



MINUTES

Wisconsin Rapids Board of Education  
**Educational Services Committee**

510 Peach Street · Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54494 · (715) 424-6701

Mary Rayome, Chairperson  
John Benbow, Jr.  
Katie Bielski-Medina  
Troy Bier  
Larry Davis  
Sandra Hett  
John Krings, President

July 6, 2020

LOCATION: Board of Education, 510 Peach Street, Wisconsin Rapids WI  
Conference Room A/B

TIME: 6:00 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: John Benbow, Jr., Katie Bielski-Medina, Troy Bier, Sandra Hett,  
John Krings, and Mary Rayome

OTHERS PRESENT: Craig Broeren, Roxanne Filtz, Dani Scott, Kelly Zywicki

I. Call to Order

Mary Rayome called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

II. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

III. Actionable Items

A. Pupil Academic Standards

Roxanne Filtz, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, reviewed the Pupil Academic Standards updated for the 2020-21 school year. Changes were noted in world language. Jake Wendtland, CII World Language Committee Chair, is working with his group to explore how they will meet the new standards. Updates to English Language Arts, Physical Education and Personal Financial Literacy have been recently released and are being reviewed by the Curriculum Department.

**ES-1 Motion by John Krings, seconded by Troy Bier, that the administration accept the pupil academic standards that will be in effect for the 2020-21 school year, as presented.**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

B. Healthy Schools (b.e.s.t.) Grant Application

Dr. Dani Scott, Director of Pupil Services, highlighted how the Healthy Schools (b.e.s.t.) grant was used during the 2019-20 school year. Ninety-seven percent of K-5 students

were screened in the fall. Spring screening was cut short by COVID-19, yet 92% of targeted students were still evaluated. Referrals and interventions were made based on the screening. The Center for Community Health Advancement at Marshfield Clinic Health System and Security Health Plan will pay for the implementation of b.e.s.t at select, qualifying schools.

**ES-2 Motion by Troy Bier, seconded by Katie Bielski-Medina, to approve of the b.e.s.t. Grant Application for the 2020-21 school year.**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

C. Title VI of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act: Indian Education Formula Grant

Dr. Scott provided background information on this grant. Funds are based on the number of students that complete a 506 form. Much of the grant pays for the Title VI Native American Liaison's salary. Priorities for the remaining funds were school supplies and books by Native American authors purchased for school libraries, and fourth grade students participating in a field trip to the Ho Chunk Nation in Black River Falls. A Pow-Wow was planned but cancelled because of COVID-19. Priorities for the 2020-21 school year are the same, with the addition of purchasing student Chromebooks for Native American students to check out as needed.

**ES-3 Motion by Katie Bielski-Medina, seconded by John Krings, to approve of Title VI of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act: Indian Education Grant Application for the 2020-21 school year.**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

D. Education for Homeless Children and Youth Grant

Dr. Scott explained that Wisconsin Rapids Public Schools (WRPS) has just completed its final year of the three-year Education for Homeless Children and Youth Grant. During the duration of the three-year grant period, academic achievement for homeless students increased, while absences decreased. A case manager was designated for each student. Michelle Waldvogel, Homeless Liaison, helped families with obtaining BadgerCare and rent assistance. Gas cards were provided to families so that they could attend school related activities such as Parent Night. Dr. Scott hopes to hear by the end of July on funding for the 2020-21 school year.

**ES-4 Motion by John Krings, seconded by Troy Bier, to approve of the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Grant Application for the 2020-2023 school years.**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

E. Acellus Academy

Acellus Academy will be utilized for Lincoln High School summer school credit recovery instruction. This year the number of licenses needed is higher because of COVID-19, therefore the additional licenses require Board approval. Depending on how the 2020-21 school year begins, more students could be using Acellus virtually, perhaps at the middle or elementary levels. Additional licenses will be purchased as needed.

**ES-5 Motion by Katie Bielski-Medina, seconded by Troy Bier, to approve of the purchase of 110 Acellus Academy licenses to be used during the 2019-2020 LHS Summer School Program.**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

F. Seesaw Purchase

Ms. Filtz explained that the elementary buildings are in need of a uniform platform for instructional tools and communication between 4K - 5th grade classroom teachers and their students and families. After considering several products, Seesaw for Schools has been chosen as the program that will provide this powerful learning connection. Seesaw is currently being successfully used by many teachers. Professional development opportunities for teachers to learn Seesaw are currently being offered, and more will be offered virtually in August.

