

## **Eau Claire Board of Education Meeting Minutes Monday, May 18, 2015**

*Generated by Patrice Iverson*

### **Members present**

Kathryn P Duax, Chris Hambuch-Boyle, Joe Luginbill, Richard Spindler, Charles Vue, and Chue Xiong

### **Member absent**

Trish Cummins

## **1. REGULAR MEETING - CALL TO ORDER**

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, President Spindler called the meeting to order at 7 p.m. Board Secretary Patti Iverson confirmed that the meeting had been properly noticed and was in compliance with the Open Meeting Law.

## **2. PUBLIC FORUM**

Archie Ecker, Memorial math teacher, has a wife who is also employed by the District part time .6 FTE. Changes have been made to the Employee Handbook with regards to benefits for part time employees. She was grandfathered to continue to receive benefits through this school year but will lose that benefit soon. He asked the Board to consider grandfathering this health insurance coverage on her behalf as was done in the past and into the future.

James Martin, technology coordinator and ECAE negotiator, said he recognizes the financial challenges facing the ECASD. He urged the Board to consider an operational referendum with several years of gradual increases in the property tax levy. He said the money could be used for the fund balance so the District doesn't have to short-term borrow each year and to be competitive to recruit and retain high quality staff, make investments in long-term programming and curriculum adoptions, and to invest in buildings and grounds for safe, efficient and well maintained facilities.

## **3. BOARD/ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS**

### **3.1 Superintendent's Report**

Dr. Hardebeck shared the upcoming Board of Education events.

She also made the following announcements:

Raeann Brenner from Northstar Middle School and Maddy LoRusso from South Middle School are National History Finalists. The national competition will take place in Washington DC in June.

The 2015 Memorial Girls' Swim and Dive Team has been recognized by the National Interscholastic Swimming Coaches Association of America as Scholar Team Award-Gold Level for having a cumulative grade point of 3.76.

The fall and winter Big Rivers Conference Sportsmanship Awards were recently announced. Eau Claire high schools did very well. For the fall season, North won first place in boys' soccer and Memorial won first place in boys' cross country. For the winter season, the Eau Claire hockey coop took first place in girls' hockey and boys' swim and dive, North won first place in wrestling and Memorial took second place in wrestling.

The Visioneer Design Challenge is a unique statewide program for middle and high school students who are interested in both art and design of the 21st century. The goal of the program is to expose students to art and design through problem solving that includes feedback and interaction with design professionals in their respective fields. Challenges included design in spaces and places, communication and information, human interaction and everyday things. It provides students with an opportunity to explore design careers and open their minds to the many possibilities waiting for them in their future. Several students in the ECASD participated and received advanced or proficient design distinction. Many of those students were at the meeting and were recognized.

### **3.2 Board President's Report**

Rich Spindler urged Board members to contact their regional legislators about education finance issues. He also noted that the Charter/Choice Committee asked Board members to read the book, *Unsustainable* before the next meeting.

WASB will hold its Summer Institute on July 18th if Board members are interested in attending.

President Spindler stated that this was the Student Representatives last meeting. He thanked them for their involvement throughout the year and presented them with a token of appreciation.

## **4. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT**

Hannah Winegarden shared some ideas on ways to promote the District: Highlight schools individually on the webpage, encourage more business internships to get students out in the community, institute an Academic Hall of Fame at the high schools, encourage mentorships with students between levels, and have more involvement in social media. She

also shared recent events taking place at North. Hannah thanked the Board for a great experience and said she learned a lot about decision-making. She said it was very rewarding to see how many people care about the students.

Jonah Giese echoed the comments about utilizing social media, and particularly Twitter, more effectively to interact with the community. Jonah also said that after seniors take their AP exams, classes are more relaxed and attendance starts dropping off. He said that as students head to college or into the work force, they sometimes feel unprepared. He suggested having a day dedicated to less academic and more real life applications; like changing a tire on their car, doing taxes, and writing checks. This would fit well with the goal to educate the whole child with real world situations. Jonah also thanked the Board for providing him with this civic responsibility.

## **5. OTHER REPORTS**

### **5.1 Board Committee Reports**

There were no Committee Reports.

### **5.2 Legislative Update**

Chris Hambuch-Boyle said that May 19<sup>th</sup> will be a crucial day as the Joint Finance Committee votes on K-12 education items in the proposed state budget. She encouraged the Board and community to contact their legislators now.

