



Wisconsin Rapids Board of Education

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

MINUTES

John A. Krings, President
John Benbow, Jr.
Larry Davis
Sandra K. Hett
Anne Lee
Katie Medina
Mary E. Rayome

February 11, 2019

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: Sandra Hett, John Krings, Mary Rayome, Anne Lee, Larry Davis, Katie Medina, John Benbow

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT: Craig Broeren, Daniel Weigand, Brian Oswald, Ed Allison, Elizabeth Severson, Phillip Bickelhaupt, William Oswald

MEDIA PRESENT: Jesse Austin – River Cities Community Access

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

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call

Student Representative's Report

Desiree Alu was absent.

Approval of Minutes

Motion by Mary Rayome, seconded by John Benbow to approve regular Board of Education meeting minutes of January 15, 2019; and special closed session Board of Education meeting minutes of January 17, 2019. Motion carried unanimously.

Comments from Citizens and Delegations

None.

Committee Reports

A. Business Services Committee – February 4, 2019. 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 a proposal to purchase 44 months of Securly Anywhere Filtering from Securly at a cost of \$41,962.80 to be paid in three annual installments of \$13,987.60 with funding from the District Technology budget.

Motion by John Benbow, seconded by Larry Davis to approve consent agenda item BS-1. Motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.

Mr. Benbow provided updates and reports on:

The Committee was provided an update on purchases of police liaison officer services and Technology Education equipment.

Motion by Larry Davis, seconded by Katie Medina to approve the balance of the Business Services Committee report and minutes of the regular February 4, 2019 meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

B. Personnel Services Committee – February 4, 2019. Report given by Sandra Hett.

Ms. Hett 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 Batina Panzer (Custodian - Washington), Jacob Linzmeier (Custodian – Lincoln), Brenda Akkerman (Noon Duty Aide – Washington), and Jacob Blakeslee (Custodian – Lincoln).
- PS-2 Approval of the professional staff early retirement request of Patti Bauer (Teacher – WRAMS).
- PS-3 Approval of the professional staff resignation request of Lou Ann Horgan (Teacher – WRAMS).
- PS-4 Approval of the support staff resignation requests of Jodi Matthews (Special Ed Aide – Grove), and Julie Henne (Noon Duty Aide – Grant).
- PS-5 Approval of a 2% wage increase for confidential secretaries and District van drivers, excluding the Administrative Assistant to Superintendent/Board Secretary position, retroactive to July 1, 2018.
- PS-6 Approval of an hourly rate of \$29.00 for the Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent/Board Secretary position, effective July 1, 2018.
- PS-7 Approval of a pay increase for food service substitutes as listed in the addendum, effective March 1, 2019. *(The sub rates will be changing as follows: Head/Service Cook from \$11.55/hour to \$12.00/hour; Baker/Second Cook from \$11.05/hour to \$11.50/hour; and Helper/Cashier from \$10.55/hour to \$11.00/hour.)*

Motion by Sandra Hett, seconded by Mary Rayome to approve consent agenda items PS 1-7. Motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Hett provided updates and reports on:

- The Committee was provided information on the substitute pay rate and the current substitute fill rate.

Motion by Sandra Hett, seconded by Anne Lee to approve the balance of the Personnel Services Committee report and minutes of the February 4, 2019 meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

C. Educational Services Committee – February 4, 2019. Report given by Anne Lee.

Ms. Lee 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 2019-20 Wisconsin Rapids Public Schools Strategic Plan.

Motion by Anne Lee, seconded by John Benbow to approve of consent agenda item ES-1. Motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Lee provided updates and reports on:

- Lizzie Severson, Director of Food Services, presented an update on the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program and funding the District is receiving in 2018-19. Grove, Howe and Mead Elementary Schools are all receiving this award, and as a result Mead is able to offer the snack every day, and Howe and Grove three days a week. Besides nutritional benefits, students are also tasting and learning about new foods, and developing better eating habits.

- Ms. Severson updated the Committee on results of a spring 2018 survey the WRPS Wellness Committee requested staff to complete.
- Kathi Stebbins-Hintz, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, explained how the UW System merger of four and two year college campuses is changing what concurrent enrollment courses may be offered at Lincoln High School. English 250 will no longer be an option for students. Other possible course additions will be reviewed through the CII process and would be brought to the Committee in the future.

Motion by Anne Lee, seconded by Larry Davis to approve the balance of the Educational Services Committee report and minutes of the February 4, 2019, Educational Services Committee meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Agenda Referrals/Information Requests

None.

