

Eau Claire School Board Minutes

Monday, April 1, 2019

Generated by Patti Iverson

Members present

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

1. WORK SESSION – 6 P.M.

1.1 School Board Self-Evaluation

President Luginbill called the Work Session to order at 6 p.m. He shared a summary document of the School Board's Self-Evaluation Report. It included feedback and recommendations from Board members and the Executive Team. The Board and Executive Team read through the document before discussing.

The group looked at the recommendations under each question.

Question 1 – Feedback on Board’s governance structure, conduct/meetings and decision-making process:

- Board members should review all ECASD governance-related policies to ensure their roles and responsibilities are being met.
- The Board should ensure that it consistently observes timelines for decision making. (Board members felt that the President should be responsible for making sure guidelines are adhered to.)
- During Board meetings, have additional congratulations and acknowledgement to staff at-large when the District experiences success.
- Work Sessions should be scheduled with regional school districts that have implemented various governance structures so the Board can deliberate on those structures and make a decision/commitment to maintain fidelity to a structure moving forward.
- Once a governance structure is decided, a plan for long-term sustainability and commitment to the structure in policies, practices, and norms should be established. The Board should set an end date and work backwards to determine the timeline.
- Board agendas should be shorter when possible.
- Board members should not involve themselves as individuals in situations involving personnel or student discipline as such involvement may impede the Board's ability to provide sound governance.

Question 2 – Feedback regarding Board’s policy development and implementation:

There were no recommendations here.

Question 3 – Feedback regarding Board’s fiscal oversight, resource allocation, and facility stewardship:

- The Board's fiscal oversight should be the first content area we tackle after identifying a governance structure moving forward.
- The Budget Development Committee should have level of oversight in administrative cuts or reductions over a certain amount/budgetary threshold.
- The Revenue Committee may want to merge with the Budget Development Committee or be absorbed by them.
- The Budget Development Committee should automatically be consulted on any matter before the Board that exceeds a set financial threshold, i.e. an established dollar amount or percentage of total budget. (Dr. Hardebeck said there was a change in practice last year to bring the Board any changes that are made to the budget. She said a dollar threshold or a percentage of the total budget could be set. Any item that falls under that category would be accompanied by a recommendation from the Budget Development Committee.)
- There should be a project workflow from the financial lens like the Policy & Governance Committee’s policy workflow.

Question 4 – Feedback regarding Board’s oversight of accountability measures in alignment with the District’s Strategic Plan:

- The Strategic Plan should be reviewed on an annual basis due to the turnover of Board members. (This could be put in a yearly calendar as a Work Session.)
- Specific action steps should be put in place for each of the Board's goals/priorities, allowing us to be able to measure the desired outcomes annually.
- The Board should receive reports about School Improvement Plans by building from Building Leadership Teams. Perhaps there could be a bi-annual update.

Question 5 – Feedback regarding Board’s monitoring of student achievement:

- Information should be shared with the Board about the gifted and talented program and other programs that serve subgroups of educational needs and how that is impacting ECASD's universal design for learning. (Dr. Hardebeck will do an audit of the written letters provided to the Board and report back.)
- Vertically the ECASD has collected enough data to show growth for the whole District. We should also segregate data horizontally to address the gaps in achievement.

Question 6 – Feedback regarding Board’s relationship and collaboration with the community at-large:

- We should further develop and invest in our communication strategies and place as a top priority.

- ECASD should initiate a community partners survey to gain perspective and ideas of ways to further collaborate in a healthy way.
- The Board should establish a Business Advisory Council to engage private industry in the review and development of relevant and engaging policies/curriculum/programs.
- The Board/Administrator Google Doc events calendar should be further developed and utilized with consistent opportunities scheduled for community outreach/presentations.
- LEAP will need to formalize a positive and seamless process for accepting/reviewing community-initiated proposals for ECASD educational programs.
- ECASD should develop intentional strategies to ensure that all families are represented in the decision-making process.

