



**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

April 10, 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, Roxanne Filtz, Steve Hepp, Aaron Nelson, Brian Oswald,
Christine Slattery

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

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call

Mr. Krings took a moment to acknowledge and thank Sandra Hett for her 24 years of dedication and service on the Board.

Public Comment

None.

Student Representative Report

Sarah Panzer reported on:

- A referendum open house for the community is scheduled at Lincoln High School (LHS) for Sunday, April 16, 2023 beginning at 1:00 p.m.
- Students from the LHS Art Club will be competing at an upcoming State competition in Madison
- Student artwork from grades 6-12 is on display beginning April 17, 2023 at McMillan Library
- Students from DECA will be competing at the International competition held in Orlando, Florida at the end of April
- The Sponge Bob musical/theatrical student performance is slated to occur on April 27-29, 2023

School Showcase – THINK Academy

THINK Academy Principal Christine Slattery was joined by staff members Kim Martin, Kelsey Johnson, Olivia Baehman, Hilary Klein, Meredith Briggs, Maggie Frank, and Teresa Matulewics as well as students Beth and James Ashbeck to showcase school activities as they operate under the “FISH Philosophy” which includes mindsets around “Be There,” “Choose Your Attitude,” “Make Their Day,” and “Play.” Examples of specific ways in which staff and students engage in these mindsets was shared, and Board members had an opportunity to participate in the lively, informative presentation. Students Beth and James shared thoughts about what they enjoy most as students attending THINK Academy. The Board thanked all of the presenters for the enjoyable, informative presentation.

Approval of Minutes

Motion by Troy Bier, seconded by Katie Medina to approve three special closed session Board of Education meeting minutes of February 15, 2023; special closed session meeting minutes of March 6, 2023; special closed session meeting minutes of March 9, 2023; regular Board of Education meeting minutes of March 13, 2023; and special Board of Education meeting minutes of April 5, 2023. Motion carried unanimously.

Committee Reports

A. Educational Services Committee – April 3, 2023. 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 Board Policies 321 – School Calendar, 723.1 – Emergency School Closings, and 723.1 Rule – Emergency School Closing Procedures for first reading.
- ES-2 Approval of six applications to participate in seven requested courses at Mid-State Technical College through the Start College Now program in the fall, 2023-24 school year, and three applications to participate in one requested course in the Early College Credit Program in the fall, 2023-24 school year.
- ES-3 Approval of continuing the District’s partnership with Gaggle Therapy during the 2023-2024 school year at a cost of \$72,864.00 to be funded through the ESSER III grant.

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

Ms. Medina provided updates and reports on:

- The Committee learned about the Families and Schools Together (FAST) program which was implemented at Pitsch Early Learning Center and Washington Elementary School in 2022-23, and has just completed one cycle. FAST is an internationally acclaimed parent engagement program shown to help children succeed at school by building stronger, more supportive relationships at home. Built on evidence-based practices and rigorously tested, FAST empowers parents to become more effective family leaders, connects families to schools, and creates a community engaged in children’s well-being and education. FAST activities are designed to strengthen family bonds, empower parents, increase positive communication and improve the child’s overall academic performance and emotional functioning. In a FAST cycle, families meet for eight weeks. The weekly sessions follow a prescribed format of activities whose effectiveness have been demonstrated through research. FAST sessions are led by a team that empowers parents and connects families to school and community. This team includes one parent partner, school staff, and two community partners. Specific initiatives which occurred at Pitsch and Washington during the recent 8-week session was shared.
- Ms. Roxanne Filtz, Director of Curriculum & Instruction, explained that the District learned that the application for the 2022-2023 Educator Effectiveness (EE) Grant has been approved for funding in the amount of \$32,240 for the period of July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023. The grant dollars are used exclusively to pay for the costs associated with the Educator Effectiveness model which supports educators and promotes improved teaching strategies to increase student learning for all students.
- Ms. Filtz provided an update on plans to once again apply for the Peer Review and Mentor Grant. This grant involves a consortium with Port Edwards School District to provide a comprehensive “New Colleague Program” which includes orientation sessions, monthly seminars, a mentor, and other support systems to make the adjustment for new colleagues a successful one. Past grant funds have helped to defray some of the costs of the program, and the District is again applying for the maximum \$25,000.00 amount for 2023-24.
- Information concerning the Education for Homeless Children and Youth (ECHY) Innovations Grant was presented, which is a three-year grant provided by the United States Department of Education and awarded through the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI). This is a competitive and discretionary grant to employ innovative practices to support students who qualify as homeless under the McKinney-Vento Act. McKinney-Vento legislation ensures that all children and youth who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence receive access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a preschool education, as provided to other children and youth. The Innovations Grant focuses on innovative practices and is not intended to focus on compliance-related topics (such as basic training for all staff, transportation, creating district posters/ materials, etc.). The District will be submitting a grant application by the deadline of April 11, 2023, asking for \$40,000 yearly over the next three years. The focus of the application will be on increasing academic outcomes for students experiencing homelessness.
- Upcoming student travel plans were shared which includes thirty-one students from Lincoln High School’s DECA attending the International Career Development Conference (ICDC) in Orlando, Florida on April 20-26, 2023. Participants raised funds throughout the school year and secured sponsorships as a means to pay for the trip.

