



Wisconsin Rapids Board of Education

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

MINUTES

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

Note: Due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, Board Committee meetings were not held in May, 2020 and business normally conducted by the committees was taken up directly at the regular Board of Education meeting held on May 11, 2020. No Student Representative report was provided in May, 2020.

May 11, 2020

REGULAR BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

LOCATION: Thomas A. Lenk Educational Center, 510 Peach Street, Wisc. Rapids, WI 54494
Conf. Rm. A/B

TIME: 6:00 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: John Benbow, Sandra Hett, John Krings, Katie Medina, Mary Rayome

BOARD MEMBERS EXCUSED: Troy Bier, Larry Davis

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT: Craig Broeren

MEDIA PRESENT: Kevin Bargender – Wisconsin Rapids Community Media

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

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call

Approval of Minutes

Motion by Mary Rayome, seconded by John Benbow to approve regular Board of Education meeting minutes of April 13, 2020; special open and closed session Board of Education meeting minutes of April 13, 2020; and Board reorganizational meeting minutes of April 27, 2020. Motion carried unanimously.

Comments from Citizens and Delegations

None.

Committee Agenda Items

Craig Broeren, Superintendent, reviewed a number of topics as an update or actionable item for Board consideration which would normally fall under individual Board Committee agendas:

A. Educational Services Committee

2020-21 Peer Review and Mentor Grant

Mr. Broeren explained that each school year the District provides a comprehensive “New Colleague Program” in collaboration with surrounding school districts. During the 2020-21 school year, Port Edwards will be partnering with WRPS to provide this orientation program consisting of monthly seminars, mentor support, and other resources to help new colleagues adjust successfully. The Peer Review and Mentor Grant will help defray costs affiliated with the program.

Motion by Mary Rayome, seconded by Sandra Hett to approve of the application for the Peer Review and Mentor Grant in the amount of \$25,000 for the 2020-2021 school year. Motion carried unanimously.

Professional Development (PD) Plan for 2020-21

The Board reviewed the proposed 2020-21 Professional Development (PD) Plan. Mr. Broeren explained that no drastic changes have been made to the plan, and the District Strategic Plan was taken into consideration during the course of the plan's development. A focus on Professional Learning Community (PLC) time is included as part of the plan, and a portion of the time slated for District level activities has been replaced with building level PLC time as a result.

Motion by John Benbow, seconded by Katie Medina to approve of the 2020-21 Professional Development Plan. Motion carried unanimously.

Professional Development (PD) Schedule for 2020-21

The 2020-21 PD schedule was reviewed by the Board. Mr. Broeren explained that another focus in the PD plan which the PD schedule attempts to address is educator stress and fatigue, or "caregiver capacity." After the 2019 State Education Convention, the Board expressed an interest in ensuring that the mental health and well-being of staff members is monitored and supported as appropriate. The PD schedule will support that endeavor.

Motion by Katie Medina, seconded by Mary Rayome to approve of the proposed Professional Development Day schedule for the 2020-21 school year. Motion carried unanimously.

School Agenda Planners for 2020-21

Mr. Broeren presented proposed modifications to the 2020-21 school agenda planners. Elementary building agenda planners have not undergone review by the Board in the past, but will continue to be included on an annual basis in the future. The Board requested that similar language concerning suicide prevention resources be added to the elementary level planners.

Motion by John Benbow, seconded by Katie Medina to approve of the proposed modifications to the LHS Planner for the 2020-2021 school year. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by John Benbow, seconded by Mary Rayome to approve of the proposed modifications to the WRAMS Planner for the 2020-2021 school year. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by John Benbow, seconded by Katie Medina to approve of the proposed modifications to the elementary school Planner for the 2020-2021 school year, to include the addition of suicide prevention resources language. Motion carried unanimously.

