



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

September 9, 2013

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

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT: Dr. Colleen Dickmann, Daniel Weigand, Kathi Stebbins-Hintz, Amy Ryan, Ryan Christianson, Trudy DeSimons, Ed Allison

MEDIA PRESENT: Jesse Austin – River Cities Community Access; Nathaniel Shuda – *The Daily Tribune*

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

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call

Student Representative Report

Emily Morzewski provided updates to the Board on the following topics occurring at Lincoln:

- Homecoming activities including the “Raiders for a Cure” fundraiser, Badger Band performance, and school dance
- Teen Leadership meetings through Incourage Community Foundation are beginning
- Student assembly featuring guest speaker Keith Nord, which includes a leadership training session in the afternoon with select students, an evening speaking event for parents, and on the following day Mr. Nord will work with students involved in the WVC Sportsmanship Summit

Approval of Minutes

Motion by Mary Rayome, seconded by Larry Davis to approve regular Board of Education meeting minutes of August 12, 2013; and special closed session Board of Education meeting minutes of August 5, 2013. Motion carried unanimously.

Comments from Citizens and Delegations

None.

Committee Reports

A. Business Services Committee – September 3, 2013

Mr. Krings explained that there was no Business Services Committee meeting held in September due to a lack of a quorum being established.

B. Personnel Services Committee – September 3, 2013. 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 early retirement request of Bonnie Grundman (Special Ed Aide – Lincoln).

PS-2 Approval of the professional staff resignation requests of Tanya Steger (School Counselor – Lincoln) and Lorra Walton (Language Arts – WR Middle).

Committee Reports (continued)

B. Personnel Services Committee

- PS-3 Approval of the support staff resignation request of Sue Siems (Office Aide – Woodside).
- PS-4 Approval of the professional staff appointments of Barbara Bondioli (Social Worker – Howe/Washington), Christopher Calteux (Grade 4 – Mead), Samantha Franz (Grade 4 – Mead), Heather Heqet (Grade 3 – Mead), Rachel Sheets (Social Worker – Grove/Woodside).
- PS-5 Approval of the non-union, non-certified support staff appointments of Candace Blakeslee (Human Resources Specialist – Central Office) and Lori Stanton (Human Resources Specialist – Central Office).
- PS-6 Approval of the support staff appointments of Rick Kehrberg (Relief Custodian – District) and Matthew Peeters (Special Ed Aide – WR Middle).
- PS-7 Approval of Policy 365.1 – Rule – Network and Internet Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Policy Guidelines for Students for second reading, and the deletion of Policy 365.1 – Exhibit 1 – Independent Use Student Consent and Waiver.
- PS-8 Approval of a wage increase for Leanne Rzentkowski, Disbursement Manager, to be increased to the same hourly rate as the Payroll Manager, which is currently \$23.60/hour, effective August 30, 2013.
- PS-9 Approval of a supplemental wage increase of \$3.00/hour for Ann Killian, Director of Curriculum Secretary, for a current total wage of \$18.19/hour, effective August 30, 2013.

Motion by Sandra Hett, seconded by Anne Lee to approve consent agenda items PS 1-9. Motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.

Motion by Sandra Hett, seconded by Mary Rayome to approve the regular Personnel Services Committee meeting minutes of September 3, 2013. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Sandra Hett, seconded by Anne Lee to approve special closed session Personnel Services Committee meeting minutes for two meetings held on August 6, 2013. Motion carried unanimously.

- C. Educational Services Committee – September 3, 2013. Report given by Anne Lee.
Ms. Lee reported that there are no consent agenda items from the September Educational Services Committee meeting. Ms. Lee reviewed the following updates and reports provided to the Committee:

ACT Results – Ronald Rasmussen, Principal of Lincoln High School, reviewed results of the 2013 ACT examination with the Committee, noting that LHS had a 64% participation rate compared to 49% in other Valley schools. Lincoln's composite score was 22.2, compared to 22.1 statewide.

Mr. Davis questioned why the participation rate for Lincoln is so much higher than surrounding schools. Mr. Christianson explained that it is likely due to the District beginning to offer the PLAN assessment on an annual basis to all sophomores approximately five years ago. Offering this exam gave more exposure and understanding to students about the assessments. Lincoln promotes the exam so that students can learn more about their options for post-secondary education.