## **6. CONSENT RESOLUTION AGENDA**

Motion by Kathryn P Duax, second by Joe Luginbill, to approve the following consent resolution agenda items:

- Minutes of May 4, 2015
- Financial Report - April 2015
- Gifts in the amount of \$17,631.56 for the period April 1, 2015 through April 30, 2015
- Human Resources - Employment Report
- Approve Employee Handbook Modifications
- Revisions to Policy 230 - Administrative Team

Motion carried.

Yes: Kathryn P Duax, Chris Hambuch-Boyle, Joe Luginbill, Richard Spindler, Chue Xiong, Charles Vue.

## **7. INDIVIDUALLY CONSIDERED RESOLUTION(S)**

### **7.1 Payment of Bills & Payroll**

Motion by Kathryn P Duax, second by Chue Xiong, to approve payment of all bills in the amount of \$5,081,128.03 and net payroll in the amount of \$3,038,424.53 for the period of April 1, 2015 through April 31, 2015

Motion carried by the following roll call vote:

Yes: Kathryn P Duax, Chris Hambuch-Boyle, Richard Spindler, Chue Xiong; Abstain: Joe Luginbill, Charles Vue.

### **7.2 Appoint Board Committee Assignments**

President Spindler shared his recommended Committee assignments. Com. Duax noted that she wasn't sure if the Joint Commission on Shared Services would allow alternates. President Spindler will follow up on that.

Motion by Joe Luginbill, second by Chue Xiong, to approve the Board Committee assignments as presented.

Motion carried.

Yes: Kathryn P Duax, Chris Hambuch-Boyle, Joe Luginbill, Richard Spindler, Charles Vue, Chue Xiong.

### **7.3 WERMC 66.0301 Agreement**

Dan Van De Water explained that the District has been member of WERMC since its inception in 2010. It is a consortium of districts that joined together to leverage premium for property, casualty and workmen's compensation benefits. The District utilizes its specialists every week. He said that annual Board approval is needed.

Motion by Chris Hambuch-Boyle, second by Charles Vue, to approve the 2015-2016 Wisconsin Educators Risk Management Cooperation (WERMC) 66.0301 Agreement as presented.

Motion carried.

Yes: Kathryn P Duax, Chris Hambuch-Boyle, Joe Luginbill, Richard Spindler, Charles Vue, Chue Xiong

### **7.4 Summer 2015 Meeting Schedule**

The Board discussed the summer meeting schedule. It was decided that the Board would hold one meeting in June and

July -- on June 1st and July 13<sup>th</sup>.

## **8. ADJOURN TO COMMITTEE**

## **9. COMMITTEE REPORTS/ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**

### **9.1 Demographic Trends & Facilities Planning Committee Report/Recommendations**

Mike Falch, co-chair of the Demographic Trends & Facilities Planning Committee, shared the committee's report on differences in enrollment among schools, uses for Little Red School and recommendations from the committee.

Capital Referendum - A listing of capital projects totals \$46 million and the committee agreed that a capital referendum should be considered by the Board. Priority should be given to improvements at South Middle School, possibly Roosevelt and other maintenance items deemed a priority by administration.

Applied Population Laboratory (APL) Study & Building Capacity -- Projections show steadily increasing enrollment in the District over the next decade. The committee recommended looking at open enrollment, closing schools to intra-district transfers, considering transitional boundaries and implementing overflow policies for new students moving into an "at capacity" schools as a way to alleviate overcrowding in the elementary schools. In addition, it was recommended to indefinitely limit open enrollment and alternate school requests to North High School only. The feasibility of SAGE should also be reviewed again to address capacity issues in some schools. They also suggested that District boundaries be reviewed every five years.

Homelessness in District - There were 234 students without a place to live during this 2014-15 school year. The committee felt this was an important demographic.

Enrollment & Program Differences between North and Memorial - The committee recommended that the Board take action to balance enrollments to expand course offerings. There were four broad areas for change identified which included indefinitely limiting open enrollment and alternate school requests to North High only, developing a magnet school for STEM at North, implementing a gradual boundary change and creating a grade 9/10 building and a grade 11/12 building. These were listed in order of having the least impact to having the greatest impact. The committee recommended that the Board develop a Program Equity Group separate from the Demographic Trends & Facility Planning Committee to help guide some of these recommendations.

Mr. Falch said the committee reviewed numerous documents and spoke with administration at both schools in an effort to understand the program and academic performance between the two high schools. They discovered that the deeper they looked at the two schools, the more complex the issue became with no single answer to improve the situation. Mr. Falch added that perception also comes into play with some of the equity issues.

