



**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

February 13, 2023

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: John Benbow, Troy Bier, Larry Davis, Sandra Hett, John Krings, Katie Medina, Julie Timm

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT: Ed Allison, Craig Broeren, Steve Hepp, Tina Miller, Aaron Nelson, Brian Oswald, Jennifer Wilhorn

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

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call

Public Comment

Ranee Graf commented on the topic of accountability and her perception of a lack of accountability in the District in areas concerning falling test scores; Board policies in need of revisions and updates given their age; lack of a Board policy for online learning occurring on inclement weather days; lack of a list of the District's core values; and a strategic plan that is missing a vision, mission, and measurable goals tied to a timeline.

Student Representative Report

Sarah Panzer reported on:

- Students are enjoying the new English classrooms at Lincoln which opened up for use two weeks ago, and the coffee shop and library are opening up as well
- The Forensics team has an upcoming competition
- The LHS Junior class will be taking the ACT on March 7, 2023
- Trimester 2 ends on March 2, 2023

School Showcase – Howe Elementary

Howe Elementary Principal Tina Miller was joined by staff members Leslie Anderson, Katie Saylor, Melissa Miller, and student Madilyn Stultz to present on the positive programming and partnerships occurring at Howe Elementary. Community support from organizations and individuals such as Boys & Girls Club, First English Lutheran Church, Crossview Church, Eagle Scouts, the Howe PTC, Life is a Puzzle Counseling, Mead Witter Foundation, Connexus, Ruby's Pantry, the Tritz family with donations, Women United to support literacy, and countless volunteers are all critical to the school in helping to meet student needs. Initiatives at Howe promote a love of literacy and joy in reading. The Howe presentation ended with an emphasis on working together to do great things, and a recitation of their motto of "One School, One Voice, Howe Family." The Board expressed their appreciation for the insightful presentation showcasing the great variety of activities happening at Howe to help students be successful.

Approval of Minutes

Motion by Troy Bier, seconded by Julie Timm to approve regular Board of Education meeting minutes of January 9, 2023, and two closed session special Board of Education meeting minutes of January 5, 2023. Motion carried unanimously.

Committee Reports

A. Educational Services Committee – February 6, 2023. Report given by John Krings.

Mr. Krings 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 2023-24 Wisconsin Rapids Public Schools Strategic Plan.

Motion by John Krings, seconded by Troy Bier to approve consent agenda item ES-1. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Krings provided updates and reports on:

- Ms. Filtz reviewed the mid-year Achievement Gap Reduction (AGR) report. Information concerning each schools' implementation of AGR contract requirements, performance objectives, and success in attaining the objectives was shared. While the report is mid-year, it is helpful to understand that the data involved to create the report for reading comes from the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) assessment that was administered to students in late September and early October making it more of a comparison to the beginning of the year, rather than mid-year. The PALS screener will be phased out after this year since the company was purchased by another entity who doesn't intend to continue with the product. Jen Wilhorn, Assistant Director of Curriculum, is working with a committee to evaluate another solution to fill this screening need. Math results for grades K-1 are based upon District screeners developed by the Math leadership committee. Beginning in grade 2, students complete the Renaissance Star Math assessment. The Committee considered how changing screening tools may impact the ability to accurately assess student progress since comparisons to historical information will be based off of different testing content/materials. Ms. Filtz made mention that this mirrors the difficulty with using State exams as an accurate basis of comparison to measure student success when the tests continually change. An end-of-year AGR Report will be brought to the Board at some point during the summer, after the school year has concluded.
- Ms. Filtz reviewed a student trip being planned by Jeanine Kleman, Lincoln High School Art teacher, to occur in June, 2023. Students and chaperones will travel to Germany, Prague, and Switzerland with the possibility of adding on Paris. Length of the trip and costs for students was explained.
- Ms. Filtz presented information concerning the implementation of Remote Learning Days on occasions when school buildings are closed due to inclement weather. District academic calendars are developed with extra hours of instruction built into the year for potential instances of emergency school cancellation due to weather or other events. For the 2022-23 academic year the District has exceeded these reserved hours. Since much has been learned about how to deliver instruction remotely as a result of the pandemic, this is the first year of officially delivering instruction remotely on inclement weather days. The ability to implement Remote Learning Days will prevent families from being inconvenienced by an extended school year. Ms. Filtz inquired with other school districts throughout the state to determine if they had implemented remote learning policies to date. She discovered that this is an emerging alternative for districts, and policy development is in its early stages for them as well. The administration intends to bring recommended policy language to the Board for consideration and approval in spring, 2023.

Ms. Filtz explained that building administrators have developed remote learning expectations for staff members and students at each respective school. Differences between the elementary and secondary level approach were discussed by the Committee. A suggestion was made to include Remote Learning Days information for families during the welcome back and open house orientations/events that occur in August. The Committee expressed appreciation to Ms. Filtz for the work involved in developing the report, and applauded the efforts by building staff to implement Remote Learning Days that are tied to expectations and accountability while continuing to offer new learning and instruction for students on these days.

Motion by John Krings, seconded by Larry Davis to approve the balance of the Educational Services Committee report and minutes of the February 6, 2023 Educational Services Committee meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

B. Business Services Committee – February 6, 2023. 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 of the lease agreement with CESA 5 for use of the Vesper Community Academy Facility for the 2023-24 school year, at an amount of \$25,000.00.

BS-2 Approval of the proposals from Nassco in the amount of \$17,705.43 and Hillyard in the amount of \$8,658.39.