Motion by Katie Medina, seconded by Troy Bier to approve the balance of the Educational Services Committee report and minutes of the April 3, 2023 Educational Services Committee meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

B. Business Services Committee – April 3, 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 continued participation in the Wisconsin School Nutrition Purchasing Cooperative 66.0301 Agreement for the 2023-24 school year in an amount of \$300.00.

BS-2 Approval of the bid from Mauer Roofing to replace the roof at THINK Academy at a cost of \$629,790.00 to be funded by the Fund 46 Budget.

BS-3 Approval of the bid from American Asphalt to upgrade and expand the parking lot at THINK Academy at a cost of \$99,785.00 to be funded from the Fund 46 Budget.

BS-4 Approval to replace the fire panel at East/Central Office with a new Simplex 4100ES system and necessary field devices at a cost of \$65,842.02 to be funded from the Fund 10 Budget.

Motion by John Benbow, seconded by Katie Medina 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.
- During the previous two school years, school districts across the country did not charge families for meals as they were fully reimbursed by the U.S. government. The government's rate of reimbursement is higher than what the District charges families for the cost of a student's meal. As a result, the District has accumulated a healthy food service fund balance and will not need to raise meal prices for the 2023-24 school year.

Motion by John Benbow, seconded by Troy Bier to approve the balance of the Business Services Committee report and minutes of the April 3, 2023 Business Services Committee. Motion carried unanimously.

C. Personnel Services Committee – April 3, 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 Bryndis Agustsdottir (Breakfast Cashier – Grove), Emily Westover (Special Ed Aide – Mead), Jeramey Zych (Instructional Aide – WRAMS), Jessica Kuczynski (Noon Duty/Instructional Aide – THINK), Rachel Brown (Noon Duty Aide – Washington), and Sativah St. Claire (Noon Duty Aide – Grove).

PS-2 Approval of the professional staff resignations of Rose Schiferl (Teacher – WRAMS), Natalie Leroy (Social Worker/Homeless Liaison – Lincoln/District), Matthew Brown (Teacher – WRAMS), Macyn Elliott (Teacher – Speech/Language Pathologist – District), Gillian Goetsch (Counselor – Mead), and Jordyn Baumann (Teacher – THINK).

PS-3 Approval of the support staff resignations of Kevin Cushman (Special Ed Aide – Woodside) and Dana Laskowski (Special Ed Aide – Lincoln).

PS-4 Approval of the support staff retirements of Teresa Wunrow (Food Production Coordinator – District).

PS-5 Approval of the addition of an Early Childhood long-term substitute teacher for the remainder of the 2022-2023 school year.

PS-6 Approval of Board Policy 539.1 – Tutoring for first reading.

PS-7 Approval of the hiring of a Program Support/Off-Site Instructor for the 2023-24 school year.

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

Ms. Hett provided updates and reports on:

- Brian Oswald, Director of Human Resources, provided an update on the clerical salary schedule from 2000 along with the current hourly staff wage schedule. Mr. Oswald shared how raises have been applied

to the schedule and how some positions have moved from one group to another. Ms. Hett asked about how job descriptions are used in terms of where a position is placed, how an employee could request an increase, and whether the wage schedule should be redone. Craig Broeren, Superintendent, explained that while job descriptions play a role, added responsibilities do not necessarily mean a job would move to a higher group. He also shared that employees know that the first person they should go to if they are requesting an increase is their supervisor/building administrator. Finally, Mr. Broeren pointed out that redoing the hourly staff wage schedule would not necessarily result in a better system due to the fact that there is not an easy way to delineate between similar positions. Mr. Broeren concluded by letting the Committee know that the District will review and update job descriptions if needed.

Motion by Sandra Hett, seconded by Larry Davis to approve the balance of the Personnel Services Committee report and minutes of the regular April 3, 2023 Personnel Services Committee meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Agenda Referrals/Information Requests

Mr. Krings requested information pertaining to the total number of public records requests received over the course of the past year, and any affiliated legal fees involved. Mr. Davis also expressed an interest in the information.

