



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

April 7, 2014

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

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

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 Report

Emily Morzewski provided updates and reports to the Board on the following topics concerning Lincoln:

- The success of the Lincoln musical recently held
- Graduation materials will be distributed on April 9th while speeches are being written by students for the ceremony. Mr. Gawlitta will be the faculty speaker.
- “Distracted Driving Week” occurs after the week of spring break, and two speakers have been invited to speak to Lincoln students on this topic. Other events are being planned to occur throughout the week as well.
- Japanese students recently performed well in a quiz bowl held in Milwaukee, WI.
- The next Parent Teacher Visitation night is scheduled to occur on April 28th.
- The National Honor Society induction is scheduled to occur April 30th.
- Sophomores were recently rewarded for their PLAN test scores, which are some of the highest Lincoln has ever seen.
- Student Council elections were held last week. Student Council projects continue to move along as planned.
- The Lincoln Prom is scheduled for May 3rd.

Approval of Minutes

Motion by Mary Rayome, seconded by John Benbow to approve regular Board of Education meeting minutes of March 10, 2014; and special closed session Board of Education meeting minutes of March 10, 2014. Motion carried unanimously.

Comments from Citizens and Delegations

None.

Committee Reports

A. Business Services Committee – March 31, 2014 – 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 proposal for the 2014-15 Lincoln High School Trades House construction class to construct a house for Ronald and Debra Bohn on a lot located on Log Home Lane.

BS-2 Approval of Policy 751.21 – Use of Electronic Surveillance Technology on School Bus for first reading.

BS-3 Approval of Policy 731.2 – Use of Electronic Surveillance Technology in Public Areas of School Buildings and Property for first reading.

Motion by John Benbow, seconded by Katie Medina to approve of consent agenda items BS 1-3. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Benbow stated that an item related to the request for approval of VeriTime time sheet/time clock software was tabled by the Committee due to concerns about the \$9,750.00 annual fee for a program that covers non-salaried employees, when the majority of staff are salaried and do not punch a clock.

The Committee also heard updates and reports on purchases of virtual curriculum and occupational therapy services.

Motion by John Benbow, seconded by Larry Davis to approve the balance of the regular Business Services Committee report and minutes of the March 31, 2014, Business Services Committee meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

B. Personnel Services Committee – March 31, 2014 – 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 professional staff early retirement requests of Kathryn Engel (Library/Media Specialist – EJH/WRAMS), Pam McCarville (Special Ed Program Support – District), Jane Natzke (Library/Media Specialist – District; and the professional staff resignation requests of Nichole Coffman (Special Ed – WRAMS), Margery Wittenberg (Special Ed – EJH), and Susan Roe (Library/Media Specialist – District).

PS-2 Approval of the support staff early retirement requests of Jane Rosicky (Food Service – Grant), and Ardell Mueller (Special Ed Aide – EJH).

PS-3 Approval of the support staff resignation requests of Holly Boehm (Special Ed Aide – EJH), and Susan Breese (Special Ed Aide – Mead).

Motion by Sandra Hett, seconded by Mary Rayome to approve consent agenda items PS 1-3. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Sandra Hett, seconded by John Benbow to approve the regular Personnel Services Committee meeting minutes of March 31, 2014. Motion carried unanimously.

C. Educational Services Committee – March 31, 2014 – 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 proposed changes to the WRPS elementary (K-5) science curriculum.

ES-2 Approval of four students to attend University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, UW Colleges Online, and Mid-State Technical College at a cost of approximately \$3,689.40 under requirements of the Youth Options program.

ES-3 Approval of the following grant applications:

- 1) Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) Spotlight for School Continuation Grant for 2014-15 for Howe Elementary School – \$25,000
- 2) STEM DPI Grant – \$25,000
- 3) Mead Elementary Charter School and United Way of Inner Wisconsin Women’s Leadership Council – “Learning for Life” Reading Mentor Ad Campaign – \$5,000
- 4) Read to Lead Development Fund Grants
 - a) Mead Elementary Charter School 4K Royal Readers – \$2,000
 - b) Mead Elementary Charter School “Mead Reads” Summer Programming – \$9,000
 - c) WRPS Doors to Discovery Literacy Program: Further Developing Literacy in 4K – \$36,640
- 5) 21st Century Community Learning Center Grant for Mead Elementary Charter School – \$50,000
- 6) United Way of Inner Wisconsin Grant for Before and After School Club Mead – \$83,000

- 7) McCarthy Dressman Education Academic Enrichment Grant for Howe School – \$30,000 (\$10,000/year for 3 years)

ES-4 Approval of changes to Board Policy 345.11 – Procedures for Academic Excellence Scholarships for first reading.

ES-5 Approval of changes to Board Policy 443.3 – Smoking and/or Use of Tobacco/Nicotine Products by Students; Board Policy 522.2 – Smoking and/or Use of Tobacco/Nicotine Products by Employees; and Board Policy 831 – Smoking and/or Use of Tobacco/Nicotine Products on School Premises, all for first reading, with a language check on Policy 831.

Motion by Anne Lee, seconded by John Benbow to approve consent agenda items ES 1-5. Motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.

Ms. Lee provided updates and reports on:

Educator Effectiveness System – Kathi Stebbins-Hintz, Director of Instruction, provided an overview of the Educator Effectiveness System that will be implemented with the 2014-15 school year. The purpose and components of the program were explained, along with the schedule for implementation.

