make them the clear choice.

3. **Phone System Upgrade**

Recommended Vendor: RingCentral

Cost: \$299,628.05- 2022 bond program

Using the SourceWell Cooperative program, we evaluated proposals from RingCentral, 8x8, and Mitel. RingCentral's cloud-based system emerged as the top recommendation due to its robust feature set, ease of implementation, and seamless integration with existing platforms like Google Workspace and Microsoft 365. RingCentral's cloud-native design reduces our hardware footprint, lowers maintenance costs, and enhances overall system resilience and future proofing us.

These projects will include installation, removal of legacy equipment, configuration, training, and ongoing support as applicable. All vendors were selected based on a rigorous process prioritizing value, performance, reliability, and long-term support.

We are confident that these upgrades will significantly strengthen the district's technology infrastructure, enhance instructional delivery, and ensure secure, stable, and future-ready systems. Approval of this proposal is a critical step forward in supporting the district's mission to provide a safe, innovative, and effective learning environment for all students and staff.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thomas Isom". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "T".

Thomas Isom

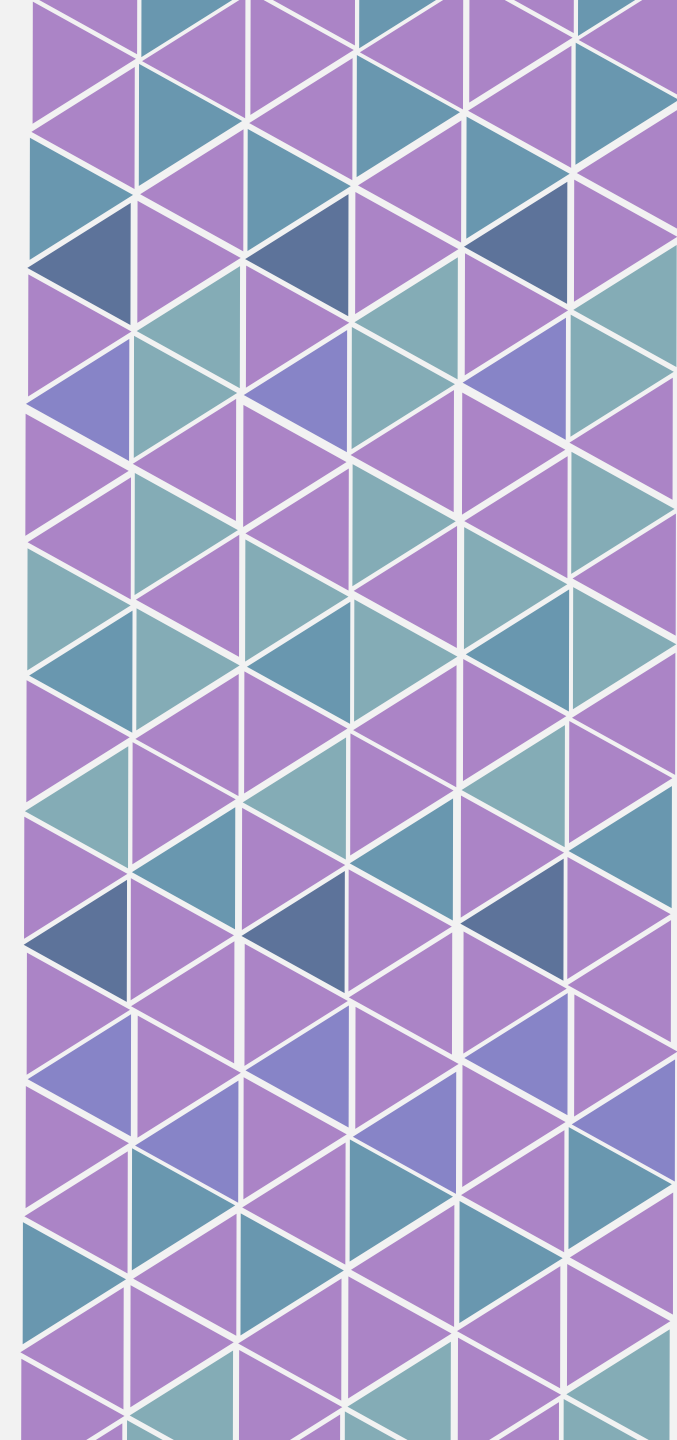
Director of Media and Technology
Okemos Public Schools

Physics Field Trip

Cedar Point

Sandusky, OH

**A Unique Learning Experience for 11th
& 12th Grade Physics Students**



Trip Details

Date: May 5th, 2025 - this date coincides with the Cedar Point Physics, Science, and Math Week

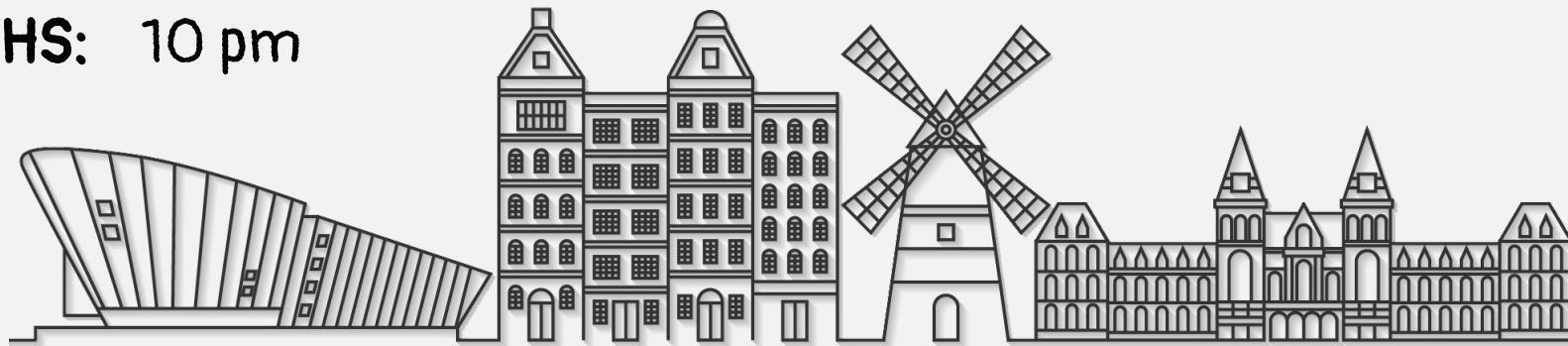
Transportation: Provided by Blue Lakes Charters (three bus bids were explored)