End of Term Progress Reporting

Mr. Broeren reviewed how student progress reporting for Trimester 3 would occur given the circumstances surrounding the coronavirus closure and a shift to off-campus learning. Students at the high school level have options to select from (with parental permission) which range from choosing to continue with traditional grading, a choice of Pass/No Credit, or potential withdrawal from a course.

Middle school students moved to a progress monitoring format to shift the focus toward student engagement and learning as opposed to the end result of a letter grade. However, the Algebra and Level 1 World Languages courses are an exception that will still be receiving letter grades for the trimester.

Teachers at the elementary level will not be grading students, and instead will continue to provide written or verbal feedback through a variety of communication methods such as Google classroom, virtual meetings, email, and phone conversations. Typical year-end assessments such as Benchmark Books, PALS, and STAR will not be administered this year, and final trimester reporting will indicate an "N/A" score for all areas. Final progress reports will include a narrative section in which the teacher will provide a synopsis of overall achievement by the student for the year.

The Board discussed the changes in progress reporting, signaling support for the administration's shift and focus from educational accountability toward customer service and support in order to best meet the needs of students and their families during the pandemic.

Student Travel Update

Every four years a group of students and community members travel to New York City with a group called "Worldstrides." Originally the trip was scheduled for June 10 through June 13, 2020; however, due to COVID-19, the trip has been rescheduled for October 2 through October 5, 2020. At the current time, 11 students from Lincoln High School along with 13 adult community members and Theater Instructor Sara Danke Lukaszewicz are scheduled to participate in the trip.

B. Business Services Committee**Elementary Computer Workstation Purchase**

Mr. Broeren presented a recommendation for the purchase of several classroom computer workstations for Mead, Washington, and Woodside Elementary Schools due to potential security concerns affiliated with the aged equipment that is currently running under Windows 7, which is no longer supported by Microsoft.

Motion by John Benbow, seconded by Mary Rayome to approve of the proposed purchase of 100 HP EliteDesk 800 G1 refurbished computers from School Tech Supply at a cost of \$24,800.00 to be funded through the Technology Referendum budget. Motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.

Meals Provided During Closure

Mr. Broeren updated the Board on the number of meals served to children under 18 in the community since the COVID-19 shutdown began on March 16, 2020. Through May 1, 2020, a total of 67,855 breakfast and lunch meals have been served. The District will continue to provide meals in the current format through the month of June, and then evaluate where things are at in terms of federal reimbursement aid available for additional summer meal offerings.

Chromebook Purchase

The District has purchased 385 Chromebooks for the incoming freshman class at Lincoln High School. The purchase was made early in order to ensure there will be ample numbers of Chromebooks available for students in the fall. With the limited stock of available Chromebooks, the administration worked to avoid paying a high price in July due to shortages. The Chromebooks were purchased from PDS at a total cost of \$77,192.50 with funding via the 2020-2021 budget. Sandra Hett suggested that the District consider providing Chromebooks at Grades 5 and 6 for students. Mr. Broeren clarified that there are enough Chromebooks for student 1:1 access at the Grades 6-8 level, and the District continues to move toward a 1:1 initiative at upper elementary level as well.

FEMA Reimbursement for 2019 Storm Damage

The District sustained a great deal of damage to structures, fencing, and trees following the strong wind storm that occurred on July 20, 2019. Thankfully, the District applied for and received federal disaster recovery money through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) office. The damage recovery funds applied for are categorized as follows by FEMA:

Category A - debris removal and clean up total: \$112,949.99

Category E - damages to fences and structures total: \$7,588.03

Category Z - administrative work time collecting and documenting losses total: \$6,026.91

Approximately 150 trees were lost, not counting trees located in wooded areas. Clean-up began the day after the storm occurred, and approximately 25 crew members worked diligently to accomplish the work needing to be done. Additional clearing of trees and debris in wooded areas will continue into this summer.

