



MINUTES

Wisconsin Rapids Board of Education
Educational Services Committee

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

Katie Bielski-Medina, Chairperson
John Benbow, Jr.
Troy Bier
Larry Davis
Julie Des Jarlais
Sandra Hett
John Krings, President

August 1, 2022

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

TIME: 6:00 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: John Benbow, Katie Bielski-Medina, Troy Bier, Larry Davis, Julie Des Jarlais, Sandra Hett, John Krings

OTHERS PRESENT: Ed Allison, Kelly Bluell, Craig Broeren, Roxanne Filtz, Tracy Ginter, Steve Hepp, Miranda Moody, Aaron Nelson

I. Call to Order

Katie Medina called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

IV. Actionable Items

A. 2023-2024 and 2024-25 Calendar Revisions

Roxanne Filtz, Director of Curriculum & Instruction, reviewed proposed school year calendar changes for the 2023-24 and 2024-25 academic years. The administration recommends moving the late fall Professional Development Day to August in order to provide for an Autumn Break day in late October. Staff members would still be required to attend and participate in planned activities in August, and their contracted work day schedule would be fulfilled. Ms. Filtz outlined the benefits to the recommended changes.

ES-1 Motion by John Benbow, seconded by Troy Bier, to approve of the proposed changes to the 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 school year calendars that would move the October Professional Development Day to August, thus providing both teachers and students with an Autumn Break day in late October. Motion carried unanimously.

B. Behavioral, Emotional and Social Traits (b.e.s.t.) Screener Grant Application

Steve Hepp, Director of Pupil Services, explained that the b.e.s.t. screener is a universal screening platform that helps to identify students who may benefit from

additional positive behavioral supports. Used for the past several years in elementary buildings, the screener comes at no cost for qualifying schools who receive the b.e.s.t. grant. The b.e.s.t. Universal Screening Program provides a systematic method of quantifying behavioral observations in order to translate the principles of mental health wellness into practice. Mr. Hepp shared the benefits of the program and explained that the Center for Community Health Advancement at Marshfield Clinic Health System will pay for the implementation of b.e.s.t.

ES-2 Motion by Troy Bier, seconded by John Krings, to approve of the b.e.s.t. Grant Application for the 2022-2023 school year. Motion carried unanimously.

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

Mr. Hepp explained that the Title VI program is designed to address the unique cultural, language, and educational needs of American Indian and Alaska native students. Each year WRPS collaborates with a local committee of families that are served under the Title VI program. Grant objectives, goals, and funding priorities were shared.

ES-3 Motion by John Krings, seconded by Troy Bier, to approve the Title VI of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act: Indian Education Grant Application for the 2022-23 school year. Motion carried unanimously.

V. Updates

A. Novel Selection Process at Lincoln High School for Student Choice Novels

Ms. Filtz and Miranda Moody, District K-12 Language Arts Coordinator, shared the student novel selection process followed at the secondary level which involves students, parents, and teachers. As part of offering an inclusive and diversified curriculum, student choice novels are built into book bundles for certain units of study in the ELA curriculum. Teacher teams work diligently to select books that capture students' attention and engage their interest while also matching individual student reading levels. Parents or guardians have the ability to make the final decision about which novel their student will or will not read during a unit that offers novel choices. Students provided a choice in literature are apt to read more. Ms. Moody reviewed a Book Bundle Summary sample with the Committee. Committee members raised questions around the ability for students to use books identified in the book bundle which they have personally purchased, book challenges, and how student success is measured.

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

Ms. Filtz reviewed the annual Achievement Gap Reduction (AGR) End-of-Year Report for the 2021-22 academic year. Each school district sets its own district goal to determine the benchmark that is set for each grade level in Reading and Math from Kindergarten through grade 3. The District has maintained a goal of 80% of all students, regardless of background or special education status, to meet the expectations as determined by the PALS or Star screener as well as pass the reading level benchmark that has been identified for each grade level for Reading. Ms. Filtz noted that the "bar" for reaching the benchmark rises throughout the school year for kindergarten and grade 1 Math which ties to higher expectations for students to be considered proficient at year's end.

A detailed overview of the AGR Report was provided including metrics involved, individual school success in attaining the performance objectives established in the AGR contract along with aligned strategies, schools with grade levels meeting the class size reduction identification of 18:1, and narratives around the effects of COVID-19 on instruction and learning. Trends around progress involving the same class of students as they moved through their grade levels from 2017-18 through 2021-22 were shared along with historical background relative to curriculum implementation, pandemic impacts, and the wide array of factors that can impact student scores.

Ms. Filtz explained how district and building level leadership along with teaching staff intend to dig into the data and work together to improve upon specific things which are within their control. A 2022-23 Action Plan was shared that identifies the types of questions that educators and leadership will be asking as the data is analyzed with the ultimate goal of strengthening the overall approach to reading and math instruction. Examples of action steps to reach this goal include such things as targeted professional development, more support for teachers new to the District or to the curriculum resource being used, increased hands-on involvement of school administration in the classroom and teacher professional development at the building level, more direct involvement from district level curriculum leadership in understanding how teaching is being done in the classroom, discovering what supports are needed and providing them, and targeted PLC time to take a deeper dive into student data and truly reflect on what students know and areas where they may be struggling. The Board will again be provided a mid-year and end-of-year AGR Report in the upcoming year.

C. Gifted and Talented Educational Services (GATES) Update

Kelly Bluell, District K-12 Gifted and Talented Educational Services (GATES) Coordinator, provided an update on 2021-22 activities related to the GATES program. Information was shared on specific initiatives to enhance programming including those involving a Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics (STEAM) focus. Potential new legislation to increase transparency, accountability, and equity in the area of gifted education in Wisconsin was explained. Ms. Bluell reviewed overall demographic data for gifted and talented identified students in the District, noting that while the District is doing well in identifying students in need of gifted services, it may need to strengthen its identification of potential gifted and talented special education and English Language Learner (ELL) students.

D. Seclusion and Restraint Report

Mr. Hepp reviewed the annual District Seclusion and Restraint Report, providing historical and current incident data for comparison covering the 2017-18 through 2021-22 school years. Mr. Hepp provided an update on the number of certified non-violent crisis intervention trainers on staff as well as the number of employees who received initial and refresher training during the 2021-22 school year. Areas of focus for 2022-23 were shared to ensure that certifications remain current.

VI. Consent Agenda Items

ES-1 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 Calendar Revisions

ES-2 Behavioral, Emotional and Social Traits (b.e.s.t.) Screener Grant Application

ES-3 Title VI of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act Grant Application

VII. Future Agenda Items/Information Requests

Agenda items are determined by the Committee Chair after consultation with appropriate administration depending upon other agenda items, presentation information, and agenda availability.

Future agenda items/information requests include, but are not limited to:

- ESSA Update (September)
- Council for Instructional Improvement Parent Representatives (September)
- New Course/Curriculum Modification Proposals – Discussion (October)
- ECCP/SCN (November)
- School & District Report Cards (November)
- New Course/Curriculum Proposals – Decision (November)

Katie Medina adjourned the meeting at 7:05 p.m.