Student to Chaperone Ratio: 15:1 - chaperone tickets are complimentary

Cost: \$110 - Cost of trip sponsored by OHS for any students who could not afford the cost (two parents volunteered to sponsor a second student)

Students Depart OHS: 6 am

Students Return to OHS: 10 pm



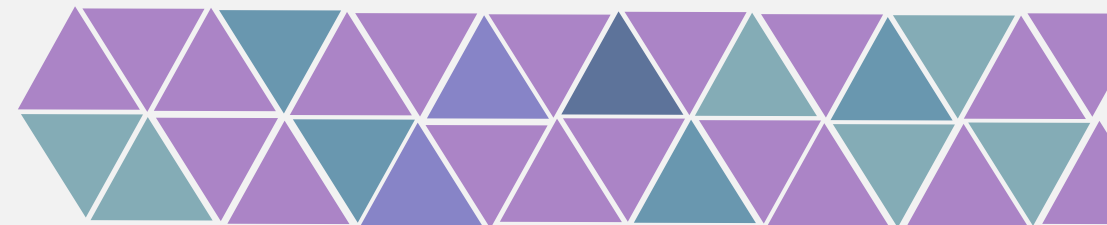
Cedar Point's Physics, Science, and Math Day Offerings

- **Special Programming:** Access to educational materials and live demonstrations.
- **Physics Workbooks:** Custom resources provided by Cedar Point.
- **Exclusive Opportunities:** Q&A sessions with industry professionals.



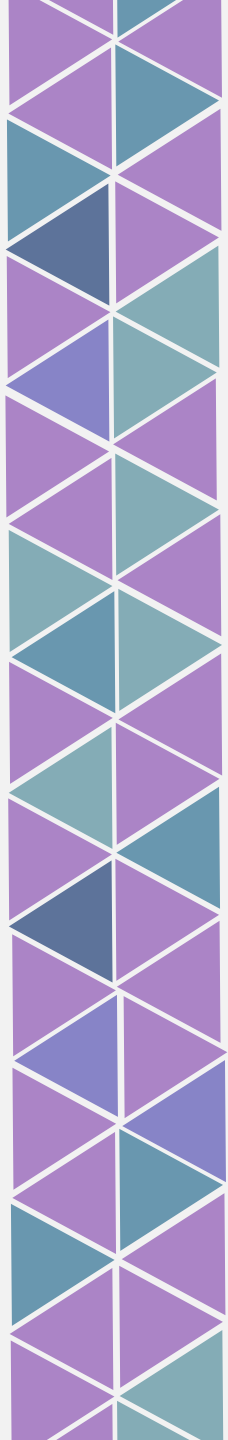
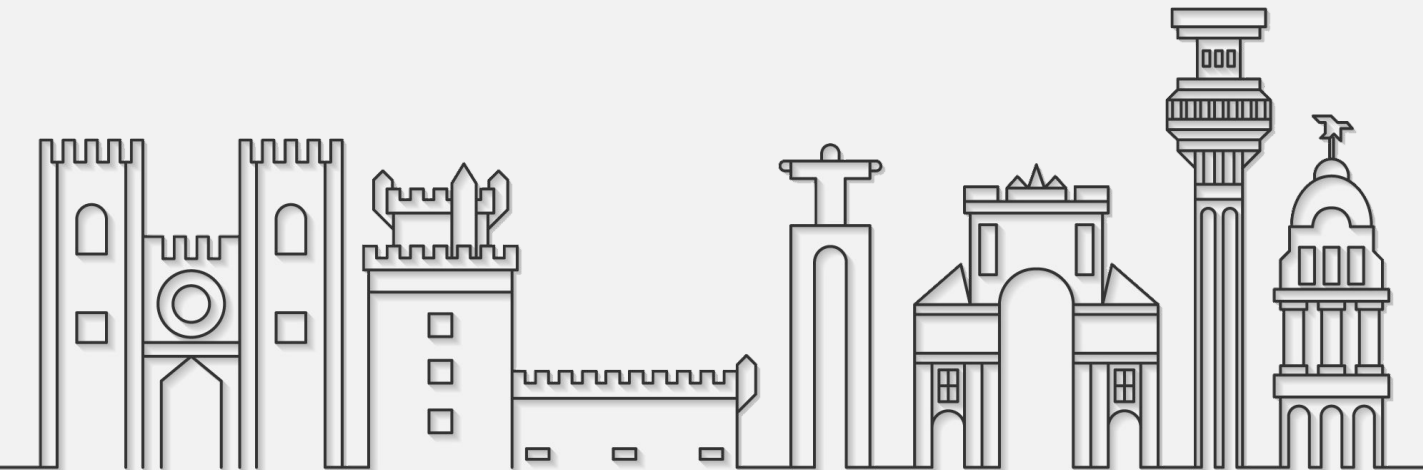
Purpose and Rationale:

- **Provide a Hands-On Learning Experience:** Apply physics concepts in real-world scenarios.
- **Interactive Environment:** Experience physics principles through roller coasters and rides.
- **Engagement & Inspiration:** Spark students' curiosity and passion for science
- **Experiential Learning:** Enhances classroom instruction with practical application.