Legislative Agenda

John Benbow shared the following information:

- Information on Governor Evers' school funding reform proposal are becoming available, which he refers to as the "Fair Funding for our Future" plan as part of the 2019-21 state budget bill that he will be introducing later this month. Key provisions of the proposal include:
 - Shifts funding for the School Levy Tax Credit, First Dollar Credit, and High Poverty Aid to the General Equalization Aid Formula;
 - Provides an additional \$596 million in state general equalization aids over the 2019-21 biennium;
 - Sets a minimum aid level of \$3,000 per FTE student for every student in every district;
 - Weights economically disadvantaged students in all districts by an additional 20 percent FTE within the General Aid Formula for per pupil property valuation purposes only;
 - Includes a new \$5.8 million hold harmless provision in 2020-21 to ensure that every district receives the same amount of total state support under the "Fair Funding" plan as it would have otherwise received under current law;
 - Increases the current secondary cost ceiling from 90 percent of the state average shared cost per student to 100 percent of the state average;
 - Increases the current special adjustment aid provision from 85 percent to 90 percent of each district's prior year state general aid

In addition, Evers' proposal calls for increasing special education categorical aid by \$606 million in the 2019-21 biennium, which is projected to boost the percentage of eligible prior year special education costs reimbursed by this aid from about 24.5 percent currently to an estimated 30 percent in 2019-20 and an estimated 60 percent in 2020-21.

Evers' "Fair Funding" proposal would increase funding for student mental health by nearly \$64 million and further calls for fully funding full-day 4K; creating the state's first funding stream for afterschool programs; and achieving two-thirds state funding of public schools without raising property taxes.

- A public hearing has been scheduled to occur on February 13, 2019 by the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Commerce and Trade regarding three bills, including Senate Bill 16, relating to career and technical education incentive grants for school districts.
- WASB has released some advocacy tips around adopting and utilizing Board resolutions effectively. It is suggested that once adopted, resolutions be discussed openly and have greater awareness promoted with the public, staff members, and the legislators themselves about the importance of the resolution to the District and/or public education, with an explanation provided as to why the Board took the time and trouble to draft and adopt it.
- All Resolutions put forward at the 2019 WASB Delegate Assembly during the State Education Convention passed.

Bills

Motion by Mary Rayome, seconded by Larry Davis to note January, 2019 receipts in the amount of \$9,670,758.25 and approve January, 2019 disbursements in the amount of \$5,757,122.69. Motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.

Sandra Hett noted a receipt of \$72,000 in rebates from Focus on Energy, as well as the number of projects underway and being completed through the first round of Safety Grant funding.

New Business

Employee Appointment, Resignation, and Retirement Requests

Mr. Brian Oswall, Director of Human Resource, presented the following professional staff appointment for approval:

Emeline Ritchie	Location:	Grant Elementary School
	Position:	Teacher (1.0 FTE)
	Education:	BS – UW Eau Claire – May, 2018
	Major/Minor:	Unified Early Childhood
	Salary:	\$15,158 for 72 days (\$40,000 is normal full year 2018-19 salary)

Mr. Oswall presented the following professional and support staff employee early retirement requests for approval:

Judy LeClair	Location:	Woodside Elementary School
	Position:	Teacher (1.0 FTE)
	Effective Date:	June 10, 2019
	Date of Hire:	August 28, 2002
Linda Dougherty	Location:	Woodside Elementary School
	Position:	Special Education Aide (7.0 hrs/day)
	Effective Date:	June 7, 2019
	Date of Hire:	September 28, 1995

Motion by John Benbow, seconded by Larry Davis to approve of the professional staff appointment request of Emeline Ritchie; the professional staff early retirement request of Judy LeClair; and the support staff early retirement request of Linda Dougherty, as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Broeren presented the following administrator retirement request for approval:

Rodney Henke	Location:	Lincoln High School
	Position:	Associate Principal
	Date of Hire:	August 18, 1991
	Effective:	June 30, 2019

Motion by Mary Rayome, seconded by Anne Lee to approve of the administrator retirement request of Rodney Henke effective June 30, 2019. Motion carried unanimously.

Board Policy Approval for Second Reading

Superintendent Broeren presented Board Policy 422 – Admission of Nonresident Pupils, 423.1 – Part-Time Open Enrollment, 443.2 Rule – Bus Conduct, and 453.4 Rule – Medication Administration Procedures all for second reading. He explained that the policies have already undergone first reading approval by the Board through Committees in January, 2019, and are now ready for final approval.