Little Red -- The committee recommended holding onto Little Red as a viable part of the District's inventory. It can be utilized for storage needs and future educational purposes if needed.

The Board discussed closing open enrollment to Memorial. Dr. Hardebeck reminded the Board that the decision would have to be made by June 1st. It was noted that the Policy & Governance Committee will be reviewing policies and rules on inter-district transfers in the near future. The Board thought that Demo Trends or a newly established Equity Group could look at the advantages and disadvantages of recommendations brought forward in the next year. Enrollment practices would not be changed for next year.

With regards to SAGE, it was noted that there have been legislative proposals to change SAGE dramatically. Future discussions on this aspect may be influenced by that legislation. The Board will get a report on SAGE if anything changes in the future.

### **9.2 High School STEM/Project Lead the Way - Science Equivalency Credit**

Kristan Motszko, Schools to Career Coordinator, was present to update the Board on the Project Lead the Way program. The Board was asked to consider offering science credit (1.0) for Principles of Engineering, which is a Project Lead the Way (PLTW) course. She said that this year each high school has offered three courses in the PLTW engineering tract. There will be four courses offered in PLTW engineering in 2015-16. An interdisciplinary STEM team (including science, math and technology & engineering teachers) has been identified at each high school. This team will collaborate and work with the PLTW Partnership Team to develop and grow the PLTW program.

Ms. Motszko said that offering science equivalency credit for the Principles of Engineering course will allow students an opportunity to meet graduation requirements in a way that aligns with their post-secondary academic and career plans. This will align with the new increase in state graduation requirements in science and math. There are two ways to offer science or math credit: have a math/science certified teacher teaching the course or offer math/science equivalency credit. The District will do both!

It was noted that the District has documentation from the UW system that states that this science credit will be recognized for course admissions.

The Board agreed to move this forward as a resolution at the next meeting.

### **9.3 Referendum Discussion**

Executive Director of Business Services Dan Van De Water gave an update on the District's current financial status and various scenarios that could play out based on the outcome of the state funding allocations. In addition, he reviewed the District's capital and operational needs and the types of referendum available for the Board's consideration.

He said that Charlie Kramer is working with architects to refine the amount for a facilities referendum. It is anticipated that it could be comparable to the last referendum of about \$50 million for facilities. A referendum to exceed revenue limits would be another type of referendum. The District could also consider a recurring or non-recurring referendum, and Mr. Van De Water explained the difference between each type. With non-recurring you go out each year for the dollar amount you need. One downfall with that is if you go with non-recurring and build up dependency on that volume and then can't get a succeeding referendum to pass, you can have a problem. With recurring you are building capacity each year. Either option will keep tax rate projections identical because you end up with the same tax levy. He shared a history of both types of referendums in the state for the last several years. Non-recurring is the most popular and the District has had two successful non-recurring referendums.

Several Board members favored a recurring referendum. The Budget Committee will be asked to provide a recommendation to the full Board. It was pointed out that the soonest the District could go to referendum would be April 4, 2016. An important part to passing any referendum would be communicating the needs to the public and explaining the ramifications.

### **9.4 2015-16 Property Insurance Renewal**

Dan Van De Water said that for decades the ECASD, and many other school districts in the state, have acquired property insurance coverage from the Local Government Property Insurance Fund (LGPIF). Because of the low cost of managing the Fund, premiums have been more favorable than those in the private insurance marketplace.

Governor Walker proposed closing the LGPIF in his bi-annual budget, and the Joint Finance Committee affirmed this budget item. However, the JFC modified the Governor's recommendation by delaying the termination of LGPIF by two years. Although the District could renew its coverage with LGPIF, it is projected there will be an 85 percent increase in premium rates should the fund be dissolved.

The District's risk consultant has been seeking alternative property quotes, and it is believed the quotes will be better than staying with the fund. Mr. Van De Water recommended that the Board take action on June 1st to stop doing business with the fund so that the Board can get alternative quotes. Should the alternative carrier have a quote of over 85 percent, the District could still go back to the LGPIF.

The Board agreed to move this item forward as a consent resolution item on June 1st.

## **10. REQUEST FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

There were no requests for future agenda items.

## **11. OTHER BUSINESS**

There were no other matters brought before the Board.

## **12. ADJOURN**

Motion by Chris Hambuch-Boyle, second by Charles Vue, to adjourn meeting. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

Meeting adjourned at 9:46 p.m.