



**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

October 9, 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: Troy Bier, Larry Davis, John Krings, Kathi Stebbins-Hintz, Julie Timm

BOARD MEMBERS EXCUSED: John Benbow, Katie Medina

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT: Ed Allison, Phil Bickelhaupt, Craig Broeren, Roxanne Filtz, Steve Hepp, Elizabeth Messerli, Tina Miller, Aaron Nelson, Brian Oswald

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

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call

Public Comment

None.

School Showcase – Howe Elementary

Howe Elementary Principal Tina Miller was joined by other Howe staff members to present on healthy initiatives occurring at Howe. Nutrition education and opportunities for students to enjoy healthy, nutritious snacks and meals throughout the week help nurture and encourage healthy lifestyle habits and choices. Other initiatives to help promote exercise and good hygiene include the Healthy Smiles program to meet dental needs; Playworks to encourage cooperative, caring relationships and physical activity during recess; a partnership with First Tee of South Central Wisconsin to help students experience activities such as golf which they might not otherwise be able to; and participation in Jump Rope for Heart to support a worthy cause while remaining active and giving back. Lastly, Ms. Miller shared video footage of the safe and secure entryway constructed at Howe which was made possible through 2021 referendum funding. Having a more secure building lends itself to a healthy, safe, and positive school environment.

Student Representative Report

Sarah Panzer shared the following:

- It is a busy time at Lincoln with the end of Progress 1 occurring on October 13<sup>th</sup>.
- Career Discovery Day is scheduled for Tuesday, October 24<sup>th</sup>. Freshmen will have a speaker in the field house, meet with Link Crew leaders, attend a session hosted by school counselors, and receive class ring information from Jostens. Sophomores will tour Mid-State Technical College while juniors will hear presentations and gather insights from business professionals serving in their career interest areas. Seniors will learn about the scholarship process and receive graduation information.
- The LHS Theatre Department performance of “The Art of Being Vague” is coming up October 20-21<sup>st</sup> in the Performing Arts Center.
- Orchestra and band concerts will occur on October 30<sup>th</sup> and November 6<sup>th</sup>.
- There will be no school on October 27<sup>th</sup> as it is Autumn Break.

Approval of Minutes

**Motion by Troy Bier, seconded by Julie Timm to approve of regular Board of Education meeting minutes of September 11, 2023 and special closed session Board of Education meeting minutes of September 11, 2023. Motion carried unanimously.**

Committee ReportsA. Educational Services Committee – October 2, 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 to accept the Peer Review Mentor Grant funding in the amount of \$23,514.00 for the 2023-2024 school year.
- ES-2 Approval of a 9-month license renewal of ExploreLearning Reflex and Frax, along with the FRAX II Missions software programs for our 2-5 math program for all 7 elementary buildings as well as 20 intervention seats to be used at WRAMS for a total cost of \$26,418.04 to be paid through the ESSER III budget. This will cover the remainder of the 2023-2024 school year.

**Motion by John Krings, seconded by Larry Davis to approve consent agenda items ES 1-2. Motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.**

Mr. Krings provided updates and reports on:

- The Council for Instructional Improvement (CII) Committee recently met to review new course and curriculum modifications and proposals brought forward by staff. The proposals also get reviewed by relevant CII sub-committees and building leadership committees. Details about each proposal was provided along with rationale and goals, timelines involved, and the anticipated impact if approved. After receiving feedback from the Educational Services Committee, the proposals will be taken back to CII for review and an advisory vote and then be brought back for final approval by the Board in November, 2023.
- The Committee was provided an update on GATES program initiatives from Kelly Bluell, District K-12 GATES Coordinator. Ms. Bluell shared numerous stories of student success from 2022-23, and described a variety of opportunities available to students in elementary through high school to enrich and expand their learning. In terms of the future, the goal is to expand the “Math 24” regional competition beyond intra-district schools by opening up competition with other area schools who have expressed an interest. Excitement around the competition has also sparked the interest of donors willing to contribute toward prize awards, and the upcoming year will hopefully see Math 24 expanded to include 3<sup>rd</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grades in some capacity. Additionally, a recent DPI grant award of \$33,217.00 will help boost GATES programming by providing increased engagement and enrichment opportunities in Science, Technology and Engineering through the use of classroom robots.
- Ms. Filtz explained the *60 Forward* initiative is a partnership involving the University of Wisconsin System, Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, and Wisconsin Technical College System and supported through a grant from the Lumina Foundation. *60 Forward's* goal is to move Wisconsin to a postsecondary education attainment rate of 60% by 2027. Mid-State Technical College and the District have partnered to advance the *60 Forward* initiative by removing admissions barriers to MSTC by admitting all graduating seniors from WRPS to MSTC beginning with the 2024 graduating class.
- Ms. Filtz and Jen Wilhorn, Assistant Director of Curriculum & Instruction, reviewed the impact that 2023 Wisconsin Act 20 has on districts across the state as it requires schools to provide science-based early literacy instruction in universal and intervention settings. Timelines are still being developed; however, the impact of Act 20 will begin to be seen in the 2024-25 school year. The statutory changes will have an impact on the District curriculum acquisition cycle, professional development with classroom teachers and elementary administrators, and District assessment practices. A detailed overview of various components needing to be completed to meet compliance requirements of Act 20 was shared along with its impact on WRPS. Guidance and clarification around Act 20 continues to be provided to districts day-by-day. Staff members and leadership teams are having conversations around the implementation of Act 20 provisions, and additional details and proposals will be shared with the Board as they become available.
- Ms. Filtz stated that the DPI will not lift the embargo on 2022-23 WSAS results until October 10, 2023 which is a day after the regular scheduled October Board meeting. As a result, a full report will be provided to the Board through the November Educational Services Committee meeting.

**Motion by John Krings, seconded by Troy Bier to approve the balance of the Educational Services Committee report and minutes of the October 2, 2023 Educational Services Committee meeting. Motion carried unanimously.**

**B. Business Services Committee – October 2, 2023. Report given by Julie Timm.**

Ms. Timm reviewed the following consent agenda item brought before the Board through the Business Services Committee, and asked if there were any motions to be held:

- BS-1 Approval of a 66.03.01 cooperative agreement with the Nekoosa School District for students attending the Project Search program.
- BS-2 Approval of the purchase of three minivans for a total cost of \$89,915.00 from Johnson & Sons Chrysler to be funded by the 2023-2024 Transportation budget.
- BS-3 Approval of the purchase a Kubota Model M7060 tractor and loader from Service Motor Company at a cost of \$59,683.24 to be funded by the 2023-2024 Buildings & Grounds budget.
- BS-4 Approval of the purchase of a 2024 Chevrolet Express work van from Wheelers for a total cost of \$39,075.00 to be funded by the 2023-2024 Buildings & Grounds budget.
- BS-5 Approval of the revised District 10-Year Facility Plan.
- BS-6 Approval of the purchase of cafeteria tables for Woodside, Howe, Washington, Grant elementary schools and THINK Academy for a total cost of \$169,820.13 from School Specialty.
- BS-7 Approval of the purchase of 27-Verkada environmental sensors from Bluum and the network installation from Current Technologies for a total cost of \$58,995.00 to be funded by the 2023-2024 Fund 46 Budget.

**Motion by Julie Timm, seconded by Troy Bier to approve consent agenda item BS 1-7. Motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.**

Ms. Timm provided updates and reports on:

- Invoices, bid specs, and purchases made
- Schools eligible to participate in the Community Eligibility Program include Central Oaks Academy, Grove Elementary, Howe Elementary, Mead Elementary, Pitsch Early Learning Center, River Cities High School, Washington Elementary and Wood County Alternative (operated by CESA 5 at East Junior High). These schools will receive free breakfast and lunch meals based on their overall free/reduced eligibility.

