



**WISCONSIN RAPIDS
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING MINUTES

John A. Krings, President
John Benbow, Jr.
Troy Bier
Larry Davis
Katie Medina
Kathi Stebbins-Hintz
Julie Timm

May 8, 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, John Krings, Katie Medina, Kathi Stebbins-Hintz, Julie Timm

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT: Ed Allison, Craig Broeren, Roxanne Filtz, Steve Hepp, Aaron Nelson, Brian Oswald, Nicole Calteux

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 Teacher Appreciation Week, thanking staff members for their dedication and service in the field of education.

Public Comment

Katie Campbell thanked Sandra Hett for her many years of service and contributions during her tenure as a Board member.

Special Recognition

President Krings paid special recognition to outgoing Board Member Sandra Hett for her 24 years of dedicated service on the Board.

Student Representative Report

Sarah Panzer reported on:

- There are a number of student performances occurring across the District throughout the month of May, including the District Strings Festival taking place on May 8, 2023
- The “Rise to Remember” student led event focused on mental health awareness is taking place on Thursday, May 18, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. in the Performing Arts Center
- The last day for Lincoln senior students is May 25, 2023 with graduation taking place on May 27, 2023
- The Lincoln Prom occurred on May 6, 2023 and was well attended

School Showcase – THINK Academy

Grant Elementary Principal Nicole Calteux was joined by staff members Gabbie Scheunemann, Angie Peters, Lisa Butzen, Sarah Ranum, Jodi Grimm, Connie Ackerlund, Anna Radtke, Dustin Anderson, Joni Feidt, and Leslie Benitz as well as students Mykah Wettstein, Bentley Goodenough, Tyler Nguyen, Leah Johnson, Levi Walloch, and Aiden Nguyen to showcase school activities and the community building initiatives occurring at the school. Examples provided include the Kindness Ninjas Club, all-school activities and mentorship opportunities, and after-school and family involvement events. The Board engaged in the development of potential hashtags the school could use that might describe what they have learned about Grant from the presentation. Board members thanked all of the presenters for the engaging, informative presentation.

Approval of Minutes

Motion by Troy Bier, seconded by Katie Medina to approve special closed session Board of Education meeting minutes of April 5, 2023; regular Board of Education meeting minutes of April 10, 2023; special closed session Board of Education meeting minutes of April 10, 2023; special Board of Education meeting minutes of April 17, 2023; Board Organizational meeting minutes of April 24, 2023; and special open and closed session Board of Education meeting minutes of May 1, 2023. Motion carried unanimously.

Committee ReportsA. Educational Services Committee – May 1, 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 the adoption of the proposed 6-12 physical education curriculum maps as presented beginning with the 2023-2024 school year.
- ES-2 Approval of the proposed 6-12 physical education acquisition as presented in an amount not to exceed \$109,773.33 to be funded through the WRPS Referendum Curriculum budget.
- ES-3 Approval of the purchase of *The 7 Mindsets*, a Social and Emotional Learning Framework resource for grades 6-12, for a total cost of \$38,250.00 for one year to be paid with funds from the Comprehensive Coordinated Early Intervening Services (CCEIS) set aside budget, for implementation beginning with the 2023-2024 school year.
- ES-4 Approval of the 2023-2026 District Technology and Library Plan.
- ES-5 Approval of the proposed modifications to the LHS Planner for the 2023-2024 school year.
- ES-6 Approval of the proposed modifications to the WRAMS Planner for the 2023-2024 school year.
- ES-7 Approval of the proposed modifications to the elementary school Planner for the 2023-2024 school year.
- ES-8 Approval of the 2023-2024 Professional Development Plan.

Motion by Katie Medina, seconded by Troy Bier to approve consent agenda items ES 1-8. Motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.

