



**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

July 17, 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, Kathi Stebbins-Hintz, Julie Timm

BOARD MEMBER EXCUSED: Katie Medina

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT: Tracy Ginter, Steve Hepp, Aaron Nelson, Bill Oswald, Brian Oswald, Paul Rheinschmidt

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

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call

Public Comment

None.

Special Recognition

President John Krings presented special recognition on behalf of the Board to retirees Cathy Tritz and Mary Beth Freeh.

School Showcase – Wisconsin Rapids Area Middle School

Wisconsin Rapids Area Middle School (WRAMS) Principal Tracy Ginter was joined by staff members Paul Rheinschmidt, Bill Oswald, Kirsten Johnson, Becki Mischnick, and Deanna Willems to present a video depicting numerous initiatives at the middle school to help students be successful. The presentation highlighted various clubs, peer-mentor programming, fundraising initiatives, guest speakers, and planned events which occurred in 2022-23 to build on academic foundations, strengthen relationships, and promote social-emotional skill building. Board members thanked Ms. Ginter and the WRAMS staff for their presentation, and for the positive changes being made at WRAMS to provide students many opportunities to connect and grow.

Approval of Minutes

Motion by Troy Bier, seconded by John Benbow to approve of regular Board of Education meeting minutes of June 12, 2023, and special Board of Education meeting minutes of June 28, 2023. Motion carried unanimously.

Committee Reports

A. Educational Services Committee – July 10, 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 Pupil Academic Standards as presented.
- ES-2 Approval of the implementation of the Playworks Program at Grant, Grove, Howe and THINK elementary schools during the 2023-2024 school year at the cost of \$68,000.00 to be funded through the Get Kids Ahead Grant.
- ES-3 Approval of expanding the Families and Schools Together (FAST) Program to include Grove and Howe elementary schools for the 2023-2024 school year at a total cost of \$14,000.00 for implementation, as well as approval of stipends estimated to be \$15,280.00 for Pitsch, Washington, Grove and Howe elementary schools to provide the FAST program, with costs being funded through the Get Kids Ahead Grant.

Committee Reports (continued)

- ES-4 Approval of WRPS partnering with Center 4All to complete equity walks for Grant, Lincoln, Pitsch, River Cities, THINK, Washington, Woodside and WRAMS at a total cost of \$29,467.78 to be funded through IDEA Part B funds.
- ES-5 Approval of the acceptance of the EHCY grant for \$40,000.00 annually over the next three years.
- ES-6 Approval of fully adopting the Wisconsin General Records Schedule and eleven affiliated records retention schedules as developed by the Public Records Board, and to submit the required Notification of General Records Schedule Adoption forms to the Public Records Board for processing.
- ES-7 Approval of Board Policies 347 Rule – Guidelines for the Control and Maintenance of Student Records, 525 – Personnel Records, and 823 – Access to Public Records for first reading, as well as proposed updates to the Resolution Regarding Procedures for Release of Public Records and Property.

Motion by John Krings, seconded by Troy Bier to approve consent agenda items ES 1-7. Motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.

Mr. Krings provided updates and reports on:

- The Committee learned about two different programs to support student reading including Reading Corps and Future Forward. Reading Corps is similar to AmeriCorps, but is primarily focused on supporting students identified with a need for reading support. Trained tutors work under the supervision of a Literacy Coach (typically Reading Interventionists) at the building to assist students directly to support them in reading and help them be more successful. Grant Elementary, THINK Academy, and Washington Elementary are currently utilizing Reading Corps programming.

Future Forward is another support system for students who may be experiencing challenges with reading. The District partners with the local Boys & Girls Club in this tutoring program at Grove Elementary and Howe Elementary, and it includes a family component for events such as “Family Night” that is organized and facilitated by Future Forward staff members in collaboration with school staff.

- Ms. Jennifer Wilhorn, Assistant Director of Curriculum & Instruction, presented the District Achievement Gap Reduction (AGR) End-of-Year Report, explaining that the strike-through areas with numbers corrected below them on the report are due to the administration’s use of eduCLIMBER to gather and accumulate data tied to the report. Utilizing eduCLIMBER helped to identify some errors in how data was being collected and reported for the mid-year report, which have since been corrected. For the most part, growth has been seen in most grade levels and schools. However, there are some areas of concern where the 80% benchmark is not being met. The administration and building teams will be focusing on determining what supports are needed to help students be more successful.

