

**Eau Claire Board of Education**  
**Monday, February 20, 2017**

*Generated by Patrice Iverson*

**Members present**

Carolyn Barstad, Kathryn P Duax, Jennifer Fager, Chris Hambuch-Boyle, Aaron Harder, Joe Luginbill, Charles Vue

**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**

Dan Wilson, Labor and Relations Chair of ECAE, discussed the Board's proposal to make changes to the married couples insurance.

**3. BOARD/ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS**

**3.1 Superintendent's Report**

Superintendent Hardebeck reviewed the Board's calendar of upcoming events.

Dr. Hardebeck said the President's Council on Service and Civic Participation recently awarded Memorial Senior, Sydney Gonyea, with the President's Volunteer Service Award for her outstanding active service to her school, community and country. Sydney has given a tremendous amount of hours to the Eau Claire Marathons, school tutoring, blood drives, Food Scavenger hunts for St. Francis Food Pantry, blood drives, and the Turkey Trot just to name a few. Dr. Hardebeck also recognized her parents, Eric & Amy Gonyea, who are long-time school district employees.

Dr. Hardebeck said she participated in the Leadership Eau Claire education panel along with UWEC Chancellor Schmitt, CVTC President Bruce Barker, and Regis President Mark Gobler. She said they discussed the challenges associated with talent development and retention as well as budgets. They shared their leadership philosophies and talked about the partnerships between all four entities. Dr. Hardebeck followed up with a session about ECASD's referendum to share the rationale for the referendum, the response for it, and the support from Support Eau Claire Public Schools.

Board members received the book, *Boards That Matter*, which was recommended by Al Brown. Dr. Hardebeck encouraged Board members to read it. She also said the Executive Team is reading it. She reminded the Board about the community read of the book, *Evicted*, which she also encouraged them to read.

Dr. Hardebeck attended the annual meeting of Economic Development Corporation. It was reported that Wisconsin is in its best economic cycle in the last 15 years. Unemployment is the lowest since 2000 and there are 4,900 more jobs in Eau Claire than there were in 2010.

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

President Hambuch-Boyle shared the following information:

- There is proposed legislation that would require that a letter be included in tax bills about cost for voucher schools.
- The newly formed Equity Committee met for the first time on February 13<sup>th</sup>. This advisory committee will address the equity of donations in the District. If the committee comes up with other areas of equity concerns, those will be taken up by another committee.
- Beginning with the second meeting in April, the Board will start a new meeting format. The first Monday of the month will be a regular meeting and the second meeting will be a Work Session so that the Board and Executive Team can work closely on the Strategic Plan and their journey to meet expectations.
- Included on the Board's Outreach Schedule is a meeting with the villages and townships at the Seymour Town Hall on April 20, 2017 at 7 p.m.
- President Hambuch-Boyle would like to get input from Board members on how they might use the books, *Evicted* and *Boards that Matter* as a Board Development tool.

## **4. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT**

Ryan Cramer shared an update on activities taking place at North and the success of sporting teams as they participate in tournament play. He spoke in support of the proposal to limit open enrollment requests to North High.

Angela Arnholt shared an update on activities taking place at Memorial as well as the success of sporting teams, Show Choir and Forensics. She said that students are now signing up for AP classes.

## **5. OTHER REPORTS**

### **5.1 Board Committee Reports**

The Budget Development Committee discussed timelines for insurance negotiations for the next two to three years. There has been a 5% cap on HMO rates and 9% on Open Access that will continue next year but in the fifth year of the contract with Security Health Plan there will not be a cap in place. The District could face volatile situation. The committee is looking at specific insurance considerations such as higher costs of using Open Access vs HMO. This disparity raises claims utilization rates which weakens the District's position as it goes out for renewals. There has

also been discussion about the high cost of Emergency Room visits and claims for insurance. A letter is being drafted that will go out to all staff about compensation. The committee hopes to bring it to the full Board for approval on March 6<sup>th</sup>.

The Demographic Trends & Facilities Committee recommended that the Board consider limiting open enrollment requests to North High to help even out enrollment. There will be several other issues coming to the Board in the future related to enrollment patterns in the District.

The LEAP Committee held two showings of *Race to Nowhere* with about 20 people in attendance who gave feedback. The committee is thinking about offering the showing to students on ACT day. The Arctic Zone project is going strong at Northstar. They conducted a lottery to determine enrollment fashioned after the lottery used by Montessori. There was a great conversation with the assessment group that reviewed the draft of the whole child dimension and definition, which takes on a different realm than achievement and test scores.

