



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  
John Krings, President  
Kathi Stebbins-Hintz  
Julie Timm

May 1, 2023

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

TIME: 6:00 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: John Benbow, Katie Bielski-Medina, Larry Davis, John Krings,  
Kathi Stebbins-Hintz, Julie Timm

BOARD MEMBERS EXCUSED: Troy Bier

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT: Ed Allison, Craig Broeren, Phil Bickelhaupt, Roxanne Filtz, Tracy  
Ginter, Steve Hepp, Aaron Nelson, Bill Oswald, Ronald  
Rasmussen, Paul Rheinschmidt, Kelly Zywicki

- 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. Grades 6-12 Physical Education Curriculum Maps

Roxanne Filtz, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, introduced Physical Education staff members Randy Duxbury, Jodi Williamson, and Amy Manhardt to share proposed curriculum maps for the grades 6-12 physical education curriculum. Justin Weinhold, K-12 Physical Education Curriculum Chairperson has been working with the 6-12 physical education subcommittee to revise the 6-12 physical education curriculum maps, centering their work on the Wisconsin State Standards. The District Council for Instructional Improvement (CII) reviewed the proposed curriculum maps in February, 2023 and unanimously voted to recommend approval of them. Examples of the proposed maps were shared along with physical education goals, objectives, and the State Standards from which assessments and grades will be based. Committee members took the opportunity to ask questions.

**ES-1 Motion by John Benbow, seconded by John Krings to approve the adoption of the proposed 6-12 physical education curriculum maps as presented beginning with the 2023-2024 school year. Motion carried unanimously.**

b. Grades 6–12 Physical Education Proposed Materials Acquisition

Ms. Filtz and Physical Education staff members also shared details about a physical education acquisition proposal for grades 6-12. The physical education sub-committee discussed potential materials to support the approved curriculum, and secured several quotes from a variety of vendors. Since the acquisition is for equipment, no public viewing was scheduled to review the materials. The CII Committee discussed the acquisition proposal in April, 2023 and unanimously voted to recommend approval of the proposed purchases. The cost of the entire purchase is not anticipated to exceed \$109,773.33 with funding coming from the Referendum Curriculum budget. Committee members took the opportunity to ask questions.

**ES-2 Motion by John Benbow, seconded by Larry Davis to approve the proposed 6-12 physical education acquisition as presented in an amount not to exceed \$109,773.33 to be funded through the WRPS Referendum Curriculum budget. Motion carried unanimously.**

c. Grades 6–12 Social and Emotional Learning Framework Purchase

Ms. Filtz introduced Becki Mischnick, Student Engagement Facilitator at WRAMS; Melanie Kozlowski, Student Engagement Facilitator at Lincoln and River Cities; and Sunshine Broeren, District Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Coordinator, to provide details concerning the purchase of secondary level SEL resources. After considering three potential programs including *Character Strong*, *Move This World*, and *The 7 Mindsets*, WRAMS teachers piloted *Character Strong* and *The 7 Mindsets* during the fall and winter of the 2022–23 school year. Lincoln High School staff communicated with WRAMS concerning the pilots as they had an interest in building upon the momentum of any middle school decisions made and avoid any repeat of content/lessons across grade levels. LHS teachers piloted a lesson in March, 2023. After receiving feedback from teachers and students at WRAMS, both *The 7 Mindsets* and *Character Strong* received strong support. The LHS team considered “Glow” and “Grow” feedback from staff should *The 7 Mindsets* curriculum be implemented. After weighing how each program would address the criteria set by the team at the start which included the selection of resources that are: evidence based; Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) aligned; age appropriate and differentiated for each grade level; engaging for students; and had ease of access, a decision was made to recommend the purchase of *The 7 Mindsets* to the CII committee for consideration.

After details of the program were presented at the April, 2023 CII committee meeting, the committee unanimously agreed to bring *The 7 Mindsets* program forward to the Board of Education for consideration and possible approval. A public viewing of the materials was held on April 17, 2023 with four community members and one school board member attending. Public comment regarding *The 7 Mindsets* program was very positive. The administration recommends approval of purchasing *The 7 Mindsets* SEL framework resource for grades 6-12 at a cost of \$38,250.00 to be implemented beginning with the 2023-24 school year.

