



# 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  
Mary E. Rayome  
Anne Lee  
Katie Medina

May 24, 2017

### SPECIAL BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING BOARD WORKSHOP

**LOCATION:** Thomas A. Lenk Educational Services Center, 510 Peach Street, Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54494  
*Conference Room A/B*

**TIME:** 6:30 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Katie Medina, Anne Lee, John Krings, John Benbow, Sandra Hett, Mary Rayome

**EXCUSED:** Larry Davis

**ADMINISTRATION PRESENT:** Colleen Dickmann, Daniel Weigand, Ryan Christianson, Kathi Stebbins-Hintz, Phil Bickelhaupt, Ed Allison, Kevin Yeske, Ronald Rasmussen, Steve Smith, Roxanne Filtz, Jennifer Wilhorn, Elizabeth Severson, Kelly Schaeffer

President John Krings called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

#### Roll Call

#### Employee Appointments/Resignations

Dr. Ryan Christianson, Director of Human Resources, presented the following employee appointment recommendations:

Mitchell Wolding  
*Grant Elementary/Lincoln High*  
Teacher (1.0 FTE)  
Salary: \$41,000

Jennifer Gause  
*Grant Elementary*  
Teacher (1.0 FTE)  
Salary: \$40,000

Kendra Shymanski  
*Washington Elementary*  
Teacher (1.0 FTE)  
Salary: \$46,500

Sara Jennings  
*Washington Elementary*  
Teacher (1.0 FTE)  
Salary: \$40,000

Jaymi Dake  
*Washington Elementary*  
Teacher (1.0 FTE)  
Salary: \$40,000

Amanda Scherbarth  
*THINK Academy*  
Teacher (1.0 FTE)  
Salary: \$40,000

Laura Cronan  
*East Jr. High*  
Teacher (0.50 FTE)  
Salary: \$21,500 (0.50 of \$43,000 annually)

**Motion by John Benbow, seconded by Mary Rayome to approve of the professional staff appointment requests for the 2017-18 school year as presented. Motion carried unanimously.**

#### District Facilities and Potential Options

Superintendent Dickmann explained that the administrative team has gathered information as requested by the Board at the last facility workshop meeting held on April 24, 2017. Following are highlights of the information shared, and points made concerning future facility options:

- An interactive map of elementary attendance boundaries was shared by Phil Bickelhaupt, Director of Technology – the map provided a snapshot of the areas in which students are residing and attending either inside or outside of their assigned attendance area
- Dr. Christianson presented current and projected (2017-18) enrollment numbers for Vesper Community Academy (VCA) – the school is projected to have 62 students in the program next year, with 42 being resident boundary students
- Boundary exception data requests from 2015-16 to present date was shared – the trend for VCA has been for fewer requests into the school, and a steady number of requests for pupils to attend schools other than VCA
- In studying VCA enrollment numbers, Dr. Christianson has determined that following the 2017-18 school year, enrollment is projected to drop by another 15 students at VCA once the large fifth grade class moves on to the middle school
- A history of open enrollment numbers for students requesting to transfer out of VCA to other districts since 2013-14 was shared – each year more students have opted to open enroll out to neighboring districts
- Ed Allison, Director of Buildings & Grounds, shared a four-year history of the gas, electric, and utility costs affiliated with VCA, noting that sewer rates from 2014-15 to 2015-16 have doubled
- The utility cost per square foot at VCA compared to other elementary buildings is the highest in the District, with an inefficient heating system raising costs (ductwork contained in the floor requires day temperatures to be run around the clock, all winter long)
- To upgrade the HVAC system to a more efficient system would cost approximately \$453,414
- Mr. Allison explained that the roof at VCA is in need of replacement, and a quote from the District's roofing contractor, Siplast, came in at \$318,000 which includes a 10-year full coverage warranty and 30-year life expectancy. The District has a long-standing history of working with Siplast, who stands behind their warranties and just recently replaced \$4 million in roofing materials on District roofs under warranty after a problem was detected.
- Mr. Allison explained that Vesper citizen Bill Winch provided him with a quote for roof replacement from a local contractor at a cost of \$255,324 with a 20-year graduated warranty; however, the replacement and life expectancy would not be comparable to the roof that Siplast would install
- Other structural/drainage issues involving the foundation at VCA are a concern, and the cost to excavate and provide some relief for the problem is anticipated to be over \$120,000
- Mr. Bickelhaupt shared that the cost for phone service at VCA each year is \$1,500; and internet service is \$11,500 per year since service is provided through TDS versus Solarus – the difference in cost is \$148/student at VCA versus \$26/student for all other pupils in the District
- Roxanne Filtz, Principal of THINK Academy located in Rudolph, spoke about the building capacity at THINK, and three potential options that might be considered with regard to VCA students being moved to THINK beginning with the 2018-19 school year:
  - **Option 1:** Combine THINK (*including THINK boundary exception students*) and VCA at Rudolph, adding only VCA resident students (*not VCA boundary exception students*) – *the impact on teaching sections would be to add two sections at THINK, and lose three sections at VCA*
  - **Option 2:** Combine THINK and VCA at Rudolph, adding all current VCA students (*including boundary exception students to both THINK and VCA*) – *the impact on teaching sections would be to add three sections at THINK, and lose three sections at VCA*
  - **Option 3:** Combine only resident students from both THINK and VCA at Rudolph, not allowing any boundary exceptions at all – *the impact on teaching sections would be to add two sections at THINK, and lose three sections at VCA*
- Ms. Filtz reviewed how the classrooms at THINK could potentially be utilized in order to accommodate each option
- To go along with the other school pillars of Brain-Based Learning and Conscious Discipline, a goal of the THINK staff in the 2017-18 year is to explore the integration of Project Based Learning into the curriculum at THINK – this goal will continue to be one of the staff, even if VCA pupils do not get moved to THINK
- Dr. Dickmann shared a building drawing of the Pitsch Elementary facility, explaining that the building has the capacity to house only a single section with little room for growth

