



Wisconsin Rapids Board of Education
Educational Services Committee

510 Peach Street · Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54494 · (715) 422-6005

MINUTES

Sandra Hett, Chairman
Katie Bielski-Medina
John Krings
Anne Lee
Mary Rayome
Greg Swank
Michelle Bean, President

January 5, 2009

LOCATION: Conference Room A/B

TIME: Immediately following the Business Services Committee meeting, but not before 6:30 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Michelle Bean, Katie Bielski-Medina, Sandra Hett, John Krings, Anne Lee, Mary Rayome and Greg Swank

OTHERS PRESENT: Robert Crist, Jason Krug and Sharon Toellner

I. Call to Order

Sandy Hett called the meeting to order at 6:41 p.m.

II. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

III. Policy Review and Development

- A. Policy #445 – Relations with Law Enforcement Agencies and Policy #445-Rule – Procedures for Conducting Student-Law Enforcement Interviews on School Premises

ES-1 Motion by Mary Rayome, second by Michelle Bean, to approve Policy #445 – Relations with Law Enforcement Agencies and Policy #445-Rule – Procedures for Conducting Student-Law Enforcement Interviews on School Premises (for first reading).

Ryan Christianson, principal of Lincoln High School, was present to discuss changes being proposed to Policy #445 – Relations with Law Enforcement Agencies and Policy #445-Rule – Procedures for Conducting Student-Law Enforcement Interviews on School Premises.

Mr. Christianson indicated that review of these policies has been ongoing since Officer Andy Dewitt, liaison officer at Lincoln High School, approached him about the current policy. Officer Dewitt is on the school premises continually and is visible in classrooms and the cafeteria. Students seek him out for advice and questions. With the current policy, officers should not have individual contact with students without parental consent. The revised policy and rule specifies the guidelines to be followed for law enforcement officer interviews of students.

Mr. Christianson explained that there are two ways students can have disciplinary contact with law enforcement:

- 1) A physical altercation on school property, which can conclude in a citation for disorderly conduct or battery. Sometimes students can be taken into custody.
- 2) Nonschool related matters where detectives and/or police officers request to speak with students at school.

The relationship between the police department and schools is based on mutual reliance. Law enforcement officers also follow guidelines when handling guardian contact or informing students they have the right to a guardian's presence.

Motion carried unanimously.

B. Policy #345.4 – Promotion/Retention

ES-2 Motion by Michelle Bean, second by John Krings, to approve the revisions to Policy #345.4 – Promotion/Retention for first reading.

Sharon Toellner, Director of Instruction, was present to clarify the recommended revisions to Policy #345.4 – Promotion/Retention. She explained that the changes made to the policy reflect the approved changes to the 4th and 8th grade advancement policy.

Motion carried unanimously.

IV. Curriculum Development

A. East Junior High Anti-Bullying Initiative

Kathi Stebbins Hintz, principal of East Junior High School (EJH); Jeanne Olson, band teacher at EJH; and Troy Schimek, counselor at EJH, were present to discuss information about bullying and the Bullyproofing Your School program being used.

Ms. Hintz clarified that bullying interferes not only with the climate of a school, but also with student achievement. As shown through a quiz given to Committee members, there are many myths about bullying and bullies, themselves.

Ms. Olson explained that bullies dehumanize their target. She also explained that there are four types of bullying: verbal, physical, relational and cyber-bullying. At this time, almost half of all American teens are affected by cyber-bullying. A bully can be anyone and lacks guilt, empathy and compassion for their target.

The effect of bullying on targeted students can be found in their academics, health and adjustment issues, such as depression and anxiety.

Ms. Olson explained that approximately 85% of a school population are not affected by bullying. These students are considered the bystanders and usually do not get involved when they witness bullying for numerous reasons:

- fear of retaliation
- unsure of what to do
- fear of making things worse
- worry about losing social status

The anti-bullying program is aimed at this group.

Ms. Olson shared with Committee members the process that the school has been following:

- Professional Development Days on anti-bullying program
- Surveys to identify where and when bullying is occurring
- Pilot of 8 anti-bullying programs; implementing Bully Proofing Your School
- Homeroom activities
- Examination of discipline methods to educate students about the adverse impact of bullying

Mr. Schimek shared with Committee members that all students in grades 7, 8 and 9 are receiving some form of bully proofing lessons. Seventh grade students receive instruction in their core classes with topics including the basics of bullying to creating caring communities. In eighth grade, students will receive lessons beginning in the 2009-10 school year. Ninth grade students receive lessons in their English classes, which include information on sexual harassment, inclusion and groups, positive leadership and characteristics of leadership. Ms. Hintz explained that a speaker arranged through the Family Center spoke to ninth graders about sexual harassment recently.

Sharon Toellner, Director of Instruction, told Committee members that through the Health curriculum, elementary students are taught about healthy relationships. She also indicated that each school has different formats of character building. Ms. Olson also indicated that through professional development, such as Responsive Classroom, teachers are trained to deal with bullying.

V. Updates and Reports

A. East Junior High Student Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Grants

Kathi Stebbins Hintz, principal of East Junior High School, explained that two Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse student-written grants in the amount of \$1,000 and \$600 were received from the Department of Public Instruction.

The East Ambassadors will use their \$1,000 grant money to educate other students on abuse of prescription drugs. They plan to create a contest, video and provide speakers on this issue.

H.E.L.P. (Help Empower Living Pride) is a group that deals with self-esteem issues of girls, received a grant in the amount of \$600. This group will develop a program to mentor girls in sixth grade with low self-esteem. They are also planning a community-wide walk with a shoe donation at the end.