**Motion by Julie Timm, seconded by Larry Davis to approve the balance of the Business Services Committee report and minutes of the October 2, 2023 Business Services Committee meeting. Motion carried unanimously.**

**C. Personnel Services Committee – October 2, 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 support staff appointments of Debra Symons (Cashier – Lincoln), Luis Hernandez (ELL Aide – WRAMS), Kaitlin Siemen (Noon Duty Aide – Grant), Holly Ihrcke (Special Ed Aide – Woodside), Mary Pierce (Breakfast Cashier – Mead), Kendra Zavala (Special Ed Aide – Pitsch), Kate McAllister (Special Ed Aide – Grove), Kayleena Schauff (Special Ed Aide – Lincoln), Letty Schmick (Kitchen Helper – Lincoln), Rae Ann Nelson (Kitchen Helper – Lincoln), James Hertel (Relief Custodian – District), Kaylie Jinsky (Special Ed Aide – Woodside), Candace Van Lysal (Noon Duty Aide – Grant), Cheryl Clark (Noon Duty Aide – Mead), Cindy Bell (Kitchen Helper – WRAMS), Rachel Charette (Special Ed Aide – Mead), Bryanna Vann (Special Ed Aide – Lincoln), Rachel Steinmetz (Noon Duty Aide – Woodside), Dan Almario (Special Ed Aide – WRAMS), Stacy Crossley (Special Ed Aide – Lincoln), and Shelly Anderson (Special Ed Aide – Lincoln).
- PS-2 Approval of the non-represented support staff appointment of Amanda Bullock (School Nurse – District).
- PS-3 Approval of the non-represented support staff resignation of Nichole Fuller Daughtry (School Nurse – District).
- PS-4 Approval of the professional staff resignation of Chris Moore (Cross Categorical Teacher – WRAMS).
- PS-5 Approval of the support staff resignations of Gerald Korslin (Noon Duty Aide – Grant), Jennifer Krakow (Breakfast Cashier – Mead), Jenna Hake (Pupil Services Secretary – District), Reed Zirnhelt (Kitchen Helper – WRAMS), and James Hertel (Relief Custodian – District).

- PS-6 Approval of Board Policy 751 – Student Transportation for second reading.
- PS-7 Approval of a \$1,500 stipend for the Library Media Specialist for the 2022-23 and for the 2023-24 school year.
- PS-8 Approval of a \$1,500 stipend for Kirsten Johnson for additional responsibilities for managing the Common School Fund budget and District-wide subscription ordering after school hours.
- PS-9 Approval of an annual stipend for up to two FACT advisors at \$750 each. If one advisor oversees the 6-8 and 9-12 programs that person would receive \$1,125.
- PS-10 Approval of a one-time stipend of \$1,500 for Ashley Tessmer for the District Canvas Coordination position.
- PS-11 Approval of a 15 hour a week, school calendar year Social Worker Administrative Assistant position at the hourly rate of \$17.01 for the 2023-2024 school year. This one-year position will be paid for by the American Rescue Plan Homeless Children and Youth grant funds.

**Motion by Kathi Stebbins-Hintz, seconded by Troy Bier to approve consent agenda items PS 1-11. Motion carried unanimously.**

**Motion by Kathi Stebbins-Hintz, seconded by Larry Davis to approve the balance of the Personnel Services Committee report and minutes of the regular October 2, 2023 Personnel Services Committee meeting. Motion carried unanimously.**

Agenda Referrals/Information Requests

None.

Legislative Agenda

Troy Bier shared the following information:

- State Superintendent Dr. Jill Underly delivered the State of Education address on September 21, 2023, remarking on the state of K-12 Education in Wisconsin with its challenges to students, teachers, parents, and school as a whole.
- The Senate Committee on Education held a public hearing on September 26, 2023 regarding SB 83 which would require school boards to publish on the ballot, the estimated interest that will accrue on issued bonds as part of a referendum; SB 335 which would allow school districts to employ a district administrator without a license; and SB 395 which would remove the restriction on revenue ceilings that restricts a district's ability to shift their ceiling upwards for three years, if they fail an operational referendum.
- The Speakers Task Force on Childhood Obesity held a public hearing on September 26, 2023 to hear from invited speakers; of note is that Representative Donna Rozar from Marshfield, Wisconsin is serving on this task force.
- The Assembly Committee on Education held a public hearing on September 28, 2023 in executive session to discuss AB 108 relating to the definition of "strip search" for the purpose of the prohibition against strip-searching a pupil; and AB 293 relating to defining critical mapping data for school safety plans. The Committee also received public testimony on AB 403 relating to restrictions on the revenue ceiling for school districts; AB 223 relating to maintaining a supply of usable opioid antagonist at a school; and AB 342 relating to allowing school boards to employ a school district administrator who is not licensed by the Department of Public Instruction.
- Three other bills impacting Wisconsin schools and being considered in various legislative committees include AB 377 which would require student athletes to compete on sports teams that correlate with their birth sex; SB 447 which pertains to ready-to-use glucagon rescue therapies in schools; and SB 83 related to including with a referendum question for issuing bonds a statement of the estimated interest accruing on the amount of the bonds.
- The Assembly Committee on Education will hold an executive session on October 10, 2023 to vote on three bills: AB 377 relating to designating athletic sports and teams operated or sponsored by public schools or private schools participating in a parental choice program based on the sex of the participants; AB 163 relating to requiring anti-choking devices in schools; and AB 232 relating to directing school boards to provide instruction on Hmong Americans and Asian Americans.
- The WASB Legislative Conference is scheduled to occur on November 4, 2023 in Green Lake, Wisconsin.

Bills

**Motion by Troy Bier, seconded by Larry Davis to note September, 2023 receipts in the amount of \$6,741,194.25 and approve September, 2023 disbursements in the amount of \$25,432,995.71. Motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.**

New BusinessEmployee Appointments, Resignations, and Retirement Requests

None.

2024 Friend of Education Award

Superintendent Craig Broeren spoke with President Krings and Vice President Bier concerning a recommendation for the 2024 Friend of Education award to be presented to “Kids Growing Flowers for Kids.” This organization started in 2018 growing fall mums and donating 20% of the proceeds to charity annually, which includes hundreds of boxes crayons, glue sticks, hats, gloves, socks, and Band-Aids to kids attending Wisconsin Rapids Public Schools. They continue to seek ways in which to impact even more kids in the area and help make a positive difference in their lives. If selected, the award would be presented at an upcoming holiday concert scheduled to occur in December. The Board expressed their gratitude and full support for the award to be presented to the Tritz family operating the “Kids Growing Flowers for Kids” organization.

**Motion by Kathi Stebbins-Hintz, seconded by Troy Bier to approve of presenting the 2024 Friend of Education award to Kids Growing Flowers for Kids. Motion carried unanimously.**

Update on WRPS School Nutrition Programming

Lizzie Messerli, Director of Food Services, provided an update on various initiatives occurring in the area of District nutrition programming. An overview of District production kitchens versus satellite kitchens was shared along with the number of staff members and their roles in the department. The impact of the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) program on eligible schools was reviewed, and details were shared about the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program, summer food service program, and the department’s catering program. Lastly, details were provided about the “Get Schools Cooking” grant program which provides hands-on support through an assessment of school food operations, strategic planning, funding opportunities and technical assistance with a goal of helping school districts increase their amount of scratch cooking. Examples of various equipment such as salad bars, tilt skillets, and a blast chiller purchased to support these initiatives was reviewed. Board members had an opportunity to ask questions and expressed their appreciation for the presentation.

Wisconsin Rapids Education Association (WREA) Tentative Agreement for 2023-24

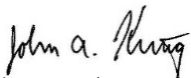
Superintendent Broeren presented a tentative agreement reached with the Wisconsin Rapids Education Association (WREA) for the 2023-24 contract year after bargaining commenced in October, 2023. The agreement includes a 6% increase to total base wages distributed in an equalized fashion which equates to \$2,994.00 per employee and pro-rated on the employee’s Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) employment status. Overall cost to the District for the settlement is \$1,080,597.00. The WREA bargaining unit ratified the agreement.

**Motion by Larry Davis, seconded by Troy Bier to approve of the tentative agreement reached with the Wisconsin Rapids Education Association (WREA) bargaining unit with pay retroactive to July 1, 2023 for currently active employees. Motion carried on a vote of 4-0 with one abstention. Kathi Stebbins-Hintz abstained.**

Calendar

Calendar items were reviewed.

President Krings adjourned the meeting at 7:20 p.m.



John A. Krings – President

Maurine Hodgson – Secretary

Larry Davis – Clerk