



**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
Julie Timm

October 10, 2022

REGULAR BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

LOCATION: District Board Office, 510 Peach Street, Wisc. Rapids, WI 54494
Conf Rm A/B

TIME: 6:00 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Troy Bier, Larry Davis, Sandra Hett, John Krings, Katie Medina, Julie Timm

BOARD MEMBERS EXCUSED: John Benbow

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT: Craig Broeren, Roxanne Filtz, Steve Hepp, Aaron Nelson, Brian Oswald, Elizabeth VanBerkel, Jennifer Wilhorn

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

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call

Public Comment

None.

Student Representative Report

Sarah Panzer reviewed the successful Homecoming activities that occurred with high student participation; spoke on the fall sports activities wrapping up; encouraged attendance in the upcoming Comedy Improv show being put on by students in the Performing Arts Center on October 21-22, 2022; and expressed excitement around the upcoming State Cross Country meet to be held at the Ridges Golf Course on October 29, 2022.

School Showcase – Pitsch Early Learning Center

Staff members Jennifer Wilhorn, Denise Martell, Teri Thomas, Jamie Jestadt, and Tracy Weiss shared their “Panda Pride” along with the mission and vision developed for the Pitsch Early Learning Center. Details were provided on how the improved learning spaces at Pitsch are providing excellent opportunities for students to learn, grow, and meet the unique needs of all. Areas of focus in the presentation included the gymnasium, family room, library and playground. The recently Board approved playground upgrade will provide greater accessibility for students with disabilities and appropriate sized equipment for the District’s youngest learners. The Board thanked the Pitsch staff for their informative presentation.

Approval of Minutes

Motion by Troy Bier, seconded by Larry Davis to approve regular Board of Education meeting minutes of September 12, 2022 and special closed session Board of Education meeting minutes of September 12, 2022 and September 26, 2022. Motion carried unanimously.

Committee Reports

A. Educational Services Committee – October 3, 2022. Report given by Katie Medina.

Ms. Medina 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 the modifications in language to Board Policy 332.1 – Exhibit 1 – Process Guidelines for Requesting New Courses Form, and Board Policy 332.2 – Exhibit 2 – Process Guidelines for Pilot Programs or Curriculum Modifications Form, both for first reading.

Committee Reports (continued)

- ES-2 Approval of the purchase of Gaggle Therapy at a cost of \$55,000.00 as proposed, to be funded through ESSER III dollars.
- ES-3 Approval of the purchase of therapy sessions from When Life's a Puzzle Counseling and Consulting not to exceed \$20,000.00, to be funded through ESSER III dollars.
- ES-4 Approval of the purchase of Families and Schools Together for Pitsch Early Learning Center and Washington Elementary School at a cost of \$14,000.00 to be funded through the Mental Health Grant.
- ES-5 Approval of a one-year license renewal of ExploreLearning Reflex and Frax software programs for grades 2-8 in all seven elementary buildings, as well as WRAMS, for a total cost of \$25,304.41 to be paid for through the District curriculum budget.

Motion by Katie Medina, seconded by Troy Bier to approve consent agenda items ES 1-5. Motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Medina provided updates and reports on:

- The Committee was provided an update on new course/curriculum modifications and proposals being considered for approval at the November, 2022 meeting after the Council for Instructional Improvement (CII) has had an opportunity to review them and cast an advisory vote. Details and final recommendations will be shared with the Educational Services Committee in November.
- Wisconsin Student Assessment System (WSAS) results for the 2021-22 school year which were released from embargo by the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) on September 29, 2022 were shared by Ms. Filtz. Specific test results include the Wisconsin Forward Exam, ACT Aspire, ACT with Writing, and Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM). Overall results indicate that WRPS is falling behind academically at several grade levels when compared to surrounding districts and the State. There are numerous potential factors involved which the administrative team and staff members believe may be contributing to the decline in scores including: circumstances surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic, shifting student demographics, family engagement, student apathy and lack of attendance, teaching strategies, district and building level leadership, curriculum resources, professional development deficits, and testing logistics and timing. Ms. Filtz stated that there is no one single reason for lower test scores, and there is not one single solution to address the scores. School district leaders and staff members acknowledge there is work to be done to make improvement in academic outcomes, and will be analyzing every area possible that may be impeding progress.

