

Meeting: Eau Claire Virtual School Governance Board

Date: 10.17.2023

Time: 4:45 P.M.

Location: Flynn Elementary Room 180

Attendees:

Nicole Brynelson	PaSia Moua	Jason Schmitz X	Andria Rice X	Kelsey Maki X
Susan Kishel	Erik Keisler	Catalino Rodriguez	Shannyn Pinkert X	Lillian McRaven X
Michael Lee X	Kristina Johnson	Jennifer Robbins		

Guests:

Jim Schmitt, Michael (Mike) Johnson, Tiffany Hall, Debra Nemitz, Katie Matera, Deborah Skalecki

Notes:

1. 9.19.23 Approval of Minutes – Shannyn Pinkert

- Motion by Andria Rice to approve 8.15.2023 ECVS meeting minutes, seconded by Jason Schmitz All others approve, motion carries.

2. School Report – Jim Schmitt

- There was a Dabble Box event at the public library on October 16th. There were 6 people in attendance.
- There will be an event for students in November. Students and staff will go bowling at a local bowling alley.

3. Family Advisory Council (FAC) Update

- This meeting was for agenda setting.
- Shannyn and Mike Johnson attended.

4. Roundtable Meeting with ECASD Superintendent, Mike Johnson

- Jim has asked ECVS staff what the purpose of the Eau Claire Virtual School is – they believe the following:
 - ECVS is mostly for students in a 2-hour radius of Eau Claire (logistically for testing)
 - There should be enough students enrolled to have two staff members per elementary grade level.
 - There should be enough students to have a full high school staff.
- Request for an at-risk teacher to address students with attendance issues and credit deficiencies.
- We will continue ensuring that ECVS provides quality education.
- The Connections Academy in Appleton extends beyond the 2-hour radius of their location.
- How does a family differentiate between ECVS and Pearson Connections Academy when making decisions for their child – historically there has been confusion when there are two options (Cohort C and ECVS throughout COVID-19)
- What does Pearson do regarding interventions and providing Special Education services – Mike Johnson has reached out to Pearson with questions about these two topics.
- Mike Johnson acknowledges that this information has raised a lot of questions both for ECASD and Pearson.

- In August/September Mike Johnson sent the charter through the ECASD legal team. There were quite a few things that the legal team had questions about. These questions were returned to Pearson, and we are waiting for responses.
- There are questions about what role ECASD will play in the operations of Pearson Connections Academy. They would like these questions answered before moving forward with the addition.
- How do other school districts handle non-instrumentality?
 - An instrumentality has control over the students, staff, materials – and use a Pearson (or other) product.
 - Example of a non-instrumentality school in Michigan – 7,000 students – have had close to 1,600 students from across Upper and Lower Michigan enrolled. They have about a 1-hour radius that they do not advertise to not impact the virtual school they are based nearby.
 - 5 students who are within the 1-hour radius have chosen to enroll in the Connections Academy
- Who will provide the needed technology for students to engage in their learning?
- The charter by Pearson that is being proposed is 5 years.
- Is there a disadvantage to merging the ECVS and Pearson Connections Academy?
 - This is not part of the proposal from Pearson.
- Some ECASD Board Members have noted that they want ECVS to grow as a instrumentality vs. a non-instrumentality
- Considerations – brand recognition, money
- We are part of a continuum of services that are offered to students (may be preventing students from leaving)
- Timeline – November 6th is the current deadline set by Pearson for a decision from the ECASD School Board. The ECASD School Board may want more time to consider the information presented.
- Member of the board will write a statement to the ECASD School Board with our thoughts and recommendations for the decision moving forward.
- At least 90% of students at ECASD are from the local area.

5. Annual Meeting (Contract Renewal, Strategic Plan)

- ECVS has been an overall positive experience for my student (89% agree)
- ECVS has provided positive social interactions for my student (63% agree)
- ECVS provides flexibility (100% agree)
- ECVS provides a high-quality education (86% agree)
- ECVS is responsive to needs (80% agree)
- Why did you enroll in ECVS?
 - Flexibility – 28%
 - Safety – 24%
 - Mental health – 26%
 - Curriculum – 12%
- Enrollment by year
 - 2022-2023 149 students
 - 2023-2024 140 students
 - K-6 enrollment is low compared to secondary.
- Enrollment by special population
 - Numbers are variable by year.
 - Special education numbers have grown.

- Failure Rates Per Semester Per Year
 - 2021-23 Percentage of Fs 29.9%
 - 2022-23 Percentage of Fs 30.9%
 - These are encouraging considering how much the population of ECVS has changed between these two years. This shows that the work put in and the plans made have been effective.
 - Using multiple data points
 - This is higher than the brick-and-mortar schools.

6. Future Agenda Items

- Public Comment
- Approval of Minutes
- School Report/FAC update
- Committee breakout
- 5-year contract renewal
- Annual Meeting
- Strategic Plan
- Contract Renewal
- Next meeting will be November 14th to formalize a unified statement.
- Full ECVS meeting will be held on November 28th.