Summer Professional Development – Kathi Stebbins-Hintz, Director of Curriculum & Instruction, shared that many professional development opportunities were available during the summer, and several staff participated in these opportunities. Throughout the summer there were over 300 staff involved in courses/workshops related to technology, Star Math and Accelerated Math, Common Core Mapping in Language Arts and Science, and RtI with Skyward. Eight staff members were involved to facilitate these opportunities.

District and School Report Cards – Ms. Stebbins-Hintz explained that the District and School Report Cards for 2012-13 were shared with District personnel on Monday, August 12, 2013 through a secure website. The results of the report cards are embargoed from the public until Tuesday, September 17, 2013. A full report on the results will be shared at the Educational Services Committee meeting on Monday, October 7, 2013.

Committee Reports (continued)

Motion by Anne Lee, seconded by John Benbow to approve the balance of the Educational Services Committee report and minutes of the September 3, 2013, Educational Services Committee meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Agenda Referrals/Information Requests

None.

Legislative Agenda

Ms. Rayome reported on a bill which has been introduced to bring all publicly-funded schools in the state, including private voucher schools, into a state accountability system. The bill was introduced with just four co-sponsors out of 131 lawmakers, although a fifth lawmaker, Sen. Dale Schultz from Richland Center, will be requesting that his name be added to the bill the next time the Senate meets in floor session. A public hearing on Senate Bill 286 is set for Thursday, September 12, 2013. The bill would begin to require that private schools in the voucher program report a wide range of performance information to the state. Public schools, including charters, already provide this data. Based upon data collected during the 2014 academic year, scores would be given to every public, charter and voucher school. The scores would be in five categories: reading and math, achievement and growth in those areas, college and career readiness, closing gaps in student achievement and graduation rates, and student engagement. The bill would also create a series of consequences for schools that under-perform three years in a row. Consequences might include restructuring, closing, and revocation of charter or removal from the voucher program. Governor Walker, who convened a task force in 2011 to design an accountability system for all publicly-funded schools in the state, including private voucher schools, has not been heavily involved in the discussions thus far. His support is seen as important to overcoming objections being raised by certain lawmakers in the state Assembly.

Bills

Motion by Mary Rayome, seconded by Larry Davis to note August, 2013 receipts in the amount of \$7,267,686.35 and approve August, 2013 disbursements in the amount of \$2,222,949.22. Motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.

New BusinessWeapons Policies

Dr. Dickmann presented Policy 443.8 – Possession or Use of Weapons – Students; Policy 522.9 – Possession or Use of Weapons – Staff/Employees; and Policy 832 – Possession or Use of Weapons – Visitors and Volunteers, all for second reading. These policies were reviewed by the full Board and approved for first reading at the regular Board of Education meeting held on August 12, 2013.

Motion by John Benbow, seconded by Larry Davis to approve Policy 443.8 – Possession or Use of Weapons – Students; Policy 522.9 – Possession or Use of Weapons – Staff/Employees; and Policy 832 – Possession or Use of Weapons – Visitors and Volunteers, all for second reading. Motion carried unanimously.

66.0301 Cooperative Agreement

Dan Weigand, Director of Business Services, presented a request to approve of a 66.0301 agreement with Adams-Friendship for a student to participate in the WRPS virtual program.

Motion by John Benbow, seconded by Larry Davis to approve of a 66.0301 cooperative agreement with Adams-Friendship for a student to participate in the WRPS virtual program. Motion carried unanimously.

Office/Clerical and Aide Support Staff Employee Handbook

Ryan Christianson, Director of Human Resources, presented a draft of the proposed Office/Clerical and Aide Support Staff Employee Handbook. Information was specifically brought to the Board's attention as it relates to changes from past protocol under the Collective Bargaining Agreement, the recent adoption of a revised weapons policy by the Board, and after District legal counsel had the opportunity to review the handbook and make recommendations. Specific topics addressed by Mr. Christianson included:

- Assignments, Vacancies, and Transfers
- Break allowance under "Workday"
- Insurances
- Probationary Period
- Compensatory Time
- Reduction in Force
- Vacations
- Employee Classifications
- Weapons on School Premises
- Holidays

Ms. Medina expressed concerns about the reduction in breaks from two down to one, and the angst employees might be experiencing as certain benefits are slowly being eliminated or reduced. Dr. Dickmann explained that one factor in the reduction of breaks relates to the secondary professional staff now teaching six periods per day. Teachers are not available to supervise as they have in the past while support staff employees go on break. Support staff are being used more now for supervision. Mr. Christianson explained that from a building perspective, the previous allowance of break time has been the biggest issue of concern with this particular employee group. In some instances, certain positions primarily perform relief for other employees that go on break. Clerical time has been able to be reduced through cutting back in break allowances. One of the challenges in keeping consistency while reducing breaks for this group is that it affects a very diverse group, from cashiers in lunch lines to year round, full time employees located at Central Office.