**ES-6 Motion by Troy Bier, seconded by Katie Bielski-Medina, to approve of the purchase of Seesaw for Schools for a three year period at a total cost of \$35,268.75 from the technology and curriculum budgets, with 50% of total cost being paid in Year 1 and 25% of total cost being paid in each subsequent year for a total savings of \$1,856.25.**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

IV. Updates

A. Achievement Gap Reduction (AGR) End-of-Year Report

Ms. Filtz explained that because of school closures due to COVID-19, schools were unable to complete End of Year assessments in math and reading; therefore, data is not available. A statement on the report was required by the Department of Public Instruction showing how the District provided off campus learning to students and which online resources, if any, were used to provide this instruction.

B. Behavior and Mental Wellness Grant End of Year Report

WRPS has just completed year one of a two-year Behavior and Mental Wellness Grant. Dr. Scott provided an overview of how the grant was implemented during the 2019-2020 school year. Over 85 families were connected with mental health resources. Grades 6 and 9 students were screened with Signs of Suicide (SOS). Eight of our schools have a community mental health provider on sight. Three parent/community nights were held, presenting on a variety of topics.

During the 2020-2021 school year more students will be screened and a refresher for those already screened will be offered.

C. Preferred Driver Education Contract

With the expiration of the contract with Preferred Driver Education in July of 2020, WRPS will no longer enter into a driver education contract with one company and will not list a preferred vendor for driver education courses. Students/families will be provided with a listing of local vendors who offer online instruction. All driver education agreements will then be between the parent/student and the private vendor with no connection to the school. LHS will no longer provide classroom space for in person instruction. LHS students may choose to complete their online driver's education coursework during any scheduled study hall. Students may also continue to complete their "Behind the Wheel" training during their scheduled study hall, if needed. No credit will be given.

D. Possible Referendum

Craig Broeren, Superintendent, opened the discussion by stating that the timing of the referendum may not be good given many factors – COVID-19, Verso closure, etc. However, regardless of other factors, the District is at a point where a levy override referendum to continue to fund necessary curriculum and technology expenditures remains. Board committee members were provided with background information containing details regarding the use of referendum dollars from the referendum approved by voters in 2006; a result of effective business management, curriculum and technology purchases were made through 2020 using those dollars from the referendum. Those referendum dollars are now depleted making the need for another levy override referendum question to voters necessary. In addition, the District has been proactive with a fairly aggressive approach to debt defeasance, which saves taxpayers money, while significantly decreasing the amount the District owes. Based on the current school funding formula in Wisconsin, it can be somewhat advantageous to the District to have a certain level of debt payments. This fact, in conjunction with a need to modify and renovate entrances on all facilities that house students for additional safety and security (as well as significant modifications to the second floor of LHS and other areas), Mr. Broeren also outlined the possibility of asking voters an additional question for a possible bond issue referendum in the amount of \$20 million or \$30 million. Committee members were provided with tax impact scenarios for the levy override question as well as the levy override question and a bond issue question if approved.

Mr. Broeren asked for input on whether administration should proceed, and if so, how to move forward. Options were discussed and it was agreed that this is something to bring before the full Board at the regular meeting scheduled for July 13, 2020, under New Business.

V. Consent Agenda Items

**ES-1 Pupil Academic Standards**

**ES-2 Healthy Schools (b.e.s.t.) Grant Application**

- ES-3 Title VI of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act**
- ES-4 Education for Homeless Children and Youth Grant**
- ES-5 Acellus Academy**
- ES-6 Seesaw Purchase**

VI. Future Agenda Items/Information Requests

- Seclusion and Restraint (August)
- Parent CII Representatives (September)
- ESSA Update (September)
- ACP Update (October)
- New Course/Curriculum Proposals – Discussion (October)
- ECCP/SCN (November)
- New Course/Curriculum Proposals – Decision (November)

Mary Rayome adjourned the meeting at 7:11 p.m.