Ms. Broeren provided an update on progress being made at the elementary level to implement the *Move This World* SEL curriculum. The framework was offered as a

resource this year to teachers and a good majority of staff members are using it. Full implementation is anticipated for 2023-24 with an all staff training being conducted at the beginning of the year. Staff feedback thus far has been positive as students learn a common language to deal with emotions and work through conflict. All team members throughout the District are working across all grade levels to integrate these resources within Multi-level systems of support.

Committee members took the opportunity to ask questions.

**ES-3 Motion by John Benbow, seconded by Julie Timm to approved the purchase of *The 7 Mindsets*, a Social and Emotional Learning Framework resource for grades 6-12, for a total cost of \$38,250.00 for one year to be paid with funds from the Comprehensive Coordinated Early Intervening Services (CCEIS) set aside budget, for implementation beginning with the 2023-2024 school year. Motion carried unanimously.**

d. Library Media and Technology Plan

Phil Bickelhaupt, Director of Technology, introduced Library Media Specialists Kirsten Johnson, Tracy Hauke, and Jamie Jestadt as well as Stephanie Roe, Elementary Keyboarding Instructor, to present the proposed 3-year WRPS Library Media and Technology Plan. Working through the WRPS Instructional Technology Committee (ITC), the 2023-26 plan addresses multiple facets of technology and library services throughout the District. Main topics include Professional Development, Infrastructure, Library Space, Budgeting, Community Partnerships, Data and Privacy, and Curriculum and Instruction. The WRPS Information and Technology Mission Statement is as follows:

WRPS will provide the necessary facilities, technology, instruction, professional development, support staff and library media program to make the vision a reality. To achieve the vision, it is the mission of the WRPS Information and Technology Program to:

- integrate Wisconsin Standards for Information and Technology Literacy into the curriculum
- provide on-going professional development in digital and print resources and technology use
- provide up-to-date infrastructure and technologies
- increase student proficiencies through the use of a variety of technologies and instructional methods
- promote collaboration between library media staff, technology support staff, and teachers
- provide the staffing required to support and implement the library media program and the information and technology standards

Highlights about what is going well in buildings was shared by each of the media specialists. They also presented challenges that the District is facing in the Library and Instructional Technology services realm. In short, understaffed areas in Library Media Centers is making it difficult to keep pace with the increasing demands of support for online digital software, media, and productivity tools used by staff. School libraries have evolved to be flexible, collaborative, creative learning spaces that include many more uses than just checking out books. Mr. Bickelhaupt shared statistics around Common School Fund expenditures, explaining that 72.36% of the 2021-22 annual budget was dedicated to online digital software, media and productivity tools. He also shared a comparison of surrounding districts and districts of similar size in terms of media and technology integration and affiliated staffing levels, pointing out the lower levels of staff support available at WRPS. Top software applications by device type for the last six months was reviewed along with data on multi-application engagements across campuses and grade levels.

Ms. Roe described the current elementary Keyboarding time allotment scheduled by grade level. In addition to Keyboarding lessons, students have also begun to dabble in robot coding technology, and Ms. Roe hopes to expand this in the coming year. Digital Citizenship lessons will be added in 2023-24 through an online course called *Neptune Navigate*. Mr. Broeren stated that the District is fortunate to have received a donation of Dash coding robots through the area Girl Scouts organization. Additionally, Kelly Bluell, Gifted and Talented Coordinator, is writing a grant to hopefully secure funding to further expand coding offerings at all levels.

A Spring 2023 action plan was shared, and Mr. Bickelhaupt explained that Board approval of the 2023-26 District Library and Technology Plan does not include approval of specific staff positions, rather it is the overall plan. Individual proposals to increase staffing would come through separately under the normal process as proposals are developed and appropriate funding is identified.

