



MINUTES

Wisconsin Rapids Board of Education
Educational Services Committee

510 Peach Street · Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54494 · (715) 424-6701

Mary Rayome, Chairperson
John Benbow, Jr.
Katie Bielski-Medina
Troy Bier
Larry Davis
Sandra Hett
John Krings, President

November 1, 2021

LOCATION: East Junior High School Cafeteria, 311 Lincoln Street, Wisconsin Rapids, WI

TIME: 6:00 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: John Benbow, Katie Bielski-Medina, Troy Bier, Larry Davis, Sandra Hett, John Krings, Mary Rayome

OTHERS PRESENT: Craig Broeren, Roxanne Filtz, Steve Hepp, Phil Bickelhaupt, Ed Allison, Aaron Nelson

I. Call to Order

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

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Public Comment

Mike Schedgick commented on ESSER funding, expressing his distrust in federal government strings attached to the acceptance of funds and his belief that the constant printing of additional money by the federal government devalues currency. With regard to student assessment results, Mr. Schedgick believes the ESSER dollars spent did nothing to help with education, and he correlated assessment results with students suffering by masking and experiencing low oxygen levels.

IV. Actionable Items

A. Early College Credit Program (ECCP) and Start College Now (SCN)

Roxanne Filtz, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, explained that there are no requests submitted for participation in the Early College Credit Program (ECCP). Twenty-five students have applied to take 16 different courses through the Start College Now (SCN) Program. Committee members considered the requests.

ES-1 Motion by Troy Bier, seconded by John Benbow, to approve the 25 applications to participate in the 16 requested courses at Mid-State Technical College through the Start College Now (SCN) program in the spring of the 2021-2022 school year. Motion carried unanimously.

B. New Course Proposals

Ms. Filtz explained that five new course proposals were presented to the Educational Services Committee for potential approval in November. The proposals were taken through the Council for Instructional Improvement (CII) Committee, and the CII Committee overwhelmingly supports the adoption of the recommended course

proposals as presented. The administration recommends approval of all five requests. Committee members reviewed the requests. Ms. Hett commented that through her involvement on the CII Committee, she is impressed with the rigorous process that new course proposals and modifications go through prior to being introduced to the Board. All Committee members expressed their appreciation for the passion they have seen educators display as they develop and recommend coursework that will not only interest and engage students, but also contribute to their overall success. The following action was taken on the new course proposal recommendations:

a. Applied Math in the Trades

ES-2 Motion by Mary Rayome, seconded by Troy Bier, to approve the course Applied Math in the Trades for a .5 mathematics credit at Lincoln High School for grades 11 and 12 to begin with the 2022-2023 school year. Motion carried unanimously.

b. Bloodstone Layout Editor Course Credit

ES-3 Motion by John Benbow, seconded by Larry Davis, to approve the course Bloodstone Layout Editor for a .5 Elective credit at Lincoln High School for grades 10–12 to begin with the 2022-2023 school year.

c. Modern World History

ES-4 Motion by Troy Bier, seconded by Larry Davis, to approve the course Modern World History for a .5 social studies credit at Lincoln High School for grades 11 and 12 to begin with the 2022-2023 school year.

d. Criminal Justice

ES-5 Motion by Mary Rayome, seconded by Troy Bier, to approve of the course Criminal Justice for a .5 social studies credit at Lincoln High School for grades 11 and 12 to begin with the 2022-2023 school year.

e. Environmental Lit. in the Outdoors

ES-6 Motion by Larry Davis, seconded by Troy Bier, to approve the course Environmental Lit. in the Outdoors for a .5 English credit and a .5 physical education credit at Lincoln High School for grade 11 students to begin with the 2022-2023 school year.

V. Updates

A. Wisconsin State Assessment System (WSAS) Forward and DLM Exam Results

Ms. Filtz reviewed 2020-21 Wisconsin State Assessment System (WSAS) Forward and DLM Exam results. She explained that in the 2019-20 school year the exams were not administered as they were waived by the State due to the COVID-19 shutdown. While the state of Wisconsin requested another waiver for 2020-21, the federal government did not approve it. Data results represent a snapshot in time and are only one of many pieces of information that are utilized when determining how well

District students are doing. School and District Report cards will be released soon, and provide a more comprehensive measurement of data tied to student achievement and affiliated gaps, attendance/absenteeism, and post-secondary readiness and graduation rates. The Board will be apprised of the District and School Report Card results in December, after the embargo on data has been lifted.