Ed Allison, Director of Buildings & Grounds, met with an official from FEMA after our area was deemed a federal disaster. Since the WRPS clean-up occurred so quickly before FEMA was on-site to survey the damage, each tree lost needed to be pinpointed via GPS. An inordinate amount of paperwork related to federal and state forms was completed to meet the reimbursement requirements. A final meeting with FEMA officials occurred on May 4, 2020, and the final Category Z reimbursement will be received soon.

The grand total of all categories qualifying for FEMA reimbursement equals \$126,564.93.

C. Personnel Services Committee

Mr. Broeren presented the following professional staff retirement request:

Mary Schultz	Location:	Lincoln High School
	Position:	Teacher (Counselor)(1.0 FTE)
	Effective Date:	June 8, 2020

Motion by Mary Rayome, seconded by Sandra Hett to approve of the retirement request of Mary Schultz effective June 8, 2020. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Broeren presented the following support staff early retirement request:

Joseph Dunaj	Location:	Howe and Mead Elementary School
	Position:	Custodian (8 hours/day)
	Effective Date:	May 7, 2020

Motion by Mary Rayome, seconded by Sandra Hett to approve of the support staff early retirement request of Joseph Dunaj effective May 7, 2020. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Broeren presented the following professional staff appointments for the 2020-21 school year:

Abrielle Becker	Location:	District
	Position:	Teacher (1.0 FTE)
	Salary:	\$47,000
Nicholas Davis	Location:	Lincoln High School
	Position:	Teacher (1.0 FTE)
	Salary:	\$41,500
Caitlin Engel	Location:	WR Area Middle/Lincoln High School
	Position:	Teacher (1.0 FTE)
	Salary:	\$43,000
Hannah Laffin	Location:	THINK/Washington Elementary School
	Position:	Teacher (1.0 FTE)
	Salary:	\$43,000
Justin Pyan	Location:	Lincoln High School
	Position:	Teacher (1.0 FTE)
	Salary:	\$41,500
Kylie Hodgson	Location:	Lincoln High School
	Position:	Teacher (1.0 FTE)
	Salary:	\$41,500
Andrea Koester	Location:	Washington Elementary School
	Position:	Teacher (.25 FTE)
	Salary:	\$10,375
Sydney Dorschner	Location:	Lincoln High School
	Position:	Teacher (1.0 FTE)
	Salary:	\$41,500
Kendra Randrup	Location:	Washington Elementary School
	Position:	Teacher (1.0 FTE)
	Salary:	\$41,500
Lexi Lovell	Location:	Howe Elementary School
	Position:	Teacher (1.0 FTE)
	Salary:	\$42,000
Paige Kubisiak	Location:	WR Area Middle School
	Position:	Teacher (1.0 FTE)
	Salary:	\$41,500
Autumn Michlig	Location:	WR Area Middle School
	Position:	Teacher (1.0 FTE)
	Salary:	\$41,500
Brinley Gordon	Location:	Mead Elementary School
	Position:	Teacher (1.0 FTE)
	Salary:	\$41,500

Lauren Rehrauer	Location:	Grove Elementary School
	Position:	Teacher (1.0 FTE)
	Salary:	\$46,500
Stephanie Wisen	Location:	Washington Elementary School
	Position:	Teacher (1.0 FTE)
	Salary:	\$48,000
Trevor Hoth	Location:	Mead/Woodside Elementary School
	Position:	Teacher (.44 FTE)
	Salary:	\$18,260

Motion by Sandra Hett, seconded by John Benbow to approve of the professional staff appointments for the 2020-21 school year of Abrielle Becker, Nicholas Davis, Caitlin Engel, Hannah Laffin, Justin Pyan, Kylie Hodgson, Andrea Koester, Sydney Dorschner, Kendra Randrup, Lexi Lovell, Paige Kubisiak, Autumn Michlig, Brinley Gordon, Lauren Rehrauer, Stephanie Wisen, and Trevor Hoth. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Broeren presented the following professional staff resignation requests:

Letha Brizzee	Location:	Washington Elementary School
	Position:	Teacher (1.0 FTE)
	Effective Date:	June 8, 2020
Chris Feidt	Location:	WR Area Middle School
	Position:	Teacher (1.0 FTE)
	Effective Date:	June 8, 2020

Motion by Mary Rayome, seconded by John Benbow to approve of the professional staff resignation requests of Letha Brizzee and Chris Feidt effective June 8, 2020. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Broeren presented the following support staff resignation request:

Dera Baccus	Location:	Howe Elementary School
	Position:	Special Education Aide (7.0 hours/day)
	Effective Date:	June 5, 2020

Motion by Mary Rayome, seconded by Sandra Hett to approve of the support staff resignation request of Dera Baccus effective June 5, 2020. Motion carried unanimously.

Update on 2020-21 Professional Staff Hiring

Mr. Broeren provided an update on the status of professional staff hiring for the 2020-21 school year. There is a need for an additional speech/language pathologist to be hired given that caseloads have increased significantly since 2016, and no additional time has been added since well before 2016. There is also a need for additional special education teacher time for caseloads at Grant Elementary, although the position may be difficult to fill. At the current time, there are few candidates who have applied to fill replacement special education positions currently vacant at Lincoln and WR Area Middle School. The plan is to post the speech/language and special education positions, and then evaluate and make a final decision about hiring in conjunction with what the 2020-21 budget will allow.

Agenda Referrals / Information Requests

None.

Legislative Agenda

John Benbow shared the following information:

- The U.S. Department of Education has posted guidance for state education agencies and school districts concerning the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Fund, which is the principal source of funding for K-12 education under the federal CARES Act.
- The DPI will hold a public hearing on licensing changes for school pupil service professionals on Tuesday, May 12, 2020.

- The Office of School Safety has announced a weekly webinar opportunity being made available to Wisconsin educators to address topics related to school safety such as resilience, mental/behavioral health, threat assessment, school resource officers, and school safety drills; and also released a grant announcement for the \$2,000,000 Critical Incident Response Fund which is intended to assist schools that need additional resources to respond or recover from a very critical incident.
- U.S. Education Secretary Betsy DeVos issued a final Title IX rule that makes significant changes to how schools and colleges must handle allegations of sexual misconduct, including harassment and assault. The new rule takes effect on August 14, 2020.
- The DPI released information stating that more than 1 million meals have been provided to Wisconsin students since the closure of K-12 school buildings because of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The DPI is promulgating an emergency rule revision to PI 17 that expands districts’ ability to use online instruction for summer school and interim session and count those instructional minutes for membership. It will expand online summer school options to all grades for all courses provided for an academic purpose. The new rule is aimed at helping districts address the uncertainties posed by school closures due to COVID-19 and the current public health emergency.
- With anticipated state tax collections projected to decline and a potential freeze in state spending, increases that had been built into the State budget for schools is now highly doubtful.
- The Legislative Fiscal Bureau (LFB) recently reported that state tax collections dropped significantly in April 2020 as compared with April 2019, ending up at \$870 million below those over the same 10 months of 2018-19. Factors impacting collections include the coronavirus pandemic severely impacting the state’s economy and tax collections, and the extension of income and franchise tax filing deadlines from April to July 15 in 2020 affecting collections. In January the LFB had estimated that the gross balance in the state’s general fund at the end of the current fiscal year on June 30, 2020 would be nearly \$1.1 billion. To make up for the shortfall, a predicted \$189 million transfer to the state’s budget stabilization (“rainy day”) fund is unlikely to occur, which will boost the 2019-20 ending general fund balance. Additionally, the state required a number of state agency operations budgets to lapse 5% to the general fund in the 2019-20 fiscal year, estimating that it will save \$70 million to boost the general fund ending balance by that same amount.
- The Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association (WIAA) is extending summertime coaching contact for up to 30 days beginning on July 1, 2020 as a continuation of the spring season.