In terms of next year, Ms. Wilhorn explained that the AGR report will look quite different due to the PALS assessment being sunsetted and with the District moving to STAR Early Literacy to replace it. Additionally, rather than having mid-year and end-of-year expectations which has been like trying to hit a moving target, the primary focus will be on the end-of-year expectations set. This may result in scores looking low at the mid-year reporting point; however, this should change as schools work to help students master content and strive toward meeting the end-of-year target.

Committee members were encouraged to see that the data reflects increases toward the benchmarks from mid-year to end-of-year rather than decreases with the exception of certain areas in math. Questions were raised around whether certain scores were a symptom of the screener or the standard in place. Ms. Wilhorn explained it relates more to the standards and that for grades K-1, District created screeners are used whereas in grades 2-3, STAR Math is utilized which is more standardized. Conversation was had around how the data from the reports is primarily generated to assist staff in identifying areas to provide additional supports and strengthen areas where necessary. While the District acquisition cycle for replacing language arts materials was already in process, Ms. Wilhorn and Mr. Broeren explained there likely will be substantial modifications in early literacy content and assessments coming up as the State moves toward sweeping changes in this area and develops potential lists of curriculum programs and/or resources that school districts will be able choose from, and possibly in the case of a statewide assessment, be required to utilize.

Motion by John Krings, seconded by Larry Davis to approve the balance of the Educational Services Committee report and minutes of the July 10, 2023 Educational Services Committee meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

B. Business Services Committee – July 10, 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 annual insurance premium payment in the amount of \$373,389.00 for the 2023-24 school year to be funded with District's insurance budgets.

BS-2 Approval of the contract with Tweet-Garot to replace the water heaters at East Junior High at a cost of \$77,542.00 to be funded from the 2023-2024 Buildings and Grounds budget.

BS-3 Approval of the purchase of a blast chiller at a cost of \$37,015.85 from Boelter, LLC funded from the 2023-2024 Food Service budget.

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

Mr. Benbow provided updates and reports on:

- Invoices, bid specs, and purchases made
- The Wood County Highway Department will be reimbursing the District an additional \$7,337.53 when purchasing the parcel of land at River Cities High School. This additional reimbursement is for the replacement of the building sign that had to be moved as a result of the road construction project. *Committee members questioned how transportation and pick-up/drop-off would be impacted at River Cities with the road construction occurring. Principal Steve Hepp will be working with all relevant parties to ensure students, staff members, and transportation providers understand how to access the school.*
- Committee members reviewed the scope of services to be covered in the upcoming District audit by Hawkins Ash CPAs.
- CESA 5 will be leasing rooms 130-131, the old music wing at East Junior High, due to the sale of Vesper Elementary. An amendment has been made to the lease agreement changing the address to the East Junior High location. All other language stays in place with the original lease agreement including an annual lease amount of \$25,000.00.

Motion by John Benbow, seconded by Troy Bier to approve the balance of the Business Services Committee report and minutes of the July 10, 2023 Business Services Committee meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

C. Personnel Services Committee – July 10, 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 Sarah Doebereiner (Teacher – Grove), Amy Dorshorst (Teacher – Grove), Trevor Hoth (Teacher – Woodside), and Emma Rozumalski (Teacher – THINK).
- PS-2 Approval of the support staff appointment of Susan Lloyd (Special Ed/Noon Duty Aide – Mead).
- PS-3 Approval of the youth apprenticeship/work experience support staff appointments of Margaret Bredl, Nicholas Caffaro, Cody Russell, Riley Look, and Rose Paul.
- PS-4 Approval of the professional staff resignations of Lisa Sanger (Teacher – Woodside), Michele Skibba (Teacher – Grove), Kao Vue (Teacher – Grove), Joseph Krombos (Business Teacher – Lincoln), Rachel Ostrowski (Teacher – Woodside), Sarah Gildenzoph (Reading Intervention Teacher – RCHS), and Tanner Schlender (Teacher – THINK).
- PS-5 Approval of the support staff resignations of Robyn Vicker (Supervisory Aide – WRAMS) and Chelsey Mazurek (Office/Health Aide - Washington).
- PS-6 Approval of a 2% co-curricular advisor stipend for the “Cool 2 Be Kind” Club.

PS-7 Approval of the proposed Athletic Trainer contract with Aspirus effective July 1, 2023.