- The Board had requested information concerning bus routes to VCA, and Dr. Dickmann shared that three bus routes transport between 55-63 students to VCA on a given day
- Mr. Weigand shared a comparison of staffing costs between elementary buildings, including the average FTE per pupil allocated which ranges from 6.90 to 9.54 – the Board requested this information to be provided to them in writing, along with a breakdown of the type of special programming at each school which might account for higher FTE allocations at certain locations
- Dr. Dickmann shared that other communities have utilized closed school buildings for dance studios, banks, churches, head start centers, senior centers, alternative education spaces, or for office space
- Dr. Dickmann researched potential grant opportunities in order for the District to develop a Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math (STEAM) magnet school, and found a number of grants ranging anywhere from \$1,000 to \$100,000
- In a recent conversation with a VCA parent, Dr. Dickmann responded to various questions which were raised – she shared her responses with the Board, which covered the following topics:
  - 4K site options, and advertisement of sections to parents
  - The possibility of a survey being sent to Mead parents to gauge their interest in having their students attend VCA
  - Options for a 4K program to be offered at VCA in the morning, with daycare offered in the afternoon by a licensed individual who would rent the room
  - Concerns that a lack of support from the District/Board to keep VCA open is why students are not enrolling
  - Whether busing for all students would be an option if some students chose THINK and others chose the STEAM option
  - Many parents like the small, “country” feel VCA offers
- Kelly Schaeffer, Director of 4K, explained the process for 4K site selection and the variables involved in student placement and staffing when daycare needs drive parental enrollment decisions
- Dr. Dickmann shared results of a VCA parent survey from November, 2016 in which parents were asked to rate their preference of various options – results indicated that parents preferred to keep VCA open, but if not possible they would prefer to either move the entire VCA project based program intact to another location, or move VCA students to THINK Academy

Dr. Dickmann presented four possible options to the Board concerning VCA as follows:

- ◆ **Option 1** – do nothing
- ◆ **Option 2** – disperse VCA students after boundaries are revisited and boundary exception students return to their home school
- ◆ **Option 3** – move VCA intact to the Pitsch facility
- ◆ **Option 4** – move VCA students to THINK (*with or without boundary exception students*)

Pros and cons were considered. The Board will discuss the topic again and possibly take action concerning VCA at the regular Board of Education meeting scheduled for June 12, 2017.

President Krings adjourned the meeting at 7:55 p.m.



John A. Krings – President

Maurine Hodgson – Secretary

Larry Davis – Clerk