Bills

Motion by Mary Rayome, seconded by John Benbow to note April, 2020 receipts in the amount of \$1,294,258.50 and approve April, 2020 disbursements in the amount of \$3,379,552.97. Motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.

New Business

Employee Resignations and Appointments

Mr. Broeren presented the following employee resignation and appointment recommendations:

Professional Staff Resignations

Morgan Tracy	Location:	District
	Position:	Teacher (1.0 FTE)
	Effective Date:	June 8, 2020
	Date of Hire:	February 3, 2020
Keith Pupp	Location:	Lincoln High School
	Position:	Teacher (1.0 FTE)
	Effective Date:	June 8, 2020
	Date of Hire:	August 28, 2018

Motion by Mary Rayome, seconded by Katie Medina to approve of the professional staff resignation requests of Morgan Tracy and Keith Pupp effective June 8, 2020. Motion carried unanimously.

Professional Staff Appointment

Jordan Brummond	Location:	Lincoln High School
	Position:	Teacher (1.0 FTE)
	Effective Date:	August 25, 2020
	Salary:	\$46,500

Motion by Mary Rayome, seconded by Katie Medina to approve of the professional staff appointment of Jordan Brummond effective August 25, 2020. Motion carried unanimously.

Summer School Administrator Appointment / Summer School Coordinator Position

With Principal Tim Bruns resigning from his Summer School Principal duties, a review of the summer school administrator duties has taken place. Mr. Broeren presented a recommendation to appoint William Oswald to fulfill these duties, with compensation in the form of a \$6,000 stipend. One half would be paid in June to cover January-June duties, and the other half in July to cover July-December duties. Over the course of the past few months, Mr. Oswald has been working with Mr. Bruns to transition these duties.

The administration also recommends approval of the development of a Summer School Site Coordinator position to assist the administrator in a more “hands-on” capacity in day-to-day operations at each summer school site. The Board reviewed a job description for the position. Compensation is being recommended in the form of a \$3,000 stipend paid in two increments at the conclusion of each session, based upon the operation of six weeks of summer school. The overall cost impact to the District for these positions is neutral since the total combined pay does not exceed what is currently being paid out for these duties. At this point in time, plans are underway to host summer school; however, with the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, summer school is questionable. An individual has been selected to fill the coordinator position and will be brought to the Board for approval at a future meeting.

Motion by Mary Rayome, seconded by Katie Medina to approve of the appointment of William Oswald to fulfill administrative Summer School duties for a flexible period of time as needed to administer and provide overall oversight to the program, with compensation in the form of a \$6,000 stipend which will be paid at 50% (\$3,000) in June to cover January-June duties; and 50% (\$3,000) in July to cover July-December duties. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Mary Rayome, seconded by Katie Medina to approve of the development of a Summer School Site Coordinator position to assist the Summer School administrator beginning with the 2020 Summer School session. The individual hired will be compensated in the form of a \$3,000 stipend to be paid at 50% (\$1,500) at the conclusion of the first session; and 50% (\$1,500) at the conclusion of the second session based upon the operation of a six-week session. Motion carried unanimously.

Consideration of the Practice of Board Memorials

Ms. Rayome explained that she requested that this item be placed on the agenda for Board consideration. The current practice is to send memorial gifts on behalf of the Board and Superintendent in situations involving the death of an active employee, currently enrolled student, retired administrator, and/or retired Board member. Ms. Rayome believes the practice should change to remove the retired administrator and Board member since individuals could be missed as there is often limited contact with them once they have moved on. The Board discussed the topic.

Motion by John Benbow, seconded by Mary Rayome to approve of altering the practice related to Board memorials to send flowers or a memorial in the event of a death of an active employee, currently enrolled student, or current Board member. Motion carried on a vote of 4-1. Sandra Hett voted no.