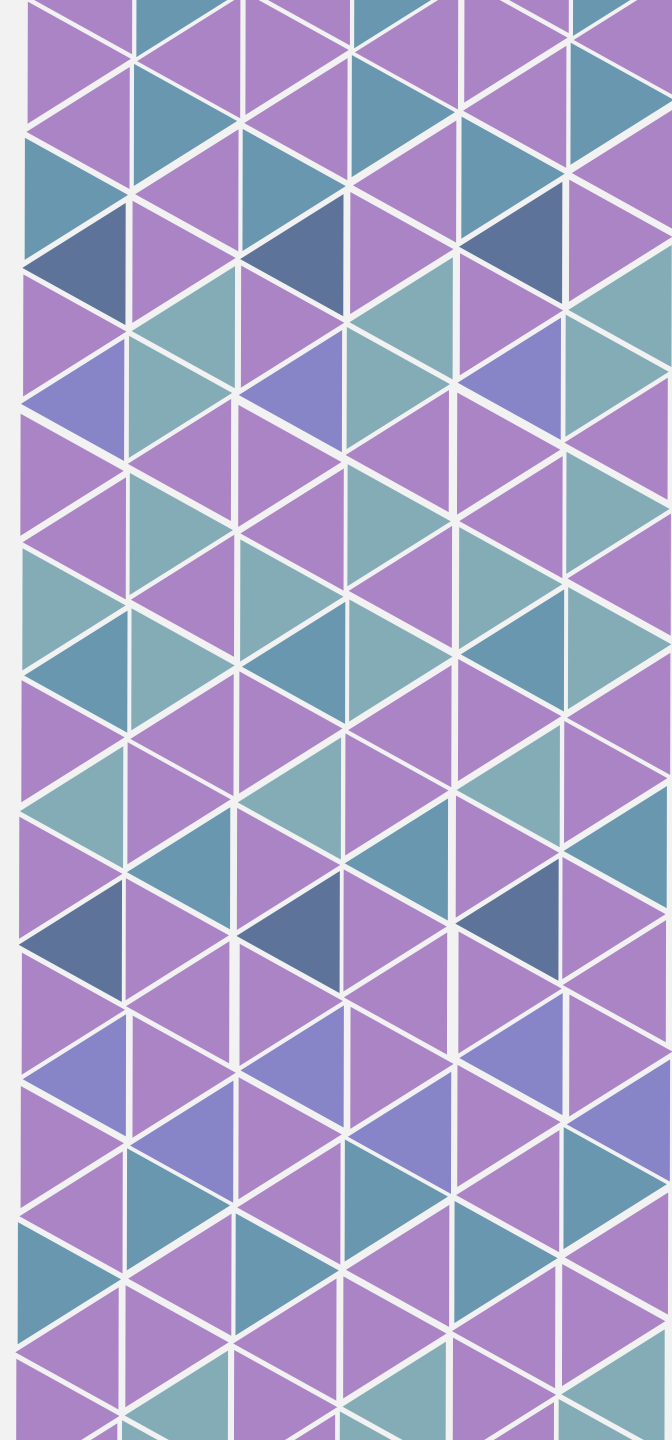


Physics Concepts to be Addressed

- **Kinematics & Dynamics:** Study velocity, acceleration, and force.
- **Energy Transformations:** Analyze potential and kinetic energy shifts.
- **Centripetal Force & Circular Motion:** Explore the physics of loops and curves
- Concepts will be applied to a summative amusement park project that will be assigned after the completion of the trip.



Questions?



BPA Nationals 2025

Orlando, Florida
May 7 - 11

Who Can Go?

- **Top 6 & Top 3 teams at States**
 - **Ambassador Torch Award**
 - **Seniors in Good Standing**

When: May 7-May 11

How Much \$\$?: \$1500

What does the \$1500 cover?

- **Flights**
- **Ground transportation**
- **Hotel/resort**
- **1 day at an amusement park**
- **Conference registration**

The Hotel: Gaylord Palms Resort & Convention Center



Payment Plan
\$200 due March 19
\$1300 due April 11

****payment must be made to Sharon Murchie
(not revtrak) because I will be paying for
everything up front in order to make the
payment deadlines.**

AP Exams

1. **Tell Mr. Walton which exams you need to take during the make-up window**
2. **The make-up exams have the *same* pass rate as the regular exams. The scores are normalized, meaning the score cutoffs are the same for each window.**
3. **Conflicts with school competitions do not incur an additional late testing fee (other things, like a family event, do incur a fee).**

Travel Documents You MUST HAVE a “Real ID” or a Passport to Fly.

123FreeVector



Note: The hotel/resort is “Cashless” - you will need a credit card or debit card to purchase anything there, including food.

- **11 restaurants on site.**
- **No access to food off-site.**

Nationals Commitment - DUE 3/18 a.m.

My student, _____ has my permission to attend the BPA Nationals competition in Orlando, Florida May 7 - May 11. All forms and documentation (including medical insurance) previously submitted for BPA States is accurate and can be applied to my student's attendance at Nationals.

I give my permission to Sharon Murchie to book a round-trip flight for my student leaving May 7 and returning May 11. My student's date of birth is _____ and their full legal name is _____.

I agree to submit a check or Venmo to Sharon Murchie (@Sharon-Murchie) for \$200 by 3/19 and \$1300 by April 11 to cover flights, hotel, transportation, and conference registration.

I understand that flights are non-refundable should my student need to cancel.

Signed _____ Date _____

Business Professionals of America's National Leadership Conference will be held in Orlando, Florida May 7-11.

Okemos' chapter of BPA currently has 122 members. 78 students travelled to Grand Rapids March 13-16 and competed at States.

States Results:

Next up, Nationals!

There are several ways to qualify to attend Nationals:

1. Medal at States
2. Complete the top level Torch Award
3. Be a senior member in good standing

2022, 3 students attended Nationals in Dallas, Texas

2023 - 6 students attended Nationals in Anaheim, California

2024 - 6 students attended Nationals in Chicago, Illinois

2025 - ?? Currently a lot of interest

The screenshot shows the BPA National Leadership Conference website for May 7-11, 2025, in Orlando, Florida. The page includes a registration period from February 28 to March 28, 2025, and a 'Planning Guide' section with an 'Estimated Costs of Attendance' table.

Estimated Costs of Attendance	
Registration	\$125
Travel	\$475
Hotel (4 nights quad occupancy)	\$331
Meals (5 days)	\$250
Tours	\$175
Miscellaneous	\$135
Per Attendee Estimate	\$1,491

I arrange transportation (Flights and ground transportation) and do not use a travel company. We are required to stay at the sanctioned hotel – Michigan's hotel is _____ .

The approximate cost breakdown is on the screenshot, above. I charge \$1500 per student to attend.

Custodial Services Proposal 2025- 2027



Current Service Provider: GRBS

- Service provider last three years
- Responsible for evening cleaning inside all buildings
- Contract has provision to extend for 2 years

Summary: Challenges due to staffing turnover, establishment of reasonable expectations, relationships between GRBS/Okemos Staff, willingness to improve

Contracting or Okemos Staff

Contracting (3rd Party)

- Cost savings
- Expanded resources
- Transfer management intensive duties

Okemos

- Relationships
- Staff more vested
- Consistent staff
- Knowledge of facilities
- Direct supervision and control

Contract Extension vs. an RFP

- Allows OPS time to coordinate new builds with contract renewal
- Extension of contract more economical than reopening bids
- Current provider responsive to feedback, willing to work with us
- Higher quality service with existing team vs. a new team
 - Relationships
 - Training, Knowledge of buildings
 - Improvements

Cost Analysis: GRBS vs. Okemos Staff

GRBS (cost per year/ previous 3 years)	\$1,177,000
GRBS (cost per year/next 2 years)	\$1,247,094
<i>Difference (GRBS Extension):</i>	<i>\$70,094 (6% increase)</i>
Okemos Staff (cost per year): (Maintains Current Staffing Model)	\$1,950,000

Why extend with GRBS?

