

Board of Education Tom Buffett President, 2025-2026	Okemos Public Schools <a href="mailto:board@okemosk12.net">board@okemosk12.net</a> <a href="http://okemosk12.net">http://okemosk12.net</a>	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.*

**6:00 PM**

**MEETING AGENDA  
Tuesday, December 16, 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**

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

**There is one opportunity for public comment:** Citizens who wish to address agenda or non-agenda items will have an opportunity at the beginning 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.

At the appropriate point in the agenda, the board president will call upon individuals who have submitted a blue card for their comments.

**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.

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

**31aa Ratification and Rescission Resolution (5 Min)**

The Board reviewed the proposed 31aa requirements at its October 27 and November 24 meetings. This resolution ratifies the Superintendent's prior opt-in submission and authorizes further action as outlined in the resolution.

That the board waive the reading and adopt the resolution pursuant to Section 31aa of the State School Aid Act, authorizing the Superintendent to take action on behalf of the Board in accordance with the terms of the resolution, as presented.

**WORK SESSION: Superintendent Search Profile (45 Min)**

The board will enter into a work session to review stakeholder feedback and begin to develop a profile to guide the superintendent search process.

**OTHER MATTERS**

**ADJOURN**

Okemos Public Schools, Michigan (the “District”)

A special meeting of the board of education of the District (the “Board”) was held in the boardroom, within the boundaries of the District, on the 16<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2025, at 6 o’clock in the p.m. (the “Meeting”)

The Meeting was called to order by Tom Buffett, President.

Present: Members

Absent: Members

The following preamble and resolution were offered by Member \_\_\_\_\_ and supported by Member \_\_\_\_\_:

**WHEREAS:**

1. Public Act 15 of 2025 amends State School Aid Act Section 31aa, MCL 388.1631aa, to allocate funding for fiscal year 2025/2026 to support school safety and student mental health initiatives, as well as to provide certain competitive grant funding (“31aa Funding”); and

2. To receive 31aa Funding, the District must agree to receive the funding in the form and manner established by the Michigan Department of Education (“MDE”) and either formally opt in or seek a competitive grant; and

3. As a condition of receiving either type of 31aa Funding, the District must agree in advance that, in the event of a “mass casualty event,” as defined in MCL 388.1631aa: (1) the District will be subject to and comply with a comprehensive investigation following such an event, and (2) the District will waive any privilege that may otherwise protect related information from disclosure; and

4. Litigation challenging the legality and enforceability of the privilege-waiver requirement is currently pending; and

5. The opt-in deadline for 31aa Funding was on or around December 4, 2025, at 11:59 p.m. (the “Opt-In Deadline”), and failing to opt in by the Opt-In Deadline would have caused the District to lose eligibility for 31aa Funding; and

6. The respective courts have ordered that school districts that opt in by the Opt-In Deadline have the right to rescind their respective opt ins by providing notice to MDE no later than December 30, 2025, at 11:59 p.m., as may be subject to further extension (the “Rescission Deadline”), in the form and manner established by MDE; and

7. John Hood, Superintendent, (“Authorized Official”) submitted the District’s opt-in form to MDE by the Opt-In Deadline to preserve eligibility for 31aa Funding; and

8. The Board has been fully advised of the legal and practical implications of the privilege-waiver requirement, including its potential effect on attorney-client privilege and other applicable privileges; and

9. The Board desires to ratify the Authorized Official's submission of the opt-in form and to preserve the District's ability to rescind if the privilege-waiver requirement remains in effect.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:**

1. The Board hereby ratifies the Authorized Official's submission of the District's opt-in form to MDE by the Opt-In Deadline solely for the purpose of preserving eligibility for 31aa Funding and only on a conditional basis, as provided in this Resolution. Submission of the opt-in form shall not constitute a present waiver of the attorney-client privilege or any other privilege.

