



**WISCONSIN RAPIDS
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING MINUTES

John A. Krings, President
John Benbow, Jr.
Troy Bier
Christopher Inda
Kathi Stebbins-Hintz
Elizabeth St.Myers
Julie Timm

June 10, 2024

REGULAR BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

LOCATION: District Board Office, 510 Peach Street, Wisc. Rapids, WI 54494
Conf Rm A/B

TIME: 6:00 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: John Benbow, Troy Bier, Christopher Inda, John Krings, Kathi Stebbins-Hintz, Julie Timm

BOARD MEMBER EXCUSED: Elizabeth St.Myers

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT: Ed Allison, Craig Broeren, Roxanne Filtz, Steve Hepp, Aaron Nelson, Brian Oswald,
Ronald Rasmussen

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

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call

Public Comment

None.

School Showcase – Central Oaks Academy Charter School

Central Oaks Academy Charter School Principal Brian Oswald was joined by staff members Cyndee Lewis and Amanda Akkerman to present on the unique individualized programming offered through Central Oaks that fosters strong partnerships with families and helps students become successful. Services highlighted in the presentation included book work curriculum, asynchronous online platforms, lead education guides, virtual or in-person tutoring, Friday “in school” experiences, family events and field trips, interventions, open labs, and writer’s workshops. Positive feedback shared by families involved in the program was shared. The Board thanked Central Oaks staff members for their informative presentation.

Special Recognition

President Krings presented special recognition to Superintendent Craig Broeren for his excellence in service during his tenure as the District Superintendent for the past seven years, wishing him well.

Approval of Minutes

**Motion by Troy Bier, seconded by Kathi Stebbins-Hintz to approve regular Board meeting minutes of May 13, 2024.
Motion carried unanimously.**

Committee Reports

A. Educational Services Committee – June 3, 2024. Report given by Kathi Stebbins-Hintz.

Ms. Stebbins-Hintz 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 6-8 Science acquisition as presented in an amount not to exceed \$30,000.00 to be funded through the WRPS Referendum Curriculum budget.
- ES-2 Approval of Policy 345.5 – Graduation Requirements as presented for first reading.
- ES-3 Approval of the proposed 3-year K-5 Amplify CKLA acquisition at a total cost of \$578,910.82 and the Zaner-Bloser Handwriting workbooks acquisition for grades 1-5 at a total cost of \$68,997.44 to be paid through the WRPS Referendum Curriculum budget.

- ES-4 Approval of the proposed renewal of “7 Mindsets” for the 2024-25 school year at a cost not to exceed \$39,000.00 and to be paid through ESSER III funds.

Ms. Stebbins-Hintz requested that Consent Agenda Item ES-3 be held out.

Motion by Kathi Stebbins-Hintz, seconded by Troy Bier to approve consent agenda items ES 1-2 and 4. Motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.

With regard to Consent Agenda Item ES-3, Ms. Stebbins-Hintz stated that she wanted to provide some information concerning her “no” vote at the Educational Services Committee meeting, and also requested that the motion be split apart for action to be taken separately on the Amplify CKLA acquisition and Zaner-Bloser Handwriting request. She has no issue with approving the Zaner-Bloser Handwriting purchase, and would like this voted on separately as a result.

Ms. Stebbins-Hintz went on to comment that she is deeply appreciative to the District staff, leadership team, and committees involved who have been piloting and reviewing early literacy materials in preparation for the Elementary Language Arts (ELA) acquisition in conjunction with the requirements set out in 2023 Wisconsin Act 20. She explained that she is very passionate on the topic and wants nothing more than student reading scores to go up, and for them to receive the best education possible. Ms. Stebbins-Hintz made the following points which entered into her decision to vote no on the ELA acquisition request:

- She disagrees with many of the requirements set out in Wisconsin Act 20, both substantively and procedurally
- She believes there are some positives coming from the law, including the intensive professional development opportunities for staff in phonological and phonemic awareness
- Her primary struggle is the inability for the District to select its own materials without being limited to the four State-approved programs to be eligible for reimbursement by the State
- Several programs that met the letter and spirit of Act 20 were being piloted by District teachers prior to being removed from the list by the Joint Finance Committee (JFC); she is concerned that while there is no statutory requirement to choose one of the four approved ELA programs, the best set of materials had no opportunity to be selected because the narrow list of four has forced the District to choose a program for which there is some hope of receiving at least a portion of reimbursement
- The \$578,910.82 cost of the materials seems quite high for a three-year commitment when in comparison, the typical 10-year ELA acquisition purchase in the past hasn't reached near that amount
- While she recognizes that District leadership hands are tied in terms of keeping within the timelines of the Act 20 law, the materials are being purchased without first updating the ELA scope and sequence and curriculum maps, which she finds concerning
- She has concerns with the Amplify curriculum focus of shifting from small group to whole group instruction, lack of a writing emphasis, and lack of independent reading and shared reading levels
- Her experience throughout her educational career saw the pendulum shift back and forth in terms of reading initiatives and focus, and she would like to see a time come where parties meet in the middle and make decisions with the best interest of children in mind without any political motivation or ties
- While she will vote her conscience to reject the recommendation, once a decision by the Board is made she will continue to support the staff and administration in any way possible to remain unified and help contribute toward the best outcome possible for students

Committee members had the opportunity to provide commentary and share their viewpoints concerning the ELA acquisition recommendation. Superintendent Craig Broeren took the opportunity to explain that the reimbursement from the State will likely be less than ten percent of the cost since a large portion of the \$50 million set aside by the State to support Act 20 is going toward initiatives such as the establishment of the Wisconsin Reading Center and hiring numerous statewide early literacy coaches, in addition to reimbursement to districts purchasing eligible curriculum materials. The possibility of receiving very little reimbursement if a curriculum from the list wasn't chosen was not a focus for District staff members involved in reviewing materials. He stated that private businesses developing the ELA materials are involved to make money. He understands the cost concern; however, he would also caution against locking into any program long-term until the District is certain the selected materials are working well and driving positive student results and success. Lastly, while districts have the opportunity to pilot and implement any ELA program of their choosing (taking into account the exception of utilizing certain techniques such as three-cueing, which Act 20 prohibits), if a program not on the list is chosen and there are struggles or inadequate gains seen, the District could be vilified. Mr. Broeren stated that having legislators with no knowledge or background in legitimate literacy instruction making decisions that impact Wisconsin students based off of what other states are using or doing for ELA instruction is unbelievable.

He stated that the District is in a unique position since it was already preparing to undergo an ELA acquisition in accordance with the regular acquisition cycle timelines; however, that process was sped up by the requirements tied to Act 20. Mr. Broeren complimented WRPS staff members and the administrators involved in the piloting process as they were extremely engaged and open to reviewing materials in an expedited manner to come to a conclusion and the final recommendation being brought forward to the Board. District protocols and process were still able to be followed fairly well even with the time constraints involved. By the third year it should become apparent whether or not the selection of the Amplify CKLA program was warranted and, if anticipated gains are not realized the District can switch gears and consider other curriculum options at that time since it will not be locked into a ten-year program. Case studies of success in other districts based upon ELA programs they are using will also be important to review along the way. Mr. Broeren emphasized that the focus of the District has been to see student reading scores improve across all demographics.

He has confidence that if there are any gaps discovered in the Amplify approach, they will be overcome with talented teaching staff who are analyzing data and ensuring that their instructional approach meets the needs of all students.

Motion by Kathi Stebbins-Hintz, seconded by John Benbow to approve of the proposed 3-year K-5 Amplify CKLA acquisition at a total cost of \$578,910.82 to be paid through the WRPS Referendum Curriculum budget. Motion carried on a vote of 5-1. Ms. Stebbins-Hintz voted no.

Motion by Kathi Stebbins-Hintz, seconded by Troy Bier to approve of the Zaner-Bloser Handwriting workbooks acquisition for grades 1-5 at a total cost of \$68,997.44 to be paid through the WRPS Referendum Curriculum budget. Motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Stebbins-Hintz provided updates and reports on:

- The Committee was updated around the decision to purchase MAP Growth as the District reading screener for grades 6-12. MAP Growth will replace the Reading Inventory screener currently being used at the secondary level since it is being sunsetted. MAP Growth and Star Reading were the two programs piloted as a replacement to be used in the coming year, and after feedback was solicited from both staff and students involved in the pilot and reviewing data around the products, MAP Growth was selected at a cost of \$18,060.00 to be paid using ESSER III funds. The administration plans to monitor the use of MAP Growth in the year ahead to determine if it will be continued beyond the 2024-25 school year.

