

Eau Claire School Board Minutes

Monday, March 18, 2019

Generated by Patti Iverson

Members present

Lori Bica, Chris Hambuch-Boyle, Aaron Harder, Laurie Klinkhammer, Joe Luginbill, Eric D Torres, Charles Vue

1. REGULAR MEETING - CALL TO ORDER

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, President Luginbill 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

Chris Hambuch-Boyle moved, second by Aaron Harder, to suspend the rules and allow public comment to be extended past 30 minutes. Carried by unanimous voice vote.

Rebecca Denney said that serving as president of El Centro has helped her see the power of paying attention to minority populations. She said it is important for Spanish-speaking families to continue nurturing their home language without barriers. She shared a statement from a young mom with a one-year-old who felt the Dual Immersion Program would teach all kids to learn a second language and to be open to different people, cultures, and beliefs.

Michael Lee supports the Dual Immersion Program. He said it enhances brain development, expands the work force and skill sets, and builds the community. There are more career opportunities if you are bilingual. He wants his children and others to have the opportunity to learn a second language and take advantage of opportunities.

Matt Hicks said it is extremely beneficial to speak two languages when you get into the work force. At his job only 2 of the 80 employees speak Spanish. Those who don't know the language must use a language translator line, which the company pays for. Matt's son Harrison said it would be nice if he was able to learn Spanish in kindergarten because it is easier to learn another language when you are young. He said in five years the entire school would be able to speak English and Spanish.

Chauncy Harris spoke in support of keeping Roosevelt as a neighborhood school. He worked at Nestle' before retirement, and he was very involved in the 'Adopt a School' program with Roosevelt for over 20 years. Nestle' provided funding and donations for a variety of activities, and staff came to Roosevelt to volunteer for things like after-school tutoring, Math Club, Junior Achievement, Walk to School Day, etc. Employees felt these visits to Roosevelt were energizing and the kids would brighten their day. He said they often returned to work with a fresh

perspective and were more productive. He was concerned that this partnership would be much more difficult with a school that was farther away.

Rachel Hart Brinson spoke in favor of the Dual Immersion Program. She said when she tried to sign her child up to take Spanish classes through summer school at 8 a.m. on the first day, there were 350 applications ahead of her. She said there are many educational benefits with a program like this. Rachel speaks Spanish and has volunteered to help students who come to school speaking little to no English and has watched them struggle immensely. She felt this program would provide equity as well as assist in academic achievement to prepare all students for post-secondary success.

Meghan Licòn speaks English, Spanish, and German and strongly supports the Dual Immersion Program. She said that knowing multiple languages has opened doors for her and has allowed for rich family experiences. By learning Spanish, her children can communicate with their grandparents on a deeper level, visit where they came from, and communicate when they are there visiting them.

Gerardo Licòn encouraged the Board to vote in favor of the Dual Immersion Program. He offered a historical perspective of how the progression of education for children whose first language is not English has evolved. From having to separate children because they were seen as slowing down everyone else, to students being punished for speaking their first language, to being ignored all together because they are a minority, to not having their needs met because they were seen as a small minority whose needs don't get prioritized, to efforts to not use 'sink or swim' models so kids get help transitioning to learn English. He sees this program as being a fantastic, proactive next step so students don't feel ostracized or treated differently.

Biblana Fuentes said it is important to think about the different constituencies that could be helped by dual immersion. She said she is excited about the possibility of raising her children fluent in English and Spanish. She said as the Spanish-speaking population grows in Eau Claire, there will be many families who would benefit from this program. She said children will live in a global world, so this program will allow children who might not otherwise have a connection to the Spanish culture to experience that. The program would also allow UWEC students who want to receive licensure for bilingual/bicultural education to be placed for field experience in Eau Claire.

Sara Echarn-Recarte was born and raised in Spain and moved to Eau Claire seven years ago. She said her family would be very interested in participating in this program as it would offer more than academic benefits for her children. She also felt that offering this program would have a positive impact on the entire community as the progress and development would be directly related to the capacity of the city to satisfy residents.

