REGULAR BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
Location: Thomas A. Lenk Educational Center, Conf. Rm. A, 510 Peach Street, Wisc. Rapids WI  54494
Time: Immediately following the Budget Publication Meeting

Board Members Present:  Gregory Swank, Michelle Bean, Anne Lee, John Krings, Katie Medina, Mary Rayome, Sandra Hett
Administration Present: Ryan Christianson, Robert Crist, Tom Helgestad, Jane Jauquet, Bryon Kolbeck, Kay Marks, Sharon Toellner, Daniel Weigand
Student Representative:  Jason Krug
Media Present: Kathy Williams – River Cities Community Access

Michelle Bean called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call

Recognitions

The Board of Education recognized retired district employees Kathleen Hartjes (Elementary Teacher – Rudolph Elementary), Jeffrey Johannes (Art Teacher – Lincoln High School), Charlie Martin (Special Education Teacher – Lincoln High School), and Ida Winker (Guidance Counselor – Washington Elementary).

Superintendent’s Report
Dr. Crist reported on the importance of stressing the overall quality of the Wisconsin Rapids Public Schools, and spoke about the excellence of our staff who truly care and give their hearts and souls to kids. A great number of WRPS staff have been nominated and have attained a Kohl award. These types of accomplishments are very significant and monumental, and are a true tribute to those who earn it.

Dr. Crist spoke about how various departmental areas work hard to be sure we are always current with mandated requirements by the DPI, state, and federal government. Changes in our curriculum and special educational areas are on-going to be sure we are meeting standards which we are held accountable for. The specialization and training needed by our students today compared to the educational system of years past is significantly different. In order to continue to prepare all students to succeed to the best of their ability, student achievement is at the forefront of all we do.

The WRPS system is a gem in Central Wisconsin, and Dr. Crist feels we need to focus on the good things happening here, as well as shore up any areas that might be considered negatives. With the world ever changing, WRPS needs continue to address the needs of all children so that all can be more successful.

Motion by Sandra Hett, seconded by Mary Rayome that the minutes of the June 9, 2008 special Board of Education meeting, the closed session Board of Education meeting of June 9, 2008, the regular Board of Education meeting of June 9, 2008, the closed session Board of Education meeting of June 25, 2008, and the special Board of Education meeting of June 25, 2008 all be approved. Motion carried unanimously.
Comments from Citizens and Delegations
None.

Community Computer Program
Bryon Kolbeck introduced student interns Dan Pastori and Dan Zirnhelt to present information to the Board on the Community Computer Program which they have spearheaded as volunteers. Mr. Pastori and Mr. Zirnhelt touched on the program’s project goals, which computers are affected, who receives the computers, the training and assistance provided in conjunction with the Lincoln High School Help Desk class, the process used to erase data and clean the computers for readiness to be used, a comparison of the LINUX vs. Windows operating systems, and the environmental benefits involved with recycling the computers at the end of their life cycle in a responsible manner through this program. Mr. Kolbeck spoke about the benefits and potential for this program as it ties into the curriculum for the Help Desk class. The Board commended Dan Pastori and Dan Zirnhelt for their presentation and their efforts in the Community Computer Program.

Committee Reports

   Greg Swank reviewed the following consent agenda items brought before the Board through the Business Services Committee and asked if there were any motions to be held.

   BS-1 Approval of the proposed Kohl grant applications for a 2008-09 start-up breakfast program at Washington Elementary in the amount of $7,564, and a 2008-09 breakfast participation improvement grant for the current eight participating schools in the amount of $13,164.

   BS-2 Approval of the purchase of a 32” Advance Adhancer floor scrubber from CTL of Wausau at a cost of $12,797 to be funded from the 2008-09 Buildings & Grounds budget.

   BS-3 Approval to accept the proposal from Miron Construction for the Lincoln High School science area remodeling project at a cost of $125,520, that architectural and design fees not to exceed $25,000, and that project contingency funding not be exceed $25,000 be funded from the 2006 referendum for facilities and technology.

   BS-4 Approval of the purchase of a 2008 Chevy G2500 Express Cargo Van from L&L Motors LLC at a price of $18,200 plus applicable fees to be funded from the 2008-09 Buildings & Grounds budget.

   BS-5 Approval to accept the proposal from Employee Benefits Corporation with the benefits card option at $4.25 per month per participant (price guaranteed for three years) and a Plan document fee of $600 for the services of providing FLEX plan benefits to employees for medical and childcare expenses beginning October 1, 2008.

