



**WISCONSIN RAPIDS
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING MINUTES

John A. Krings, President
John Benbow, Jr.
Troy Bier
Larry Davis
Sandra K. Hett
Katie Medina
Mary Rayome

November 8, 2021

REGULAR BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

LOCATION: East Jr. High School, 311 Lincoln Street, Wisc. Rapids, WI 54494
Cafeteria

TIME: 6:00 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: John Benbow, Troy Bier, Larry Davis, Sandra Hett, John Krings, Katie Medina,
Mary Rayome

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT: Craig Broeren, Aaron Nelson, Steve Hepp, Brian Oswald, Phil Bickelhaupt

President John Krings called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call

Public Comment

The following individuals made public comment:

Mike Derrie – is a resident commenting on the Continuity of Services Plan. Mr. Derrie posed several questions concerning the plan and the sources relied upon to ascertain the effectiveness of practices implemented through the plan, and whether other sources are considered and if not, why not.

Juan Medina – is a resident commenting on ESSER III funding. Mr. Medina suggested an idea to have a portion of the funding be used to set up a 3D printing lab to assist in training students in careers focused in manufacturing, and to consider exploring ways to educate in the growing area of renewable energy and potential job opportunities in this field.

Lynn Derrie – is a resident commenting on First Amendment freedom of speech in relation to public debate, and expressed her resentment with the Board’s opening statement regarding public comment, and frustration with the Board having no regard for the public’s input all summer long which she says is evident by their decision making.

Ranee Graf – is a resident expressing her dismay at the recent Miss Wisconsin Rapids Area Pageant requiring children dancing and involved in the performance having to be masked, while the contestants were not required to. She states she has also seen Board members outside the Board room without masks which she believes doesn’t support their message of them being “safety first.” Lastly, she believes the District is violating the law and individual Constitutional rights by causing individuals to wear masks against their will and consent, and requiring masks without having a license to practice medicine.

Student Representative Report

Madelyn Hepp provided an update on:

- Fall sports are wrapped up with the football and boys soccer team making it to round 2 playoffs
- WRPS recently hosted the state cross country meet with three Lincoln High School girls competing
- Conference and sectional swim meets were hosted at Lincoln recently
- Through fall sports, a multitude of conference athletes have achieved numerous honors ranging from honorable mentions to unanimous first teams
- DECA hosted their annual “Trick-or-Can” event at Halloween to gather nonperishable goods to donate to the SWEPS food pantry
- HOSA hosted “Trick-or-Coin” to collect loose coins which they donated to charity
- An exploration of careers by all students at Lincoln was made possible through the annual “Career Day” event
- Student Council is hosting a food drive in the coming week
- Trimester 1 concludes soon, and students are preparing for final exams and finishing large homework assignments

Approval of Minutes

Motion by Mary Rayome, seconded by John Benbow to approve special closed session Board of Education meeting minutes of September 29, 2021; regular meeting minutes of October 11, 2021; special open/closed session meeting minutes of October 11, 2021; special closed session minutes of October 19, 2021; special meeting minutes of October 25, 2021; and special closed session meeting minutes of November 2, 2021. Motion carried unanimously.

Committee Reports

A. Educational Services Committee – November 1, 2021. Report given by Mary Rayome.

Ms. Rayome reviewed the following consent agenda items brought before the Board through the Educational Services Committee, and asked if there were any motions to be held:

- ES-1 Approval of 25 applications to participate in the 16 requested courses at Mid-State Technical College through the Start College Now (SCN) program in the spring of the 2021-2022 school year.
- ES-2 Approval of the course Applied Math in the Trades for a .5 mathematics credit at Lincoln High School for grades 11 and 12 to begin with the 2022-2023 school year.
- ES-3 Approval of the course Bloodstone Layout Editor for a .5 Elective credit at Lincoln High School for grades 10–12 to begin with the 2022-2023 school year.
- ES-4 Approval of the course Modern World History for a .5 social studies credit at Lincoln High School for grades 11 and 12 to begin with the 2022-2023 school year.
- ES-5 Approval of the course Criminal Justice for a .5 social studies credit at Lincoln High School for grades 11 and 12 to begin with the 2022-2023 school year.
- ES-6 Approval of the course Environmental Lit. in the Outdoors for a .5 English credit and a .5 physical education credit at Lincoln High School for grade 11 students to begin with the 2022-2023 school year.

Ms. Rayome requested that consent agenda item ES-6 be held out.

Motion by Mary Rayome, seconded by Larry Davis to approve consent agenda items ES 1-5. Motion carried unanimously.

With regard to consent agenda item ES-5, Ms. Rayome was informed that the original background information was not correct, and that the Environmental Lit. in the Outdoors course will actually be offered to both grades 11 and 12. As such, a new motion is requested to include to include this change.