Ms. Medina provided updates and reports on:

- The Committee was provided an update on the District “Continuity of Services Plan” as required under the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act.
- An update on the status of progress being made at the Wisconsin Rapids Area Middle School (WRAMS) to improve school culture and decrease disciplinary incidents and attendance issues was presented by numerous staff from WRAMS. To get things back on track at the school, three main goals were established for 2022-23 which include: 1) make connections; 2) increase family engagement; and 3) meet student behavioral needs. Staff members focused on the following initiatives being implemented: Rams Pride Time (RPT), RESET program, school culture improvement activities, community connections being developed and/or expanded, a “School Connectedness Survey” conducted with students with results indicating that a more positive school climate is being developed, family engagement initiatives, high expectations set for everyone at WRAMS to *Be Respectful, Be Responsible, and Be Resourceful*, behavior data shows attendance at 91%, major discipline referrals are down 33% compared to last year, in-house referrals are down 59% compared to this time last year, student support plans are being developed, student support groups have been formed, eduClimber software is being utilized for communication among staff and to catch concerns early on, training has been conducted for staff around the Positive Behavioral Intervention & Supports (PBIS) approach, and successes were shared from students involved in the new Bridge Alternative Program. The Committee learned that goals for the coming year at WRAMS include a full PBIS Tier 1 roll-out, enhancing relationships through RPT and RESET, customizing eduClimber, fully implementing the social emotional learning curriculum, and continuing to provide individualized academic and social-emotional support.

Motion by Katie Medina, seconded by Julie Timm to approve the balance of the Educational Services Committee report and minutes of the May 1, 2023 Educational Services Committee meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

B. Business Services Committee – May 1, 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 contract with Mainstage to install replacement curtains, rigging equipment and associated hardware at a cost of \$39,528.00 to be funded from the 2022-2023 Buildings and Ground Budget.
- BS-2 Approval of entering into a 66.03.01 cooperative agreement with the Nekoosa School District for the student attending the Early Childhood program.
- BS-3 Approval to allow Portage County permission to complete the proposed routine brush and tree removal along County Road WW on District property 30 feet from the road centerline in the fall of 2023 or winter of 2024.
- BS-4 Approval of the proposal from Jeff Cegielski Concrete at a cost of \$37,200.00 to be funded from the 2022-2023 Fund 46 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.

Motion by John Benbow, seconded by Katie Medina to approve the balance of the Business Services Committee report and minutes of the May 1, 2023 Business Services Committee. Motion carried unanimously.

C. Personnel Services Committee – May 1, 2023. Report given by Kathi Stebbins-Hintz.

Ms. Stebbins-Hintz 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 professional staff appointments for the 2023-24 school year of Benjamin Vandenberg (Teacher-WRAMS), Ken Jensen (Teacher – WRAMS), Alison Hepp (Teacher – Grant), Anthony Fannin (Teacher – Lincoln), Lacey Foate (Teacher – Lincoln), Megan McIlheran (School Counselor – Mead), Isadora Wagner (Teacher – Lincoln), Constance Hoernke (Teacher – WRAMS), Lori Kurszewski (Teacher – Pitsch), and Brenna Murry (Teacher – Lincoln).
- PS-2 Approval of the support staff appointments of Tammy Sullivan (Custodian – District), Robyn Vicker (Supervisory Aide – WRAMS), Jeramey Zych (Special Ed Aide – Lincoln), Paige Weber (Special Ed Aide – Lincoln), Tricia Joosten (Kitchen Helper – District), Stephen Dunn (Custodian – District), Allison Eswein (Special Ed Aide – Woodside), and Leanna Lindner (Special Ed Aide – Woodside).
- PS-3 Approval of the professional staff resignations of MariJo Zieroth (Teacher – THINK), Zachary Pecha (Teacher – Lincoln), Whitney Nurmela (Teacher – Woodside), Megan Hand (Teacher – Lincoln), Susan Niggemann (Teacher – District), Lorna Jentz (Teacher – Grove), and Rilyn Donahue (Teacher – Grove).
- PS-4 Approval of the support staff resignations of Dawn Sukala (Title VI Liaison – District), Cynthia Fellowes (Cashier – WRAMS), and Daniel Martinez (Special Ed Aide – Mead).
- PS-5 Approval of the non-represented, certified staff resignation of Trina Watson (School Nurse – WRAMS).
- PS-6 Approval of the professional staff retirement of Denise Martell (Teacher – Pitsch).
- PS-7 Approval of the professional staff retirements of Renee Heineck (Supervisory Aide - WRAMS) and Joan Brueggen (Special Ed Aide – Woodside).
- PS-8 Approval of a 0.20 FTE school psychologist position for the 2023-2024 school year.
- PS-9 Approval of second reading for Board Policies 539.1 – Tutoring, 321 School Calendar, 723.1 Emergency School Closing, 723.1 Rule – Emergency School Closing Procedures, and first reading of Board Policy 164 – Board Member Compensation and Expenses.
- PS-10 Approval of the 2023-2024 Open Enrollment applications under the Open Enrollment Law, pending a review of discipline records and special services needs.
- PS-11 Approval to pay the following stipends to Families and Schools Together (FAST) program team member participants: Nicki Williams, Community Partner - \$960; Makena Detlor, Community Partner - \$960; Patricia