While student 2020-21 state assessment performance results are down, Ms. Filtz described a number of potential contributing factors including:

- A significantly high number of students did not take the test, likely due to the mode of instruction selected during the pandemic
- Students not testing are automatically registered by the State as “not proficient” which negatively impacts overall results
- A District focus during the 2020-21 school year was to meet the needs of students and their families first under the ongoing stressful and uncertain circumstances caused by the pandemic; high achievement on a state test was not necessarily the primary focus of importance
- A variety of instructional models were offered during the 2020-21 school year to accommodate the needs of families; at the elementary level students could attend in-person, virtually through Central Oaks Academy, or through a distance learning “paper and pencil” method – if the students were not attending in person, there was more likelihood by families to opt out of testing
- Student transiency between modes of instruction negatively impacted learning
- Students at grades 6-8 middle school level whose parents wanted a virtual option were enrolled in Central Oaks Academy; the Academy had an unprecedented increase in 2020-21 to 500+ students enrolled at the 4K-grade 8 level
- 68.2% of students enrolled at Central Oaks did not participate in State testing which automatically deemed them as “not proficient”
- For 3rd and 4th grade students, the exam was the first of its kind for them since the exam wasn’t required in 2019-20
- Third grade students in particular have likely been somewhat hindered by a lag in keyboard development skill building, a skill that is helpful in a computer based testing environment

Ms. Filtz reviewed other data from WSAS results:

- Economically Disadvantaged Trends
- Comparisons of Students Not Tested at Each Grade Level
- Proficient and Advanced Comparisons of WRPS to Wisconsin
- 5-Year Trends of Opt-Outs and Proficient/Advanced Exam Results
- Comparisons of Individual WRPS School Scores by Building
- Analysis of Graduating Class Progress for 2024, 2025, 2026, and 2027
- Achievement Gap Data Related to Economically Disadvantaged Status, English Proficiency, Disability, Homelessness, and Ethnicity
- Comparisons to Wisconsin Valley Conference and Surrounding Districts

Ms. Filtz explained that the data continues to be reviewed by the administration and leadership teams in order to determine steps that can be taken to help students get back on track from learning opportunities that were lost as a result of the pandemic. Committee members had an opportunity to ask questions concerning the data, expressing disappointment in having students who opted not to test be included in the overall proficiency rating. Superintendent Broeren mentioned that a number of surrounding schools of like size had similar instructional approaches to WRPS for the 2020-21 school year except for the fact that their percentage of students not tested was significantly lower. Having a high opt-out percentage at WRPS certainly seems to

have had an adverse impact on scores. The data will continue to be analyzed internally with conversations focused on what can be done to boost student achievement and close the achievement gap where identified.

B. ESSER II Update

Ms. Filtz provided an overview of expenditures made using Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Education Relief II (ESSER II) Funds which were released to the District in March, 2021. As required, the dollars have been spent to take comprehensive action to mitigate learning loss and restore high quality learning environments in our schools. The funds have been instrumental in providing tangible items such as textbooks, workbooks, software, outdoor classroom supplies, student desks, tables, materials to build testing rooms, carts, cupboards, water bottles, water bottle fillers, student and staff masks, cleaning supplies, desk shields and partitions, technology equipment and social/emotional learning materials. Services tied to staff member virtual conference registrations and professional development opportunities were also purchased in order to help teachers learn how to navigate teaching in a virtual environment. Additionally, to ensure that all students had equal opportunity to learn, the District purchased internet access, Kajeet portable Wi-Fi hotspots, and technology devices for families to use. Lastly, expenses tied to personnel in the form of additional professional staff time and substitutes, along with telehealth software services to help address mental health needs of students, were all covered using ESSER II dollars. The end goal in using ESSER II funds has been to provide the best service and safest learning environment possible for students under the difficult circumstances caused by the pandemic. ESSER III funding is the next round of dollars available to the District which will be utilized to address any learning loss and continue getting students back to where they need to be academically, socially, and emotionally. The Board will learn more about this round of funding in the coming months. Committee members had an opportunity to discuss the District's use of ESSER II funding, and ask any questions.

VI. Consent Agenda Items

ES-1 Start College Now (SCN) Application Approvals

New Course Proposal Approvals:

ES-2 Applied Math in the Trades

ES-3 Bloodstone Layout Editor Course Credit

ES-4 Modern World History

ES-5 Criminal Justice

ES-6 Environmental Lit. in the Outdoors

VII. Future Agenda Items/Information Requests

- ACT-Aspire and ACT Test Results (December)
- Innovation Mini Grant Recipients (December)
- AGR Mid-Year Report (February)
- District Strategic Plan (February)

John Krings adjourned the meeting at 7:02 p.m.