Policy & Governance reviewed Policy 445 regarding School Resource Officers and made some modifications. Policy 311 on Academic Freedom and Policy 366 on guidance and counseling programs were also reviewed and modifications made. The Committee talked about Policy 188 regarding public input at board meetings and revised it to address community members speaking at committee meetings as well.

The Head Start Policy & Governance Committee talked about community partnerships and how they support our schools. They also talked about performing and fine arts and equity in high schools. There will be professional development for staff on conscious discipline and a focus on mental health and drug abuse. They talked about school readiness and updated data for the school readiness goal.

There will be a budget advocacy training on February 26 for the Wisconsin Public Education Network. Participants will learn how to advocate for the needs of public schools.

The Parent Advisory Council discussed academic interventions at its February 7th meeting. Jim Schmitt and a team of educators from each level talked about how the district identifies students for interventions, what the interventions look like, how you know when a student has finished an intervention, what kinds of interventions have shown the most success or promise in working to improve student performance, and what the greatest challenges are in implementing interventions. They also talked informally about whether students are having equal opportunities for field trips across the District.

## **5.2 Legislative Update**

Joe Luginbill reported that State Representative Tom Larson passed away and expressed condolences. The Governor's official proposed budget is now available

and can be read online or as a summary at wasb.org. WASB has developed a document that talks about the new Secretary of Education and how things at the federal level will impact local school districts. The polls will be open on February 21<sup>st</sup> from 7 to 8 p.m. for the primary for State Superintendent for Public Instruction.

## **6. CONSENT RESOLUTION AGENDA**

Motion by Jennifer Fager, second by Charles Vue, to approve the following consent resolution agenda items:

- Minutes of February 6, 2017
- Minutes of Closed Session - February 6, 2017
- Financial Report - January 2017
- 2016-17 Budget Adjustments
- Payment of all bills in the amount of \$3,837,168.58 and net payroll in the amount of \$3,323,897.08 for the period of January 1, 2017 through January 31, 2017.
- Gifts in the amount of \$61,991.20 for the period of January 1, 2017 through January 31, 2017.
- Human Resources - Employment Report - February 20, 2017
- Revisions to Policy 424 - Open Enrollment

Motion carried

Yes: Carolyn Barstad, Kathryn P Duax, Jennifer Fager, Chris Hambuch-Boyle, Aaron Harder, Joe Luginbill, Charles Vue

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

### **7.1 Placing All High School Open Enrollment Requests to North High School**

In May 2015 the Demographic Trends Committee made a recommendation to limit open enrollment requests at the high school level to North to help with the enrollment gap between the high schools. No action was taken at that time. The committee again reviewed that recommendation and concurred that this would be one of several steps the Board could take to ensure that ECASD is an equitable school system.

It was suggested that the Demographic Trends Committee discuss placement of students at the middle school level who are already open enrolled and intended to attend Memorial. In addition, the ramifications of students with siblings already attending Memorial should also be clarified by the committee.

Motion by Joe Luginbill, second by Jennifer Fager, that the Board of Education limit open enrollment requests at the high school level to North High School.

Motion carried

Yes: Carolyn Barstad, Kathryn P Duax, Jennifer Fager, Chris Hambuch-Boyle, Aaron Harder, Joe Luginbill, Charles Vue

## **8. ADJOURN TO COMMITTEE**

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

### **9.1 Update on Membership Count as of January 13, 2017**

Tim Leibham, Executive Director of Administration, shared results of the January 2017 membership count noting that there were 11,219 students enrolled, which is up about 80 students from last year at this time. He also reviewed projections from the Applied Population Laboratory study, which were very much in line with actual enrollments. The projections estimate that ECASD will be slightly over 11,300 students in PreK-12 next year and will continue to show slight growth District-wide for the next three years and into the future.

### **9.2 Utilization Costs and Married Couple Health Insurance Costs**

Abby Johnson, Executive Director of Business Services, explained that the District has a cap for insurance premiums with Security Health for 2017-18 but not beyond that. The District still has a contract with Security for 2018-19, but it does not include a cap. The District's claims utilization will affect upcoming bids for health insurance. The HMO plan loss ratio was at 95% and Open Access (OA) was at 137.3%.

The District is looking for ways to control claims utilization as it goes out to bid again. This could include plan design changes (emergency room costs, co-pay changes) and employee costs for premium payments.