   BS-6 Approval to accept the proposal from Goldleaf Partners of Brainerd, MN to provide ongoing third party administration services to the District’s 403(b) plan administration and compliance, and for the District to pay the annual cost of $1,000 and the one-time set-up fee of $950.

   Motion by Greg Swank, seconded by Anne Lee to approve consent agenda items BS 1-6. Motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.

   Greg Swank reviewed updates and reports on:
     - Transportation Hazardous Area Designation Review – A report from the Wood County Sheriff’s office indicating no hazards of “overt” danger to students were apparent in the two mile area around Mead Elementary School.
     - A comparison of electrical and natural gas usage and costs for the past eight fiscal years.
     - The District received a check in the amount of $3,796,619.05 to date on property losses from the hail storm on June 7, 2007. When all is accounted for, the entire amount for all damage related to the storm will total $6.9 million.
     - The meeting date for transportation negotiations has been set for July 23, 2008 at 5:00 p.m.

   Motion by Greg Swank, seconded by John Krings to approve the balance of the Business Services Committee report and the minutes of the July 7, 2008 Business Services Committee meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Mary Rayome reviewed the following consent agenda items brought before the Board through the Personnel Services Committee and asked if there were any motions to be held.

PS-1 Approval of the support staff early retirements of Susan Charles (LHS – Principal’s Secretary effective November 3, 2008) and Rebecca Hoffman (Woodside – Library Aide effective July 1, 2008).

PS-2 Approval of the professional staff resignation of Carrie Dziubczynski (Mead – EBD effective June 6, 2008), Katie Mathews (District – Specially Designed Physical Education effective July 1, 2008 pending receipt of liquidated damages), Katie Mommaerts (Howe – Social Worker effective June 6, 2008), Jodi Moore (Mead – Grade 1 effective June 18, 2008), Megan Slempkes (Howe – Grade 3 effective June 6, 2008).

PS-3 Approval of the support staff resignations of JoAnn Dietzler (Washington – Early Childhood Aide effective June 5, 2008), Marlene Holtz (Howe – Noon Aide/LAP Tutor effective June 5, 2008 – will continue LHS swim instructor/coordinator position).

PS-4 Approval of the professional staff appointments effective August 26, 2008 of Jonah Adams (West/Lincoln - Language Arts), Joel Kuehnhold (West/Lincoln – EBD/LD), Teresa Kuenzli (Mead – EBD), David Pilla (West – Language Arts), Catherine Stuttgen (Pitsch – 4 year old Kindergarten), Kao Vue (Grove – Grade 5/6).

PS-5 Approval of the support staff appointments of Stephanie Minch (Central Office – Pupil Services Secretary) and Jill Piatt (Central Office – Pupil Services Secretary).

Motion by Mary Rayome, seconded by Katie Medina to approve consent agenda items PS 1-5. Motion carried unanimously.

Mary Rayome shared reports and updates on the following:
- A Library position request of 1.0 FTE for Grades 5-8. This item will be taken up by the Board under New Business later in this meeting.
- Discussion the Committee had regarding the current practice involving clerical long-term substitute pay. It was determined by the Committee that a change will not take place.
- On June 2, 2008, Maurine Hodgson was appointed to the position of Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent/Board of Education, and on May 13, 2008, Leanne Rzentkowski was appointed to the position of Disbursement Manager for the Payroll/Accounts Payable Departments.

Motion by Mary Rayome, seconded by Anne Lee to approve the balance of the Personnel Services Committee report and the July 7, 2008, Personnel Services Committee meeting minutes. Motion carried unanimously.


Sandra Hett reviewed the following consent agenda items brought before the Board through the Educational Services Committee and asked if there were any motions to be held.

ES-1 Approval of the continuation of the LHS Student Incentive Release Program pilot for the first semester of the 2008-09 school year.

ES-2 Approval to extend the contract with Building Blocks Learning Center for childcare services at River Cities High School during the 2008-09 school year.

Motion by Sandra Hett, seconded by Anne Lee to approve consent agenda items ES 1-2. Motion carried unanimously.

Sandra Hett shared reports and updates on the following:
- WKCE-CRT Results at Grades 3-8 and 10 – A comparison was shared of the percent of students in the proficient/advanced categories over the last three years between WRPS and Valley Conference schools. Overall there have been gains made, however, there are exceptions such as in sixth grade math. While the percent of students in the proficient/advanced categories increased from 74% to 82%, the District ranking in the Valley Conference remained the same at fifth overall. J.L. Gray shared information about the Washington Elementary School building plan to continue intervention and collaboration efforts through upper elementary grades, focusing on reading and language arts. Steve Smith explained there has been an appeal filed to challenge West Jr. High as being identified as not meeting Adequate Yearly Progress in the
subgroup of Students With Disabilities in the area of reading. A decision from the DPI on this appeal is expected between July 8-27, 2008.