- Relationship developing, working with us to address concerns
- Promoting ownership from students,
- Developing routines to assist in success
- Management has been responsive
- Positive references from other districts
- Struggles not unique to GRBS
- Most economical solution
 - Makes unknown, known for budget planning
- Timelines for bond/new buildings

Recommendation

- Continue to contract for night custodial
- 2 year contract extension with GRBS, reassess

Other Considered but rejected:

- Going out to third party bid
- Bringing all custodial in house



2025 GRBS Program Enhancements

- * Dedicated Manager - Communication and Accountability Focus
- * District Supervisor - Training, Walk down, and Event Focus
- * Added additional 20 hours per week above original bid amount during school year. (GRBS absorbing)
- * Increased wages to **\$15.00** to start, up from \$14.00 that was bid (GRBS is absorbing this \$60K cost)

Current Average Service Wages	
OKEMOS	
	Custodial \$15.48
	Retail \$15.46
	Fast Food \$13.00
	Manufacturing \$17.07

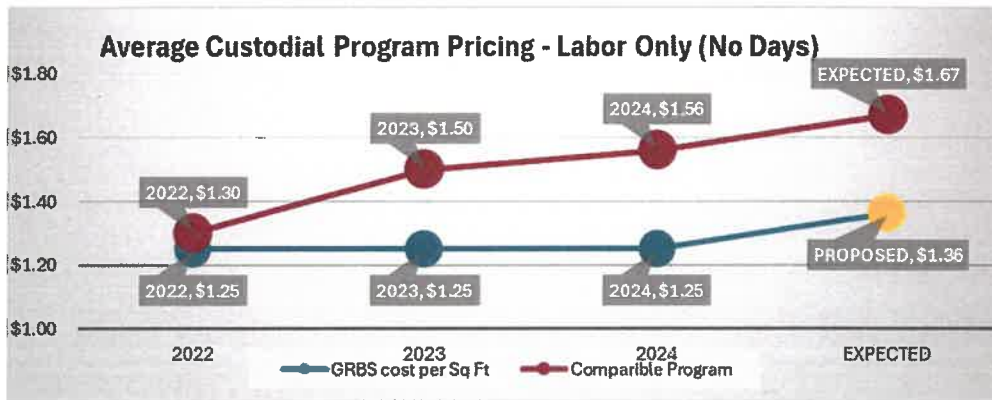
Pricing Options Breakdown

- * Current Annual Price has remained static since 2022 **\$1,176,924.00**
- * **Wages** - Need to add \$.50 per hour this year to get to \$15.50 (\$30K) and then move to \$16.00 (\$60K) in 2026-27. This is total cost prorated across 2 years. **\$44,850.00**
(Minimum wage is set to reach \$14.97 in 2028)
- * **ESTA Regulations** - Beginning Feb 21 we need to pay 1 hour of PTO for every 30 hours worked. District is projected for 46,000 hourly hours per year. Added cost above our current PTO program. **\$25,320.00**

**This can be reduced depending on current legislation*

Extension of Current Program with Enhancements:

\$1,247,094.00 (\$1.36/Sq Ft)



In an RFP the anticipated price for the current program is \$1.67, although no bids have been submitted as of January.

- * Include All Chemistry, Small Tools, and Supplies: **\$31,620.00** * We would work with Ken/LSS
- * Equipment Estimated Repair costs: **\$18,768.00** * Based on average wear & tear
- * Estimated cost to provide all new equipment is \$253,880.00. This would be prorated across length of extension. **\$126,940.00** * Assumes 2 year extension with ALL new equipment

2 Year Extension - All options included

\$1,424,422
(\$1.55/Sq Ft)

- * The average bid price from RFP's in 2024 was \$2.19 (Includes supplies, chemistry, and full day program)
- * Removing the equivalent labor and benefits for the day staff equates to approximately \$.31/Sq Ft - Making that average \$1.88
- * Other than 2022-2023 (10% jump), the market averages a about a 3% increase each year - Reasonable to expect \$1.94 in 2025

By extending with GRBS for 2 years, your average price INCLUDING all supplies and equipment will be less than the market price for the current program that does not include those items.

- * This does not reflect time/resource savings from OPS staff handling orders and deliveries
- * This cost can be further reduced through an equipment buy back program - GRBS will work with LSS to buy current equipment at fair value, and reduce the new equipment cost to reflect only what needs to be supplemented versus buying all new.



Operations Department

Date: 3/6/2025
To: Board of Education
From: Brian Lieber, Director of Operations
Re: New Large Area Mower Purchase

Purchase Information

Cost: \$68,794
Vendor: Omnia Partners - Cooperative Bidding Site
Source of Funds: General Fund (part of the revised budget)

Description of Need

Our current method for mowing large areas involves using a tractor to tow a mower, which is slow and inefficient. There are faster and more efficient alternatives available. A large zero turn style mower would allow us to cover ground more quickly and move between buildings with greater ease, increasing overall mowing productivity each week. Additionally, the new mower would use about half the fuel.

Recommendation

I recommend purchasing a large-area mower from Exmark for \$68,794. While there are other options from different manufacturers, they are significantly more expensive and include features we don't require. We expect this unit to last 4-5 years. Our current mowing setup has been unreliable and may not last another full season. I plan to purchase a second unit in 3 years so that we have a backup. We will also purchase less of the smaller mowers we have as these large area mowers will eliminate the need for the 10 smaller mowers we have. We would likely only need 3-4 smaller mowers with 2 large area mowers.