Motion by Kathi Stebbins-Hintz, seconded by Troy Bier to approve the balance of the Educational Services Committee report and minutes of the June 3, 2024 Educational Services Committee meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

B. Business Services Committee – June 3, 2024. 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 the purchase of a 5-year license to the Verkada Guest Visitor Management system and all included hardware from Heartland Business Systems at a total cost of \$36,187.25 to be funded from a combination of the District Technology Budget, Buildings and Grounds Budget, and the Technology Referendum Budget.
- BS-2 Approval of accepting the supply bids from multiple vendors for a total cost of \$114,828.26 to be paid out of the 2024-25 District Supply Budget.

Motion by John Benbow, seconded by Troy Bier to approve consent agenda items BS 1-2. Motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.

Mr. Benbow provided updates and reports on:

- Board members had an opportunity to tour the 2023-24 Building Trades Home prior to Committee meetings on June 3, 2024
- Invoices, bid specs, and purchases made
- A donation of \$3,000.00 from the Bell Family Charitable Foundation for basketball backboards to be installed at Grant Elementary

Motion by John Benbow, seconded by Julie Timm to approve of the Building Trades House tour minutes for June 3, 2024. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by John Benbow, seconded by Julie Timm to approve the balance of the Business Services Committee report and minutes of the June 3, 2024 Business Services Committee meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

C. Personnel Services Committee – June 3, 2024. Report given by Troy Bier.

Mr. Bier 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 appointments of Brian Cole (Teacher – Lincoln), Caitlyn Christensen (Teacher – WRAMS), Makenna Maronek (Teacher – Pitsch), Taylor Mancl (Teacher – Woodside), Megan Overfelt (Teacher – Howe), Cassidy Zieghan (Teacher – Grove), Joshua Martineau (Teacher – Woodside), Lauren Wilcox (Teacher – Grove), and Nicole Gustaveson (Teacher – WRAMS).
- PS-2 Approval of the support staff appointments of Jenny Williams (Manager Satellite Kitchen – Grove), Letty Schmick (Manager Satellite Kitchen – Washington), and Stephan Dunn (Custodian – Grove).

PS-3 Approval of the following 2024 summer professional staff appointments:

Name	Summer Teaching Position	Name	Summer Teaching Position
Pete Larsen	Secondary	Danielle Heuer	Middle
Aferdita Mehmedi-Muslija	Secondary	Elizabeth Rogus	Elementary
Emmaline Friedenfels	Secondary	Elizabeth Thompson	Elementary
Isadora Wagner	Secondary	Lori Harmsen	Elementary
Anna Goldbach	Secondary	Kylee Eastman	Elementary
Jacob Hintz	Secondary	Taylor Bergquist	Elementary
Caitlin Lautenschlager	Secondary	Ashley Butler	Elementary
Jeanne Olson	Secondary	Mimi Doerrler	Elementary
Ginger Martin	Secondary/Elementary/Middle	Kasey Kautzer	Elementary
Julie Stoffel	Secondary	Yia Xiong	Elementary
Tony Biolo	Secondary, Strength, Speed, Conditioning	Susan Martinez	Elementary
Justin Pyan	Strength, Speed, Conditioning	Melissa Miller	Elementary
Jack Smalley	Strength, Speed, Conditioning	Andrew Miller	Elementary
Faith Buzelli	Strength, Speed, Conditioning	Megan Thayer	Elementary
Zachary Toelle	Strength, Speed, Conditioning	Kylie Barnes	Elementary
		Amanda Bullock	Nurse

PS-4 Approval of the following 2024 summer support staff appointments:

Name	Position	Name	Position
Joanne Dachel	Instructional Aide	Beth Frank	Summer Custodian
Tania Halbersma	Instructional Aide	David Wittenberg	Summer Custodian
Nichole Goetz	Instructional Aide	Holly Zwicke	Summer Custodian
Kellie Garski	Instructional Aide	Aron Braun	Summer Custodian
Nicole Crowley	Instructional Aide	Jordan Armitage	B & G Helper
Holly McMiller	Instructional Aide	Tanner Peters	B & G Helper
Keegan Crowley	Instructional Aide	Haley Casper	Technology Support
Kelly Deitz	Instructional Aide	Rachel Teeselink	Technology Support
Donna Bohn-Moma	Instructional Aide	Cody Russell	Technology Support
Lita Rosenow	Instructional Aide	Benjamin Klingforth	Technology Support
Kerrie Wolosek	Instructional Aide	Nicholas Caffaro	Technology Support
Lisa Gray	Instructional Aide	Macy Back	Summer Gymnastic
Jennifer Lukaszewski	Instructional Aide	Olivia Oleson	Summer Gymnastic
Machelle Anderson	Secretary	Tia Thao	Summer Gymnastic
Marissa Ashenberg	Secretary	Shaely Thao	Summer Gymnastic
Tayla Palacios	Summer Swim Instructor	Bianca Bowden	Summer Gymnastic
Lilly Reetz	Community Lifeguard	Sophie Hasenorhl	Summer Gymnastic
Milan Montero	Community Lifeguard	Kim Ahles	Food Service
Sarah Korte	Community Lifeguard	Letty Schmick	Food Service
Carol Korte	Community Lifeguard	Jenny Williams	Food Service
Colin Coates	Community Lifeguard		
Marlene Holtz	Community Lifeguard		
Elyxa Peck	Community Locker Room Attendant		

PS-5 Approval of the youth apprenticeship/work experience support staff appointments of Madison Graf (Work Experience Copy Assistant – District), Riley Look (Youth Apprenticeship – Buildings & Grounds), Amelia Blum (Youth Apprenticeship/Student Webmaster – Technology Dept.), Cash Runstadler (Youth Apprenticeship/LHS Chromebook Repair Tech – Lincoln).

PS-6 Approval of the professional staff resignations of Jacob Jorstad (Teacher – WRAMS), Rebecca Steckbauer (School Counselor – Woodside), Nathali Jones (Teacher – Lincoln), Emmaline Friedenfels (Teacher – WRAMS), Autumn Maki (Teacher – WRAMS), and Andrew Cook (Teacher – Lincoln).

PS-7 Approval of the support staff resignations of Paige Weber (Special Ed Aide – Lincoln), Linda Weinfurter (Secretary – Grove), SanJuanita Rodriguez (ELL Aide – Lincoln), Cynthia Bates (Special Ed Aide – Washington), Teri Jazdzewski (Noon Duty Aide – Mead), Cheryl Hanneman (Faculty Media Clerk – Lincoln), Kaitlin Siemen (Noon Duty Aide – Grant), Jessica Kuczynski (Instructional Aide/Noon Duty Aide – THINK), and Alan Wollschlager (Custodian – Lincoln).

PS-8 Approval of the support staff retirements of Daniel Maciejewski (Custodian – Grove) and Richard Weber (Custodian – Mead).

PS-9 Approval of Board Policy 375 – Student Activity Funds Management for second reading.

PS-10 Approval of Board Policy 375 Rule – Student Activity Fund Management Guidelines for second reading.

Motion by Troy Bier, seconded by Julie Timm to approve consent agenda items PS 1-10. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Bier provided updates and reports on:

- The Committee was updated by Ronald Rasmussen, Principal of Lincoln High School, Chris Feidt, Athletic Director, and Brian Oswald, Director of Human Resources, concerning attempts to fill the Middle School Athletic Director position following a recent retirement. Despite efforts, the position could not be filled internally. As a result, a reorganization of roles is planned to occur within the Athletic Department to ensure improved coverage and support for WRPS and community athletics and activities. The changes will result in an overall decrease to the budget.

Mr. Broeren clarified that the individual who previously held the position had .33 FTE in teaching responsibilities with the remaining .67 FTE as the middle school Athletic Director. The teaching portion of the individual's duties has been filled and technically there will be an increase of .33 FTEs for the Athletic Department as a result; however, there is a decrease in overall *cost* because the person being replaced was a veteran staff member at the top end of the pay scale. The individual who will be hired as the Athletic Department Assistant would not need to be a licensed staff member and the plan is to post the position at a salary of around \$50,000. With the reshuffling of Athletic Department duties, Scout Gerndt who serves as the Assistant Athletic Director, Aquatics Director, and RASC Coordinator, would transition over to the middle school as the Athletic Director at .50 FTE while retaining portions of his facility related responsibilities at Lincoln High School. The overall anticipated savings is around \$30,000 with this reorganization of duties.