2. The District's conditional opt in shall be automatically rescinded without further action of the Board, unless, on or before the Rescission Deadline: (a) the Legislature removes, substantively amends, or otherwise eliminates the privilege-waiver requirement such that acceptance of 31aa Funding would not require waiver of attorney-client privilege or any other applicable privilege; or (b) a court of competent jurisdiction rules that the privilege-waiver requirement is unlawful, unenforceable, or otherwise not applicable to the District. If neither (a) nor (b) occurs by the Rescission Deadline, the Superintendent of Schools, or designee, shall notify MDE, in the form and manner required by MDE and no later than the Rescission Deadline, that the District's opt in is rescinded.

3. If the privilege-waiver requirement remains in effect and enforceable as of the Rescission Deadline, the Superintendent of Schools, or designee, shall have no authority or obligation to accept 31aa Funding.

4. Nothing in this Resolution shall be construed as a waiver of attorney-client privilege or any other applicable privilege.

5. The District's participation in the opt-in or rescission process shall not be construed as a waiver of the Board's or District's right to challenge the legality or enforceability of any condition imposed by MCL 388.1631aa or related administrative guidance.

6. If, after the Rescission Deadline, the privilege-waiver requirement is removed, amended, or invalidated, the Board may take further action as it deems appropriate to pursue 31aa Funding consistent with applicable law.

7. This Resolution does not apply to any "mass casualty event" occurring prior to the Opt-In Deadline.

8. All resolutions and parts of resolutions insofar as they conflict with the provisions of this Resolution be and the same are hereby rescinded.

Ayes: Members

Nays: Members

Resolution declared adopted.

\_\_\_\_\_  
President & Acting Secretary, Board of Education

The undersigned duly qualified and Acting Secretary of the Board of Education of Okemos Public Schools, Michigan, hereby certifies that the foregoing constitutes a true and complete copy of a resolution adopted by the Board at the Meeting, the original of which is part of the Board's minutes. The undersigned further certifies that notice of the Meeting was given to the public pursuant to the provisions of the "Open Meetings Act" (Act 267, Public Acts of Michigan, 1976, as amended).

\_\_\_\_\_  
President & Acting Secretary, Board of Education

MDF/keh





## **SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS JOB POSTING**

The Okemos Public Schools Board of Education is conducting a search for its next Superintendent of Schools. It is expected that the Superintendent will be in place no later than July 1, 2026.

### **Our Community**

The Okemos Public Schools district is situated in the south-central portion of Michigan's lower peninsula near Lansing, the state capital, and shares a common border with Michigan State University.

Ranked as the number one school district in the Lansing area by Niche in 2024 and 2025, Okemos provides educational resources to more than 4,800 students in an early childhood center, four elementaries, two middle schools and a high school across the district. The Montessori program is available for students in Pre-K-8th grade.

### **Our Mission**

Together, educating with excellence, empowering every learner for life.

### **Our Vision**

Every learner. Every day. Stronger Together.

### **Our Beliefs**

Together we value:

- Every learner's individuality, experience, and growth
- Communities that are safe, empathetic, and engaged
- A culture of innovation, integrity, and excellence for all

### **Points of Pride**

- Student-centered with a commitment to student success
- Excellent parent and community engagement
- Diverse and multicultural community
- Collaborative Board of Education and administrators
- Caring and dedicated staff
- Outstanding music, arts, and athletics programs
- Wide variety of clubs and afterschool programs
- Gifted and Talented Program
- 93.6 % 4-year cohort graduation rates
- Current \$275 million bond for building new middle schools, a new elementary school, and improved athletics facilities
- 50% of teachers have been with the district 5 years or longer
- Proximity to Michigan State University and State of Michigan Government

## **District Data**

- Enrollment: 4899
- Administrative Staff: 23
- Teachers: 309
- Cafeteria: 36
- Childcare: 16
- Custodians: 7
- Maintenance: 8
- Non-Union Support: 97
- Office Staff: 26
- Counselors: 12
- Aides: 16
- Other: 57
- Transportation: ?
- Number of Buildings: 8
  - 1 High School
  - 2 Middle Schools
  - 4 Elementary Schools
  - 1 Early Childhood Center
- Annual Operating Budget: \$70,000,000
- Foundation Grant per Pupil: \$10,050
- Projected Fund Balance: 14.20%
- Tax Base: \$1,736,853,822
- Non-Homestead Levy mills: 18
- Debt Retirement mills: 7.00
- Sinking Fund mills: 0.9850