Swift action has already begun to immediately implement initiatives that the administration believes will improve outcomes. An action plan has been developed to refine the data driven decision making process through better utilization of Professional Learning Community (PLC) time by taking deeper dives into analyzing data and working collaboratively to improve teaching and learning. WSAS results will be triangulated with other data collected including district screeners in reading and math, absentee and truancy rates, discipline data, behavioral data, and other pieces of information that will help identify deficit areas.

Ms. Filtz reviewed a number of supports that have been implemented for the 2022-23 school year including reducing class sizes; increasing pupil services staff to lend assistance and support to students, teachers, and families; implementation of the "Move This World" curriculum in elementary classrooms to help regulate students and support their social and emotional needs; piloting of two similar social emotional programs at the middle school for eventual adoption and implementation; increased reading and math interventionist staffing at all levels; enhanced dyslexic programming through additional staff training; targeted special education and ELL curriculum resources purchased to support reading instruction; continued implementation of the new math program at grades 4K-5; implementation of a new data warehousing system to provide teachers with real time data on individual students to detect and address identified deficits immediately; and numerous new initiatives at the middle school to improve school climate and culture, offer alternative programming for students struggling in the traditional classroom setting, using the Block schedule in unique ways to infuse intervention into math and English classes on a daily basis, and increase family engagement.

WRPS staff and administration acknowledge the work that needs to be done to improve WSAS scores. Entering the 2022-23 school year, Ms. Filtz described a more positive and energetic vibe by staff with an overall “can do” attitude compared to the prior two years. The administration is confident that the action plan developed to make strides toward improvement will translate to greater student success in the future.

Motion by Katie Medina, seconded by Larry Davis to approve the balance of the Educational Services Committee report and minutes of the October 3, 2022 Educational Services Committee meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

B. Business Services Committee – October 3, 2022. Report given by Katie Medina.

Ms. Medina 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 of purchase new cafeteria tables for Grove Elementary from School Specialty for a total cost of \$32,346.85. The Food Service budget will fund \$30,000.00 and the balance will be funded from the Buildings and Grounds budget.
- BS-2 Approval to purchase new accessible playground equipment from Minnesota Wisconsin Playground for Pitsch Early Learning Center for a total cost of \$239,054.00. The 4-K budget will fund \$211,128.00, ESSER III funds will pay for \$5,450.00 and the Preschool Special Education budget will fund the balance amount of \$22,476.00.
- BS-3 Approval to enter into a 66.03.01 Cooperative Agreement with the Port Edwards School District for two students attending the Project Search program.

Ms. Hett requested to have consent agenda item BS-2 held out.

Motion by Katie Medina, seconded by Troy Bier to approve consent agenda items BS-1 and BS-3. Motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.

With regard to consent agenda item BS-2, Ms. Hett requested clarification on where the funds for the Pitsch playground equipment purchase are coming from. Mr. Nelson explained that the administration budgeted the amount into the 2022-23 District budget last spring when the need was identified and discussed.

Motion by Katie Medina, seconded by Troy Bier to approve consent agenda item BS-2. Motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote

Ms. Medina provided updates and reports on:

- Invoices, bid specs, and purchases

Motion by Katie Medina, seconded by Larry Davis to approve the balance of the Business Services Committee report and minutes of the October 3, 2022 Business Services Committee meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

