



Wisconsin Rapids Board of Education
Educational Services Committee

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

MINUTES

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

March 6, 2023

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: Ed Allison, Phil Bickelhaupt, Craig Broeren, Roxanne Filtz, Steve Hepp, Jeanne Olson,
Aaron Nelson, Ronald Rasmussen, Kelly Schaeffer

- 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. Summer Academy Course Proposal – *Food Around the World*

Roxanne Filtz, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, presented information concerning a summer cooking course option for middle school students as a way to keep students interested in the program since they have one opportunity only in 6th grade to take a cooking course before attending high school. If approved, *Food Around the World* would be offered as a Summer Academy class to help continue with the promotion of food sciences for grades 6-8. The focus would be on learning about the cuisine of various countries in the world and making dishes from each of the countries. The District Council for Instructional Improvement (CII) Committee unanimously approved of recommending the course to the Board of Education for consideration and approval. Committee members had an opportunity to ask questions.

ES-1 Motion by John Krings, seconded by Larry Davis to approve of the *Food Around the World* Summer Academy class to be offered in summer of 2023. Motion carried unanimously.

B. Washington Elementary Title I School-Wide Application

Ms. Filtz provided background on the Title I application process for Washington Elementary, explaining that there are currently four Title I schools in the District, including Grove Elementary, Howe Elementary, Mead Elementary, and River Cities High School. History concerning Washington's prior participation as a Title I school was shared. A committee

comprised of parents, classroom teachers, intervention staff, student services staff and administration has been formed to develop a plan of supports covering such things as student intervention support and supplemental materials; family engagement and communication; and increased professional development opportunities for staff members. Yearly goals are set in the areas of School Culture and Climate, Instructional Practice, Family and Community Engagement, and School Structure. As enrollment and student needs continue to change, Washington Elementary will benefit from becoming a Title I school. Committee members had an opportunity to ask questions.

ES-2 Motion by Larry Davis, seconded by Troy Bier to approve of having Washington Elementary School apply to become a Title I School-Wide program. Motion carried unanimously.

C. WRPS Co-Curricular Activities Code for Grades 6-12

Ronald Rasmussen, Principal of Lincoln High School, shared recommended changes to the WRPS Co-Curricular Activities Code of Conduct for grades 6-12. Committee members had an opportunity ask questions. A request to have the Code contain references to both "athlete" and "participant" was made to ensure club activities are also represented.

ES-3 Motion by John Benbow, seconded by Troy Bier to approve of the recommended revisions to the Wisconsin Rapids Public Schools Co-Curricular Activities Code of Conduct. Motion carried unanimously.

D. Care Solace

Steven Hepp, Director of Pupil Services, presented a proposal to enter into a 3-year purchase agreement with Care Solace at a total cost of \$60,021.00 to be funded through the School Based Mental Health Grant funds and Get Kids Ahead Grant funds as necessary. As outlined in the District Strategic Plan, ensuring the well-being of both students and staff remains a top priority for the Board. Care Solace provides support for all students, staff, and their families, and offers around-the-clock multilingual support for accessing qualified mental health care providers. Their services extend to mitigating wait times for care and assisting families with navigating insurance protocols. Families are supported through appointment scheduling and getting questions answered throughout the process. The Committee had an opportunity to ask questions concerning the proposal and considered current needs and trends.

ES-4 Motion by Troy Bier, seconded by Julie Timm to approve of the 3-year purchase agreement of Care Solace for a total cost of \$60,021.00 to be funded through the School Based Mental Health Grant funds and Get Kids Ahead Grant funds if needed. Motion carried unanimously.

E. Digital Media Live Broadcast Equipment Purchase

Ms. Filtz explained that the Board approved a new course, Digital Media Live Broadcast, in November, 2022. At the time of the course proposal being introduced, it was believed that all equipment needed to create the course and have it run at its full potential was being purchased through construction, referendum, technology, building or Fund 80 budgets. While most of the equipment for the room and construction of the room itself was funded through these means, there are still some crucial pieces of equipment that need to be purchased in order to fully furnish and operate the Virtual Studio. Since this is a new course, the administration recommends that the purchase be made using referendum dollars allocated for curriculum and technology purchases. The plan would then be to place the class into a curriculum acquisition cycle that aligns with other Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses. Committee members had an opportunity to ask questions concerning the purchase.

ES-5 Motion by Larry Davis, seconded by Troy Bier to approve of the additional equipment purchases for the Digital Media Live Broadcast course to be paid through the Curriculum and Technology Referendum budget in the amount of \$32,976.72. Motion carried unanimously.