Keir, Community Partner - \$720; Kathi Stebbins-Hintz, Community Partner - \$630; Dani Weinhold, Parent Partner - \$500; Kristin Mras, Parent Partner - \$441; Barb Bondioli, School FAST Coordinator at Washington - \$640; Teri Thomas, School FAST Coordinator at Pitsch - \$640; Kelly Look, School Staff - \$500; Chris Klopotek, School Staff - \$500; Terri Stilson, School Staff - \$500; and Denise Martell, School Staff - \$500.

Ms. Stebbins-Hintz requested that item PS-11 be held out.

Motion by Kathi Stebbins-Hintz, seconded by Larry Davis to approve consent agenda items PS 1-10. Motion carried unanimously.

With regard to consent agenda item PS-11, Ms. Stebbins-Hintz explained that she held the item out for a separate vote as she intends to abstain from voting on the topic to avoid any potential conflict of interest since the matter has to do with service she performed prior to her being elected to the Board of Education.

Motion by Troy Bier, seconded by Julie Timm to approve consent agenda item PS 11. Motion carried 6-0 on a roll call vote. Ms. Stebbins-Hintz abstained.

Motion by Kathi Stebbins-Hintz, seconded by Troy Bier to approve the balance of the Personnel Services Committee report and minutes of the regular May 1, 2023 Personnel Services Committee meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Agenda Referrals/Information Requests

Mr. Krings commented on the information received from Superintendent Broeren concerning the number of open records requests processed by the District over the course of the past year and time and costs involved. Superintendent Broeren made mention of the fact that the 103 requests processed is not even close to the average processed in prior years. As far as he is aware, it seems there is nothing of substance that came from the amount of time and resources invested to respond to the requests and he is hopeful that a similar year of requests doesn't occur again since it detracts from other duties needing attention.

Ms. Timm requested to have Board Committee meetings recorded, similar to regular Board meetings in an effort to communicate about the topics discussed and decided upon in depth at the Committee level. Mr. Broeren stated that this has been considered and discussed in the past, and part of the drawback is to devote and/or commit additional student time to the task and he is also leery about providing an additional opportunity for members of the public to grandstand during a meeting which nearly had the District lose access to its YouTube account during the pandemic because of misinformation being shared during times of public comment. He further mentioned that all meetings are posted for the public's awareness and anyone is welcome to attend. The Board requested that Mr. Broeren check into the possibility of staff availability to livestream Educational Services Committee meetings in the future.

Ms. Stebbins-Hintz requested to receive information in the form of a report around the elementary reading program in terms of what is occurring with the program, how the implementation of reading, writing, and phonics is going, and what is going well versus items needing to be addressed.

Legislative Agenda

Troy Bier shared the following information:

- Senate Bill 240 was introduced on April 14, 2023 which calls for amending State Statutes to direct school boards to provide education on Hmong Americans and Asian Americans similar to current statutory language citing Black Americans, Hispanics, and American Indians. Given the struggles in surrounding districts and in order to strengthen support for diversity and inclusion, Mr. Bier urged fellow Board members to reach out to local representatives to request that they sign on to SB 240.
- The Assembly Education Committee held a public hearing on April 20, 2023 to take testimony on three Assembly bills as follows:
 - Assembly Bill 109 relating to requiring one-half credit of personal financial literacy for high school graduation
 - Assembly Bill 24 relating to posting the child abuse and neglect reporting hotline in school buildings
 - Assembly Bill 77 relating to pupil applications to attend a private school participating in a parental choice program
- The State Senate Education Committee met on Tuesday, April 25, 2023 to discuss public hearing results of two bills:
 - Senate Bill 74 relating to pupil applications to attend a private school participating in a parental choice program
 - Senate Bill 210 relating to allowing school board members to serve as a volunteer school bus driver

