



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

April 27, 2015

SPECIAL BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

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

TIME: Immediately Following the Special Open/Closed Session Board of Education Meeting, but Not Before 6:45 p.m.

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

EXCUSED: Larry Davis

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT: Colleen Dickmann, Kathi Stebbins-Hintz, Daniel Weigand, Ryan Christianson, Phil Bickelhaupt, Ed Allison, Ronald Rasmussen, Tracy Ginter, Jen Wilhorn

President John Krings called the meeting to order at 6:55 p.m.

Roll Call

President Krings stated the purpose of the meeting is to continue discussions on District facility costs, utilization, and potential restructuring options.

Dr. Dickmann explained that several discussions have occurred among the administrative facility group since the Board workshop held on October 14, 2014 concerning potential facility options for the future. The group has focused on having grades 6-8 housed at either East Jr. High or the Wisconsin Rapids Area Middle School, with grades 9-12 being served at Lincoln High School. The group wasn't in agreement about moving to a grade 5-6, 7-8 configuration, but reached consensus to pursue a grade 6-8 configuration. Another option would be to do nothing. Costs for the various options were shared:

Option 1

| | | |
|-----------------------------|---|--|
| Grades 9-12 at Lincoln | \$1,550,000 | <i>to add science room, lab, and renovate office</i> |
| | \$ 250,000 | <i>technology infrastructure</i> |
| Grades 6-8 at East Jr. High | \$1,650,000 | <i>renovations at East</i> |
| | \$1,300,000 | <i>renovations at Central Office</i> |
| | \$ 250,000 | <i>technology infrastructure*</i> |
| | <i>*E-rate funding could potentially lower the technology costs by approximately \$200,000 – this funding, however, is not a stable source from one year to the next.</i> | |

Move River Cities High School, Central Office, and Vesper (Project-Based Learning Center) to the WRAMS building – cost involves technology as well as providing a fenced-in playground area for students (\$50,000-\$100,000 depending upon what equipment could be moved.)

Approximate Total Cost: \$5,000,000

Option 2

| | | |
|------------------------|-------------|---|
| Grades 9-12 at Lincoln | \$1,550,000 | <i>to add science room, lab, and renovate office</i> |
| | \$ 250,000 | <i>technology infrastructure</i> |
| Grades 6-8 at WRAMS | \$3,710,000 | <i>to add ten new classrooms</i> |
| | \$ 250,000 | <i>technology infrastructure*</i> |
| | | <i>*E-rate funding could potentially lower the technology costs by approximately \$200,000 – this funding, however, is not a stable source from one year to the next.</i> |

Move River Cities High School and Vesper (Project-Based Learning Center) to East – cost would include a fenced in playground area for students (\$50,000-\$100,000 depending upon what equipment could be moved.)

Approximate Total Cost:.....\$5,760,000

Option 3

| | | |
|------------|-----------|---|
| Do nothing | \$783,400 | <i>cost to keep Vesper building open</i> |
| | \$ 24,000 | <i>yearly cost for internet connection</i> |
| | | <i>*E-rate funding could lower this cost by approximately \$14,000.</i> |
| | \$210,890 | <i>cost to keep River Cities building open</i> |

Approximate Total Cost:.....\$1,004,290 (includes E-rate funding)



| | | |
|--|-------------|-----------------------|
| Potential Savings from Options 1 or 2: | \$1,004,290 | <i>facility needs</i> |
| | \$ 20,000 | <i>utility costs</i> |
| | \$ 150,000 | <i>staffing costs</i> |

Approximate Total Savings: \$1,174,000
 Making Total Actual Cost of Option 1 or 2: \$3,826,000 to \$4,586,000

Architectural information and specific technology needs were also shared concerning the options.

The Board discussed the various options presented. Points in the discussion included:

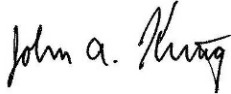
- Whether redistricting should be studied to implement a change in District elementary boundary areas
- If boundary exceptions should continue to be honored
- Competition for resident students who want to attend another school in the District versus nonresident students wanting to attend under open enrollment
- Where students might get absorbed (Mead/THINK?) if Vesper were to close – Vesper is the highest cost building with the fewest students
- Board philosophy concerning the project based learning program – should it continue to remain intact or is it better to consider what is best for all students district-wide
- The Board would like numbers of how many students attend Vesper and THINK as resident students, District boundary exceptions, or under the state open enrollment program
- What the growth potential is in the Vesper and Rudolph communities – are they currently growing or shrinking
- Concerns were expressed about having River Cities High School students and elementary students housed in the same building as the two programs are significantly different, with different student needs
- Potential for creative marketing should the project based learning be moved, along with a possibility of other new or innovative programs considered for inclusion at the new site
- Having grades 6-8 at WRAMS versus East in terms of facility and green space available for programming

- Reduction in true “junior high schools” is trending across the state
- Costs affiliated with change might not be covered without a referendum
- It might be a hard sell to the community to renovate buildings without any closure of buildings
- Lincoln High School is in need of pool/track upgrades
- Unknowns surround the future of the Pitsch Elementary facility as the Boys & Girls Club have until next summer to advise the Board of their intent with regard to purchasing the building
- Whether a two-tiered approach to move ninth grade to Lincoln while keeping eighth grade at East for one year might be feasible while additional consideration is given to various restructuring options involving grades 5-8
- Consideration was given to the benefit of hosting community listening sessions on the restructuring topic – past sessions have not always been well attended

The Board expressed hesitancy in committing to any restructuring option without knowing what the future holds for the Pitsch facility. No movement of ninth grade will occur for 2015-16 as Lincoln adjusts to the implementation of a trimester schedule. Any decisions made should be done well in advance to provide ample notification to parents and allow enough time to set up any new configuration.

Dr. Dickmann will reconvene the facility group to hold additional conversation on restructuring options. In the coming year more information will perhaps be known about the future of Pitsch and how well the Lincoln trimester implementation is progressing.

President Krings adjourned the meeting at 7:50 p.m.



John A. Krings – President

Maurine Hodgson – Secretary

Larry Davis – Clerk