

Eau Claire School Board Minutes Monday, December 18, 2017

Generated by Patti Iverson

Members present

Kathryn P Duax, Chris Hambuch-Boyle, Aaron Harder, Joe Luginbill, Charles Vue, Eric D Torres, Lori Bica

1. REGULAR MEETING - CALL TO ORDER

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, President Hambuch-Boyle 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

Maria Selsor spoke in support of the Little Red Nature Campus. She felt the location would be an amazing, untapped resource for the community, and she would love to see it utilized. She thought the timing was right to bring this forward and noted the success of other innovation zones in the District. She said with a group of parents who are dedicated and excited to develop this project, Eau Claire could be poised to become a leader not only in the state, but beyond with this school.

Selika Ducksworth-Lawton asked that the District to consider partnering with the group that plans the Martin Luther King, Jr. Program in Eau Claire. She noted that most students who read at the event are from the ECASD. She asked for assistance with the music so a different musical group from the District could be showcased each year. In addition, she asked that the elementary schools come up with a joint assignment that could be written or visual that could be highlighted at the program or be on display, if it is visual, during the readings or musical pieces. She also asked that the District help to publicize the event through social media or by sending flyers home with children.

Aimee Dunn has children who attend Chippewa Valley Montessori and she has been thrilled with the education they have received there. She also teaches fifth grade at Locust Lane. She said the idea of student engagement can be difficult for a traditional classroom. For students in their middle school years, they often feel less engaged. She felt that anything that can be done to bolster student engagement and passion would be worthwhile. She has been excited about the Arctic Zone at Northstar, but the program is limited by space available and staff allocated. She felt it was critical to expand those opportunities and thought the Little Red proposal was well designed.

Aaron Graveene felt the Little Red project would be an excellent idea to engage students. He would like additional options for high school students who might not succeed in the large high schools. His son experiences social anxiety, and when he enrolled him at the Learning Center, he saw a big turnaround in him. He could do

far better in a smaller setting than dealing with others in a large group setting. He asked if this proposal could include high school as well as middle school students.

Nick Poss worked with the School District and McKinley to start the Learning Center, which is an alternative day program for middle school kids who aren't succeeding in a typical classroom setting. He supports the Little Red proposal as he sees many concepts that are working well for kids at the center. He said a student's ability to be passionate and excited about what they are learning has been a profound way to build self-esteem and banish poor behaviors. He was excited to see the project move in the direction of innovation, which could put the District in the forefront. He felt it was important to have educational options for students to draw in people from around the country who will drive and grow Eau Claire's economy. He said he knows the people bringing the proposal forward, and believes they are incredibly dedicated, caring, and passionate people who could make this proposal a reality.

Vanessa Moessner has three students in the District and she feels they are getting a great education. However, she notes that they learn in different ways. She felt the Little Red proposal would be a great option for students, and by continuing to nurture and engage students, they would become problem solvers and succeed. She asked the Board to listen to the presenters with open hearts and minds and to give them a chance.

Shana Brisiel has four students who attend the District. Her daughter has attended the Arctic Zone at Northstar, and it has been an amazing program for her with students setting their own goals and working towards them. The students are determining how they learn and recognize what works for them and what doesn't work for them. She hoped the Board would consider the Little Red proposal for students in the District.

3. BOARD/ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

3.1 Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Hardebeck reviewed the upcoming School Board events.

Dr. Hardebeck recognized Gwen Nemitz from Great Lakes Higher Education Guaranty Corporation. They will be granting Lakeshore Elementary School \$6,610 through their corporate match of the Eau Claire's office, "Unite for our Communities Campaign." These funds will be used to support a sensory room, classroom libraries, art sculpture tour, music field trip, Makerspace items, and classroom materials. A check will be presented on December 21st at 2:20 p.m. in the gym at Lakeshore during their Annual Holiday Sing-Along.

Bailey Kelly, a 6th grader at South Middle School, was also commended. Bailey participated in a challenge by Google and Donors Choose to create a Google Logo (the image you see when you log into Google). Bailey's logo was one of

twenty selected nationwide to be featured on the Google Web Site during Computer Science Week. She created this with support from her Technology Integration teacher, Randi Stanley, during an Hour of Code activity.

