



OZARK SCHOOL DISTRICT

STUDENT Dedicated Every Day,
STUDENT Driven In Every Way



District Administration

Dr. Chris Bauman, Superintendent
Dr. Craig Carson, Assistant Superintendent
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Board of Education

Sarah Adams Orr- President
Mark Jenkins Vice President
Amber Bryant
Guy Callaway
Aaron Johns
Patty Quessenberry
Christina Tonsing

June 29, 2023

The Ozark Board of Education would like to address the fact that a board member is conducting individual "town hall" or group meetings with the public. However, under Missouri Law individual Board members have no authority outside official Board meetings or unless a majority of the Board votes, to provide specific authority to an individual Board member regarding a matter. The Missouri Court of Appeals has stated as follows: "Unless otherwise authorized by the board, individual members are not empowered to act and cannot govern." Colombo v. Buford, 935 S.W.2d 690, 698 (Mo. Ct. App. 1996).

Accordingly, let it be known the Ozark School Board has not granted Christina Tonsing the authority to conduct any such meeting, and therefore, all liability arising out of any such meeting falls to her personally. These meetings or similar individual Board meetings of any kind are not sanctioned by the Ozark Board of Education.

The Ozark School Board would recommend that the better practice for receiving public input would be one or more of the following: (1) Submit communications in writing, directed to the superintendent or Board President, which is then shared with the entire Board; (2) provide avenues through public comment at Board meetings; (3) conduct district-organized town hall meetings that include appropriate parameters and safeguards against conduct that could result in liability; and/or (4) use other means that are part of the district's official, pre-planned, and legally compliant community engagement process.

This statement was approved by the following board members.

Sarah Adams-Orr
Board President

Aaron Johns

Mark Jenkins
Board Vice President

Patty Quessenberry

Amber Bryant

Christina Tonsing

Guy Callaway

District Cabinet

Gerald Chambers, Executive Director-Secondary Learning; Dr. Kimberly Fitzpatrick, Executive Director-Student Services;
Dr. Kent Sappington, Executive Director-Elementary Learning; Jeff Simpson, Executive Director-Special Services