



## BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING MINUTES

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

July 22, 2024

### **SPECIAL BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING Board Workshop**

LOCATION: McMillan Memorial Library, 490 East Grand Avenue, Wisc. Rapids, WI 54494  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Meeting/Training Room

TIME: 5:30 p.m.

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

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT: Ronald Rasmussen

President John Krings called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

#### Roll Call

Mr. Krings explained the purpose of the meeting is to have conversations with Wisconsin Association of School Boards (WASB) Consultant Cheryl Gullicksrud around the roles and responsibilities of the Board and Superintendent, perform teambuilding exercises, and discuss commitments, norms, and ways to build and sustain trust in order to work together as a high functioning, effective team.

Ms. Gullicksrud introduced herself and led the meeting as a facilitator to guide conversations around how best to lead the District as a team. She explained that effective school boards in high achieving districts:

1. Have a good working relationship with their superintendents
2. Understand their role in the overall school system
3. Understand the importance of a strong collaborative Board team
4. Set goals and focus on results
5. Align and sustain resources to support educational programs
6. Hold themselves and their superintendent accountable for district success
7. Understand they set the tone for the culture of the district

She explained that research points to the fact that children are best served and receive the best education in school districts that are governed with Boards and superintendents that carry out their responsibilities well. Ms. Gullicksrud reviewed goals for the evening, which include:

- ◆ Get to know more about each member of the Board/Superintendent leadership team
- ◆ Discuss roles and responsibilities and levels of authority
- ◆ Gain a better understanding of group norms
- ◆ Explore ways to build and sustain trust

She then led the team through a number of relationship-building exercises and discussions to help ensure the team understood roles and responsibilities, establish mutual agreement on working collaboratively, and develop understanding and focus on areas that the District needs to work on to improve. Ms. Gullicksrud provided clarity around the Board's responsibility to decide what gets done and what parameters limit what gets done, and the Superintendent and administrators operationalizing it by deciding who does it and how to do it.

The team then reviewed goals and priorities to consider what Superintendent Rasmussen's first-year priorities should be. After some conversation, the top three priority areas for focus included: 1) Student achievement, 2) Administrative team leadership, and 3) School or District culture. Additional areas of importance discussed include:

- Attract and retain teachers, administrators and support staff
- Building relationships (staff, parent, student, community)
- Cultivating Board/Superintendent relations
- Community engagement in schools
- School finance
- Curriculum development/revision
- Referendum planning
- Assessment of facility needs
- Professional development/staff development
- Long-range planning
- Policy development or revision
- Board professional development

Some conversation occurred around how the Strategic Plan is developed and how much input is provided by the Board during the process. Additional conversations will be had on this topic in the future to ensure the Board's role in setting goals and direction for the District is an integral part of the process. Mr. Rasmussen will plan for the item to be on the Educational Services Committee meeting agenda in November, 2024.

The instrument to evaluate effectiveness was discussed, and the Board expressed interest in continuing the current practice for evaluation as outlined in policy which includes conversation and reflection with the Superintendent in December of each school year. After coming to consensus, a summary document is developed by the Board President and provided to the Superintendent and inserted in the personnel file. Board members acknowledged the importance for all seven members to provide their input and feedback during the December meeting to be sure all voices and thoughts are shared. The Board's goal for the Superintendent in the evaluation process is for the individual to understand expectations and have the opportunity to reflect, grow, and lead well. A bit more structure and focus around the process would be beneficial. Ms. Gullicksrud stressed the importance of goal setting so that priorities are clear and can be a focus, along with a way to measure outcomes and effectiveness. Referencing the Wisconsin Administrator Standards is also beneficial when performing the Superintendent's evaluation.

The team decided that since this is Mr. Rasmussen's first year as Superintendent, it would be good to have a check-in at the midway point before December (likely October) to review goals, reflect, and share thoughts and ideas about how things are going with him in his new role. Mr. Benbow offered to draft a list of goals and expectations to be used as discussion points during the mid-year meeting. Information concerning the Administrator Standards will also be gathered and provided for the Board's consideration.

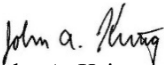
The Board discussed setting agreed upon norms, which are agreed upon standards of acceptable behavior, for meetings. Norms describe how you treat one another and are a set of understandings about how the Board will act in a meeting. Examples of Board norms were discussed and include:

- We will start meetings on time.
- We will come to a meeting prepared.
- We will actively participate in meetings.
- We will seek to understand the viewpoints of others.
- We will be honest in our interactions with others.
- We will listen when others are talking.
- We will assume positive intentions.
- We will leave each meeting supporting the decisions of the Board.

The Board considered how the "Speak Your Peace" initiative that is weaved into policy is an example of expected Board norms. Consideration was given to how Board members can support one another and mentor new Board members to help them get up to speed and better understand their roles in an efficient manner. All Board members were open to being paired up with another Board member to assist in this regard. Ms. Gullicksrud cautioned Board members to be mindful of the potential for a walking quorum and open meetings law. The potential for annual retreats of the Board in a less formal setting to have candid conversations and build connections and relationships may be something for the Board to consider.

The Board thanked Ms. Gullicksrud for her expertise in guiding the important conversations had during the meeting.

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

  
John A. Krings – President

Maurine Hodgson – Secretary

Julie Timm – Clerk