There are currently 70 married couples who are both employed by the District who receive a benefit that allows them to receive free health insurance. This saves the District money in premiums by the employees taking one insurance plan instead of two. There are 35 couples currently on the HMO plan and 35 currently on the OA plan. Premium costs are directly related to claims utilization.

During the Budget Development Committee meeting, the group talked about several different options the Board could consider when it comes to married couple health insurance costs. The monthly premium difference between the OA and HMO Family plans is \$294. Per year that would equate to \$102,312 difference in premiums for those on the family plan. If the District were to pay the full HMO plan cap towards the cost of the OA plan premium and employees pay the difference, it would save the District about \$120,000 annually in premiums based upon 2016-17 rates and plans chosen by District married couples. If the District would provide a contribution towards the cost of the OA plan premium and the employees would pay the difference, this would save the District about \$209,000 annually in premiums.

The committee recommended:

- Continuing a free benefit for married couples by providing the HMO plan
- Allowing married couples to choose to pay additional costs to have Open Access plan
- For 2017-18, married couples would pay 50% of premium difference for OA plan and for 2018-19 and beyond, married couples would pay 100% of premium difference.

In order to have an impact on the claims ratio and utilization rates, it was recommended that these changes go into effect on July 1, 2017.

Another consideration to bring the loss ratio down would be to look at the retirees that use the OA plan and making changes to their plans so that they have to bear more of the cost for their insurance plans.

The Board came up with these options:

- Continue a free benefit for married couples by providing the HMO plan.
- For any new enrollment for married couples, they can take HMO and get it for free or they could pay 100% of the difference in premiums from day one.
- For existing couples on OA, they would pay 50% of the premium difference for 2017-18 and 100% for 2018-19.
- For existing couples on OA, they would not pay a premium difference for 2017-18 and they would pay 100% of the difference in 2018-19.

At the March 6, 2017 meeting, the Board will choose the options they will approve, which could include some or all of the options above.

### **9.3 2017-18 Budget Projections**

Abby Johnson shared preliminary budget figures for the 2017-18 school year. She included three different scenarios based on per pupil categorical aid increases: one with \$0 increase, another with \$100 increase, and a third with \$200 increase for 2017-18 and \$204 second year for 2018-19 (which the Governor proposed.) Based on the current enrollment count, with the \$100 per pupil increase in revenue, the District could receive an additional \$2.8 million for 2017; \$3.9 million for 2018 and \$5.0 million for 2019. With the Governor's proposal it would mean an additional \$2.8 million for 2017; \$5.0 million for 2018 and \$7.3 million for 2019. Ms. Johnson also shared assumptions for expenses to be incurred that would affect the budget.

It was pointed out that the proposed increase in categorical aids does not fix school funding in Wisconsin and would still keep Eau Claire below the state average.

### **9.4 Discussion & Possible First Reading of Policy 411 - Equal Educational Opportunities**

Joe Luginbill explained that the United States Supreme Court held in Plyer v. Doe that no public school district has a basis to deny children access to education based

on their immigration status, citing the harm it would inflict on the child and society itself, and the equal protection rights of the Fourteenth Amendment. Policy & Governance discussed this and checked with the Board's attorney and felt that it made sense to add "immigration status" as a protected category.

It was also noted that there is Wisconsin law that provides additional support for the concept that no public school district should be collecting and retaining immigration status in student records in general. Policy & Governance is working on a resolution from the Board about being a welcoming district for immigrant students and families, and the committee could include directives or general statements that could serve as directions for moving forward on this aspect of the law.

A citizen cautioned the Board's approval of this change feeling that it may conflict with existing statutes about hiring and harboring immigrants.

The Board shared a first reading of the paragraph that would change in Policy 411.

*No person shall be denied admission to any public school or be denied participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be discriminated against in any curricular, extracurricular, pupil services, recreational or other program or activity because of the student's sex, race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, immigration status, creed, pregnancy, marital or parental status, physical, mental, emotional or learning disability, or sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. In determining qualifications for participation, all students shall be judged against the same pre-determined qualifying standards in a manner that is fair and objective.*

The Board agreed to bring this policy forward on the next resolution agenda for approval.

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

There were no requests for future agenda items.

## **11. ADJOURN**

Motion by Jennifer Fager, second by Aaron Harder, to the adjourn meeting.

Motion carried

Yes: Carolyn Barstad, Kathryn P Duax, Jennifer Fager, Chris Hambuch-Boyle, Aaron Harder, Joe Luginbill, Charles Vue

Meeting adjourned at 8:49 p.m.