Ms. Medina stated that she gets the sense that employees do not feel they are receiving communication about changes being implemented, and do not understand why the changes are being made. Mr. Christianson explained that he has met with union leadership members to review the changes being implemented as the District moves toward the establishment of an employee handbook for this group. The administration acknowledged that in the post-Act 10 arena and without collective bargaining agreements in place any longer, the dynamics and responsibility of communication to employees about benefit changes rests more on the administration and less on union leadership.

Mr. Benbow questioned whether it is the administration's intent to provide printed copies of the employee handbooks to employees, or primarily have them posted on line for employees to access them electronically. Dr. Dickmann stated that the intent is to have employee handbooks available in electronic format on line, rather than in print form.

A question was raised about whether the District deducts union membership dues at this time. Dr. Dickmann clarified that the District does not deduct union dues any longer.

Mr. Christianson explained that the effective date of the pending Healthcare Reform Act has been postponed by a year; however, to be prepared as a District, changes will be implemented at the beginning of the new fiscal year (July 1, 2014) in anticipation of the January 1, 2015 effective date of the Healthcare Reform Act. The language being recommended for employee handbooks is intended to incorporate certain regulations being implemented, such as requiring employees to work 30 hours per week or more in order to be eligible for the group health plan.

Mr. Davis believes that districts are suffering "death by a thousand small cuts," and shared concern about how districts will be able to continue maintaining quality programming for students in the face of continued reductions and the slow deterioration of employee morale in schools.

The Board stressed the need for good communication with employees by the administration when changes are implemented concerning their wages, benefits, or employment with the District.

Motion by John Benbow, seconded by Mary Rayome to approve of the proposed Office/Clerical and Aide Support Staff Employee Handbook with recommended changes. Motion carried unanimously.

Honeywell Service Contract

Ed Allison, Director of Buildings & Grounds, presented a request for Board approval of the renewal of a three-year service contract with Honeywell at a cost of \$42,889.58. The contract covers service and software controllers in each building which operate the HVAC systems. Honeywell has agreed to hold current pricing for the next three years on the service portion of the contract. It is anticipated that the District will save money as a portion of the contract will be eliminated, once new service panels are installed. The total amount of savings is expected to be \$4,289.25. Mr. Benbow expressed gratitude to Honeywell for holding their pricing on the proposed contract.

Motion by John Benbow, seconded by Larry Davis to approve of the three year Honeywell service contract in the amount of \$42,889.58 as presented. Motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.

Resolution to Amend Wisconsin Rapids Flex Benefit Plan

Dan Weigand, Director of Business Services, explained that due to changing federal government regulations, a Resolution is being proposed which would authorize the District to make changes to and modify the WRPS

Flexible Benefit Plan. The specific change allows employees to contribute an annual amount up to a maximum of \$2,500 as established by the federal government.

Motion by Larry Davis, seconded by John Benbow to approve of the Resolution to Amend the Wisconsin Rapids Flex Benefit Plan. Motion carried unanimously.

Short-term Borrowing

Mr. Weigand presented a Resolution to authorize temporary borrowing in an amount not to exceed \$10,000,000 pursuant to Sec. 67.12(8)(a)1 of Wisconsin Statutes. Short-term borrowing provides cash-flow during certain times of the year when expenditures exceed revenue because of the timing of state aid payments to the District. The Board reviewed bids received from U.S. Bank, Bank of Oklahoma, JP Morgan Chase, and RW Baird. U.S. Bank proposed the most competitive rate. Mr. Weigand recommended Board approval to borrow \$10,000,000 from U.S. Bank at a rate of .437%.

Motion by Larry Davis, seconded by John Benbow to approve of the Resolution Authorizing Temporary Borrowing in an Amount Not to Exceed \$10,000,000 Pursuant to Sec. 67.12(8)(a)1, Wisconsin Statutes, from U.S. Bank at a rate of \$.437%. Motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.

Calendar

Calendar items were reviewed.

John Krings adjourned the meeting at 6:54 p.m.

John A. Krings – President

Maurine Hodgson – Secretary

Sandra K. Hett – Clerk