



**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

December 11, 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: Craig Broeren, Roxanne Filtz, Tracy Ginter, Steve Hepp, 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 – Wisconsin Rapids Area Middle School (WRAMS)

The following representatives from WRAMS presented information to the Board about the “Where Everyone Belongs” (WEB) transition program: Tatum Marrison, Katherine Duerr, Miah Dhein (students) and WEB advisors Abby Kreisa, Becki Mischnick, and Nichole Fleischmann. Details were shared about the program that helps 5th graders become acclimated and comfortable at WRAMS. Facets of the program include such events as elementary building class tours, the “Amazing WRAMS Race,” orientation sessions, a WEB rally, and a family yard party. Another benefit of the WEB program is student leadership development skills being honed in the upper grades. The Board enjoyed an interactive activity with the presenters, and expressed their appreciation for their presentation.

Student Representative Report

Sarah Panzer shared the following:

- The LHS Community Candle program recently concluded
- DECA participants recently attended a Sports and Entertainment Marketing Conference in Green Bay, and DECA district-level competitions are coming up soon
- The Community Holiday concert is scheduled for December 17th at which the “Friend of Education” award will be presented
- Winter break will take place from December 25, 2023 through January 1, 2024

Approval of Minutes

Motion by Troy Bier, seconded by Larry Davis to approve of regular Board of Education meeting minutes of November 13, 2023; special open and closed session Board of Education meeting minutes of November 13, 2023; and special closed session Board of Education meeting minutes of November 14, 2023. Motion carried unanimously.

Committee Reports

A. Educational Services Committee – December 4, 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 to increase the annual funding to the Boys & Girls Club of the Wisconsin Rapids Area from \$55,000 to \$85,000 annually to support afterschool programs, transportation, non-covered meals, and the “Be Great Graduate Program” with funding from Fund 80.
- ES-2 Approval to continue the Morning Jumpstart Program, including Grant Elementary, in collaboration with the Boys & Girls Club of the Wisconsin Rapids Area and funding the program with \$150,000 annually to be paid through Fund 80.
- ES-3 Approval of the proposed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Boys & Girls Club of the Wisconsin Rapids Area to implement the school based “Be Great, Graduate” program at the Wisconsin Rapids Area Middle School and Lincoln High School effective December 11, 2023 through June 30, 2025.
- ES-4 Approval of the proposed changes to the 2024 Summer Academy Program with a single session to be held from June 10-28, 2024; scheduling classes as K-5 grade level classes that incorporate the unique and fun course offerings as offered in the past; moving 4K-grade 5 Summer Academy to either Woodside or Washington Elementary; and moving grades 6-8 remedial courses to Lincoln High School.
- ES-5 Approval of the proposed K-5 Science curriculum maps beginning with the third trimester of the 2023-24 school year.
- ES-6 Approval of the eight year purchase of Mystery Science for all seven elementary schools and Central Oaks Academy at a total cost of \$78,120 to be funded through the District Curriculum Referendum budget; the cost includes a \$33,824 discount for committing to an eight-year renewal.
- ES-7 Approval of a districtwide universal “Late Start Monday” program beginning with the 2024-25 school year that would delay the start of school each Monday by 45 minutes for the purpose of uninterrupted collaboration time for teachers across the district.

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

Ms. Medina provided updates and reports on:

- Three District Innovation Mini Grant awards presented to Dustin Anderson for “Laser Learning – Cutting Edge Creativity in Art,” Leslie Anderson for “Kindness Club,” and Morgan Graf for “Calming Sensory Room.”
- District and School Report Cards for the 2022-23 school year were shared by Ms. Roxanne Filtz, Director of Curriculum & Instruction. Ms. Filtz stated that WRPS fared well in comparison to surrounding school districts and she is pleased that the report cards not only take achievement into account, but also other value added reporting factors that impact student outcomes such as growth, target group outcomes, and on-track to graduation readiness. District schools are doing well to meet the needs of the diverse student population they are serving. Ms. Filtz explained how target group outcomes are determined and the rationale behind monitoring this particular group as a method to gauge how successful schools are at reaching all of their students. Ms. Filtz reviewed postsecondary preparation data which covers advanced courses, dual enrollment, industry-recognized credentials, and work-based learning information. The District can be proud of its accomplishments that are evident from the report card data. Recognizing that there are always ways in which to improve, staff members continue to be committed to the work at hand to search for ways to implement instructional strategies and supports that maximize student outcomes and success. Ms. Filtz expressed pride in the District’s robust offerings in programming from early childhood age up through the high school level which are exceptional, and definitely worth celebrating.