Question 7 – Feedback regarding Board’s legislative involvement and advocacy:

- Only a few Board members have been actively participating in state and federal educational advocacy efforts.
- There should be a Board legislative update at nearly every Board meeting that is of interest to public schools. There should be a link to the WASB Legislative Update page on the Board’s advocacy webpage.

President Luginbill said the next step in the self-evaluation process was to look at the Board’s current goals and determine if sufficient action has been taken or if more work needs to be done to meet those goals. Recommendations were shared for each goal.

Goal #1 – Addressing the achievement gap and breaking down learning targets by subgroups to determine areas for growth.

- ECASD should examine subgroups around extra-curricular activities, sports, music, art, alternative placements, AP classes, etc.
- The Board should define how we identify and measure success as we try to address our District achievement gap.
- The Board needs to regularly use more sophisticated analyses to best understand our data (not just percentages, averages, etc.).

Goal #2 - Speaking with one voice as an elected body.

- As part of the School Board Handbook and annual Board orientation, members should receive a review of proper communication protocols as well as the appropriate ways in which information or administrative action can be requested.
- Board members should take care in what is directed of staff on an individual basis as opposed to going through meeting votes or the information-gathering process within Board committees.
- Board members should be mindful about how they speak to the media regarding a topic that has not yet come before the Board.

- This is an area that could be added as a topic during one Quarterly Communication each year.

Goal #3 - Further assessment of if and how we are meeting our goals in policy, governance, and budget development.

- It might be time for a second Systems Assessment. This may fit well with the Board's ongoing work and with the forthcoming Superintendent search process.

Goal 4 – Aligning District priorities with the budget.

- The Board needs to enter each budget cycle by identifying what dollar amounts are required to reduce the deficit and then work as a unified team with downtown and school staff to understand how we're going to meet those targets.
- The Board may want to consider implementing a Balanced Budget Policy.

The Board also shared recommendations on how to help make the Board Governance training most effective:

- Board members read selected scholarly sources then meet for Work Sessions.
- The Board would benefit from guest speakers and facilitators from neighboring/regional districts. The School Board President and Superintendent from the LaCrosse School District have used the Coherent Governance structure and indicated they could discuss details with the ECASD Board.
- The Superintendent and Executive Team should be involved in the governance sessions and discussions as they will be largely responsible for the implementation of whatever model is adopted by the Board.

The Board shared what resources or information would help enhance their role as a Board member:

- It would be helpful to have WASB Board member trainings that are closer to the Eau Claire area.
- Having an established governance structure will be very helpful.
- It might be nice for the Board to host a quarterly social outing with the Superintendent and Executive Team to improve positive communication, trust, and working relationships with the Executive Team.

The Board discussed the goals it would like to set for the coming year. It was suggested that the goal of speaking with one voice be eliminated as that has been met. Another suggestion was to incorporate goal three and four into one goal to continue to align District priorities with the budget. The Board wanted to add a goal about establishing a governance structure within a year and to maintain fidelity to it. The Board wanted to continue the goal to address the achievement gap and break down learning targets by subgroups to determine areas for growth.

Eric Torres agreed to help President Luginbill with wordsmithing the three goals. They will be brought back to the Board for approval at the next meeting.

Work Session adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

2. 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.

3. PUBLIC FORUM

John Wagner urged the Board to adopt the resolution requesting support for legislation aimed at decreasing the level of child poverty and racial disparities in the state.

Mike Sinz is a special education teacher and head football coach at Memorial. He thanked those who have come forward with a donation. He felt this was a once in a lifetime opportunity to accept this donation and wondered what message would be sent to potential donors if the Board does not accept it. He said the updates to Memorial's athletic fields are necessary as there are current safety issues. He said when traveling to other Big River Conference schools, Memorial is very outdated. He noted the lack of restrooms for parents, students, and guests. MHS cannot host events because of their current outdoor facilities.