3.2 Board President's Report

President Hambuch-Boyle shared the following report:

1. The groups JONAH (Joining Our Neighbors, Advancing Hope) and Citizen Action of Wisconsin would like to collect signatures to support cutting childhood poverty in Wisconsin in half in ten years. President Hambuch-Boyle asked the Board and administration to go to www.endchildpovertywi.org for more information so they can have an informed conversation in the new year on how this initiative could be supported.
2. President Hambuch-Boyle shared links with Board members from the Blue Ribbon Commission on School Funding. She recommended that the Board watch the videos.
3. The District's Voucher Transparency Resolution was passed in Janesville.
4. Work on the School Board Handbook has been continuing and a draft is ready for the Board's Work Session in January. The Policy & Governance Committee will also use this information to align policy with the Board's governance model.

4. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

Lauren Priem said that Memorial will have student listening sessions with staff on Wednesday during the lunch periods regarding class rank, GPA, and class rigor. She said that she and Ryan have been developing questions to add to the AP survey that students take after they complete an AP course with regards to student evaluation of teacher performance.

Ryan Cramer said that listening sessions will be held at North so that students can share their thoughts regarding possible changes to the academic recognition system. Ryan has been working with administration about adding a question to the AP survey that students complete about AP teacher performance and instruction throughout the year. He is also interested in having the passing rate for AP courses published.

5. OTHER REPORTS

5.1 School Board Committee Reports

The Budget Development Committee discussed athletic fees and reviewed an analysis with other Big River Schools to compare athletic fees and costs. The committee will be discussing the five-year capital plan and is making progress with OPEB costs.

The Demographic Trends and Facility Planning Committee has been discussing the new HighClere development with regards to transportation, building capacity, and whether those students should go to Northwoods or Locust Lane.

The Parent Advisory Council talked about academic and career planning. The District is in the beginning stages of this state mandated program and is putting its own spin on it. This will help the District in connecting relevance of studies to future career pathways for students and will break down barriers for students who might think that post-secondary training isn't for them.

The LEAP Committee has been discussing a new innovation zone proposal, which will be presented to the Board later in the meeting. The committee will also be reviewing and restating its rationale for the committee.

The Policy and Governance Committee has developed a new home visiting policy. Once adopted, administration will work with principals, parents, and executive directors to create a home visiting guide. The committee made a few revisions to the new crowdsourcing policy and finalized a draft of the School Resource Officers policy. The SRO policy will be sent to various groups for feedback and a draft will be shared with the full Board in January.

5.2 Legislative Update

Joe Luginbill reminded the Board that the Wisconsin Association of School Boards (WASB) resolutions are available on their website at www.wasb.org. These resolutions will be voted on at the WASB Delegate Assembly. Mr. Luginbill will present the Voucher Transparency Resolution. The state Senate Education Committee will hold a public hearing on several bills at the State Capitol. A link to those bills can be found on the Board's Legislative Advocacy page.

The Federal Tax Plan has passed in both houses and has completed the reconciliation process as well. It ended up not impacting the \$250 tax deduction for teachers who spend their own money on classroom supplies. It bans districts from using the tax-free method of refinancing school bond debt. The District acted proactively and refinanced its bond debt before that ban was imposed. The pending legislation also eliminates the ability of people to deduct state and local taxes that go directly to local services, including public schools, while at the same time providing a \$10,000 incentive for people to send their kids to private school. It is expected that the elimination of these taxes could cost public schools upwards of \$17 billion. There was also a successful amendment to provide tax incentives for parents who wish to home school their children.