Motion by Kathi Stebbins-Hintz, seconded by Larry Davis to approve consent agenda items PS 1-7. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Kathi Stebbins-Hintz, seconded by Troy Bier to approve the balance of the Personnel Services Committee report and minutes of the regular July 10, 2023 Personnel Services Committee meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Agenda Referrals/Information Requests

Ms. Timm requested information in the form of a presentation to be made by the Food Services Department concerning the current and upcoming initiatives happening in Food Service with regard to the Chef "scratch cooking" grant that is bringing more made from scratch into kitchens, the expansion of salad bars and fresh food options being incorporated into schools, and any differences between what has been expanded for options at the high school level versus other buildings. Lastly, how students with special dietary restrictions or with a vegan diet have their needs met. Basically, a showcase about Food Services and all that the department does to cover the important nutritional aspect students need fulfilled during the school day, hitting on the above points.

Legislative Agenda

Troy Bier shared the following information:

- Assembly Bill 321, which revamps early literacy instruction in Wisconsin, passed the Senate and will move along to Governor Evers' desk for signature. Among other things, the bill requires public schools and independent charter schools to administer an array of universal screening and diagnostic assessments to pupils in grades 5K-3 and create personal reading plans for pupils deemed at risk. It also provides \$50 million for grants to schools to cover up to 50% of the cost of purchasing new curriculum and instructional materials that include all of the components of "science-based early reading instruction" as defined by the bill. Mr. Bier shared other key highlights of the bill, including the establishment of a Literacy Coaching Program within a new DPI Office of Literacy which will assign up to 64 literacy coaches to schools throughout Wisconsin.
- Governor Evers signed the state budget after using his veto to provide \$325 per pupil revenue adjustments to schools beyond the 2023-25 budget for the next 400 years until the year 2425. The partial veto will likely be challenged in court by Republicans. The 2023-25 biennial budget increases state support from 67.8% in fiscal year 2022-23 to an estimated 68.8% in fiscal year 2023-24, and 69.4% in fiscal year 2024-25 which is the highest level of state support for school districts since the calculation was initiated in fiscal year 1996-97. Mr. Bier shared other aspects of the budget concerning special education reimbursement, high-cost special education aid, bilingual-bicultural aid, the reimbursement rate for high-cost transportation aid, and increased mental health services funding.
- The Assembly Committee on Education will hold a public hearing on Thursday, July 20, 2023 to receive public testimony on the following bills:
 - Assembly Bill 163 relating to supplying anti-choking devices in schools
 - Assembly Bill 108 relating to the definition of "strip search" for the purpose of the prohibition against strip-searching a pupil
 - Assembly Bill 293 relating to defining critical mapping data for school safety plans
 - Assembly Bill 138 relating to issuing a declaration of equivalency of high school graduation or a general educational development certificate

Bills

Motion by Troy Bier, seconded by John Benbow to note June, 2023 receipts in the amount of \$3,529,849.29 and approve June, 2023 disbursements in the amount of \$14,440,645.86. Motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.

New Business

Employee Appointments, Resignations, and Retirement Requests

Brian Oswald, Director of Human Resources, presented the following professional staff appointment recommendations effective with the 2023-24 school year:

Susan Martinez	Location:	Woodside Elementary
	Position:	Teacher – Grade 3 (1.0 FTE)
	Education:	Bachelor’s – UW Milwaukee – December, 2012
	Major/Minor:	Education/Social Studies, Science
	Salary:	\$49,000
Ashley Otten	Location:	Lincoln High School
	Position:	Teacher Intern – Business (0.25 FTE) (Second Semester)
	Education:	Bachelor’s – UW Stout – May, 2024
	Major/Minor:	Business Administration
	Salary:	\$4,500
Leah Zemke	Location:	Woodside Elementary
	Position:	Teacher – Cross Categorical (1.0 FTE)
	Education:	Bachelor’s – UW Stout – May, 2023
	Major/Minor:	Early Childhood Education/Early Childhood Special Education
	Salary:	\$43,000

Mr. Oswall also presented the following non-represented, certified staff appointment:

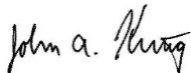
Amanda Zwetz	Location:	District
	Position:	School Nurse (8.0 hrs/day)
	Education:	Associate – Fox Valley Technical – May, 2023
		Associate – MSTC – June, 2010
	Effective Date:	August 21, 2023
	Salary:	\$49,000

Motion by John Benbow, seconded by Larry Davis to approve of the professional staff appointments of Susan Martinez, Ashley Otten, and Leah Zemke; and the non-represented, certified staff appointment of Amanda Zwetz as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Calendar

Calendar items were reviewed.

President Krings adjourned the meeting at 6:59 p.m.



John A. Krings – President

Maurine Hodgson – Secretary

Larry Davis – Clerk