- The Committee also confirmed appointees to the Professional Standards Council, including two individuals serving as Board members from Stevens Point and Oshkosh as recommended by the Wisconsin Association of School Boards (WASB)
- The Board of Commissioners of Public Lands has informed the Department of Public Instruction that a record \$52 million is available for payment to school districts as Library Aid this year; as a result, aid for school libraries from the Common School Fund in the 2022-23 school year will be \$45.38 per student.
- The Joint Finance Committee (JFC) met on May 2, 2023 to consider Governor Tony Evers’ 2023-25 State budget proposals; a memo to committee members from Co-chairs Sen. Howard Marklein and Mark Born outlined their intention to draft a motion to remove a list of 545 of Evers’ proposals from further budget consideration. One item not on the list of items slated to be removed is the governor’s recommendation to provide \$10 million per year for early literacy and reading improvement.
- WASB has a “State Bill Tracker” for the 2023-24 session of the state legislature available on its website for those interested in following the progress of state legislation that has been introduced.

Bills

Motion by Troy Bier, seconded by John Benbow to note April, 2023 receipts in the amount of \$2,937,669.37 and approve April, 2023 disbursements in the amount of \$4,508,035.70. Motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.

New Business

Employee Appointments, Resignations, and Retirement Requests

Brian Oswal, Director of Human Resources, presented the following professional staff resignation requests:

Cameron Anderson	Location: WRAMS Position: Teacher – Music (0.50 FTE) Effective Date: June 5, 2023 Date of Hire: August 29, 2022
Brooklyn Podgorny	Location: THINK Academy Position: Teacher – Grade 1 (1.0 FTE) Effective Date: June 5, 2023 Date of Hire: August 24, 2021

Motion by John Benbow, seconded by Katie Medina to approve of the professional staff resignation requests of Cameron Anderson and Brooklyn Podgorny effective June 5, 2023. Motion carried unanimously.

Woodside Outdoor Play, Learning, Activity Center (OPLAC) Playground

Mr. Broeren provided an update on bid results for the Woodside Outdoor Play, Learning, Activity Center (OPLAC) project. Local contractor Altmann Construction Company, Inc. came in with the lowest bid in multiple areas for site construction work. American Fence was low bidder for fencing for the project. The projected overall cost of the OPLAC is \$1.5 million, with the primary expense being attributed to playground equipment estimated to cost \$1,137,687.91. Woodside Elementary staff, students, and families recently held a very successful fundraiser and generated around \$10,000.00 to be put toward the project. Should additional funding be raised to cover it, it is possible that the pickleball courts and outdoor classroom/pavilion originally included in the plans could also be constructed. Timelines for the project are still being determined.

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.

Vesper Property Sale

The District advertised the sale of its property located in Vesper, Wisconsin throughout the month of April, 2023 with a minimum bid requirement set at \$75,000.00. Two bids were received as follows:

<u>BIDDER</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
Sherri Stempa	\$100,151.99
Scott Brehm	\$ 75,150.00

The administration recommends accepting the highest bid from Sherri Stempa. The property would be sold “as is,” and if the Board approves, the administration will engage in the legal requirements necessary to finalize the sale. Board

members questioned whether or not Mr. Broeren knew what the intended use might be for the property, and whether or not CESA 5 is aware of the potential sale. Mr. Broeren stated that his understanding from Sherri Stempa is that she would like to potentially develop the building into an apartment complex to provide housing options in the area. Furthermore, he has given notice to CESA 5 about the potential sale and they are already beginning to consider their options. Some conversations have been had about the possibility of the Wood County Alternative School moving into the East Jr. High facility; however, it would need to be determined whether or not the program could be confined to one area of the building and be a functional space for these operations.

Motion by Larry Davis, seconded by Troy Bier to approve of the bid submitted by Sherri Stempa in an amount of \$100,151.99 for the sale of District property formerly operating as Vesper Elementary School/Vesper Community Academy located in Vesper, Wisconsin and to proceed with all legal requirements to facilitate the sale. Motion carried unanimously.

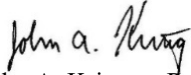
Update on Development of the 2023-24 District Budget

Mr. Broeren stated there have been no meaningful developments with the State budget to predict how the 2023-24 District budget may be impacted. He hopes information will be available by June or July and stated that while the 2023-24 budget may be impacted, the administration has greater concerns about the 2024-25 fiscal year. It will be detrimental to most districts throughout the state if no new spendable dollars for operations are provided given the current inflationary climate.

Calendar

Calendar items were reviewed.

President Krings adjourned the meeting at 7:42 p.m.



John A. Krings – President

Maurine Hodgson – Secretary

Larry Davis – Clerk