6. CONSENT RESOLUTION AGENDA

Motion by Joe Luginbill, second by Kathryn P Duax, to approve the following consent Resolution Agenda Items:

- Minutes of December 4, 2017
- Minutes of Closed Session of December 4, 2017
- Minutes of Closed Session of December 6, 2017
- Minutes of Closed Session - December 11, 2017
- Minutes of Closed Session of September 13, 2017
- Financial Report - November 2017
- Gifts in the amount of \$16,994.54 for the period of November 1, 2017 through November 30, 2017
- Payment of all bills in the amount of \$5,089,811.06 and net payroll in the amount of \$3,467,606.39 for the period of November 1, 2017 through November 30, 2017.
- Human Resources - Employment Report

Motion carried

Yes: Kathryn P Duax, Chris Hambuch-Boyle, Aaron Harder, Joe Luginbill, Charles Vue, Eric D Torres, Lori Bica

7. INDIVIDUALLY CONSIDERED RESOLUTION(S)

Adopt Plans to Update Montessori & McKinley as Approved in the November 2016 Referendum

Motion by Kathryn P Duax, second by Charles Vue, to adopt plans to update Montessori and McKinley as approved in the November 2016 referendum and presented to the Board.

Motion carried

Yes: Kathryn P Duax, Chris Hambuch-Boyle, Aaron Harder, Joe Luginbill, Charles Vue, Eric D Torres, Lori Bica

Adoption of Policy 674 - Online Solicitations/Crowdfunding/Crowdsourcing

Motion by Kathryn P Duax, second by Lori Bica, to adopt Policy 674 - Online Solicitations/Crowdfunding/Crowdsourcing.

Motion carried

Yes: Kathryn P Duax, Chris Hambuch-Boyle, Aaron Harder, Joe Luginbill, Charles Vue, Eric D Torres, Lori Bica

8. ADJOURN TO COMMITTEE

9. COMMITTEE REPORTS/ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

9.1 Five-Year Capital Selected Projects

Larry Sommerfeld, Director of Buildings and Grounds, shared a draft of the District's five-year capital plan and reviewed items that are currently scheduled to be done in the 2018-19 budget year. The proposed projects include Phase II of the Administration Building windows, replacing the tennis courts at South, culinary lab construction for North and Memorial, Phase II flooring at Northwoods, and air handling and cooling units at Prairie Ridge. While there were \$5 million to \$6 million in needs identified, the budget will be \$1.6 million as it has been for the past several years.

The Board discussed the costs for the construction of the culinary labs at both high schools. There has been considerable student interest in these programs, and the present facilities limit program growth.

Dave Oldenberg, Director of Academic Services, said that the District has partnered with CVTC to define the ProStart curriculum to develop the industry standard. He said the District needs to be able to augment the physical plant to deliver that curriculum so that students who want that pathway can matriculate to CVTC. The ProStart curriculum needs to be aligned in each building and have the equipment to deliver the opportunity for students to practice the skills and meet the standards. Instructors are certified to be ProStart instructors and the updated labs are needed to develop the curriculum. The District currently does not have the fiscal capacity to deliver the curriculum. The equipment for the new culinary labs would cost about \$38,000.

The Budget Development Committee had addressed whether it would be better to proceed with the construction of the culinary labs or to offer these programs at CVTC. The travel time for students to take these courses would limit their ability to take other classes of interest.

Another request was made to Mr. Sommerfeld to provide an orchestra room at Memorial. Mr. Oldenberg said the current all-purpose room at Memorial could possibly be augmented for this purpose. It would likely involve expanding the footprint of the building. Some Board members asked that drawings be created to address this for future consideration.

There was a question about costs related to the Daktronics scoreboards, which were deferred. Mr. Sommerfeld explained that there are accessibility issues at North and Memorial that will have to be addressed.

9.2 Proposal for Little Red Nature Campus

Members of Initiative for New Directions in Education (INDE) were present to share a proposal for the Little Red Nature Campus. This proposal was submitted to the Learning Environments and Partnerships (LEAP) Committee in June 2017 and Step 1 was approved by the committee in July 2017. Erica Zerr and Anna Rybicki were representatives of INDE and they explained the group's vision to provide students

with a learning environment that fosters independence, critical thinking, and creativity. The school would provide middle school students with an engaging, project-based education with high academic standards and a focus on real-world experiences, community participation, environmental stewardship, and outdoor learning. The dual-purpose campus would serve the entire student body of the ECASD by creating space and providing facilities for field trips, summer classes, special programs, and intensive study courses.