Kate Wilson said she supports the Dual Immersion Program. She speaks Spanish to her son at home. While she is a Caucasian from an English-speaking background,

she feels it is important for her children to speak Spanish as well. She felt the program would be excellent for both English and native Spanish speakers. She added that when tested, those who are bilingual are much more empathic. She said the world needs more compassionate and caring children and adults and she would love for Eau Claire to be that change.

Mirēya Sigāla was born in Barron and was one of five Latinos in her district at the time. Because of her physical appearance, she didn't feel like she fit in. When she traveled to Mexico, she was accepted as she was. Returning to Wisconsin she felt isolated. She refused to speak Spanish because she wanted to fit in. She had a principal in elementary school who helped her see that speaking two languages was a gift and she began accepting who she was. She said there are many studies that solidify the educational value of a dual immersion program, but there are immeasurable benefits beyond the classroom.

Dave Garlie said he supports the petition that is circulating for the Board to accept the gift being offered for Memorial High School facility upgrades. He felt a gift of this magnitude would be hard to turn down. He said what students get out of competition are lessons used for professional success and it teaches life skills. He said that excuses are reasons not to succeed, and he asked the Board not to let this be an excuse not to succeed.

Stephanie Farrar said she supports the Dual Immersion proposal. She and her husband are on the faculty at UWEC and both speak Spanish. Her husband is a native speaker. She said she took Spanish in middle and high school but didn't retain any knowledge of the language until she moved to Spain. They are trying to raise their children to be bilingual. She feels the number of families that will be interested in this program will far exceed the spaces available. She feels it will assist with acknowledging and valuing the existing diversity in Eau Claire and will provide an opportunity for inclusivity.

Abby Green said that as a North student, it has been disappointing to hear that the Memorial High School athletic facility proposal is a gift that requires a matching donation while the Board struggles making difficult decisions about what programs to cut because of the District's budget deficit. This gift would force the District to make other cuts to programs as it would require a matching \$1.2 million. She felt it would create a further divide between North and Memorial. She said it seems unnecessary and questionable to fix things that don't need to be fixed when there are so many other needs in the District. She urged the Board to listen to other perspectives on the donation and to take into account what can be done for all students.

Chris Hambuch-Boyle moved, second by Aaron Harder, to reinstate the rules for public comment. Carried by unanimous voice vote.

3. BOARD/ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

3.1 Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Hardebeck reviewed the upcoming School Board events.

Dr. Hardebeck announced that two ECASD educators are recipients of the 2019 Herb Kohl Foundation Teacher Fellowships. Niki Anderson, bio life science teacher at Memorial, and Nick Sirek, sixth grade teacher at DeLong, will receive an award of \$6,000. Teacher Fellowship recipients are educators who have been chosen for their superior ability to inspire a love of learning in their students, their ability to motivate others, and their leadership and service within and outside the classroom.

North High Senior, Megan Pekula, will receive a Student Excellence Scholarship in the amount of \$10,000. Recipients of this award have demonstrated excellence in the academic arena and high motivation to achieve, have displayed a broad range of activity and leadership outside the academic setting, and have shown strong promise for succeeding in college and beyond.

Dr. Hardebeck reviewed her recommendation for inclement weather make-up days that the Board will be asked to approve later in the meeting. She said that school boards across the state have had a difficult time making up the instructional time missed due to the harsh winter. Dr. Hardebeck said she would like to bring a plan to the Board at the first meeting in May to pre-identify and prioritize makeup days on the 2019-20 calendar so that students, families, and staff can be prepared ahead of time. She will get feedback from staff and bring recommendations to the Board.

3.2 Board President's Report

President Luginbill said he will attend the National School Board Association conference next week. This national event brings together education leaders at a time when domestic policies and global trends are combining to shape the future of students. He said he looks forward to receiving new ideas and tools to help drive the District forward.

Mr. Luginbill shared information about a new student group called "Regeneration." The group is sponsored by El Centro as well as JONAH. Middle and high school students can learn about their Latino identity, community involvement, and the application process for educational opportunities.

Board members were reminded to complete the Board Self-Evaluation Survey before the April 1st meeting, when the Board will hold a Work Session to finalize the self-evaluation.