- LHS Assessment and PLAN Results – Ryan Christianson provided interesting information to the Committee on the ACT-PLAN assessment which was administered to all sophomores during the 2007-08 school year. LHS plans to host a parent information session sometime this fall to allow parents and students to hear the results of the test and to explain the correlation to the ACT test coming up in the students’ senior year. It was reported that sophomores scored better on the PLAN Reading Assessment, which was administered later in the school year, than the WKCE Reading Test, which was administered in the fall.

- Mid-Term and Final Report – Ms. Toellner explained the differences between summative and formative assessments, and the variety of assessment practices used in order to provide students different opportunities to demonstrate learning. Formative assessment will be continued, however, committee members agreed that a survey of teachers is not necessary and the District does not need to mandate mid-term and finals from teachers.

- Professional Development Waiver – The DPI has approved the Professional Development Day waiver for the 2008-09 school year. Beginning with the 2009-10 school year, all districts under waivers will be required to submit an evaluation plan linking professional development to student achievement. This will be worked on in the coming year.

Motion by Sandra Hett, seconded by Mary Rayome to approve the balance of the Educational Services Committee report and the minutes of the July 7, 2008, Educational Services Committee meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Agenda Referrals/Information Requests
Anne Lee requested an update on the progress of the three-district joint collaboration effort. Dr. Crist stated he would contact the other districts involved to request a meeting with them again on this topic.

Legislative Agenda
Katie Medina reported on information provided by Dr. Crist on school aid exempted from “zero growth” budget planning orders. State agencies have been instructed to assume “zero growth” in overall General Purpose Revenue appropriations in each year of the next biennium and to prepare plans “to absorb a ten percent permanent base cut.” An area exempt from the zero-growth policy includes state aid to schools. It was reported that the recent flooding and downsizing of manufacturing jobs has put stress not only on the individuals involved, but also highlighted the need for continued investments in worker training, health care, infrastructure, and education. With this being brought to our attention, we need to be aware and watchful of any actions taken.

It was shared that there were 156 schools reported as missing their Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) targets, and the Legislature will be addressing this topic in upcoming sessions.

Members are encouraged to contact Senator Herb Kohl and Senator Russ Feingold, urging them to reject the proposed federal income tax deduction for local property taxes available only to those home owners whose residential property tax rates do not increase. This would put pressure on local school boards to hold down their tax rates despite local circumstances.

Bills

Motion by Sandra Hett, seconded by Anne Lee to approve June disbursements in the amount of $4,812,321.10. Motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.

Unfinished Business
Restructuring Committee - Dr. Crist stated there is a need to resurrect the Restructuring Committee or develop a new committee to look at boundary attendance areas such as Washington School where the facility is at a point of needing two additional classrooms to accommodate the number of students in attendance. While Washington has no room, other buildings have space available. Trends and items we are accountable for with the DPI, state, and federal government could be reviewed by the committee as they consider any potential change.

Dr. Crist would like to begin by contacting interested individuals who served on the committee four years ago to see if they are willing to meet and exchange ideas on this subject. Others would be invited to join the committee as needed.
The plan would be for a recommendation from the committee to come to the Board in February or March of 2009, with implementation of any recommendations to occur in the fall of 2009. Board members agreed on the merits of reviewing these issues once again, and further agreed to resurrect the Restructuring Committee as recommended.

Superintendent Evaluation Materials – A discussion took place on the superintendent evaluation materials provided by Anne Lee. The Board asked Dr. Crist to write up a self-evaluation including goals for the coming year which would be included in the evaluation by the Board. Board members agreed to select their own questions to be used as discussion points in the evaluation.

Possible Action on Support Staff Appointment – Dr. Crist stated this item was discussed by the Personnel Services Committee in closed session, and will be on the August, 2008 agenda.

Library Position Request – Discussion took place regarding the request for an additional 1.0 FTE Library Media Specialist for Grades 5-8. The need for the position is acknowledged, however, the Board preferred to wait on acting on the request until more information regarding the 2008-09 budget was presented in the meeting prior to this meeting.

Motion by Greg Swank, seconded by Sandra Hett to accept the recommendation for a library position at 1.0 FTE for grades 5-8 immediately if not sooner. Motion carried unanimously.

Wellness Committee Request – Dr. Crist asked this item to be deferred to August as more information is gathered. The Board approved this request.

Calendar
Calendar items were reviewed with additions and changes as necessary.

Michelle Bean adjourned the meeting at 8:25 p.m.