Motion by Troy Bier, seconded by Julie Timm to approve the balance of the Personnel Services Committee report and minutes of the June 3, 2024 Personnel Services Committee meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Agenda Referrals/Information Requests

None.

Legislative Agenda

Mr. Bier shared the following legislative updates:

- The state Senate met on May 14, 2024 to vote on overriding many of the vetoes that Governor Evers issued, including SB 917 pertaining to raising standards for student teaching in teacher prep programs, and requires the establishment of a DPI teacher apprenticeship program. Republicans currently hold a supermajority in the Senate, and one Democrat left the chamber earlier in the session to hold a position as Circuit Court Judge. Republicans are two votes short of a supermajority in the Assembly. To override a veto, they would need either two Assembly Democrats to vote with all Republicans (or be absent) to successfully complete these overrides. There is currently no Assembly session scheduled, and it remains unclear if/when they will take the action up.
- The 2023-24 Legislative Session has concluded and will stand adjourned until the next legislature is inaugurated in January 2025, unless the governor calls a special emergency session. The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) has issued a memo providing summaries of enacted K-12 education related legislation which can be found on the DPI's website.
- The Legislative Fiscal Bureau (LFB) released updated tax collection numbers and a report on the status of the state's general fund heading into the 2025-27 state budget debate. The fund still contains a health balance primarily because the governor and legislature have not been able to come to an agreement on how to spend it.
- The Wisconsin Association of School Boards (WASB) Legislative Update Blog is tracking state legislators not coming back in the next session. Half of the 33 state Senate districts, and all 99 Assembly district seats will be up for election. With major legislative redistricting occurring this year and the number of retiring legislators, significant turnover is expected in both chambers next session.

Bills

Motion by John Benbow, seconded by Julie Timm to note May, 2024 receipts in the amount of \$2,410,282.45 and approve May, 2024 disbursements in the amount of \$3,920,258.17. Motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.

New Business

Employee Appointments, Resignations, and Retirement Requests

Brian Oswall, Director of Human Resources, presented the following employee appointment recommendation:

Professional Staff Appointment

Josephine Altmann	Location:	Grove Elementary
	Position:	Teacher – Grade 3 (1.0 FTE)
	Education:	Bachelor’s – UW Falls – May, 2024
	Major/Minor:	Elementary Education/Social Studies
	Salary:	\$45,500.00

Motion by Troy Bier, seconded by Kathi Stebbins-Hintz to approve of the professional staff appointment of Josephine Altmann. Motion carried unanimously.

Wisconsin Rapids Education Association (WREA) Tentative Agreement for 2024-25

Superintendent Broeren presented a tentative agreement reached with the Wisconsin Rapids Education Association (WREA) for the 2024-25 contract year after bargaining commenced in May, 2024. The agreement includes a 4.12% increase to total base wages distributed in an equalized fashion which equates to \$2,147.00 per employee and pro-rated on the employee’s Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) employment status. Overall cost to the District for the settlement is \$830,756.00. The WREA bargaining unit ratified the agreement.

Motion by Julie Timm, seconded by Christopher Inda to approve of the tentative agreement reached with the Wisconsin Rapids Education Association (WREA) bargaining unit for the 2024-25 school year. Motion carried on a vote of 5-0 with one abstention. Kathi Stebbins-Hintz abstained.

Preliminary 2024-25 District Budget to be Published

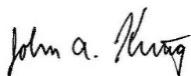
Superintendent Broeren presented the preliminary 2024-25 District budget proposed to be published. The Board received an update on the status of the 2024-25 District budget in May, and the budget will be discussed in more detail and adopted at an upcoming meeting scheduled for June 24, 2024. Any final modifications that might be needed will be taken up once the September, 2024 pupil count is complete and the State certifies aid in October, 2024. One new element that may have an impact on State aid to districts has to do with the Milwaukee Public Schools’ fiscal reporting issues. This situation will continue to be closely monitored. Board members had an opportunity to ask questions.

Motion by John Benbow, seconded by Troy Bier to approve of the preliminary 2024-25 District budget to be published. Motion carried unanimously.

Calendar

Calendar items were reviewed.

Mr. Krings adjourned the meeting at 7:05 p.m.



John A. Krings – President

Maurine Hodgson – Secretary

Julie Timm – Clerk