Mr. Luginbill said there was a School Board Candidate Forum held last week and the video of the event can be found at www.ValleyMediaWorks.org.

4. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

Molly Green said students at North are adjusting to the new schedule with an earlier start time and shorter lunch. Students are now signing up for AP tests. Molly said that North students are disappointed about the donation that was offered for a new athletic facility at Memorial High School. She said they question the upkeep costs. In addition, students wonder if the donation can be used to address safety issues at the facility but also fund other programs and activities that can provide all students with skills necessary to succeed.

5. OTHER REPORTS

5.1 School Board Committee Reports

The Policy & Governance Committee will bring forward a policy modification to meet expectations for ESEA. They also reviewed a policy draft from the LEAP Committee that will be sent back to LEAP with suggested modifications. The committee also approved modified language for the policy dealing with custodial and non-custodial parents.

The LEAP Committee completed policy work and sent it back to Policy & Governance. They will look at the suggestions from P & G and bring another draft back to the committee. The committee will meet with the Ozone group to finish a presentation and proposal for a LEAP Zone project.

5.2 Legislative Update

Legislative Liaison Eric Torres said there may be changes made to programs for high school students to receive post-secondary credit at universities and technical colleges. Governor Tony Evers has proposed to repeal versions of the Early College Credit and Start College Now programs to be replaced with new dual enrollment for high school students to be enrolled in post-secondary courses. These changes could affect Board policies.

6. CONSENT RESOLUTION AGENDA

Motion by Eric D Torres, second by Lori Bica, to approve the following consent agenda items:

- Minutes of March 4, 2019
- Minutes of Closed Session - March 4, 2019
- Financial Report - February 2019
- Gifts in the amount of \$67,821.76 for the period of February 1, 2019 through February 28, 2019
- Payment of all bills in the amount of \$4,821,543.88 and net payroll in the amount of \$3,573,526.15 for the period of February 1, 2019 through February 28, 2019.
- Human Resources - Employment Report

- Adopt New Policy 453.12 - Concussion and Brain Injury Management
- Revisions to Policy 164 - School Board Member Accommodations, Compensation, Expenses and Equipment
- Revisions to Policy 823 - Access to Public Records
- Safety Grant & Five-Year Capital Bid Award
- Summer 2019 Referendum Bid Awards
- Adoption of Superintendent's Goals

Motion carried

Yes: Lori Bica, Chris Hambuch-Boyle, Aaron Harder, Laurie Klinkhammer, Joe Luginbill, Eric D Torres, Charles Vue

Superintendent Hardebeck announced that South Principal Dianna Zeegers has resigned and will be moving to Colorado with her family to accept a new position. Dr. Hardebeck shared her biography and wished her well in her new venture.

Dr. Hardebeck also announced that Director of Buildings & Grounds Larry Sommerfeld will be retiring on March 25, 2019. She said Mr. Sommerfeld has worked tirelessly through the referendum projects and has taken a role in the safety grant work. She thanked him for his service and wished him well.

7. INDIVIDUALLY CONSIDERED RESOLUTION(S)

7.14 Inclement Weather Make-up Day

Motion by Chris Hambuch-Boyle, second by Aaron Harder, to approve the inclement weather make-up days as proposed.

Motion carried

Yes: Lori Bica, Chris Hambuch-Boyle, Aaron Harder, Laurie Klinkhammer, Joe Luginbill, Eric D Torres, Charles Vue

7.1 Dual Immersion Program

Dave Oldenberg, Director of Academic Services, and Brianna Smit, English Learner Coordinator, shared an overview of the Dual Immersion Program proposal. They reminded the Board that it had selected Longfellow Elementary as the site for the program and shared the budget impact of implementing it including materials, transportation, and Spanish BEAs. Full implementation of the program would range from \$390,000 to \$970,000. The difference in costs would be due to the number of BEA's needed based on where students would come from across the District.

Board members shared their thoughts on the program and whether they would support it.