Anna Rybicki said that in early October DPI announced there would be charter money available for Wisconsin. After that time, the LEAP Committee approved the proposal for Step 2 and recommended that the full School Board hear the proposal and give support for project feasibility work and grant development.

Erica Zerr explained that this dual-purpose ECASD property would include a facility to develop a new charter middle school for about 150 kids as well as a District extension campus. The resource center would be adjacent to the school and would serve the entire student body of the District. The proposal includes the use of the Little Red site and building although it was not limited to that facility.

Ms. Zerr said that public education is moving in the direction of innovation and choice, and the state has made a commitment for innovation by awarding federal grants. She cited a high demand in the community for innovative programming. Student engagement typically drops off at the secondary level, and giving students choices in their learning could help with that. The District loses some students to other districts, homeschool, or private schools. Having innovative programs could give some of those families an option to attend ECASD instead.

Project based learning organizes learning around projects, has proven success on standard measures of achievement, benefits all genders, races and socio-economic classes, shrinks the achievement gap between males and females, improves academic achievement for African American students, and has longer content retention.

The group feels that community partnerships could be formed with partners serving as mentors and educators. Projects will happen within the school as well as off site. Students could take ownership by choosing projects of interest, determining and analyzing goals, taking part in self-assessments, and contributing to the operations of the school. They would learn about small business development and cultivate entrepreneurial skills.

Ms. Rybicki explained how cultural and social relevance would be incorporated into the student's experience and academic programming. This program would accommodate diversity and students with special education needs.

The governance and organization of the school was explained as well as how technology, extra-curriculars, and specials (world languages, music, art, theater) would be integrated into the program. The concept of a Nature Campus was also shared.

This proposal would serve the District's Strategic Plan by implementing an engaging curriculum which nurtures the whole child and prepares every student to be college or career ready.

Wisconsin was one of nine states to receive an award under the FY 2017 State Entities Grant Program. Wisconsin will receive \$95 million over five years, with 90% for sub-grants and 10% technical assistance/administration. The charter grant application would include an application form, executive summary, narrative, three letters of support from groups/individuals within the community, and a School Board resolution approving the development of a charter school. Within the application form, basic school information would be provided as well as the planning process thus far and into the future and a five-year budget summary by category and by year. Grants will go to schools that do at least two of the following: increase access to educationally disadvantaged students, reduce and eliminate the achievement gap for educationally disadvantaged students, serve students at risk of dropping out or who have previously dropped out, increase the overall graduation rate, or increase career and college readiness. They shared information on allowable and non-allowable costs as well as the timeline and award amounts.

INDE has developed preliminary cost estimates utilizing available data on building renovations, bussing, technology and lab costs, as well as some staffing and maintenance estimates. They will complete an estimated five-year budget required for grant submission and will have a completed budget available for Board review prior to submitting the grant application. They would like to continue working with LEAP to advise and assist them in determining how to advance this work. They would like two staff members to work with them for 20 hours each during the next two to three months using the LEAP committee budget to advise the group on developing the academic language and pedagogical framework for the grant. They would also like to reach out to the community to determine what partnerships may be available. A complete budget for the grant would be developed working through LEAP and appropriate staff to acquire figures necessary, and they would like to reach out to the community to determine what's possible for funding renovations at Little Red or to locate another facility.

Ms. Rybiki took the Board through a possible timeline should the Board decide to further develop the proposal.

The student representatives spoke in favor of the project and particularly the project-based learning aspect. They both asked about possible gaps between students who attend this charter school and students enrolled in the traditional program. Ms. Zerr said students will have the same academic standards and will learn the same things, but in a different way. She said the method of how they learn has intrinsic benefits. Students will have to make sure benchmarks are hit, even if they are learning things they don't have an interest in. While DPI does allow a waiver on standardized testing, the program model experiences great success in standardized tests.