Brian Lieber

brian.lieber@okemosk12.net

4406 North Okemos Road, Okemos, Michigan 48864

Phone (517) 706-5037

	Current Weekly	Proposed Weekly	Current	Proposed	Notes
Equipment Costs			\$15,000.00	\$70,000.00	\$15,000 is to replace failing mower deck.
Transportation Time Hours	6	2	\$5,760.00	\$1,920.00	New mower on trailer vs. being driven on the road.
Fuel Usage Gallons	90	45	\$7,027.20	\$3,513.60	
Labor Hours	35	20	\$33,600.00	\$19,200.00	New mower mows twice as fast.
Maintenance costs Planned (per year)			\$600.00	\$300.00	
Unplanned Maintenance			\$5,250.00	\$0.00	Unplanned repairs made to existing tractor.
First year costs			\$67,237.20	\$94,933.60	
Second year costs			\$52,237.20	\$24,933.60	
Third year costs			\$52,237.20	\$24,933.60	
Fourth year costs			\$52,237.20	\$24,933.60	
Fifth year costs			\$52,237.20	\$24,933.60	
5 Year Total Costs			\$276,186.00	\$194,668.00	
			5 Year savings	\$81,518.00	
	Hourly Rate	Weeks Of Mowing	Fuel Costs (Diesel)	Fuel Costs (Gas)	
	\$30.00	32	\$2.44	\$2.59	

Educational Assistance Program

OKEMOS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

This Educational Assistance Plan (the “Plan”) is established by Okemos Public Schools (“District”) to provide eligible employees with educational assistance benefits under Section 127 of the Internal Revenue Code (“Section 127”) to enhance employee proficiency and opportunity for advancement, or in the case of educational assistance provided through grant-funded loan repayment programs, to recognize past academic accomplishments.

1. **District-Funded Educational Assistance.** District-funded educational assistance, which consists of payment from District resources of expenses incurred by or on behalf of an employee for instruction or training that improves or develops the employee’s capabilities, is available to employees subject to the terms of this Plan and in accordance with the employee’s individual employment contract or collective bargaining agreement, as applicable. Employees who are retired or on lay-off status are not eligible.
 - a. **Qualified Educational Expenses.** Eligible employees will be reimbursed for qualified educational expenses, in accordance with the applicable individual employment contract or collective bargaining agreement. Costs for tools, supplies, meals, lodging, or transportation are excluded from the Plan. Courses involving sports, games, or hobbies are not eligible under the Plan unless they have a business purpose or are required as part of a degree program.
 - b. **Prior Approval.** To be considered for reimbursement, prior approval is required as provided by the applicable individual employment contract or collective bargaining agreement.
 - c. **Maximum Reimbursement.** The District will reimburse eligible employees in accordance with funding available as described in the applicable individual employment contract or collective bargaining agreement.
 - d. **Minimum Scores.** To receive reimbursement, eligible employees must complete: (1) non-college courses with a passing score; (2) undergraduate courses with a grade of 2.0 or higher; or (3) graduate-level courses with a grade of 3.0 or higher.
 - e. **Reimbursement.** To receive reimbursement, eligible employees must submit evidence of course completion and grade attainment by submitting a transcript as applicable with a detailed invoice and proof of payment in addition to any other documentation required by the applicable individual employment contract or collective bargaining agreement. Eligible employees are not eligible for reimbursement by the District of tuition paid by any grant, scholarship, or other educational assistance program and shall not request reimbursement for the same.
2. **Grant-Funded Educational Assistance.** Grant-funded educational assistance consists of grant funds received by the District from a third party for: (1) payment for any form of

eligible instruction or training that improves or develops the employee's capabilities; or (2) repayment of eligible student loans. To the extent such grant funding is available, the District will distribute this funding in accordance with grant requirements to employees who meet the grant program's guidelines and eligibility requirements, and who complete any District-required certifications and documentation of eligibility. Any reimbursed costs for tools, supplies, meals, lodging, or transportation, or for courses involving sports, games, or hobbies that do not have a business purpose or are not required as part of a degree program are excluded from the Plan.

3. **Plan Revision or Termination.** The District reserves the right to change the terms or terminate the Plan without prior notice. In this event, the District will reimburse employees according to the applicable individual employment contract or collective bargaining agreement or grant program guidelines for all courses in process prior to termination, but reimbursement will not be provided for any course that began after termination and notification of the same.
4. **Taxation.** Section 127 provides an exemption from gross income of up to \$5,250 of educational assistance per calendar year, including employer-paid student loan payments through December 31, 2025. Once the receipt of benefits of \$5,250 is exceeded in a calendar year, or if an educational assistance benefit is not eligible, or is no longer exempt from gross income under the Internal Revenue Code, the employee is responsible for any resulting tax consequences.



Textbook Recommendations 2025-2026

April 14 , 2025

Strategic Plan- Instruction & Learning


PRIORITY 3: Through strong district and building leadership, deepen implementation of high-quality practices and programming.

- Enhance core instructional programming PK-12.
- Enhance core instructional practices PK-12.
- Align and enhance supplemental instructional supports PK-12 to meet the needs of each student.

Each text or instructional material selection is an opportunity to move OPS closer to our goal of equitably educating with excellence.



Textbook/Instructional Materials Proposals

- Journalism (OHS)
 - Creative Writing (OHS)
 - Contemporary Literature (OHS)
 - AP Statistics (OHS)
 - French I (CMS/OHS)
 - Spanish I (CMS/OHS)
- 

OPS Textbook Recommendation Process

1. Teachers review multiple textbooks using the following criteria and tools:
 - a. Readability
 - b. Standards Alignment
 - c. Culturally Responsive Curriculum Scorecard
 - d. Assessing Bias in Standards & Curricular Materials Tool
2. Approval process by Committee (Elementary), Department Chairs (KMS, CMS) or Area Coordinators (OHS)
3. Presentation & approval by District Advisory Council
4. Presentation to Board of Education.





OHS ELA

Journalism Last Approved: NA

Course Information: This course focuses on news, feature, advertising, and editorial writing for the OHS student publication, The OHS Press. Students will also use programs for design, editing, layout, photography, and art. Students will be responsible for writing, selling advertisements, and producing print and online publications. This course requires after-school time commitment.

Current Reality: No current subscriptions

Recommendation:

- *The Michigan Daily*
- *New York Times (previously approved for other courses at the high school)*

Rationale for selection:

- Representation of diverse perspectives and communities, including authentic, real-life narratives.
- High standards of journalistic writing and contributes meaningfully to the course's emphasis on objective, balanced, and representative journalism.

Creative Writing 12 Last Approved: 2013

Course Information: This class will provide models, instruction, and experiences in a variety of creative writing genres, including poetry, creative nonfiction, and short stories. Students enrolling in this course should plan to write every day. This course is designed for those students who really enjoy writing.

Current Reality: This text will supplement the current text, *On Writing, A Memoir of the Craft* by Stephen King.

Recommendation:

- *Improv for Writers*

Rationale for selection:

- This text offers engaging, interactive strategies rooted in improvisational techniques to help students overcome writer's block, spark creativity, and build confidence in their writing voice.
- Complements the foundational guidance to support a dynamic, student-centered approach to creative expression.