Committee members took the opportunity to ask questions. A question was raised around how the library book selection process works, and the Media Specialists described how books are vetted for inclusion in school libraries. Mr. Broeren explained that there is a Board developed process in place outlining the procedures to be followed for selection and reconsideration of library materials.

**ES-4 Motion by Larry Davis, seconded by Julie Timm to approve the 2023-2026 District Technology and Library Plan. Motion carried unanimously.**

e. Student Handbooks

Proposed changes for the 2023-2024 Student Handbooks for Lincoln High School (LHS), Wisconsin Rapids Area Middle School (WRAMS) and District elementary schools were presented. Committee members took the opportunity to ask questions.

**ES-5 Motion by John Benbow, seconded by Larry Davis to approve the proposed modifications to the LHS Planner for the 2023-2024 school year. Motion carried unanimously.**

**ES-6 Motion by Larry Davis, seconded by John Krings to approve the proposed modifications to the WRAMS Planner for the 2023-2024 school year. Motion carried unanimously.**

**ES-7 Motion by John Krings, seconded by Julie Timm to approve the proposed modifications to the elementary school planner for the 2023-2024 school year. Motion carried unanimously.**

f. Professional Development Plan (2023-2024)

Ms. Filtz presented the proposed Professional Development Plan for the 2023-2024 school year which has been shared with the District CII committee and the administrative team. As various District committees set their 2023-2024 goals and action steps, they will consider the Board approved 2023-2024 District Strategic Plan as well as the District Professional Development Plan in the development of those goals. Committee members took the opportunity to ask questions.

**ES-8 Motion by Kathi Stebbins-Hintz, seconded by Julie Timm to approve the 2023-2024 Professional Development Plan. Motion carried unanimously.**

V. Updates

a. Continuity of Services Plan

Ms. Filtz provided an update on the District Continuity of Services Plan as required under the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act. Following approval, the plan will be updated on the District website to meet the requirements for it to be available publicly online. The Continuity of Services Plan describes how WRPS will continue to provide a safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services for all schools as it strives to meet the needs of all educational stakeholders as it emerges from the pandemic.

b. Wisconsin Rapids Area Middle School (WRAMS) Update

Ms. Tracy Ginter, Principal at WRAMS, introduced the following staff members to provide an update on the strides and progress being made at WRAMS to improve school culture and decrease disciplinary incidents and attendance issues: Paul Rheinschmidt, Assistant Principal; Bill Oswald, Assistant Principal; Rebecca Mischnick, Student Engagement Facilitator; Abigail Kreisa, Language Arts Teacher; Gretchen Niedbalski, School Counselor; Tessa Gruszynski, School Social Worker; and Diane Gibbs, Bridge Program Teacher. Like many other schools throughout the country, WRAMS has experienced significant challenges which the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated. To get things back on track at the school, three main goals were established for 2022-23 which include: 1) make connections; 2) increase family engagement; 3) meet student behavioral needs. Staff members focused on the following initiatives and improvements in their presentation:

- ◆ Rams Pride Time (RPT) was used for 7 *Mindsets* SEL lessons, academic check-ins, and Fun Friday
- ◆ RESET was implemented to provide time for connections, positive reinforcement and academic support
- ◆ School culture was expanded through:
  - the "Teen Truth" assembly and leadership summit to empower student voice, improve mental health, and build positive school culture
  - Kyle Willkom presented to 6<sup>th</sup> graders on the topic of resilience and leadership
  - Wade Fernandez presented to students on the topic of honoring your gifts and talents and sharing with others
- ◆ Community Connections were developed or expanded through:
  - Mid-State Technical College academic and career planning presentations
  - the Heavy Metal Bus tour
  - disaster career presenters
  - Hmong New Year and culture presentations
  - Dia de los Muertos events
  - Talking Circles with John Dick from Ho-Chunk Nation and Ho-Chunk Nation Education Center
  - Hmong Support Group facilitated by Family Center staff
  - Feeding Our Communities with United Services (FOCUS) resources
  - Wood County Human Services Youth Justice / Adolescent Diversion Program / LEO Program
- ◆ A "School Connectedness Survey" was performed with the following results:
  - 79% of WRAMS students report having one or more adults to reach out to for help with non-academic concerns (a 172% increase from the fall);
  - 88% of WRAMS students report having one or more adults to reach out to for help with academic concerns (a 120% increase from the fall);
  - 87% of WRAMS students report having other students to reach out to if they have concerns at school (a 112% increase from the fall)
  - Considering all questions in the survey, students responded positively an average of 66% of the time in the spring, compared to 56% of the time in the fall – an 18% increase from fall to spring