Ms. Timm requested information on whether the book bundles referenced at the August, 2022 Educational Services Committee are available online. Roxanne Filtz, Director of Curriculum & Instruction, explained that the example template from August listing the titles was developed to demonstrate how the process works. Mr. Broeren clarified that the book titles vary by course and parents are aware of all titles involved; he invited Ms. Timm to request information about any specific course she is interested in learning more about and he will gather the information.

Ms. Hett expressed appreciation for the additional information provided by Mr. Broeren concerning clarification around the use of social media in terms of Board members understanding that views and opinions expressed as individuals are just that, and do not represent a position of the entire Board. She is pleased to have members on the WRPS Board who fully support public education.

Legislative Agenda

Troy Bier shared the following information:

- WRPS elections have concluded, and Mr. Bier congratulated John Krings and Kathi Stebbins-Hintz on their election to the Board as well as thanked Sandra Hett for her many years of service.
- In terms of school referendum passage rates, 65 of 81 questions were approved by voters of the districts where questions were presented which translates to a passage rate of slightly more than 80%. Locally, Adams Friendship and Tri-County questions passed, while Auburndale's question and a \$99.5 million bond question for Marshfield failed.
- The Joint Committee on Finance (JFC) has a public hearing concerning the topic of the State Budget coming up on April 12th in Wisconsin Dells.
- The Heart of Wisconsin Chamber of Commerce recently held a Legislative Breakfast on Friday, March 17, 2023 at Mid-State Technical College which Mr. Bier and Superintendent Broeren attended; a recording of the meeting is posted on the Chamber website.

Bills

Motion by Troy Bier, seconded by John Benbow to note March, 2023 receipts in the amount of \$15,952,454.70 and approve March, 2023 disbursements in the amount of \$4,795,198.00. Motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.

New Business

Employee Appointments, Resignations, and Retirement Requests

None.

2023-24 Lincoln High School Buildings Trades Home

Mr. Benbow reported that the Building Trades Home Committee met on April 3, 2023 to review applications from individuals interested in having the LHS Building Construction class build them a home during the 2023-24 school year. Two applications were received, and the Committee recommends approval of the application submitted by Brittney and Kevin Lau. Board members had an opportunity to ask questions.

Motion by John Benbow, seconded by Larry Davis to approve of the application from Brittney and Kevin Lau for construction of a home by the 2023-24 Lincoln High School Building Trades Home Construction class. Motion carried unanimously.

Donation from Mike Brock Memorial Foundation

Aaron Nelson, Director of Business Services, explained that Jeremy Radtke, Agriculture Teacher at Lincoln, was contacted by the Mike Brock Memorial Foundation as the Agriculture Department was selected to receive a donation award in the amount of \$15,000.00 to purchase a Polaris UTV to be used at the school forest and agriculture facilities. The UTV will aid in various tasks including tree planting, prairie sampling, maple sapping, and transportation of equipment around the school campus and forest. The Board expressed deep appreciation for the donation.

Motion by Larry Davis, seconded by Sandra Hett to approve of the donation from the Mike Brock Memorial Foundation Fund in the amount of \$15,000.00 to purchase a Polaris UTV for the high school agriculture and forestry program. Motion carried unanimously.

Resolution Pertaining to Debt Defeasance

Mr. Nelson presented a Resolution authorizing the transfer of funds, the establishment of an escrow account with respect to and the defeasance of certain of the General Obligation Refunding Bonds, Series 2021, dated August 2, 2021. Approval of the Resolution would result in a total reduction of future debt service payments of \$5,252,950.00. The net debt savings once the incremental levy amount is applied is \$1,256,140.00. Interest savings for calendar year 2023 will be \$39,750.00, and the estimated one-time aid increase to be received in 2023-24 is \$1,226,711.00. Closing date for the defeasance would occur on April 21, 2023. The Board had an opportunity to ask questions.

Motion by John Benbow, seconded by Troy Bier to approve of a Resolution authorizing the transfer of funds, the establishment of an escrow account with respect to and the defeasance of certain of the General Obligation Refunding Bonds, Series 2021, dated August 2, 2021. Motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.

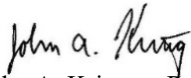
Update on Development of the 2023-24 District Budget

Mr. Broeren stated there is nothing new to report concerning the development of the 2023-24 District budget since the State budget process continues to unfold and isn't anticipated to be finalized for some time.

Calendar

Calendar items were reviewed.

President Krings adjourned the meeting at 7:07 p.m.



John A. Krings – President

Maurine Hodgson – Secretary

Larry Davis – Clerk