Contemporary Literature- 12 Last Approved: 2018

Course Information: This course will center on outstanding and award-winning contemporary literature reflecting several genres. A variety of books will stimulate exploration, discussion, and reflection of themes in relation to social justice and current issues. Students will reflect on the reading material using group discussions, literary circles, creative projects, analytical essays, book reviews and journal entries. The course is designed for students who enjoy reading and are willing to stretch their present scope of literary taste.

Current Reality: *The House on Mango Street (Cisneros), The Kite Runner (Hosseini), About a Boy (Hornby), Wit (Edson), The Lovely Bones (Sebold), Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone (Rowling), City of Thieves (Benioff), Looking for Alaska (Green), The Perks of being a Wallflower (Chobsky), The Hunger Games (Collins), Where'd You Go, Bernadette (Semple)*

Recommendation: To replace current texts with "contemporary" novels written in the 21st century that authentically reflect the lived experiences of the students at OHS. There are a total of 22 new texts being recommended.

Rationale for selection:

- Each title has been thoroughly evaluated using the District Textbook Review Tool to ensure alignment with district standards and instructional goals.
- The selected texts reflect a strong commitment to the District vision by amplifying underrepresented voices, addressing complex social issues with thoughtfulness and nuance, and avoiding stereotypes and historical inaccuracies.
- These novels are intended to foster critical dialogue among students around themes of power, privilege, and identity, while cultivating an inclusive classroom environment in which all students feel seen, valued, and empowered to participate meaningfully in conversations about the world around them.

	Book Info	Lexile Level	Notes/Justification/Rationale
1	Circe by Madeline Miller (2018)	660L	Feminist retelling of <i>The Odyssey</i> (Which is read in LC9) & would make for a nice full circle moment, explores power, isolations & resilience
2	James by Perceival Everett (2024)	N/A (Too New)	Reimagines <i>Huck Finn</i> from Jim's perspective, critically engaging with race & American history.
3	Ayesha at Last by Uzma Jalaluddin (2018)	N/A (Couldn't Find)	<i>Pride & Prejudice</i> retelling with a Muslim protagonist, explores cultural expectations & love. Might be more challenging than <i>Pride</i> .
4	Frankenstein in Baghdad by Ahmed Saadawi (2014)	1040L	Examines the impact of war on our identities & moralities through a Frankenstein-inspired narrative. (<i>Frankenstein</i> is read in Brit Lit)
5	Beautiful Little Fools by Jillian Cantor (2022)	No info	Reimagines <i>Gatsby</i> through the female character's (Daisy, Jordan, Catherine, who is Myrtle's sister) perspective, deepening female agency in the story. (<i>Gatsby</i> is read in AmLit)
6	Station Eleven by Emily St. John Mandel (2014)	930	Set amidst a Pandemic (timely-ish!), literary style dystopian novel that explores art and humanity after the world has collapsed. There is also a TV adaptation of this that could make for good discussion.
7	The Ballad of Songbirds & Snakes by Suzanne Collins (2020)	860	Would directly replace <i>The Hunger Games</i> in the curriculum. Timely and relevant, provides insight to the origins of the tyrant in <i>The Hunger Games</i> . Connects the dystopian unit to the Retellings unit.
8	Scythe by Neal Shusterman (2016)	830	Hot book right now, first in a series, engaging, philosophical YA dystopia about immortality and ethics
9	The House in the Cerulean Sea by TJ Klune (2020)	620	Wildly popular, first in a series, whimsical and hopeful fantasy exploring found family & identity. Lexile Note: "The book is considered an adult novel, but some say it's accessible to young adult readers. It includes themes like romance and the mistreatment of foster children."

	Book Info	Lexile Level	Notes/Justification/Rationale
10	The Grace Year by Kim Liggett (2019)	810	A feminist dystopian novel that can be compared to LOTF & <i>The Handmaid's Tale</i> . Considered the latter for Contemp, but it is given as an option in BritLit, so I think this would supplement it well. Explores the societal control of women.
11	The Things they Carried by Tim O'Brien (1990)	880	Older text comparatively, but can reach reluctant readers & does a nice job blending fiction and memoir to explore memory & trauma. Could be used in conjunction with Nonfic or writing the college essay.
12	Long Way Down by Jason Reynolds (2017)	750	One of my favorite books to teach. Powerful, accessible novel that addresses the cycle of violence and generational trauma. I think this would work well in my Living Poets unit.
13	Homegoing by Yaa Gyasi (2016)	910	Traces the impact of slavery across generations, provides a nuanced look at the lasting legacy of slavery and colonialism. Multi-generational narrative structure & diverse characters offer students a unique lens to analyze complex social issues. Would pair well with Reynolds.
14	Beartown by Frederik Backman (2016)	840	First in a series, has a TV adaptation, complex exploration of sports culture (might hit some reluctant readers), masculinity & justice
15	The Nickel Boys by Colson Whitehead (2019)	940	Just had a film adaptation come out. Pulitzer-prize winning novel that exposes hidden American history. Powerful and unflinching portrayal of institutional racism and abuse in a reform school during the Jim Crow Era. Would pair well with Gyasi & Reynolds.
16	Our Missing Hearts by Celeste Ng (2022)	800-1200L	Timely exploration of book banning, propaganda & identity. Encourages students to consider how to create a better world & challenge the injustices that surround them. Connects to real world policies & fears
17	All My Rage by Sabaa Tahir	590L (Ages 14 & Up)	A beautifully written novel that is incredibly easy for students to connect with, while also covering challenging topics. Connects to discussion of the American Dream from LC10 & American Lit. Explores generational trauma & resilience

	Book Info	Lexile Level	Notes/Justification/Rationale
18	Darius the Great is Not OK by Adib Khorram	710	Offers a nuanced portrayal of the life of a biracial teen as he navigates mental health, family dynamics, cultural identity & the challenges of being an outsider. Provides a window into Iranian culture and traditions, while sensitively addressing complex topics.
19	Patron Saints of Nothing by Randy Ribay	840 (9-12)	Help students develop empathy towards others, learn about social responsibility & explore their own identity. Provides an interesting, complex lens through which to explore global inequalities.
20	I am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter by Erika Sanchez	730 (9-12)	Offers a refined exploration of Mexican-American identity, especially for young women. Tackles themes of familial expectations, cultural pressure, immigration, and the struggle to find your voice amidst the chaos.
21	The Midnight Library by Matt Haig	70-750	Portrays a thought experiment on living alternative lives. Encourages discussion on regrets & resilience. Explores self-reflection, the consequences of our choices & finding meaning in life.
22	Girl in Pieces by Kathleen Glasgow	740	Deals with mental illness & resilience in a raw, unfiltered way. Fosters conversation about stigmatized issues, promotes empathy & encourages students to seek help.