Motion by Eric D Torres, second by Laurie Klinkhammer, to approve funding for the ECASD Dual Immersion Program for the 2019-20 school year.

Motion carried

Yes: Lori Bica, Aaron Harder, Laurie Klinkhammer, Joe Luginbill, Eric D Torres, Charles Vue; No: Chris Hambuch-Boyle

7.3 Approve Formation of Ad Hoc OPEB Committee & Charge

President Luginbill reminded the Board that on December 17, 2018, the Board postponed a decision regarding changes to Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB). At that time the Board requested a committee of staff members be formed to have a deeper conversation about changes to the OPEB benefits. On March 4, 2019 the Board heard a report on the estimated retirement benefits under each plan, the historical cost of the current benefit, proposed committee composition, options reviewed previously by the School Board, timelines for completion of the work, and the scope of the committee's work.

A request to solicit staff to participate in this ad hoc committee went out via the District Update on March 8, 2019 and applications were due on March 15, 2019. President Luginbill and Superintendent Hardebeck brought forward a recommendation to form an Ad Hoc OPEB Committee, membership for the committee, and a committee charge. There were 20 members suggested for the committee. Abby Johnson and Kim Koller will serve as liaisons to the committee.

The recommended charge of the committee would be to review, study, and discuss OPEB options including stipends, health and dental insurance rates and plans, married couple benefits, and coverage for single/family/employee plus plans. The Ad Hoc OPEB Committee would meet on an as-needed basis and provide a report to the full Board by June 3, 2019 with recommendations for Board approval.

The Board talked about the timeline of having a report to the full Board by June 3, 2019. This would allow time for multiple meetings but would also keep in line with the Board's desire to continue forward movement on benefit discussions. At that time, the Board will be able to decide if it wants to accept any of the recommendations at future Board meetings.

It was noted that current proposals for changes in OPEB won't help with budget issues for several years. Given that there are more urgent needs for the budget, the Board will have to look at other areas to make cuts. It was suggested that the Budget Development Committee put together a list of potential areas for further consideration such as increments, stipends, additional time, etc. The Revenue Committee could also work with Budget Development to look at additional revenue sources to offset the budget deficit.

Motion by Aaron Harder, second by Eric D Torres, that the School Board approve the formation of the Ad Hoc OPEB committee, the membership, and the charge.

Motion carried. Yes: Lori Bica, Chris Hambuch-Boyle, Aaron Harder, Laurie Klinkhammer, Joe Luginbill, Eric D Torres, Charles Vue

8. ADJOURN TO COMMITTEE

9. COMMITTEE REPORTS/ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

9.1 Update on ECASD Enrollments

Kim Koller, Executive Director of Administration, said there were 11,331 students enrolled in the District as of the 2nd Friday in January 2019 Membership Count. She shared an evaluation of actual enrollments compared to the Applied Population Lab's (APL) projections for 2019-20 and 2024-25. The projections were very close to actual enrollments.

Ms. Koller pointed out that when looking at enrollments by grade level, it is helpful to look at enrollments of the outgoing class compared to the incoming class by level. The incoming classes by level are all higher than the outgoing classes, which means that enrollments will continue to increase. The APL projections show that as well.

9.2 Update on High School Athletic Field Proposal

Kim Koller, Executive Director of Administration, and Abby Johnson, Executive Director of Business Services, gave an overview of the Memorial High School Athletic Field proposal. At the March 4, 2019 meeting, the Board had several questions they wanted answered about the proposal. Ms. Koller shared an aerial view of the athletic facilities at both high schools. She then reviewed a chart that compared things such as square footage, gym space, fields, and dugouts. In the past North received donations for a rubberized training hallway, hockey training area and team dugouts.

Ms. Johnson explained how the community donors would fund the \$1.2 million donation, which included naming rights, advertising, and renewal funds for maintenance replacement and upkeep. The donors would solidify naming rights and ECASD would approve contracts and advertising to be sure they are in compliance with District guidelines. The donors have committed \$1.2 million and it would be up to them to raise the funds.

