



MINUTES

Katie Bielski-Medina, Chairperson
 John Benbow, Jr.
 Troy Bier
 Larry Davis
 John Krings, President
 Kathi Stebbins-Hintz
 Julie Timm

January 2, 2024

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, Troy Bier, John Krings, Kathi Stebbins-Hintz, Julie Timm

BOARD MEMBERS EXCUSED: Larry Davis

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT: Ed Allison, Phil Bickelhaupt, Craig Broeren, Roxanne Filtz, Steve Hepp, Aaron Nelson, Brian Oswald, Jennifer Wilhorn

- I. Call to Order
- II. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
- III. Public Comment – none.
- IV. Actionable Items
 - A. Open Enrollment Designated Space Determinations for 2024-25

Ms. Roxanne Filtz, Director of Curriculum & Instruction, and Steve Hepp, Director of Pupil Services, presented recommendations for designating regular and special education spaces to be available for the 2024-25 school year. After considering criteria as outlined in Board Policy 423, a recommendation is being made to not designate any space limitations in regular education programming and to designate specific space availability in special education programming. Projected special education spaces were reviewed as follows:

PROJECTED SPECIAL EDUCATION OPEN ENROLLMENT SPACES FOR 2024-25								
Program	Projected Sections	Max # Students a Section	Capacity	Projected Enrollment per Factoring	10% Transfer	50% New Placements	Total Projected Enrollment	Projected Space Available 2024-25
Early Childhood/4K	6	10	60	45.2	5	23	72	0
Elementary (K-5)								
Cross Categorical Levels 1-2	15.5	12	186	339.6	34	NA	374	0
Intellectual Disabilities Level 1/2 Program	1	11	11	19.2	2	NA	21	0
Intellectual Disabilities Level 3 Program	2	7	14	37.6	4	NA	41	0
Emotional Disabilities Level 1/2/3 Program	2	11	22	43.7	4	NA	48	0
Middle (6-8)								
Cross Categorical Levels 1-2	9.5	14	133	261.7	26	NA	288	0
Intellectual Disabilities Level 1/2 Program	1	10	10	38.3	4	NA	42	0
Intellectual Disabilities Level 3 Program	1	8	8	19.1	2	NA	21	0

PROJECTED SPECIAL EDUCATION OPEN ENROLLMENT SPACES FOR 2024-25 (continued)								
Program	Projected Sections	Max # Students a Section	Capacity	Projected Enrollment per Factoring	10% Transfer	50% New Placements	Total Projected Enrollment	Projected Space Available 2024-25
High School (RCHS and LHS 9-12)								
Cross Categorical Levels 1-2	11	15	165	318.8	32	NA	351	0
Intellectual Disabilities Level 1/2 Program	2	10	20	69.5	7	NA	76	0
Intellectual Disabilities Level 3 Program	1	8	8	35.9	4	NA	39	0
Emotional Disabilities Level 3 Program	1	10	10	37.7	4	NA	41	0
Speech and Language								
Early Childhood	1.5	20	30	38	4	19	61	0
Elementary	8	35	280	27.2	27	NA	297	0
Middle School	1	40	40	34.8	3	NA	38	2
High School	0.5	40	20	19.8	2	NA	22	0
Occupational Therapy								
All Grade Levels	4.4	15, 30, 30, 45	120	240 (students)			0	0

Mr. Hepp provided an explanation concerning the calculations and fielded questions from Committee members.

ES-1 Motion by John Benbow, seconded by Troy Bier, to recommend approval to not designate any space limitations for regular education open enrollment students for the 2024-25 school year, and designate space available in special education programming as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

V. Updates

A. Central Oaks Academy Charter School

Brian Oswald, Principal of Central Oaks Academy Charter School, provided an update on 2023-24 financial, operational, and academic goals for the school. Enrollment in Central Oaks is currently at 105 students with some fluidity at the middle school level. In addition to their participation in online coursework, approximately 50 students regularly attend school in person for instruction on Fridays. On other days of the week, anywhere from 8-10 students attend for open lab sessions or other academic support in areas such as writing/language arts.

An identified goal for the year includes continued monitoring of expenditures to remain fiscally responsible. Goals completed from last year include finalizing the Governance Board Handbook and onboarding plan for new members. Work continues to be done and different methods are being employed to increase involvement in the Parental Advisory Council; the group is seeing some progress being made to increase participation. Fostering a unified school spirit also continues to be a goal since some parents are seeking this type of connection.

Committee members had an opportunity to ask questions regarding Central Oaks programming.

B. 1:1 Computer Technology

Phil Bickelhaupt, Director of Technology, provided an overview of the progress made to put educational devices into the hands of students through a one-to-one initiative that began in 2015. A timeline was shared which began in 2015 when devices were first issued to students for use in classrooms while attending Lincoln High School (LHS); eventually all LHS students were issued devices to take home between 2015-2019. Students at Wisc. Rapids Area Middle School (WRAMS) received devices in 2020; and elementary students in grades 3-5 received devices in 2021. During that timeframe, the "Canvas" learning management system was introduced at LHS and eventually at WRAMS, while "Blocksi" was implemented at the elementary level.