## **SELECTION CRITERIA**

- Michigan Administrative Certificate, or equivalent
- Minimum of a Master's Degree in Educational Leadership
- Minimum of five years successful experience as a school administrator

**The Okemos Public Schools Board of Education has determined that the following criteria are those which are the most highly sought in a new superintendent:**

- Leadership & Vision (A)
  - A student-centered leader that is dedicated to the academic growth, well being and overall success of all students
  - A visionary leader with the ability to engage all stakeholders in the pursuit and execution of the district's strategic plan
  - A leader that exemplifies the highest level of integrity, trust, and transparency
  - Proven ability to strategically innovate for improvement of student outcomes
- Financial and Operations Leadership (C)
  - Demonstrates deep knowledge of and experience in public school finance, fiscal management, and resource allocation
  - Demonstrates deep knowledge and experience with management and implementation of bond and sinking funds

- Human Relations Leadership (D)
  - An approachable and visible leader who treats individuals with respect and dignity and who collaborates and engages across the school community
  - An individual who sets high expectations for self and others; holds staff at all levels accountable; and who accepts responsibility for results
  - An individual who is committed, values, and has demonstrated quality working relationships with staff
  - Dedicated to and proven success in developing and mentoring current and future leaders
  - Demonstrated experience and success in human resource management including experience recruiting and retaining diverse staff, collective bargaining, and employment practices
- Instructional Leadership (E)
  - Demonstrates knowledge of and experience with effective curriculum, instruction, professional development, assessment, and best practices to improve teaching and student achievement
  - Demonstrates record of honoring teacher professionalism while leading a coherent and systematic approach to instructional improvement
  - Leadership experience in a traditional public school setting that reflects a record of success, including teaching, and building leadership experience
- Community engagement, communication, and transparency (F)
  - Demonstrates successful and effective skills in transparent communications and public relations
  - A resilient and composed leader that is both collaborative and decisive
  - Demonstrates ability and desire to be visible throughout the district and actively engaged in school and community activities
- Systems and Organizational Management (B)
  - Proven success in leading and managing in a high-performing, diverse school district with complex stakeholder needs
  - Demonstrated knowledge, experience, and on-going dedication to students including equity, safety, and wellness
  - Proven success in change management, collaboration, team building, data-informed decision-making, and creative problem solving
- Political Awareness (G)
  - A strong advocate for public education that is a unifying voice for Okemos students and staff, and community
  - Demonstrates a record of direct involvement with and knowledge of issues in public education at the local, intermediate, state, and federal levels
  - An apolitical leader that is skilled at navigating the political on state and national government

### **SALARY AND CONTRACT INFORMATION**

The Board will offer a comprehensive, multi-year contract. Compensation will be commensurate with experience of the successful candidate and requirements of the position. A preliminary base salary range of \$230,000 - \$245,000 has been established.

### **APPLICATION PROCEDURE**

- Interested candidates should complete and submit the Michigan Leadership Institute on-line application found at [www.mileader.org](http://www.mileader.org) or <http://www.applitrack.com/mileader/onlineapp>
- Completed on-line applications must be submitted no later than 4:00 PM on <insert date>.
- No “hard copy”, fax or email copies accepted. All materials will be treated confidentially through the screening process only upon the written request of the candidate.
- All questions regarding the search should be submitted to Andy Ingall, Regional President - Southwest Michigan, Michigan Leadership Institute, 734-320-6553 or [aingallmli@gmail.com](mailto:aingallmli@gmail.com).

**Applicants are advised not to make direct contact with any member of the Board of Education.**

#### **SEARCH TIMELINE**

- Application deadline – 4:00 PM, February 6, 2026
- Selection of candidates for first interviews – February 18, 2026
- First Round Interviews – February 23 - 25, 2026
- In-district visit – To be determined
- Final Interviews – March 16 - 17, 2026
- Start date – July 1, 2026 (an earlier start date, after March 27, 2026, is possible based on mutual agreement/availability)

The Board may make exceptions to this profile, process and/or timeline to ensure selection of the best possible candidate. The services of Michigan Leadership Institute have been secured to assist the Board in the search process and in the screening of candidates.