V. Updates

A. Student Travel

- i. Ms. Filtz introduced Jeanne Olson, Music Educator at Lincoln High School, who provided an overview of travel plans for LHS Band students from November 8-13, 2023 to participate in and perform at the National Veterans Day Commemoration at the Air Force Memorial in Washington, D.C. Students will also have an opportunity to tour many national monuments, memorials, and Arlington National Cemetery. Students have been fundraising to cover the anticipated cost per student of approximately \$1,200.00. Support is available for students in need of financial assistance to participate.
- ii. Ms. Filtz explained that the LHS Theatre Department has entered members of the LHS Thespian Troupe #525 into the "Thespys." The troupe was established in 1942 and recently has been more involved to open opportunities and future career readiness for LHS student members. The Thespys involve various theatrical aspects for students to compete. The International Thespian Excellence Awards (or Thespys® for short) recognize the highest level of achievement in school theatre performance, technical theatre, writing, and filmmaking. If students earn a Superior rating at local and regional competitions, they are invited to Nationals at the International Thespian Festival (ITF). Students can receive up to thousands of dollars in scholarships if they are rated as "Excellent" at the International Thespian Festival.

This year, the ITF will be held at Indiana University Bloomington on June 19-23, 2023. LHS has two students, Raegan VanWagner and Alaina Kawleski, who entered the competition and received 18/20, which is a Superior rating and advanced them to Nationals. The cost of the trip is \$999 for an All-Access Pass and includes housing and meals for the entire week. The LHS Theatre Department will sponsor the cost for their Thespys entry and transportation. The students plan to fundraise and seek sponsorships for the remaining amount needed to take the trip.

B. Center 4All Equity Walks

Mr. Hepp reported that despite some improvement, WRPS still disproportionately identifies Black students as having a disability, with Black students being 2.2 times more likely to be identified than their peers in 2022 (down from 2.5 times in 2021). Moreover, Black and Hispanic students are more likely to be identified with a Specific Learning Disability than their peers. With Black students being 3.06 times more likely (down from 3.61 in 2020 and 3.11 in 2021) and Hispanic students 2.4479 times more likely (increase from 2.1756 in 2020 and 2.4459 in 2021).

To address this issue, WRPS has contracted with Center 4All to conduct "Equity Walks" in three of its Title I elementary schools (Howe, Grove, and Mead). The Equity Walks will gather observational data to confirm or challenge assumptions about school improvement and equity and identify areas that may have been overlooked. Center 4All consultants and school staff will work together to collect data which will be included in a report for each individual building, as well as a system-wide district report. The reports will be used for planning, goal-setting, and inclusive conversation, and will be discussed with leadership teams to determine next steps.

The cost of the Center 4All contract is \$13,769.64 which includes the 3 days of Equity Walks, data collection/analysis, lodging/mileage reimbursement, and presentation on findings. Due to being identified as disproportionate, WRPS must budget 15% of IDEA Part B funds for comprehensive coordinated early intervening services (CCEIS) to address the root cause of racial disproportionality, as identified through continuous improvement activities. These Equity Walks are considered a continuous improvement activity and will be funded through these IDEA Part B funds.

C. Updates to WRPS Curriculum Webpage

Ms. Filtz provided an update on planned improvements for the WRPS Curriculum webpage which serves two purposes. The first purpose is to provide an overview of the curriculum that is followed including the mission and vision of each area, the essential questions for learning, as well as the learning objectives that students are expected to meet. This portion is intended for parents/guardians, and others in the community who may have an interest.

The second purpose is to house individual course lessons, assignments, assessments and materials used to organize and teach a particular lesson. This portion is for *classroom use* and is not intended to be shared openly with the public at large. However, parents/guardians have access to virtually all aspects of coursework that their child(ren) are involved in simply by asking their classroom teacher.

With the entirety of the WRPS curriculum being posted in the same place on one landing page, there are several webpage links that are not open to the general public, but only open to classroom teachers. This is due to the fact that these links typically lead to common assessments, copyrighted resources, or daily lesson plans. This causes confusion for members of the public when they are attempting to access items intended for staff use only. As a result, the curriculum webpage is currently being revamped to remove links not available to the public while still providing a general outline of what is taught at each grade level, the standards that are addressed, and what is expected in order to show proficiency in each content area. The webpage will be under construction through the spring. While under construction, parents/guardians or other interested parties may direct specific curriculum questions to their child's teacher, building administrator, or the Director of Curriculum & Instruction. Once complete, the new and improved version of the webpage should cut down on confusion and give users the experience and information they are seeking.

VI. Consent Agenda Items

- ES-1 Approval of the *Food Around the World* Summer Course**
- ES-2 Approval of Washington Elementary Title I School-Wide Application**
- ES-3 Approval of WRPS Co-Curricular Activities Code of Conduct Revisions**
- ES-4 Approval of 3-Year Agreement with Care Solace**
- ES-5 Approval of Digital Media Live Broadcast Equipment**

VII. Future Agenda Items/Information Requests

The Committee reviewed the following future agenda items:

- Start College Now (SCN) and Early College Credit Program (ECCP) Applications (April)
- Board Policy 723.1 Emergency School Closings and 723.1 Rule Emergency School Closing Procedures Revisions (April)
- Agenda Planners (May)
- District Professional Development Plan (May)

Katie Medina adjourned the meeting at 6:50 p.m.