BS-3 Approval of entering into a new 5-year contract for School Resource Officer (SRO) services with the City of Wisconsin Rapids Police Department from 2023-2028.

BS-4 Approval of the purchase of 200 HP Chromebooks from PDS at a total cost of \$51,100.00 to be funded from the 2022-2023 WRPS Common School Fund Budget.

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

Mr. Benbow provided updates and reports on invoices, bid specs, and purchases made.

Motion by John Benbow, seconded by Larry Davis to approve the balance of the Business Services Committee report and minutes of the February 6, 2023 Business Services Committee meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

C. Personnel Services Committee – February 6, 2023. 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 Dawn Koch (Noon Duty Aide – Grove), Jodi Miner (Noon Duty Aide – Howe), and Kristin Weidman (Special Ed Aide – WRAMS).

PS-2 Approval of the non-represented support staff appointment of Ashley Larsen (Payroll Specialist - District).

PS-3 Approval of the support staff resignations of Jessica Amell (Special Ed Aide – WRAMS), Lori Hogue (Instructional/Noon Duty Aide – THINK), Mandi Chariton (Noon Duty Aide – Grove), Chani Pechinski (Custodian – District), and Casie Oleson (Food Service Helper – Lincoln).

PS-4 Approval of the professional staff retirement of Karen Medo (Teacher – Woodside).

PS-5 Approval of the support staff retirement of Doris Laskowski (First Cook – Lincoln).

PS-6 Approval of the addition of an 8 hour, year-round, custodial position at Lincoln High School and a 4 hour, year-round cleaner position at THINK Academy.

PS-7 Approval of an IEP Assessment Specialist position at the rate of \$25.00 per hour.

PS-8 Approval of the Department of Health Services (DHS) School Health Workforce Development Grant and approval of the expenditures from the DHS School Health Workforce Development Grant.

Motion by Sandra Hett, seconded by Troy Bier to approve consent agenda items PS 1-8. Motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Hett provided updates and reports on:

- Brian Oswald, Director of Human Resources, provided an update on the status of District substitute fill rates.

Motion by Sandra Hett, seconded by Troy Bier to approve the balance of the Personnel Services Committee report and minutes of the regular February 6, 2023 Personnel Services Committee meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Agenda Referrals/Information Requests

Ms. Timm referenced an article entitled “3 Tips to Build Trust Between School Boards and the Public” written by Evie Blad and published in Education Week that she would like to have Board members review and potentially discuss in the future.

Ms. Hett suggested that a review of support staff employee positions across the District may be helpful since that hasn't been done in a very long time and many duties and positions have changed or evolved over the years. Job descriptions should undergo a comprehensive review and be updated to determine the appropriate pay rate instead of having individual employees make requests without an appropriate basis of comparison. She recognizes this may take some effort and time, but would like to see it be accomplished.

Mr. Krings requested to know the amount of time in hours being spent to respond to open records requests, and whether other duties are lagging or additional help might be needed to process these requests. Superintendent Broeren explained that the District has been receiving anywhere from four to eight requests per week for some time, and some requests are easier

than others to fulfill. The technical aspects of responding to requests make them something that must be handled by his office, and the time it takes to respond depends upon factors and statutory requirements involved. He expressed appreciation for the Board's interest and the fact that they are cognizant of how fulfilling the requests take time away from other duties and projects.

Legislative Agenda

Troy Bier shared the following information:

- The Wisconsin Association of School Boards (WASB) State Education Convention recently took place in Milwaukee, Wisconsin and there were a number of helpful and interesting sessions to participate in; Mr. Bier took advantage of a number of sessions specifically touching on the topic of legislative matters. The WASB *Legislative Advocacy Toolkit* is a useful resource and available online for school districts.
- Governor Evers will deliver his State Budget address this week concerning his proposed biennial budget; the budget will then work through debate in the Legislature with passage of the budget hopefully in late June or early July. Senator Patrick Testin has joined the Joint Finance Committee (JFC) as a new member, as a representative from central Wisconsin. Listening sessions concerning the budget will be scheduled to occur in March or April.
- The Spring Primary is set to occur on February 21, 2023 and Mr. Bier encourages voters to become informed and exercise their right to vote. Information can be found on myvote.wi.gov to see sample ballots and check registration status.

Bills

Motion by Troy Bier, seconded by John Benbow to note January, 2023 receipts in the amount of \$8,988,908.14 and approve January, 2023 disbursements in the amount of \$7,319,869.51. Motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.

New Business

Employee Appointments, Resignations, and Retirement Requests

Brian Oswald, Director of Human Resources presented an employment professional staff resignation request from Tara Koch, Washington Elementary Teacher, effective February 21, 2023.

Motion by Troy Bier, seconded by Larry Davis to approve of the professional staff resignation request of Tara Koch effective February 21, 2023. Motion carried unanimously.

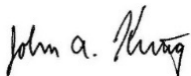
Update on 2023-24 District Budget

Aaron Nelson, Director of Business Services, stated that districts will continue to wait to see what occurs with the State budget for next year, but for now he is utilizing a \$200 per pupil projected increase for budgeting purposes. The District has some declining enrollment exemptions that will drop off next year, and revenues continue to increase slowly while inflation is on the rise. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) for the purpose of negotiations is set at 8.00%. The administrative team continues to meet monthly to discuss and develop a 2023-24 budget proposal which will ultimately come to the Board for consideration and approval.

Calendar

Calendar items were reviewed.

President Krings adjourned the meeting at 7:10 p.m.



John A. Krings – President

Maurine Hodgson – Secretary

Larry Davis – Clerk