AP Statistics

Last Approved: 2018

Current Reality:

Current online licenses have expired.

Recommendation: *The Practice of Statistics, 7th Edition*

Rationale for selection:

- Recommended by the Advanced Placement (AP) Statistics program.
- Proven to be a valuable resource for students enrolled in the AP Statistics course.
- Authored by experienced AP exam graders, the text is specifically designed to align with the expectations and rigor of the AP exam.
- Previous editions have supported strong student performance.
- Offers a comprehensive set of instructional materials and resources to enhance teaching and learning.

OHS Math

World Language

French I Last Approved: 2018

Current Reality: Bien Dit

Recommendation: *Nous Sommes Level 1*

Rationale for selection:

- Specifically designed to align with current research in second language acquisition, which emphasizes the importance of contextual, meaningful learning experiences.
- Supports a more modern, flexible, and acquisition-driven approach to language instruction.
- Demonstrated strong student engagement and accessibility for all learners. Its emphasis on storytelling provides a powerful framework for language acquisition, allowing students to connect with the content on a deeper level.
- The curriculum incorporates a rich variety of cultural materials, including music, art, humor, current events, and history, which enhances both relevance and retention.
- This curriculum represents a significant improvement over the traditional textbook model and is highly recommended for broader implementation within the district.

Spanish I Last Approved: 2018


Current Reality: *Auténtico*

Recommendation: *Somos Level 1*

Rationale for selection:

- Current research in second language acquisition emphasizes the importance of contextualized learning through meaningful, culturally relevant storytelling.
- Well-aligned with research-based best practices, promoting language development through engaging, context-rich instruction that integrates grammar, vocabulary, and cultural understanding.
- Introduces concepts through authentic materials such as music, art, humor, current events, and historical narratives, making language acquisition both relevant and motivating for students.
- Significant advantages over the previous textbook approach, offering a more dynamic and effective pathway for student learning. Based on this experience and its alignment with pedagogical research, SOMOS represents a valuable improvement to our language instruction model.

In Conclusion

- These textbooks and materials will maintain and enhance the instructional excellence and learning at all levels. These materials will help to meet learners needs' academically, provide diverse perspectives and cultures, and utilize the district's 1:1 initiative.
 - The materials will position us well for the future, both in person and online.
 - All of these proposed textbooks have been reviewed by the District Advisory Council.
 - Materials are available for parent review at Central Office for the next two weeks.
 - District textbook review calendars will be reviewed and updated to ensure timely review and implementation of instructional resources.
- 

The background is a solid pink color. In the top right corner, there is a decorative graphic consisting of several overlapping triangles and squares in various shades of pink and magenta, creating a stepped, geometric pattern.

Questions?

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The Nickel Boys by Colson Whitehead (2019)	940	LINK	Just had a film adaptation come out. Pulitzer-prize winning novel that exposes hidden American history. Powerful and unflinching portrayal of institutional racism and abuse in a reform school during the Jim Crow Era. Would pair well with Gyasi & Reynolds. Interesting Articles
Our Missing Hearts by Celeste Ng (2022)	800-1200L	LINK	Timely exploration of book banning, propaganda & identity. Encourages students to consider how to create a better world & challenge the injustices that surround them. Connects to real world policies & fears
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2025-26 Preliminary Budget Assumptions Budget Development Timelines

Board Meeting • 04/14/2025



2024-25 Preliminary Budget Revisions #2 & Carryforward Impact on 2025-26 Budget

	Budget Impact
2024-25 Net Change in Fund Balance, Budget Revision #1	(\$1,639,177)
ISD Revenue, SE & Medicaid	267,500
	(1,371,677)
2024-24 Non-Structural, 1x revisions	
Reductions in Grants	(621,327)
Environmental remediation	939,973
Curriculum/New textbooks	(205,000)
ISD SE Funding, addl due to 23-24 final & medicaid	(435,500)
SE State Aid, prior year final reconciliation	(286,620)
Equipment Needs	170,500
Kindergarten Classroom Aides	40,000
All Other 1-time	(49,851)
	(\$447,825)
Net Impact of Changes	(\$447,825)
Carry forward effect on General Fund Budget (6/30/26)	(\$1,819,502)

2025-26 Expenditure Increases/Revenue Decreases

<u>Decreases to General Fund</u>	<u>Optimistic</u>	<u>Most Likely</u>	<u>Worst Case</u>
Health insurance (MESSA 1/2 yr +16%/10.2%, WMHIP +10.2%)*	641,572	641,572	641,572
MPSERS Cost Offset Revenue (state aid)	1,882,774	1,882,774	1,882,774
ISD Special Education Funding, change in formula	470,000	470,000	470,000
20f Hold Harmless Guarantee	239,545	239,545	239,545
24-25 Wage/Position adjustments to full year	11,951	11,951	11,951
Teacher division advancement (15,18,21)	130,200	156,240	182,280
	\$3,376,042	\$3,402,082	\$3,428,122

Compensation Reference

Steps = \$927,110

1% wages = \$467,935

*- subject to negotiations

2025-26 Revenue Increases/Expenditure Decreases

<u>Increases to General Fund</u>	<u>Optimistic</u>	<u>Most Likely</u>	<u>Worst Case</u>
Increase in Foundation Allowance (\$392,\$196,\$100)	1,817,700	908,850	463,700
Enrollment (Feb 25 +40.52; Oct 25: +50, +25, 0) Blend 10/90	490,500	260,300	39,320
MPSERS Expense rate decrease (-1.45 pts to 29.91%)	498,180	498,180	498,180
MPSERS 3% Health Subsidy Reimb, 1-time state aid	287,000	143,500	0
Increased Spec Ed Categorical State Aid	366,525	366,525	366,525
K-8 New Curriculum, 1x savings	150,000	150,000	150,000
Savings from teacher retirements/resignations (20,15,8)	791,760	593,820	316,720
Reduction in 3.0 FTE at High School	329,420	329,420	329,420
Childcare Tuition Increase	350,000	350,000	350,000
	\$5,081,085	\$3,600,595	\$2,513,865