Motion by Anne Lee, seconded by Larry Davis to approve the regular Educational Services Committee meeting minutes of March 31, 2014. Motion carried unanimously.

Agenda Referrals/Information Requests

None.

Legislative Agenda

Assembly Representative Amy Sue Vruwink attended the meeting, and had conversation with the Board concerning the following topics:

- A bill introduced on loan forgiveness for rural districts
- Needed transparency for all schools accepting public monies, including voucher schools
- Misconceptions and issues surrounding Common Core State Standards
- Belief that politicians and special interest groups should not be meddling in education when professionals are hired to do what is best for students
- Referendums being held across the state to cover operational expenses
- Public education is undergoing a battle against privatization
- State budget cannot afford to support multiple educational systems being pushed by legislators
- Local control being diminished by legislative actions
- Concerns for how districts will compete and retain excellent staff under current constraints
- Decline in School of Education enrollment at Wisconsin universities and its impact on education
- Need for districts to promote the good things happening in their schools
- Public schools are required to accept and educate *all* students, regardless of poverty or special education needs, unlike private/voucher schools
- Continued track in education will be a “Race to the Bottom,” rather than a “Race to the Top” if education continues to be devalued. Jobs will get done – maybe not as well, but cheap, and you get what you pay for
- Declining morale of public workers
- Legislator redistricting caused “safe havens” where representatives don’t feel a need to respect or listen to constituents
- School start date decisions should be made locally
- Transparency in government is questioned when legislators are meeting at 4:30 a.m. to conduct business
- Special interest money pouring into the state from nonresidents
- Value survey recently conducted indicates there is a decline in the region for people providing respect and listening to one another – Rep. Vruwink will obtain copies of the survey for the Board
- Concerns that students do not get a do-over when the decisions being made cause system failure

The Board thanked Representative Vruwink for her insight and dialogue at the meeting.

Bills

Motion by Mary Rayome, seconded by Larry Davis to note March, 2014 receipts in the amount of \$9,634,825.22 and approve March, 2014 disbursements in the amount of \$3,380,155.00. Mr. Benbow noted a \$2,447.90 energy rebate from Focus on Energy related to a boiler tune-up. Motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.

New BusinessVirtual School Program

Ryan Christianson, Director of Human Resources, provides oversight and administrative leadership for WRPS virtual school programming. Mr. Christianson explained that the virtual team has been extensively involved in planning already for the 2014-15 school year. Open houses have begun, with curriculum review and selections being made. The virtual program currently services approximately 185 students in grades 4K-12. Each virtual student has an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) written for them. Elementary students in the virtual program have the option to receive academic services and sections in art, music, and physical education at Vesper Community Academy on Fridays. With the expansion of the program, space is becoming an issue.

At the secondary level, the program has been enhanced through more academic tutoring offerings. This year a room was opened up at East Jr. High to pilot these offerings on Wednesday mornings. Hopefully the tutoring will be able to be expanded to Lincoln next school year, and possibly offered more often. Virtual students who visit our brick and mortar settings often become comfortable and receptive to enrollment in the actual school building. Being able to expand options for virtual students at the secondary level will help students earn credits toward graduation in both elective and required coursework, such as foreign language and physical education.

The virtual program has generated a number of 66.030 cooperative agreements with other districts over the years. Nonresident students desiring to participate in the WRPS virtual program have been able to do so under these agreements. The District has not applied to the Department of Public Instruction to be a virtual charter school. Schools with virtual charter status can have students utilize the open enrollment process to attend. The District has not pursued this option because of the potential growth explosion which could inhibit or compromise program excellence. If the program grows more quickly than the District can handle, services to students could suffer. Also, when it comes to required state assessments, there are challenges to accepting students from great distances such as Milwaukee or Dodgeville. Travel to test sites can be a burden for the students, and families typically involved in virtual programming are often resistant to the extensive testing involved.

A number of the districts who have been willing to enter into 66.030 agreements in the past have taken a step back from them. For a variety of reasons they are no longer willing to enter into an agreement. For example, Marshfield, Pittsville, and Auburndale are no longer willing to enter into 66.030 virtual programming agreements. Some of these districts are exploring other options to provide these services to their students. On the other hand, a number of new virtual students have been coming in from Stevens Point. Stevens Point has been willing to work with WRPS to allow these students to enroll.

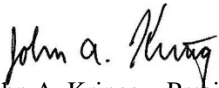
As the entire virtual program is reviewed, it is becoming more evident that moving the elementary virtual program out of Vesper Community Academy makes sense. There are space concerns at Vesper, and knowing that the majority of virtual students attending Friday services at that facility are actually from locations in and around Wisconsin Rapids, it may be time to relocate the program to a facility that has the capacity and location to absorb the program. Mr. Christianson has been speaking with Principal Tim Bruns at Grant Elementary concerning the possibility of moving the program to Grant Elementary. This would offer a closer location for families who live in and around Wisconsin Rapids, and open up opportunities to expand on-site tutoring options. Additionally, the coordination of the program would occur more easily since the Virtual Coordinator and other staff members would all work out of a more centralized district location. Providing flexibility and more on-site options in the program would likely attract even more students.

The Board took the opportunity to ask questions and discuss the virtual program. More information will be shared with the Board on this topic in the future.

Calendar

Calendar items were reviewed.

John Krings adjourned the meeting at 7:27 p.m.



John A. Krings – President

Maurine Hodgson – Secretary

Sandra K. Hett – Clerk