- ◆ Ways to increase Family Engagement include:
  - hosting virtual parent information sessions on academic, mental health and substance abuse topics
  - family orientation session and open house in August; yard party in September; Parent Teacher Visitation in October and February; Fundraiser/Family Night/Kickball Tournament in March; an Amazing WRAMS Race in May; and positive postcards sent home with students throughout the year
- ◆ Behavior Support started with universal school expectations to:
  - Be Respectful
  - Be Responsible
  - Be Resourceful
- ◆ Behavior data shared included the following:
  - Attendance is 91%
  - Major discipline referrals are down 33% compared to last year
  - In-house referrals are down 59% compared to this time last year
- ◆ Student Support Plans were implemented which include academic and behavior support plans that engage stakeholders (student, families, teachers, positive behavior coach, student engagement facilitator, student services staff, administration, etc.) in problem solving and developing strategies to build student success
- ◆ Student Support Groups facilitated by Student Services staff which include academic, social-emotional, and behavioral support to build connections and foster the development of the whole child
- ◆ eduClimber software is being utilized by staff to better communicate and readily track student academic and behavioral data on a continuous basis which helps issues or concerns get caught much earlier
- ◆ Training for staff is occurring around the Positive Behavioral Intervention & Supports (PBIS) approach which is based on a proactive model to teach and promote positive behavior in all students while also supporting students having a difficult time or who may present with more challenging behaviors
- ◆ The Bridge Alternative Program focuses on teaching responsibility, and there has been some remarkable positive change and success experienced for students as they work toward reintegration to a regular classroom setting; components of the Bridge Program include: the Bridge Handbook, clear expectations, progress monitoring, home connection, student self-review, and teacher feedback

Goals for WRAMS coming up include a full PBIS Tier 1 roll-out, enhancing relationships through RPT & RESET; customizing eduClimber; fully implementing the SEL program; and continue providing individualized academic and social-emotional support.

Committee members took the opportunity to ask questions, and thanked the WRAMS staff for the positive results and improvements being seen through their hard work and diligent efforts to improve academics, school culture, and make stronger connections across the board between students, staff, and families at WRAMS.

## VI. Consent Agenda Items

- ES-1 Grades 6-12 Physical Education Curriculum Maps**
- ES-2 Grades 6-12 Physical Education Acquisition**
- ES-3 Purchase of *The 7 Mindsets* SEL Framework**
- ES-4 2023-2026 WRPS Library and Technology Plan**
- ES-5 2023-2024 LHS Student Handbook/Planner**
- ES-6 2023-2024 WRAMS Student Handbook/Planner**
- ES-7 2023-2024 Elementary Student Handbook/Planner**
- ES-8 2023-2024 Professional Development Plan**

VII. Future Agenda Items/Information Requests

The Committee reviewed the following future agenda items:

- Grades 6 – 12 Health Curriculum Maps (June)
- Grades K – 12 Health Acquisition Materials (June)
- Grades 9 – 12 Health Curriculum Maps (June)
- Grades 9 – 12 Science Acquisition Materials (June)
- Renaissance Learning Purchase Contract (June)
- Student Engagement Facilitator Impact Report (June)
- Professional Development Calendar (June)
- Pupil Academic Standards (July)
- Achievement Gap Reduction Report (July)
- Seclusion and Restraint Report (August)
- Parent Council for Instructional Improvement Representative (September)
- ESSA Update (September)

Ms. Medina adjourned the meeting at 8:26 p.m.