Motion by John Benbow, seconded by Larry Davis to approve of Board Policy 422 – Admission of Nonresident Pupils, 423.1 – Part-Time Open Enrollment, 443.2 Rule – Bus Conduct, and 453.4 Rule – Medication Administration Procedures, all for second reading. Motion carried unanimously.

Update on the Federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) School Level Reporting Requirement

Mr. Daniel Weigand, Director of Business Services, provided an update to the Board on the new Federal School Level Reporting requirements which took effect beginning with the 2018-19 fiscal year. Districts are now required to report per-pupil federal and non-federal costs for each school to the Department of Public Instruction (DPI). In turn, the DPI collects the data and reports it to the U.S. Department of Education. This process is well underway with the District having reported its budget totals by school to the DPI in fall, 2018. Actuals will be reported by school to the DPI in late summer, 2019. In June, 2020, the DPI will be reporting audited actuals to the U.S. Department of Education and data will also be released to the public.

Mr. Weigand reviewed the types of reporting categories that will be published by school, which is based upon a financial reporting framework for school level reporting system adopted by the DPI after working with

38 other states and over 20 districts, along with experts from Georgetown University. For purposes of the expenditure calculation, the system utilizes the third Friday enrollment headcount rather than the pupil membership count, splitting the per-pupil amounts for teachers, support staff, supplies and other costs at the school level into either the federal or state/local level funding source categories. Per pupil amounts for administration, central services, and other costs at the District level are also split by funding source and this amount is then divided by the District's enrollment figure resulting in the same District level number being assigned to every school building.

For comparison purposes, the number the public will focus on is the total per-pupil expenditure amount that is broken down by school. While school level achievement data has been around for a long time, school level finance data is a new dimension entering the conversation in the future. While dollar amounts are not currently in the School Report Card by building, people will likely try to connect them in the future. To prepare for these potential conversations, it is important for District leaders and the Board to have a good understanding of its schools and student stories in order to explain the numbers. Mr. Weigand provided examples of how the data might be utilized in comparisons, explaining what a valid comparison might look like. A sample of what the School Level Budget report by each WRPS building might look like was shared. Superintendent Broeren explained that local circumstances and community factors are pieces that would need to be considered as information is deciphered and shared. District reporting information will be made available on March 1, 2019 when the Statewide School Level Budget data file will be posted to the DPI website. The Board had an opportunity to ask questions about the new reporting requirements.

Update on the Development of the 2019-20 District Budget

Mr. Weigand reviewed the DPI 2019-20 Revenue Limit Worksheet which contains preliminary numbers in the early stages of the budgeting process. This worksheet is instrumental in determining the projected local tax levy limit. Overall, if the numbers were to remain as projected, the anticipated 2019-20 Certification of General Aid on October 15, 2019 would be \$32,154,584.00. Actual numbers will most likely be different, and the guarantees in place for this fiscal year will likely change as we move into the 2019-20 fiscal year. State general aid revenue is projected to be \$643,000 less than the current year. Mr. Weigand pointed out the 2018-19 Levy for Non-Recurring Exemptions totals \$5,330,892.00 which primarily covers District energy projects. September and Summer FTE Membership Averages were reviewed, with an explanation about the three-year rolling average provided. Mr. Weigand explained that this is the first time in 18 years that the District is not receiving a declining enrollment exemption. The same 2018-19 number of 4,993 for enrollment was utilized in the budget projections. The revenue limit exemption for the District is decreasing as a result of the loss of the declining enrollment exemption. It is difficult to project what the revenue limit might be since there hasn't been a great deal of discussion or information on this topic released by the State, so no increase was projected in this area of the budget. Categorical aid amounts are projected to be increasing. A projected amount of \$2,360,964.00 has been calculated for energy exemption projects in 2019-20. The projected private school voucher amount being levied equates to \$1,307,811.00 which is a projected increase of \$365,379.00 over 2018-19. When comparing the 2019-20 revenue limit to 2018-19, Mr. Weigand's projection was \$1,467,068.00 less for 2019-20 largely due to the loss of the declining enrollment exemption and not having an increase in the projected pupil membership amount. The overall projected revenue limit totaled \$22,349,258.00. When the debt service amount of \$1,871,302.00 is factored in along with the Community Service Fund 80 amount of \$240,000.00 and \$4,000.00 of prior year levy chargeback for uncollectible taxes, the total estimated fall tax levy amount equals \$24,464,560.00. This amount equates to a \$365,379.00 increase over 2018-19. Mr. Weigand explained that while the Board doesn't need to levy for debt defeasance, his recommendation would be to do so as it would reduce the District's debt levy moving forward. A total of \$1,640,000.00 is available for debt defeasance. Mr. Weigand proposes that in the upcoming year the District place \$600,012.00 into an escrow account to be put toward the current QZAB loan which comes due December 5, 2022, and also defease \$1,030,000.00 of other Fund 39 debt.