Ms. Johnson said that when looking at how the District could fund the matching \$1.2 million donation, ECASD could reprioritize the five-year capital plan. The District has already prioritized the culinary and referendum projects, and bids have gone out for these projects with the budget approved for 2019-20. Ms. Johnson said that for 2020-21 and beyond there would be money included in the five-year capital plan. The current capital plan could be reprioritized; however, there are many projects already slated in the next several years. She noted that there is nothing related to the outdoor facilities at Memorial currently on the list. She said there were some discussions with Mr. Sommerfeld, Director of Buildings and Grounds, about adding a project to resurface the track in 2024-25.

Other matching donation ideas included:

- Issuing debt through a state trust fund loan.
- Using Fund 38 outside of referendum to issue debt. The Board would have to adopt a resolution and publish a petition to give taxpayers 30 days to respond.
- Using Fund 39 to hold a referendum.

Ms. Johnson was asked to research the formal process to adopt a resolution to issue debt and then give taxpayers an opportunity to object.

Other matching donation ideas include having donors buy engraved paver bricks or engraved nameplates for bleacher seats. The District could also look at advertising along the fence.

The donation will no longer be available after April 1, 2019, so the Board will be asked to make a decision on April 1, 2019. If the Board supports the donation, it is anticipated that the final design work would be done in 50 days, bidding would take place over 21 days, construction would take an estimated 114 days with completion in the fall of 2019.

The Board discussed who would do the fundraising. Athletic directors would be willing to do that. There was also a suggestion to collaborate with the Eau Claire Public Schools Foundation to take on the responsibility of raising the District's portion of the \$1.2 million.

Administration was asked to get an estimate of the total costs for the items that were donated at North High School.

Board members talked about the added complexity of having two high schools and its effect on accepting the donation. It is an emotional issue because of this. Other communities in the area that have one high school have embarked on similar projects with donors without any objections.

There was a suggestion to develop a comprehensive plan for athletics and facilities that aligns with District priorities like plans in place for early childhood education, new technologies in the delivery of curriculum, etc. Donors could be asked to offer the donation without the matching contribution at this time so the District could work on that plan.

President Luginbill stated that the Board must make a decision on April 1, 2019. He said it would be important to receive information from the donors and reach out to the Eau Claire Public Schools Foundation about taking over the fundraising for the District before that time. He will schedule those meetings and provide a follow up at the April 1st meeting.

Molly Green asked if it would be possible to complete items that are most pressing such as resurfacing the track and constructing outdoor restrooms rather than the

entire project.

9.3 Revenue Committee Proposal #2

Abby Johnson, Executive Director of Business Services, said the Revenue Committee recommended the following modifications to the current facility fee schedule by creating for-profit and not-for-profit rates to stay competitive with other districts and surrounding facilities.

The recommendations were as follows:

1. Change rental fees for classroom use.
2. Change rental fees for auditorium use that would create sustainable revenue for the District while staying competitive in the market. There would be an hourly rate with a four-hour minimum for auditorium rentals.
3. Change rental fees for gymnasium use based upon the court size.
4. Change costs to drag and line fields to mirror what Eau Claire Parks and Recreation charges.
5. Change equipment rental rates as standard classrooms now have items such as data projectors and document cameras. Gymnastic equipment rental fees will now be based on the equipment that is rented.
6. Charge partners that provide before and after school childcare a daily rental rate.

The Board talked about imposing fees for childcare partners. They have never paid a fee; however, many districts in the state charge a fee. The Revenue Committee suggested implementing a fee of \$10 per day per site. This could bring in \$20,000 in revenue. Ms. Johnson said that because both entities (YMCA and Grace Lutheran) have a January – December fiscal year, it would be appropriate to delay implementation of these fees until January 2020 or July 2020.

The Board agreed to bring this item forward on the consent resolution agenda at the next meeting.

10. REQUEST FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

There were no requests for future agenda items.

11. ADJOURN

Motion by Charles Vue, second by Aaron Harder, to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried: Yes: Lori Bica, Chris Hambuch-Boyle, Aaron Harder, Laurie Klinkhammer, Joe Luginbill, Eric D Torres, Charles Vue

Meeting adjourned at 10:27 p.m.