Mr. Broeren stated that while he isn’t a fan of school report cards, he believes the report cards have come a long way in terms of taking factors into account that contribute to student performance and success. He believes it is relevant to point out that the Wisconsin Student Assessment System (WSAS) information is purely achievement data and when reviewed, no staff members in the District have ever expressed the idea that there isn’t room for improvement. However, when considering the school report cards in their current format, there are many correlations that get taken into account based upon such things as the percentage of economically disadvantaged students attending a particular school. Solely reviewing achievement data without involving other factors simply informs on where economically disadvantaged students live within district boundaries. He clarified that it isn’t a matter of stating students living in poverty cannot learn or experience high academic achievement; rather it has more to do with the confluence of factors by which these students are impacted. Examples include

one-income households, one-parent households, incarceration, food insecurity, etc. The District's free and reduced population percentage dropped slightly this year, but has otherwise continually been increasing over the years rather than decreasing, which is indicative of a lagging local economy. Even given these circumstances, the school report cards reveal that District schools are successfully meeting the needs of students and helping them experience educational growth, which involves many factors. He stated that schools are not creating the problems they are dealing with, rather they are dealing with the problems created by society.

Lastly, he stated that he takes exception to individuals in the community who try to portray the District as one that accepts low achievement or is unwilling to tackle underperformance when nothing could be further from the truth. On one hand individuals want to focus on WSAS results which may show poor performance during one snapshot in time while on the other hand, the same individuals do not want to celebrate growth indicated on School and District Report Cards. Mr. Broeren stressed the need to flip the narrative to focus on the positives and talk about the good things happening with schools, rather than disparaging individuals or the District when the primary goal of the organization is to ensure that all students succeed. More positive narratives spoken about the good things happening locally would be much more beneficial and helpful to the community's overall success.

Committee members expressed their pride in the achievements and strides being made by District schools to meet student needs and help them reach their full potential. They are appreciative of all staff involved who do everything they can to continually improve and build upon student success; and agree with the sentiment and benefits around spinning a more positive narrative, rather than negative.

- Ms. Filtz explained that Lincoln High School Orchestra Teacher Ginger Marten will be taking students on a trip to Nashville, Tennessee from June 19-June 23, 2024. Trip highlights were reviewed, including an opportunity for students to perform at the Grand Ole Opry Plaza. The cost of the trip is \$1,399 and funds will be partially raised through fundraisers. Staff members will work through any barriers for students who may be in need of financial assistance so that no one is excluded.

Motion by Katie Medina, seconded by Julie Timm to approve the balance of the Educational Services Committee report and minutes of the December 4, 2023 Educational Services Committee meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

B. Business Services Committee – December 4, 2023. Report given by John Benbow.

Mr. Benbow stated there were no actionable items taken up by the Committee, and reviewed the following updates and reports:

- Invoices, bid specs, and purchases made
- Steen Macek Paper Sales was awarded the bid for 840 cases of paper for a total cost of \$26,905.20. All vendors providing a bid were required to provide a ream of paper for test purposes to ensure the quality of paper was compatible with District copiers. It was determined that the paper provided by Steen Macek Paper Sales suited District needs the best, and the cost was paid for from the 2023-2024 school year district supply account.
- The District will be implementing Skyward Activity Accounting (SAA) software in the spring of 2024 which will allow full visibility of SAA revenue, expenditures, and equity accounts for building staff, District office staff, and District auditors. SAA will also integrate with the DPI financial software system. The first-year conversion cost will be \$7,087.00 with an annual reoccurring cost of approximately \$1,448.00. This cost will be paid for with the school business office budget account.