Implementation of Alternative Open Enrollment Deadlines for 2020

Mr. Broeren explained that with the open enrollment deadlines being extended through Wisconsin Act 185 due to the pandemic, he recommends that the Board approve of adopting the alternative deadlines for this year in lieu of those outlined in Board policy to align the District’s practice with the statutory provisions, thus avoiding any conflict with current policy.

Motion by John Benbow, seconded by Katie Medina to approve of the implementation of alternative deadlines associated with processing 2020-21 open enrollment applications in accordance with modifications as specified in Wisconsin Act 185, in lieu of those set out in Board Policy 423 – Public School Open Enrollment and 423 Rule – Procedures for Processing Public School Open Enrollment Applications. Motion carried unanimously.

Amendment of Lamers Bus Contract

Mr. Broeren provided an overview of a recommended Amendment to the current Lamers bus contract. The Amendment comes after numerous conversations were held with Lamers representatives. The Amendment provides for \$2,153 in daily rate compensation during shutdown days due to the coronavirus pandemic. Expenses were calculated and provided by Lamers to justify the daily rate. Language in the Amendment does allow for an audit to take place, as necessary, in order to comply with requirements of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. The Board discussed the recommendation.

Motion by John Benbow, seconded by Katie Medina to approve of an Amendment to the Lamers Bus contract dated May 11, 2020 relative to continued compensation for the bus company during the COVID-19 shutdown. Motion carried unanimously.

2019-20 District Budget Amendment

The Board considered a recommendation to amend the 2019-20 District budget. Mr. Broeren explained that the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) utilizes information submitted to them by school districts to cast forward budget projections for the upcoming year, making it important for districts to have the information be as accurate as possible. In addition to the current recommendations, the administration anticipates there will be a need for an additional final budget amendment closer to the fiscal year-end in June. This will likely be brought forward at the budget hearing meeting scheduled on June 29, 2020.

Mr. Broeren reviewed portions of the budget needing to be amended. Areas highlighted on the expenditure side include a \$257,062.00 adjustment in the Undifferentiated Curriculum category related to grants, salary adjustments, and new hires; \$45,400.00 in Insurance and Judgements due to anticipated Unemployment Compensation claims caused by the pandemic; a change of \$552,703.00 in the Business Administration category for various District projects, Safety Grant initiatives, and equipment purchases; an adjustment of \$2,146,424.00 in the Referendum Debt Service Fund due to Board approved debt defeasance; the addition of \$43,400.00 in the Capital Projects Sinking Fund for the LHS athletic complex; a change of \$162,700.00 to the Capital Projects Fund for revenue limit exemption renovations. On the revenue side, a \$551,670.00 adjustment to decrease the Food Service Fund is necessary due to an anticipated loss in revenue because of the pandemic school closure. The Board had an opportunity to discuss the recommendation.

Motion by John Benbow, seconded by Katie Medina to approve to amend the 2019-20 District budget as presented. Motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.

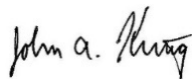
Update on 2020-21 District Budget

Mr. Broeren stated that typically by now the Board would have received an update on the 2020-21 District budget, and may have even approved portions of the budget being recommended. However, there are many unknowns tied to the upcoming budget year due to the coronavirus pandemic. As a result, several different budget scenarios are being considered and developed. He suggested there is a strong possibility that budget projections for the coming year will be changing in a negative fashion, and it is likely that revenue for the 2020-21 District budget will remain flat if a potential budget repair bill gets implemented by the state Legislature. This would be a significant change considering next year's budget was to include an increase in special education reimbursement from 26% to 30%, and additional revenues were anticipated from an increase under the per pupil revenue cap. With expenditures anticipated to continue rising at an estimated rate of 2-5%, budgeting for 2020-21 will be difficult without an increase in revenue. More details and information concerning next year's budget will be shared with the Board as information becomes available.

Calendar

Calendar items were reviewed.

President Krings adjourned the meeting at 7:41 p.m.



John A. Krings – President

Maurine Hodgson – Secretary

Larry Davis – Clerk