Mr. Broeren explained that the projections thus far have been based upon currently known data. Actual impacts to the final 2019-20 budget will be better determined once more is known about the upcoming biennial budget, the pupil count in September has been taken, and projected aid certification amounts are finalized in October. The Board had an opportunity to ask questions concerning the 2019-20 District budget information.

Update on Board Member Participation at the 2019 State Education Convention

Board members Anne Lee, Sandra Hett, John Benbow, and Mary Rayome attended the annual State Education Convention in January along with Superintendent Craig Broeren. They provided an overview of some of the highlights and breakout sessions they participated in. A few of the topics of interest mentioned include:

- WASB Resolution Delegate Assembly action and results

- Breaking the Iron Cage of Poverty for students
- Keynote address titled “A Chance in the World” by author and successful business man, Steve Pemberton
- Federal and state reporting requirements and guidelines
- School safety
- Teacher pressure, stress, and frustration
- Legislative updates including the State budget
- Blue Ribbon Commission results

Mary Rayome spoke about a session that she felt was particularly impactful which spoke on the topic of teacher mental health and why it matters. She reviewed a number of points made during the session, which was facilitated by Barb VanDoorn, 4K-12 School Counselor from the Lake Holcombe School District, about the job demands of teachers and increasing needs that teachers see students bringing to classrooms on a daily basis. The presenter pointed to research that indicates teaching has become one of the most stressful occupations in the nation with is affecting burnout, lack of engagement, job dissatisfaction, job performance, and some of the highest turnover rates ever. A 2017 Wisconsin Educator Survey indicates that the reason teachers are leaving has less to do with insufficient pay and more to do with school climate and teacher voice. Some of the greatest challenges for teachers has to do with state or district policies that get in the way of teaching, lack of decision making, constantly changing demands placed upon teachers and students, managing student behavior, and addressing the needs of economically disadvantaged students. Forces that are outside of a teacher’s control may be taxing their good will and dedication, and teachers are more likely to stay in the profession when they feel they are being heard. Administrators also frequently feel this same stress and pressure. A few examples of the negative consequences of this stress may include teachers being less effective in classrooms, negative impacts on student math/language arts scores, and teacher turnover which adds financial cost to districts.

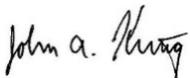
Solutions suggested in the session included some self-help techniques by teachers such as adjusting diet, exercise, relaxation techniques, and developing a support network. However, educator stress and mental health needs to be addressed systemically. Sources of stress come from a lack of strong principal leadership, a healthy school climate, and a collegial supportive environment. Additional solutions include adopting “strategic abandonment,” which means reviewing a list of all district initiatives and determining which are top priorities to keep while strategically abandoning the others. An increase in autonomy and decision-making by recognizing educators as professionals, giving staff leadership roles, providing an avenue for teacher voice, providing mentor programs, implementing student social-emotional learning, and promoting a healthy school climate can all contribute to overall solutions developed. Ms. Rayome suggested that during her long tenure of Board service, she has seen the educational climate changing, and feels it is time to begin having conversations about this concerning topic. She also suggested the possibility of hosting a Board workshop in the future, if necessary.

Mr. Broeren agreed with Ms. Rayome’s commentary about it being time for school districts as organizations to critically evaluate what they currently do, and what they truly have control over. Specific items can then be weighted to determine their necessity and value in meeting the needs of kids or supporting student achievement. Engaging in this evaluative process in a meaningful fashion involving staff members will be important since it will not simply mean divesting ourselves from all of the things currently underway. However, it does allow the District to be cognizant and critical of what we are specifically asking people to do with reflection taking place about whether or not a benefit received outweighs the unintended consequences of continuing with an initiative. Due to societal changes, funded and unfunded mandates at the state and federal levels, and all of the competing factors that schools deal with because we are a “people” business, it is time to review the things that we legitimately have control over as an organization and implement or adopt incremental changes where possible to address the concerns of staff mental health and stress. This topic will continue to be considered and discussed in the near future.

Calendar

Calendar items were reviewed.

President Krings adjourned the meeting at 7:30 p.m.



John A. Krings – President

Maurine Hodgson – Secretary

Larry Davis – Clerk