B. Professional Development Committee Update

Sharon Toellner, Director of Instruction, was present to provide an update regarding the work of the Professional Development Committee. The Committee has been meeting since the beginning of the school year to address the DPI requirements for the District waiver for Professional Development Days. Sandra Hett has served as the Board of Education representative on the Committee.

Ms. Toellner presented a visual entitled "Best Practice in Professional Development" which illustrated the professional development goal planning and evaluation process followed by the Professional Development Committee. Key questions that are asked within each phase of the process are:

Needs Assessment: Where Are We? Where Do We Want to Be?

Focus: What is Our Focus?

Planning: What Are Our Plans?

Professional Development Activities: How Will We Get There?

Evaluation: How Far Have We Come?

Ms. Toellner indicated that the research cites 4-7 years for full change to take place due to a professional development initiative, due to the stages of the change process that teachers, administrators and students work through before a change is internalized and becomes part of professional practice.

Ms. Toellner reviewed the matrix for the WRPS Professional Development Evaluation Planning Guide and WRPS Professional Development Evaluation Framework which has been approved by the DPI to fulfill the evaluation component of the Professional Development Day waiver. The District will complete the matrix for one professional development goal and each building will also complete the matrix for one goal. A key area of emphasis in the process is the detailing of initial and intermediate outcomes related to the stated goal over a five-year period.

Ms. Toellner stated that professional growth opportunities are critical at a District, building and individual level. Utilizing the Professional Development Day schedule format allows for a concentrated three-hour period of time for meetings to be held and collaboration to take place. Without this time many components of the District Professional Development Plan will become "options" to implement, because a structure won't exist to accomplish the goals of the plan. Professional development has a direct impact on student achievement.

Ms. Toellner then shared the proposed schedule for Professional Development Days for the 2009-10 school year. She indicated that the Professional Development Committee came to consensus on the proposed schedule, and therefore the

contract would not need to be opened to negotiate the calendar. The one year proposal would allow for future calendars to be negotiated when negotiations begin later this spring and summer with the WREA.

The Professional Development Committee is recommending four Professional Development Days with equal time devoted to the following: Building Activities, District Department and Grade Level Meetings, Collaboration and Assessment and Planning. The number of days for elementary and secondary staff are equal under this proposal. Also, the compensatory time for elementary teachers for portfolio conferences is now moved to the afternoon of the last day with students.

The evaluation plan, proposed schedule, and revised days and hours of instruction worksheets must all be submitted to the DPI in March. Prior to submission of the paperwork, the Board must schedule a meeting to allow the public to comment on the plan for Professional Development Days.

Discussion occurred regarding the scheduling of the time for public comment. It was agreed that final approval of the proposed plan should take place at the regular February Board of Education meeting, with public comment taking place the week prior.

Ms. Toellner also indicated that the Professional Development Committee discussed ways to better inform the public of the value of the Professional Development Days. Ideas that surfaced included information in building newsletters, a District quarterly newsletter and periodic information posted on the District website.

C. Lincoln High School Grading Proposal

Ryan Christianson, principal of Lincoln High School (LHS), and Rod Henke, associate principal of LHS, were present to discuss changing from a traditional 9-week grading schedule to a 6-week/12-week/18-week schedule. Mr. Christianson indicated that there are three categories being reviewed: schedule, practices, and configuration.

For the past three years, the high school has been piloting a trimester system, which consists of 6-week and 12-week progress reports and an 18-week transcribed report card.

Mr. Christianson explained that the parent/teacher conference has been scheduled to coincide with the 6-week progress report. Parents can pick up the progress report at the time of conference or it is mailed to them. Mr. Christianson explained that with the 6-week/12-week/18-week process there is better communication with parents. In addition, intervention with students can be initiated earlier.

Mr. Christianson explained that there are many options on how to grade within the Skyward software. The need for consistency and standardization related to grading among teachers in the same departments has been discussed. Although some teachers have questions, most endorse the changes in the schedule and standardizing of grading practices.

Mr. Henke explained that using the 6-week/12-week/18-week schedule is becoming the trend among schools in the area. The schedule is changing the role of teachers, giving students the opportunity to better their grades. This creates a cooperative partnership between teachers and parents.

Mr. Christianson indicated that a recommendation for Board approval of the grading schedule will be made in February.

D. Activities Code Review

Ryan Christianson, principal of Lincoln High School, indicated that it has been approximately 10 years since the last update of the Wisconsin Rapids Public Schools Activities Code. He explained that there is a need to review the appeal process when there are violations to activity codes and that the proposed grading schedule change would also affect the activity code guidelines. Some topics that need to be discussed include: eligibility guidelines for athletics and any school activity; what the expectations should be; and how the guidelines should reflect the changes in our society, such as the use of technology and prescription drug abuse. Part of the process will involve researching other District guidelines.

Mr. Christianson told Committee members that a public forum will be held at Lincoln High School on January 19 from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. At this forum a committee will be organized to include community members, athletes, coaches, parents, teachers and administrators. A notice will be placed on the District website.

Mr. Christianson plans to have a first reading of recommended changes presented to the Board of Education in June or July of 2009.

VI. Consent Agenda Items

ES-1 Policy #445 – Relations with Law Enforcement Agencies and Policy #445-Rule – Procedures for Conducting Student-Law Enforcement Interviews on School Premises

ES-2 Policy #345.4 – Promotion/Retention

VII. Future Agenda Items/Information Requests

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

Future agenda items include, but are not limited to:

- LHS Grading Proposal (February)
- Acceptable Use Policy (February)
- Multiple Assessment Measures (March)
- Technology Plan (February and March)
- Reading First Grant Report

- Grade 3 and 6 Exit Survey
- Social Studies Curriculum Update
- Advanced Placement Report

Meeting adjourned at 8:22 p.m.