C. Personnel Services Committee – October 3, 2022. 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 Heather Neukirchen (Noon Duty Aide – Washington), Susan Lloyd (Instructional Aide – Mead), Patsy Bretl (Noon Duty Aide – Woodside), Dawn Wayerski (Frontline Coordinator/Admin Asst to HR – District), David Wittenberg (Special Ed Aide – WRAMS), Peter Johnson (Van Driver – District), and Kelly Deitz (Special Ed Aide – Washington).
- PS-2 Approval of the professional staff resignation of Hannah Laffin (Teacher – Washington/THINK).
- PS-3 Approval of the support staff resignations of Justice Kuhn (Special Ed Aide – Washington), Andrea Galvan (ELL Aide – Lincoln), Tina Soderberg (Kitchen Helper/FFVP – Grove), and Justin Zimmerman (Van Driver – District).
- PS-4 Approval of the professional staff retirement of Julie Fox (Teacher – WRAMS).
- PS-5 Approval of the support staff retirement of Karen Hiti (Special Ed Aide – Lincoln).

- PS-6 Approval of a \$2,000 stipend for Miranda Moody for the supervision of the Title VI program for the 2022-23 school year.
- PS-7 Approval of the Live Stream advisor co-curricular assignment pay percentage from 5% to 7% for the fall and spring seasons.

Motion by Sandra Hett, seconded by Troy Bier to approve consent agenda items PS 1-7. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Sandra Hett, seconded by Troy Bier to approve the balance of the Personnel Services Committee report and minutes of the regular October 3, 2022 Personnel Services Committee meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Agenda Referrals/Information Requests

Ms. Hett requested information concerning the number of open records requests received by the District in the past year as well as the amount of time and resources being utilized to respond to them.

Legislative Agenda

Troy Bier shared the following information:

- Mr. Bier encouraged individuals to become informed voters leading up to the mid-term elections on November 8, 2022 by learning more through resources such as the MyVoteWI.gov website and by viewing candidate debates through Wisconsin Eye.

Bills

Motion by Troy Bier, seconded by Katie Medina to note September, 2022 receipts in the amount of \$6,443,636.09 and approve September, 2022 disbursements in the amount of \$8,782,695.44. Motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.

New Business

Employee Appointments, Resignations, and Retirement Requests

None.

2023 Friend of Education Award

Superintendent Broeren spoke with President Krings and Vice President Bier concerning a recommendation for Legacy Foundation of Central Wisconsin to be presented with the 2023 Friend of Education award for their significant contributions toward enhancing opportunities for students and the community through grant funding and support provided for numerous projects. If selected, the award would be presented at an upcoming holiday concert to be held in the Performing Arts Center on Sunday, December 18, 2022 at 4:00 p.m. The Board fully supports the recommendation.

Motion by Katie Medina, seconded by Troy Bier to approve of presenting the 2023 Friend of Education award to Legacy Foundation of Central Wisconsin. Motion carried unanimously.

District Bus Transportation Contract Extensions

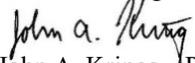
Mr. Broeren explained that the Business Services Committee recently met with Safe-Way Bus Transit and Lamers Bus representatives to negotiate an extension to the current bus contracts which are set to expire in June, 2024. The carriers received no increase in their contracts for the 2021-22 year, and the parties came to an agreement to increase rates by 7% retroactive to July 1, 2022 as well as extend the contracts by one year through 2024-25. A number of topics were discussed with the carriers during negotiations, including the potential for a Request for Proposal (RFP) process to take place in the future should it be plausible. Current market conditions and the existing driver shortage are not conducive to exploring this option at the present time. Given the shortage of drivers, the District will work with the carriers to advertise bus driving opportunities that parents, coaches, or other staff members might have an interest in filling should it work out given their schedule. Mr. Broeren and Mr. Krings expressed appreciation to the carriers for their efforts in the recent route optimization project which reduced routes yet offered more riding opportunities for students.

Motion by Katie Medina, seconded by Julie Timm to approve of a contract extension for Lamers Bus and Safe-Way Bus through the 2024-25 fiscal year, and a 7% rate increase retroactive to July 1, 2022. Motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.

Calendar

Calendar items were reviewed.

President Krings adjourned the meeting at 7:00 p.m.


John A. Krings – President

Maurine Hodgson – Secretary

Larry Davis – Clerk