Several Board members spoke in favor of the proposal as another way to provide choices for students. Family surveys have shown that parents want relevancy for their children, rigor, engagement, and choice in the public school system. The planning committee was urged to involve people of color, those in special education, and those with mental health challenges so that all students are represented. It was also suggested that the group provide information on how they would provide for fair and equitable admission, evidence of how to recruit and retain educationally disadvantaged students to ensure they flourish, and include a diverse cross section.

There were some concerns raised by Board members about funding for the proposal even though the project is meritorious. It was suggested that the Board look at LEAP initiatives as projects that will have development costs but should be relatively cost neutral. The potential for other sources of funding is realistic, and this would create options for students in the District.

Public Comment:

Karen Voss said she had two daughters who attended Little Red. She collected prairie seeds from the roadsides in Eau Claire County and planted them there. She felt this would be the perfect place to nurture an outdoor education curriculum where kid can step outside and into a prairie. She hoped the Board would consider the proposal.

Jo Ellen Burke said she brought forward a similar proposal seven years ago. She received a planning grant and they developed a governance board, had a location, and had staff to be hired. When brought back to the Board to approve the implementation grant, the Board said the timing was wrong and the money wasn't there to move forward. She encouraged the Board to proceed with this proposal noting that privatization is coming and she felt the District couldn't afford not to do this. She said the Board's fiscal responsibility is paramount, and the District could find partners to fund the program.

John Kleven is an alum of the ECASD. He supported the Little Red Learning Campus as a way for students who may be disenfranchised and not engaged in the normal way of learning. He asked the Board to consider the proposal. He felt the District could find funding by collectively using resources and by creating partnerships.

Nik Novak imagines what it would look like to have a school and its grounds built and maintained by people who care. This "environmental civics" school would have students who choose what and how they learn and be run by teachers who give their heart and soul for something different. This school would allow students to develop their menus, wash and put away their dishes, and learn carpentry and mechanical repair. He encouraged the Board to vote yes for this proposal.

Lou Deutsch is in fifth grade and has attended ECASD through open enrollment since 4K. He supported the Little Red proposal for students who may not want to attend a traditional middle school. He is a farmer and works hard and

independently. He spends all his free time outside and has a lawn mowing and snow shoveling business. He felt the charter school would work well for him and give him the freedom to learn in a way he learns best.

9.3 Discussion & Possible First Reading of New Policy 813 - Home Visiting

The Board shared a first reading of Policy 813 – Home Visiting:

The Eau Claire Area School District may provide services and activities through home visiting that promote secure family/child relationships and help families provide high-quality learning experiences in language, literacy, mathematics, social and emotional functioning, approaches to learning, science, physical skills, and creative arts. Planned in partnership with the families, home visits take place to provide educational supports and instruction; enhance the roles of families and educators in the growth and development of their child; build healthy, nurturing family/student/school relationships; strengthen families and support the family's home setting as the student's primary learning environment. Home visits shall utilize evidence-based curriculum and practices that are developmentally, linguistically, and culturally responsive.

The Executive Director of Teaching & Learning shall develop and maintain a Home Visiting Guide for all District staff. The Eau Claire Area School District shall partner with other community educational institutions and agencies to ensure the implementation of evidence-based practices.

For the purposes of this policy, "home" may be defined as a primary residence or temporary residence. This definition may include a shelter or other temporary lodging.

The Board agreed to move this forward to the consent agenda at the next meeting.

10. REQUEST FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Lori Bica asked that the Board get the recommendation from the Demographic Trends Committee for new members. Abby Johnson said they are almost ready to present that information to the Board.

Eric Torres asked for a report regarding the dual immersion program.

Lori Bica asked for an update on the status of the Eau Claire Academy.

11. ADJOURN

Motion by Joe Luginbill, second by Kathryn P Duax, to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried

Yes: Kathryn P Duax, Chris Hambuch-Boyle, Aaron Harder, Joe Luginbill, Charles Vue, Eric D Torres, Lori Bica

Meeting adjourned at 9:50 p.m.