Motion by Mary Rayome, seconded by Larry Davis to approve of the course Environmental Lit. in the Outdoors for a .5 English credit and a .5 physical education credit at Lincoln High School for grades 11 and 12 students to begin with the 2022-2023 school year. Motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Rayome provided updates and reports on:

- The Committee heard a report from Roxanne Filtz, Director of Curriculum & Instruction on 2020-21 Wisconsin State Assessment System (WSAS) Forward and DLM Exam results. She explained that in the 2019-20 school year the exams were not administered as they were waived by the State due to the COVID-19 shutdown. While the state of Wisconsin requested another waiver for 2020-21, the federal government did not approve it. Data results represent a snapshot in time and are only one of many pieces of information that are utilized when determining how well District students are doing. Potential reasons for lower performance in this round of testing was explained. Assessment data continues to be analyzed internally with a focus on improvement and closing the achievement gap. School and District Report cards will be released soon and provide a more comprehensive measurement of data tied to student achievement and affiliated gaps, attendance/absenteeism, and post-secondary readiness and graduation rates. The Board will be apprised of the District and School Report Card results in December, after the embargo on data has been lifted.
- Ms. Filtz provided an overview of expenditures made using Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Education Relief II (ESSER II) Funds which were released to the District in March, 2021. As required, the dollars have been spent to take comprehensive action to mitigate learning loss and

restore high quality learning environments in our schools. The funds have been instrumental in providing tangible items such as textbooks, workbooks, software, outdoor classroom supplies, student desks, tables, materials to build testing rooms, carts, cupboards, water bottles, water bottle fillers, student and staff masks, cleaning supplies, desk shields and partitions, technology equipment and social/emotional learning materials. Services tied to staff member virtual conference registrations and professional development opportunities were also purchased in order to help teachers learn how to navigate teaching in a virtual environment. Additionally, to ensure that all students had equal opportunity to learn, the District purchased internet access, Kajeet portable Wi-Fi hotspots, and technology devices for families to use. Lastly, expenses tied to personnel in the form of additional professional staff time and substitutes, along with telehealth software services to help address mental health needs of students, were all covered using ESSER II dollars. The end goal in using ESSER II funds has been to provide the best service and safest learning environment possible for students under the difficult circumstances caused by the pandemic. ESSER III funding is the next round of dollars available to the District which will be utilized to address any learning loss and continue getting students back to where they need to be academically, socially, and emotionally. The Board will learn more about this round of funding in the coming months.

Motion by Mary Rayome, seconded by Troy Bier to approve the balance of the Educational Services Committee report and minutes of the November 1, 2021 Educational Services Committee meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

B. Business Services Committee – November 1, 2021. Report given by John Benbow.

Mr. Benbow reviewed the following consent agenda items brought before the Board through the Business Services Committee, and asked if there were any motions to be held:

- BS-1 Approval to fund the current year quadplex/stadium budget shortfall in the amount of \$155,000.00 from the District's general fund budget and deposit future project contributions into the turf replacement sustaining fund.
- BS-2 Approval to accept the bid from DC Steinle to build a 30' x 48' post frame storage building at Lincoln High School, at a cost of \$43,640.00 to be funded from the Capital Project Referendum budget.
- BS-3 Approval to contract with American Asphalt at a cost of \$23,985.00, and Bohn Trucking at a cost of \$8,590.58, to create an 11' paved path from 32nd Street to the soccer garage at Washington field and an 8' paved path from the soccer garage to the Washington playground for a total project cost of \$32,576.58. \$30,000.00 of the project cost to be funded from Fund 46 and \$2,576.58 to be funded from the Buildings and Grounds budget.
- BS-4 Approval to revise the District's Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB) Trust Investment Guide. The first revision would indicate the Investment Manager will notify the District Director of Business Services of major asset shifts. The Director of Business Services will then update the Business Services Committee. The second revision would change the annual performance review to after the fourth quarter of each calendar year.

Motion by John Benbow, seconded by Troy Bier to approve consent agenda items BS 1-4. Motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.

- Mr. Benbow provided updates and reports on various invoices, bid specs, and purchase orders.

Motion by John Benbow, seconded by Troy Bier to approve the balance of the Business Services Committee report and minutes of the November 1, 2021 Business Services Committee meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

C. Personnel Services Committee – November 1, 2021. Report given by Sandra Hett.

Ms. Hett reviewed the following consent agenda items brought before the Board through the Personnel Services Committee, and asked if there were any motions to be held:

- PS-1 Approval of the support staff appointments of Anthony Quinnell (Custodian – River Cities), Shana McNaughton (Aide – Lincoln High School), McKenzie Kruk (Noon Duty Aide – Woodside), Cynthia Fellowes (Cashier – WRAMS), Kate McAllister (Noon Duty Aide – Grove), Emily Smith (Special Ed Aide – Mead), Justin Zimmerman (Van Driver – District), Holly Ihrcke (Noon Duty Aide – Howe), Tina Midthun (Special Ed Aide – Mead), Carol Rogers (Special Ed Aide – Woodside).