Mr. Bickelhaupt shared that all computer labs have now been removed from the elementary schools since grades 3-5 have moved to a 1:1 initiative and grades K-2 are sharing Chromebook or iPad computer carts. At the secondary level, LHS has 5 remaining labs and WRAMS has 2 labs; River Cities continues to utilize Chromebooks on a cart. The "Clever" program is in full use at the elementary level as well as at LHS and River Cities.

Technology infrastructure changes were explained, and Mr. Bickelhaupt reviewed a few of the biggest challenges pertaining to login ease and security, charging, device damage, inappropriate usage in terms of games and social media, access to reliable internet, and sustainability for the program although technology referendum dollars have helped considerably in this regard. Areas for potential efficiencies and refinements include possibly reducing the number of software applications being utilized, issuing Chromebooks in 6th grade for use through graduation, and simplifying the login process for younger students in grades K-3.

Lastly, areas to improve include more training on Canvas for students and parents, additional required professional development training for staff in technology specifically pertaining to curriculum and the classroom, and developing technology competencies and learning targets at each grade level.

A question was raised around whether substitute staff members receive technology training, and Mr. Bickelhaupt explained that more deliberate training opportunities have been offered in the 2023-24 school year to substitutes; however, participation has been low. When questioned about how the integration of Canvas at the secondary level is going, Mr. Bickelhaupt stated that it is classroom dependent and there has been some additional adjustment for students and teachers switching from Google Classroom to Canvas. The overall move to Canvas is coming along as expected.

C. Elementary ELA and Act 20

Jennifer Wilhorn, Assistant Director of Curriculum & Instruction, provided updates regarding elementary language arts materials and the process that will be used for piloting materials during the second half of the 2023-24 school year, particularly in light of 2023 Wisconsin Act 20 which requires numerous changes around early literacy instruction, curriculum, assessments, and interventions as well as teacher licensing and preparation.

Act 20 creates a Council on Early Literacy Curricula located within the Department of Public Instruction's (DPI) Office of Literacy. The Director of the Office of Literacy has yet to be named; this individual will be responsible for distribution of grant funds tied to the Act 20 initiative and have oversight of the literacy coaches who will be working with school districts. The Council on Early Literacy Curricula consists of nine members who have been meeting to develop a recommended list of science-based literacy curricula and instructional materials for use in grades K-3. The meetings are available on the DPI "Wisconsin Reads" website for public viewing. By February 1, 2024 a materials list is supposed to be released which is a change from the original date in December, 2023. The Council is accepting vendor proposals until January 15, 2024 which means a quick turn-around will need to happen to meet the February 1st deadline.

No updates have come concerning which K-3 statewide reading screener will be utilized. To prepare for the upcoming school year, District staff will begin providing consistent screener result reports to parents in a uniform manner. Depending upon when the materials list gets released, District professional development completion dates may change. Originally, requirements from Act 20 stipulated that all K-3 teachers must complete required reading training by July, 2025. The State has since revised the timeline to have the training requirement *begin* by July, 2025. However, after considering the possibility of any teacher turnover, the administration feels it is best to maintain training as originally planned to avoid the need for additional training of new staff.

While District based elementary level professional development will have a language arts focus due to Act 20, secondary level professional development being planned will likely be targeted on the expanded use of Canvas in grades 6-12, among other focus areas.

A timeline for the elementary materials pilot being introduced was shared, along with the specific materials selected for review up to this point. Ms. Wilhorn expressed her appreciation to staff members who have willingly stepped up to participate in evaluating the pilot materials. The pilot will occur from February through mid-April. The District Language Arts CII committee is meeting on January 17, 2024 to finalize a WRPS rubric for the pilot teachers to use when evaluating the materials. An update concerning the pilot process will be shared at the next Council for Instructional Improvement (CII) meeting scheduled for February 21, 2024.

In April, the Elementary Language Arts CII will meet to review pilot feedback and a presentation will then be made to the full CII Committee and include a recommendation for purchase. The community will have an opportunity to review the materials in May, and it is anticipated that a final purchase recommendation will be presented to the Educational Services Committee at its June 3, 2024 meeting. Staff members will receive training on the new curriculum materials at the end of August with full implementation slated to take place at the beginning of the school year in September, 2024. Superintendent Broeren made mention of the fact that there may be things throughout the process that administration is unable to anticipate and may need to make adjustments for as new information is provided to districts by the DPI.

Committee members took the opportunity to ask questions.

VI. Consent Agenda Items

ES-1 Open Enrollment Space Determination Limits for 2024-25 School Year

VII. Future Agenda Items/Information Requests

The Committee reviewed the following future agenda items:

- AGR Mid-Year Report (February)
- District Strategic Plan (February)
- FAST Program Updates (March)
- Play and Learn Updates (March)
- Start College Now (SCN) and Early College Credit Program (ECCP) Applications (April)
- CTE Updates (April)

Ms. Medina adjourned the meeting at 6:42 p.m.