

**Eau Claire School Board Minutes**  
**Wednesday, February 21, 2024, 7:00 p.m.**  
**Blended Model – ECASD Administration Building and Livestream**  
*Generated by Terri Grzyb*

**Members present**

Lori Bica, Joshua Clements, Jarrett Dement, Stephanie Farrar, Marquell Johnson, Tim Nordin, Erica Zerr

**CONVENE (GC-1)**

President Nordin called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Board Secretary Terri Grzyb confirmed the meeting had been properly noticed and was in compliance with the Open Meeting Law. A roll call was conducted to verify quorum.

**ADOPTION OF AGENDA (GC-2)**

Motion by Jarrett Dement, second by Lori Bica to adopt the Board agenda for February 21, 2024.

**Motion carried**

Yes: Lori Bica, Joshua Clements, Jarrett Dement, Stephanie Farrar, Marquell Johnson, Tim Nordin, Erica Zerr

**MATTERS RESERVED FOR BOARD ACTION**

The Board is meeting for the purpose of conducting a non-renewal hearing regarding the recommendation of administration pursuant to Wisconsin statute 118.24 that the administrator contract of Pete Riley be non-renewed.

Introduction of all parties present:

- Terri Grzyb, Board Secretary
- Administrative team: Kim Koller, North High School Principal, former Executive Director of Administration; Brandon Wick, Human Resources Manager; Mike Johnson, Superintendent; Christine Hamiel, attorney on behalf of ECASD Administration
- Pete Riley, McKinley Charter School Principal

On February 19, 2024, Mr. Riley was provided formal written notice of tonight's hearing. This hearing provides an opportunity for both sides to present information and evidence. Each side may present its information and evidence in support of its position. Each side may ask questions of the other. Board members will also be allowed to ask questions of both Administration and Mr. Riley. The hearing is conducted as an informal hearing. No strict or formal rules of evidence apply.

The District presented information and evidence to support the non-renewal of Pete Riley. Attorney Christine Hamiel started by setting the stage for the non-renewal of Pete Riley. Pete Riley is here per his request. His contract is set to expire June 30, 2024. The reasons for non-renewal are neither contrary to public policy nor are they based on Pete Riley's status as a protected member of a protected class under state or federal law. The reasons for non-renewal constitute violations of the most basic expectations of all District employees, especially for a building leader. There are three themes being presented: inappropriate exchanges with students, inappropriate exchanges with staff, and a blatant disregard for District policies. Christine distributed a packet of information to all Board members, which includes Pete Riley's administrative contract, employee handbook provisions, and Board policies at issue.

Brandon Wick provided a timeline of events (October 2022 to present) leading up to the hearing.

Brandon Wick shared specific examples for each of the following themes that were determined after a lengthy and comprehensive investigation by staff members: inappropriate exchanges with students, inappropriate exchanges with staff, and a blatant disregard for District policies.

Given the vast volume of complaints that were substantiated by the investigation, Administration believes the only option available is the non-renewal of Pete Riley's contract.

Pete Riley and the Board asked questions of Administration.

Pete Riley presented information and evidence to support the renewal of his contract. Pete was hired in 1997 at McKinley Charter School. He feels he has given back through his work and service. Since McKinley's inception, there has been continuous work to provide a safe spot to some of the most volatile, scared, and unwanted students in the District. Pete provided a timeline of events (October 2022 to present) through his lens and requested documents and evidence that stated the culture at McKinley was poor. Continuous improvement was mentioned, as well as implementing supports to help McKinley be part of the District. Pete does not believe the allegations happened the way they were reported.

The Administration did not have questions for Pete Riley. The Board asked questions of Pete Riley.

Each party presented a closing statement.

The record is now closed.

Motion by Stephanie Farrar, second by Jarrett Dement to move to Closed Session pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 19.85(1)(a), "Deliberating concerning a case which was the subject of any judicial or quasi-judicial trial or hearing before that governmental body," for the purpose of deliberating the nonrenewal of an administrator contract issued pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 118.24.

**Motion carried**

Yes: Lori Bica, Joshua Clements, Jarrett Dement, Stephanie Farrar, Marquell Johnson, Tim Nordin, Erica Zerr

**RECONVENE (GC-1)**

Motion by Jarrett Dement, second by Stephanie Farrar to reconvene in open session at 9:55 p.m.

**Motion carried**

Yes: Lori Bica, Joshua Clements, Jarrett Dement, Stephanie Farrar, Marquell Johnson, Tim Nordin, Erica Zerr

President Nordin announced that the Board deliberated on the evidence presented in the hearing by both sides.

Motion by Jarrett Dement, second by Lori Bica to accept the Administration's recommendation of non-renewal and non-renew the contract of Pete Riley.

**Motion carried**

Yes: Lori Bica, Joshua Clements, Jarrett Dement, Stephanie Farrar, Tim Nordin

No: Marquell Johnson, Erica Zerr

**ADJOURN**

Motion by Stephanie Farrar, second by Lori Bica to adjourn meeting.

**Motion carried**

Yes: Lori Bica, Joshua Clements, Jarrett Dement, Stephanie Farrar, Marquell Johnson, Tim Nordin, Erica Zerr

Meeting adjourned at 9:57 p.m.