- PS-2 Approval of the professional staff resignation of Travis Sprague (Teacher – Lincoln).
- PS-3 Approval of the support staff resignation of Robin Newman (Van Driver – District).
- PS-4 Approval of the support staff retirements of Debra Christensen (Special Ed EC Aide – Pitsch), Cindy O’Loughlin (Second Cook – Howe), Patricia McCarthy (Kitchen Manager Production – Mead), and Helen Henke (Second Cook – Lincoln).
- PS-5 Approval of substitute teacher bonus pay as follows: \$300 bonus after 30 assignments, \$550 bonus after 50 assignments, \$900 bonus after 75 assignments, \$1500 bonus after 100 assignments, and \$2540 bonus after 127 assignments and free lunch on Mondays and Friday for substitute teachers, effective November 12, 2021 for the 2021-2022 school year.

Motion by Sandra Hett, seconded by Mary Rayome to approve consent agenda items PS 1-5. Motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Hett provided updates and reports on:

- Open enrollment data for the 2021-2022 school year. 290 students have open enrolled into WRPS, with 342 open enrolling out.

Motion by Sandra Hett, seconded by Larry Davis to approve the balance of the Personnel Services Committee report and minutes of the regular November 1, 2021 Personnel Services Committee meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Agenda Referrals/Information Requests

- Sandra Hett requested clarified information on the LHS video scoreboard donation report.
- Katie Medina requested information on expulsion outcomes.

Legislative Agenda

Troy Bier shared the following information:

- The Senate Committee on Education and the Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety are holding public hearings on Thursday, October 14, 2021 on bills related to K-12 education as follows:
 - Senate Bill 585 – reporting certain crimes and other incidents that occur on school property or school transportation and granting rule-making authority
 - Senate Bill 423 – payments to an independent charter school authorized by a tribal college
 - Assembly Bill 420 – payments to an independent charter school authorized by a tribal college
 - Senate Bill 555 – required subjects in a human growth and development instructional program
 - Senate Bill 587 – state aid payments for pupils in grades kindergarten to 12 who transfer schools due to the existence or absence of mandates regarding pupil face coverings or COVID-19 vaccines; school district membership in an interscholastic athletic association in the 2020-21 school year; and making an appropriation
 - Senate Bill 608 – the prior year pupil attendance requirement to participate in the Racine Parental Choice Program or the statewide parental choice program and allowing a pupil who changes residence to transfer from the Racine Parental Choice Program or Milwaukee Parental Choice Program to the statewide parental choice program
 - Senate Bill 567 – requiring school boards to report information regarding credit recovery courses.
 - Assembly Bill 561 – requiring school boards to report information regarding credit recovery courses.
 - Senate Bill 589 – concerning the Foundations of Reading test licensure requirement
- Governor Evers took action on several K-12 bills passed by the legislature:
 - Signed into Law:
 - Senate Bill 373 – requires the DPI to create an online portal, available beginning in the 2023-24 school year, that displays financial data collected from all school districts, county children with disabilities education boards, and independent charter schools and creates an 11-person advisory committee to develop and report a set of recommendations to the department by February 1, 2023.
 - Senate Bill 555 – adds required content to school district curriculum on human growth and development regarding the Safe Haven Law
 - Assembly Bill 220 – requires schools to annually provide information to parents on youth apprenticeship
 - Vetoed:
 - Senate Bill 454 – would have been a massive overhaul of the reading readiness program and include new state mandates relating to screening, assessments, interventions, parental notifications and reporting requirements with no additional resources to help schools implement the mandate

- Mr. Bier made mention of an upcoming webinar on Friday, November 12, 2021 involving Marquette Professor of Law and Public Policy Charles Franklin who will examine the latest Marquette Law School Poll findings relative to educational topics.
- Mr. Bier reported on his attendance and the topics discussed at a recent local Legislative Breakfast hosted by the Heart of Wisconsin Chamber of Commerce.

Bills

Motion by Mary Rayome, seconded by John Benbow to note October, 2021 receipts in the amount of \$3,354,200.35 and approve October, 2021 disbursements of \$6,268,358.08. Motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.

New Business

Employee Appointments, Resignations, and Retirement Requests

None.