2025-26 Projected Impact on General Fund Budget

	<u>Optimistic</u>	<u>Most Likely</u>	<u>Worst Case</u>
Expenditure Increases/Revenue Decreases	(\$3,376,042)	(\$3,402,082)	(\$3,428,122)
Revenue Increases/Expenditures Decreases	5,081,085	3,600,595	2,513,865
Net Impact on General Fund Balance	\$1,705,043	\$198,513	(\$914,257)
Carryforward effect on GF Budget (6/30/25)	(1,819,502)	(1,819,502)	(1,819,502)
Total Impact on General Fund Balance	(\$114,459)	(\$1,620,989)	(\$2,733,759)
<i>Fund Balance as a % of Expenditures</i>	13.9%	11.5%	9.8%

Compensation Reference

Steps = \$927,110

1% wages = \$467,935

Multi-Year Fund Balance Impact

	<u>2025-26</u>	<u>2026-27</u>
Preliminary Fund Balance Net Impact (rev's/exp's), from prior year	*(\$1,371,677)	(\$1,620,989)
One-Time sources/uses of fund in prior year, not occurring again	<u>(447,825)</u>	<u>(855,440)</u>
Carryforward effect on General Fund Budget	(\$1,819,502)	(\$2,476,429)
New Budget Variables	198,513	(700,000)
Fund Balance Net Impact (rev's/exp's)	(\$1,620,989)	(\$3,176,429)
Beginning Fund Balance	<u>9,556,644</u>	<u>7,935,655</u>
Ending Fund Balance	\$7,935,655	\$4,759,226
<i>Fund Balance as a % of Expenditures</i>	11.5%	6.8%

*-includes \$267,500 of preliminary
2024-25 2nd budget revisions

Impending Budget Discussion 2025-26

Topics w/financial impact not in assumptions

- **State Aid**
- **Staffing Levels, Contractual Requirements**
- **Negotiations**
- **Grant Availability**
- **ISD Special Education revenue**
- **Community Education Impact on General Fund**
- **Other Variable Sources of General Fund Revenue**

Budget Development Timeline

2024-25 Fiscal Year	
Monitor Revenue and Expense Activity	Feb– May
2 nd Budget Revision	May/June

2025-26 Fiscal Year	
Budget Review & Work with Leadership	Jan-May
Budget Development & Updated Assumptions	Feb– May (Board)
Budget Work Session 1	Week of May 19
Budget Work Session 2	Week of May 26, TBD if needed
Proposed Budget	June 9
Budget Adoption	June 23

Okemos Public Schools
Preliminary Budget Assumptions
2025-26

Increased Expenditures/Decreased Revenue	Optimistic	Most Likely	Worst Case
Health insurance (MESSA 1/2 yr +16%/10.2%, WMHIP +10.2%)*	641,572	641,572	641,572
MPSERS Cost Offset, Reduced UAAL by 5.75pts (state aid)	1,882,774	1,882,774	1,882,774
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Teacher division advancement (15,18,21)	130,200	156,240	182,280
	\$3,376,042	\$3,402,082	\$3,428,122
Increased Revenue/Decreased Expenditures	Optimistic	Most Likely	Worst Case
Increase in per-pupil Foundation Allowance (\$392,\$196,\$100)	1,817,700	908,850	463,700
Enrollment (Feb 25 +40.52; Oct 25: +50, +25, 0) Blend 10/90	490,500	260,300	39,320
MPSERS Expense rate decrease (-1.45 pts to 29.91%, eff. 10/1/25)	498,180	498,180	498,180
MPSERS 3% Health Subsidy Reimb, 1-time (state aid)	287,000	143,500	0
Increased Special Ed Categorical (CY est + 24-25 timing delay)	366,525	366,525	366,525
K-12 New Curriculum, 1x savings	150,000	150,000	150,000
Savings from teacher retirements/resignations (20,15,8)	791,760	593,820	316,720
Reduction in 3.0 FTE at High School	329,420	329,420	329,420
Childcare Tuition Increase	350,000	350,000	350,000
	\$5,081,085	\$3,600,595	\$2,513,865
Projected Impact on General Fund Balance	\$1,705,043	\$198,513	(\$914,257)
Carry forward effect on General Fund Budget (7/1/25)	(1,819,502)	(1,819,502)	(1,819,502)
Total Impact on General Fund Balance	(\$114,459)	(\$1,620,989)	(\$2,733,759)

* - *subject to negotiations*

Additional Information

Compensation reference - Steps ~ \$917,450

Compensation reference - 1% of wages ~ \$463,055

Fund Balance - as percentage of expenditures

Audited 6/30/21	\$ 8,093,308	14.9%
Audited 6/30/22	\$ 8,677,164	14.6%
Audited 6/30/23	\$ 9,922,868	14.6%
Audited 6/30/24	\$ 10,928,320	15.6%
2024-25 Original Budget	\$ 9,187,199	12.9%
2024-25 Revised Budget	\$ 9,289,144	12.9%
Pro Forma 6/30/26		
<i>optimistic</i>	\$ 9,442,185	13.9%
<i>most likely</i>	\$ 7,935,655	11.5%
<i>worst case</i>	\$ 6,822,885	9.8%

**Okemos Public Schools
2024-25 1-Time Budget Items
Effect on Carry Forward Fund Balance
2025-26 Proposed Budget**

	Most Likely
2024-25 Net Change in Fund Balance, Budget Revision #1	(1,639,177)
Preliminary 2nd Budget Revisions, May/June	
Ingham ISD SE Revenue, on-going	193,000
Ingham ISD Medicaid Revenue, 1x	74,500
	267,500
	(1,371,677)
2024-25 Non-Structural, 1x revisions, do not repeat (removed from 25-26 preliminary assumptions)	
Grant Funding Sources Expired	
ESSER Grant	(268,079)
Health Resource Advocate Grant (nurses)	(69,300)
Safety/Security & Mental Health, 31aa	(283,948)
	(621,327)
Non-Grant Related	
Environmental remediation	939,973
Curriculum/New textbooks	(205,000)
ISD SE Funding, addl due to 23-24 final & 24-25 medicaid	(435,500)
SE State Aid, prior year final reconciliation	(286,620)
Equipment Needs	170,500
Kindergarten Classroom Aides	40,000
All Other 1x	(49,851)
	173,502
	(447,825)
Total Non-Structural, 1x revisions	(447,825)
Carry forward effect on General Fund Budget (7/1/25)	(1,819,502)