



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
Sandra Hett
John Krings, President
Julie Timm

December 5, 2022

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

TIME: 6:00 p.m.

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

OTHERS PRESENT: Phil Bickelhaupt, Craig Broeren, Roxanne Filtz, Steve Hepp, Aaron Nelson, Jen Wilhorn

- I. Chairperson Katie Medina called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
- II. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
- III. Public Comment - none
- IV. Actionable Items
 - A. Late Approval of one Start College Now Application

Roxanne Filtz, Director of Curriculum & Instruction, presented information concerning a late Start College Now (SCN) application received and the rationale behind recommending Board approval of the request. Due to some miscommunication that occurred and turnover in staff at Mid-State Technical College (MSTC) causing inconsistency in procedures, the application was not received in a timely fashion. Committee members expressed concern around opening up the possibility for late submissions and approval requests in the future. Mr. Broeren explained that the administration is working with all parties involved in the submission process to ensure that any confusion and concerns are addressed to avoid similar issues in the future.

The three spring semester courses the administration is recommending for approval include: Automation 1-Beginning PLC, Intro to Ethics: Theory and App, and Trig with Applications.

ES-1 Motion by John Benbow, seconded by Troy Bier to approve the late application for a Lincoln High School student to take three eligible courses which include Automation 1-Beginning PLC, Intro to Ethics: Theory and App, and Trig with Applications at Mid-State Technical College through the Start College Now Program in the spring semester of the 2022-23 school year. Motion carried unanimously.

B. Lincoln High School Virtual School Programming Purchase

Ms. Filtz explained that Lincoln High School has used the online curriculum program, Edgenuity, to address the needs of District virtual school students and some summer school students at the secondary level during the 2021-22 school year with great success. Edgenuity, owned by Imagine Learning, offers standards aligned video-based curriculum for middle and high school blended learning environments. The program addresses credit recovery as well as core curriculum. The cost of the Edgenuity program has been paid using ESSER III funds, and these same funds would be used for this purchase as well.

ES-2 Motion by Troy Bier, seconded by Julie Timm to approve the purchase of Edgenuity from Imagine Learning for the 2023-2024 school year at a cost of \$26,250.00 to be paid from Elementary and Secondary School Education Relief Fund (ESSER III). Motion carried unanimously.

C. Board Policy 431–Rule – Student Attendance Procedures – Revision First Reading

Ms. Filtz reviewed changes being recommended to Board Policy 431 Rule – Student Attendance Procedures which would allow students to be excused to participate in cultural events such as Hmong funerals and/or Native celebrations. Committee members questioned how this impacts the 10-day truancy requirement under state statutes. Ms. Filtz and Superintendent Broeren explained that each case is considered individually and consideration is given to whether or not there are attendance concerns or a lack of progress being made due to absences for the student involved.

ES-3 Motioned by Larry Davis, seconded by John Krings to approve the revision to Board Policy 431-Rule, adding “cultural events” as a time when a student may be excused from school by the principal or designee for first reading. Motion carried unanimously.

V. Updates

A. Central Oaks Academy Charter School Update

Jennifer Wilhorn, Principal of Central Oaks Academy and Assistant Director of Curriculum & Instruction, presented financial, operational, and academic goals for Central Oaks Academy Charter School for the 2022-23 school year. She explained that the Central Oaks Academy Governance Board and staff members are working collaboratively to develop a Parent Advisory Council. The new Parent Advisory

Council met for the first time in recent weeks, and are planning to schedule additional upcoming activities to bring families together more and build support around social emotional connections. A few events have taken place already which include a back-to-school skate, a family math afternoon where families were invited to engage in math activities/games, an open house for parents to learn more about the online programs being used as well as all of the information they can access through the Clever program, and a family holiday event is being planned to occur in December.

In terms of the school's educational goals, the Central Oaks professional development plan is the guide being used to lead staff members in this area. One goal is to provide information to families to raise awareness of programming and educational options offered at Central Oaks. A second goal is to work together in order to provide academic and social-emotional support for all students. The addition of a pupil services team to support Central Oaks students will help in this regard.

When questioned about enrollment caps for 2023-24, Ms. Wilhorn explained that this topic will be discussed by the Governance Board in December with any recommendations brought forward to the WRPS Board for action in January, 2023. Questions around differences in enrollment numbers pre- and post-COVID for Central Oaks were addressed by Ms. Wilhorn. Enrollment has dropped back down to a manageable number in the past two years when compared to the surge to well over 300 students in the height of the COVID pandemic. Mr. Broeren stated that providing the virtual option for families during the pandemic was a great benefit, and he reviewed how the program has evolved in the past four years as it moved from being a program of the District to becoming a virtual charter school.

B. Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) Update

Ms. Wilhorn explained that the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) that is used in kindergarten through 2nd grade as the District's Assessment of Reading Readiness will be ending at the end of the 2022-2023 school year. A committee made up of classroom teachers, elementary administration, and reading interventionists has been formed to review other screeners that meet Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) requirements. The committee will be making recommendations for screeners to pilot beginning in January of 2023 with a final decision being made by the end of the school year. Implementation will begin in the fall of 2023.

C. School and District Report Cards

Ms. Filtz provided an overview of 2021-22 School and District Report Cards results which were made public on November 15, 2022. The District overall score is 65.5 which falls into the "Meets Expectations" category, and six of seven elementary schools landed in the "Exceeds Expectations" category. Lincoln High School "Meets Expectations" and the Wisconsin Rapids Area Middle School (WRAMS) "Meets Few Expectations." The District has been taking steps to address the WRAMS results and is confident that future scores will show marked improvement. Ms. Filtz pointed out that Washington Elementary was only .4 points away from earning

a "Significantly Exceeds Expectations" score, and Lincoln High School was .6 points away from an "Exceeds Expectations" score.

Ms. Filtz explained how the priority weighted areas of Achievement, Growth, Target Group Outcomes, and On-Track to Graduation impact overall scores. The higher the economically disadvantaged percentage is for a school, the more weight is put on individual growth. Schools with a lower percentage of economically disadvantaged pupils have achievement as the higher weighted priority area. Overall, English language arts and math scores have improved for Below Basic and Basic categories, and there is more work needing to be done to increase scores for Proficient and Advanced categories. Target group outcomes were explained and reviewed. A question was raised around how test opt-outs impact School Report Cards, and Ms. Filtz explained that while the opt-outs negatively impact state testing results, they do not negatively impact School Report Cards.

Ms. Filtz pointed out a correction needed for the Industry-Recognized Credentials and Work-Based Learning categories since there was a glitch in the District Skyward software system exchanging data. The WRPS Industry-Recognized Credential percentage is 4.98% with 74 students earning at least one industry-recognized credential; and the Work-Based Learning percentage should be 4.98% with 74 students participating in a work-based learning program. Both categories are still above the state average. This discrepancy does not negatively impact the District Report Card since these categories are not used in its overall calculation. For this reason, the DPI will not correct or update this portion of the report card.

Committee members reviewed longitudinal data for District Report Card scores as well as comparisons to surrounding districts in terms of overall scores, numbers of economically disadvantaged, Students with Disabilities, and English Learners. No Report Cards were issued in 2019-20 due to the pandemic. In terms of the economically disadvantaged trend data found on page 5 of the report, Ms. Filtz mentioned a correction needed for Grove as it should be 72.2 rather than 73.5 as listed. With the Universal Free Breakfast Program no longer in place, parents are having to complete free/reduced lunch applications to qualify; this could have an impact on the economically disadvantaged numbers trending upward as a result. Due to the increase in Washington Elementary's economically disadvantaged population, the school will be applying to be identified as a Schoolwide Title School in the coming year. They would join Grove, Howe, Mead, and River Cities as a Title I school in 2023-24. A question was raised about whether adding a Title school would increase Title funding for the District. Ms. Filtz explained that the same amount of dollars are allocated to the District; however, they would get disbursed among five schools rather than four.

Lastly, when comparing area high schools, Lincoln High School had the highest score at 69.4 when compared to Marshfield, Wausau East, Port Edwards, Wausau West, Assumption, Nekoosa, Merrill, Stevens Point, and DC Everest. Additionally, Nekoosa is the only other school with a higher percentage of economically disadvantaged students which provides evidence that Lincoln High School is working to meet the needs and improve performance for all students attending. Assumption students participating in the Wisconsin Private School Choice Program are required to participate in state exams and reporting.

Mr. Broeren pointed out that while report card results can fluctuate from year to year, this year in particular is worth celebrating with six of seven elementary schools Exceeding Expectations given their economically disadvantaged status, and having Lincoln High School as the top scoring high school in the region. The scores provide evidence that WRPS is working hard to meet the needs of all students, even with the challenging demographics involved. He expressed pride in the work being done in awesome schools by outstanding staff, and he believes how educational stakeholders and the community talk about our school district is key in helping others understand the positive impact and progress that is being made here.

VI. Consent Agenda Items

Committee members will be asked to decide which items should be placed on the consent agenda for the regular Board of Education meeting.

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:

- Open Enrollment Space Determination Limits for the 2023-2024 School Year (January)
- AGR Mid-Year Report (February)
- District Strategic Plan (February)

Katie Medina adjourned the meeting at 6:45 p.m.