District Referendum Construction

Superintendent Broeren provided an update on the progress of District referendum projects, noting that there isn't too much new information other than the fact that bid openings are underway and it appears that the LHS project may come in around \$325,000 under what was anticipated for steel and roofing materials. Current economic supply chain issues are making it difficult to obtain certain materials, such as steel. Bids are being broken up as architectural drawings get finalized, and it is anticipated that bids will be coming in on a bi-weekly basis.

Employee Health Insurance Plan Modifications and Health Savings Account Contributions

Mr. Broeren explained that the current District health insurance plan renewal rate from Security Health came in at an 8.8% increase. The administration worked with insurance broker M3 to solicit bids to keep costs down. Mr. Broeren shared the following information:

- The current plan with Security Health includes a narrow network plan involving Marshfield Clinic, or a broad network option
- The broad network option could have been changed from a Point of Service plan to a Health Maintenance Organization (HMO) plan to secure a more moderate increase of around 5% – this change would have impacted one retiree currently living outside the state
- One insurance provider, Aspirus Health Plan, submitted a bid for consideration which included a narrow network option through Aspirus as well as a broad network option covering other facilities such as Mayo and Marshfield Clinic – the overall cost increase is dependent upon which option employees choose in terms of narrow or broad network coverage, and there could actually be a decrease in cost if enough choose the narrow network option
- Both Aspirus plans are comprehensive in coverage in terms of emergency room care
- There is a minor exception to the Mayo coverage in the Aspirus proposal which does not include the Eau Claire location (Rochester location is covered) – employees needing this particular coverage would likely want to select the broad coverage option
- Currently 60-70% of WRPS staff utilize care within the Aspirus network – it is plausible that since the majority of employees access their care in this network, they would choose an Aspirus narrow network option if it were offered, particularly if there were savings to be had
- Only 25 current employee policies access the narrow network Security Health Plan Marshfield Clinic option

After hosting a virtual meeting with staff members to provide information concerning health insurance options being considered, Mr. Broeren followed up with a survey for staff members to indicate preferences around the options. With 211 respondents participating, the survey indicated that 57.9% would be very likely or likely to select the Aspirus narrow network option to save themselves approximately \$339 annually on a single plan, or \$758 on a family plan. Respondents were also in favor (83.4%) of moving to a new plan effective January 1, 2022 in order to take full advantage of any savings rather than waiting to switch on June 30, 2022.

The administration recommends approval of a change to the Aspirus Health Plan effective January 1, 2022, and to continue the current District contribution levels of \$1,500 for single and \$3,000 toward employee Health Savings Accounts. If approved, the open enrollment period will transpire within the next few weeks to ensure employees are switched over to the new plan in time for a January 1st effective date. The Board had an opportunity to ask questions concerning the recommendation.

Motion by John Benbow, seconded by Larry Davis to approve of the proposed change to employee health insurance coverage from Security Health Plan to Aspirus Health Plan effective January 1, 2022; and to continue the employer contribution to eligible District employee Health Savings Accounts (HSA) in an amount of \$1,500.00 for employees carrying a single plan, and \$3,000.00 for employees carrying a family plan. Motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.

WRPS Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan

Mr. Broeren explained that a WRPS Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan has been developed as one of the requirements to apply for and receive the next round of federal ESSER III funding. Once approved by the Board, the plan will be posted to the District website which is also a requirement. Many school districts who were not open for in-person instruction during the 2020-21 school year will have had much more to do to create their return plans; however, since WRPS developed a return plan during the summer of 2020 and began the 2020-21 school year under various modes of instruction, a great deal of the plan has essentially been written throughout the course of the past 18 months. Public input regarding the plan has been received in many different ways and from numerous stakeholders throughout the course of the pandemic. Changes for a continued safe return to school that have been implemented from the 2020-21 school year to 2021-22 are reflected in the plan. Mr. Broeren reviewed each section of the plan which includes: Maintaining Health and Safety; Mitigation Measures; Continuity of Services; Periodic Review; and Public Input.

The Board discussed the plan, and requested that page 6 of the plan reflect that COVID-19 vaccination offerings were made for eligible *staff* members, removing the word “students” from this section.

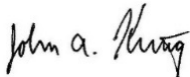
Mr. Broeren stated that a periodic review of the plan will occur in accordance with the timeline outlined in the plan. Additional information relative to the ESSER III grant fund process will also be shared with the Board as the process unfolds.

Motion by John Benbow, seconded by Larry Davis to approve of the WRPS Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan as presented with noted revisions. Motion carried unanimously.

Calendar

Calendar items were reviewed.

President Krings adjourned the meeting at 7:12 p.m.



John A. Krings – President

Maurine Hodgson – Secretary

Larry Davis – Clerk