Motion by John Benbow, seconded by Katie Medina to approve the balance of the Business Services Committee report and minutes of the December 4, 2023 Business Services Committee meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

C. Personnel Services Committee – December 4, 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 Katie Normington (Administrative Assistant to Social Workers/Families in Transition Coordinator – District), Mattheis Haschke (Title IX Coordinator/Native American Liaison – District), Linda Weiss (Custodian – Lincoln), Tricia Joosten (Cashier – Lincoln), Madeline VanDeHey (Library Aide – Grove), Jennifer Kelsner (Special Ed Aide – Woodside), Michaela Wilhelm (Special Ed Aide – Washington), and Sheila Lynn (Registrar – WRAMS).
- PS-2 Approval of the support staff resignations of Lacey Worzalla (Special Ed Aide – Lincoln), and Kimberly Robison (Noon Duty Aide – Mead).

- PS-3 Approval of Board Policy 458 - Student Wellness for second reading.
- PS-4 Approval of Board Policy 458 Rule - Nutrition Guidelines for second reading.
- PS-5 Approval of increasing the food service substitute and custodial substitute rate from \$15.00/hour to \$16.00/hour effective January 1, 2024.
- PS-6 Approval of the substitute rate for second cook/ala carte cook/baker from \$15.50/hour to \$16.50/hour and the substitute rate for kitchen manager from \$16.00/hour to \$17.00/hour effective January 1, 2024.
- PS-7 Approval of approve increasing the maintenance substitute rate from \$21.99/hour to \$22.99/hour effective January 1, 2024.

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 December 4, 2023 Personnel Services Committee meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Agenda Referrals/Information Requests

None.

Legislative Agenda

Troy Bier shared the following information:

- Senate Bill 688 was introduced on November 16, 2023 which would require that school boards solicit bids and award a public works contract to the lowest bidder if the estimated cost of a contract exceeds \$150,000 and the contract is for the construction, repair, remodeling, or improvement of a public school building or for the furnishing of supplies or materials.
- The Senate Committee on Mental Health, Substance Abuse Prevention, Children and Families will hold a public hearing on SB597 which requires school boards to develop and implement a policy for notifying parents/guardians of children under 16 of each material checked out by their child at school libraries. It would also require boards to issue an annual notification to parents/guardians if it will allow students in the district to access materials through BadgerLink, an electronic collection on library resources.
- The Assembly Committee on Education convened a public hearing on December 5, 2023 concerning several bills impacting Wisconsin public schools. Topics covered include provisional teaching licenses for paraprofessionals currently working in schools, removing liability protection from personnel in a school district that possesses “obscene materials,” sexual misconduct towards a student by a school employee or volunteer, full-time open enrollment acceptance for children of teachers working in a district outside their resident school district, and a tribal relations bill package. No action has been taken on these bills.
- Governor Tony Evers will deliver the State of the State address on Tuesday, January 23, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. in the Assembly Chambers; the address will also be streamed on Wisconsin Eye.
- On December 6, 2023, Governor Evers signed Assembly Bill 109 into law as *2023 Wisconsin Act 60* which requires students to complete a half credit of personal financial literacy in order to graduate high school beginning with the 2028 graduation class. Superintendent Broeren confirmed that WRPS has had this requirement in place for quite some time, and the administration will review the parameters of this new legislation to determine if there is anything needing to be addressed in the current required coursework.

Bills

Motion by Troy Bier, seconded by John Benbow to note November, 2023 receipts in the amount of \$1,724,545.07 and approve November, 2023 disbursements in the amount of \$33,825,070.79. Motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.

New Business

Employee Appointments, Resignations, and Retirement Requests

None.

Annual School Violence Event Drill Reports

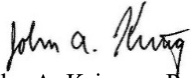
Superintendent Broeren explained that as required under Wisconsin Statute §118.07(4)(cp), each school has conducted a school violence event drill and subsequently submitted a written report which was compiled and provided to the Board for their review. The administration has been working with Wood County Dispatch to ensure they have the updated maps and will also follow up with Portage County since Grant Elementary is serviced by this agency. Board members had an opportunity to ask questions.

Motion by Troy Bier, seconded by Larry Davis to approve of the annual school violence event drill reports submitted by each building principal for drills conducted in accordance with Wisconsin Statute §118.07(4)(cp). Motion carried unanimously.

Calendar

Calendar items were reviewed.

President Krings adjourned the meeting at 6:57 p.m.



John A. Krings – President

Maurine Hodgson – Secretary

Larry Davis – Clerk