Lanette Hesse said she obtained 1,111 signatures on a petition to support accepting the donation and matching the \$1.2 million for the proposed Memorial athletic facility. She said this is a gift and acknowledged that there are financial implications for the District. Ms. Hesse said it was an opportunity to set a precedent for public opinion on gift giving. She said there could be private fund raising for the District's portion and that there may be local grants available. She felt there should be money budgeted for restrooms outside Memorial. The current porta potties are not ADA accessible.

Randi Gerber felt that the proposed athletic field complex would have a positive impact on many students and would allow them to play on fields where they won't sustain injuries due to the conditions of the fields. She asked the Board to consider the long-term impact of refusing the donation now and then the District having to pay for repairs in the future. She felt that not moving forward could be seen as financially irresponsible.

David Kite is the head soccer coach and physical education teacher at Memorial. He felt the upgrades to the Memorial athletic facilities would be very important to creating school pride. He said in the fall there are five teams using four fields and they are quite often practicing on the same field which can be dangerous. They must stagger where they hold practices so as not to ruin the playing surface. Having turf would mean less cancelled games. He said MHS cannot host sectional

finals due to the facilities. He added that the facilities could become a source of revenue for field rentals.

Christine Brown asked the Board to accept and match the donation of \$1.2 million to improve outdoor athletic facilities at Memorial. She felt it was a unique and historic opportunity to improve unsafe and old facilities and make them equal to other high schools. She understood that the \$1.2 million match may seem impossible in today's budget but asked the Board to begin to think creatively about public/private partnerships. She noted that Memorial is the only high school in the Big Rivers Conference to not have running water or bathrooms and many safety issues exist in the track area. She said the shotput area is not legal by the National Federation of High School standards, and the pole vault area is illegal. There has not been a sectional track meet at MHS since 1998. The lack of green space at Memorial due to the confined layout can be addressed with turf.

Three Memorial students (Will Hesse, Keagan Brown, and Peter Voight) spoke on behalf of Memorial students. They are football players and have concerns with the conditions of the athletic fields at Memorial. Players have been hurt stepping into gopher holes. There is typically only a non-handicapped accessible porta potty outside, but it hasn't been dropped off yet. They noted that Regis has been renting out its new turf to baseball teams wanting to practice. The boys said that not only do sports do a lot for them, but what they learn translates into the classroom. They learn about leadership, teamwork, and character building. They encouraged the Board to match the donation for the newly proposed athletic facility at Memorial.

John Jungbluth spoke about the importance of funding the fine arts. He said they are as important as athletics, and as the Board looks to fund new programs and perhaps an athletic complex, they should keep fine arts in mind for the complete education of students.

Dave Garlie spoke in support of matching the \$1.2 million donation for the Memorial athletic field proposal. He said he understands the District's budget situation but feels this would be an investment for the District. He would support the investment and sees the gift as a pathway to making improvements to the facility. He felt with the updates the Board could see a return on its investment.

Mitch Barone said that on behalf of the El Centro Board, he expressed gratitude to the School Board for approving the Dual Immersion program. They are grateful for the Board's willingness to make an investment in the future of foreign language education. He said that for many students in the District it is a legitimization of their culture and identity.

Melissa Lokken was not in favor of the Board matching the \$1.2 million for the Memorial project. She was concerned with other budget shortfalls the District is facing. She felt the donation was very generous, but rather than having the District match those funds, she would like to see those affected fundraise the additional \$1.2 million. She said when you work for something, you own it more and are proud of that. She wants the District to work for unity so there aren't divisions.

Because of the very short timeline for the Board to make a decision, she asked that they take more time to discuss this donation.

North senior Annie O'Hara was concerned about the Board accepting the \$1.2 million donation and matching that donation with District funds. She felt there would be an adverse effect on implementation of the proposed elementary boundary changes, which took place to bring equality to the two high schools. She shared statistics between the two high schools. *GreatSchools.org* rates Memorial as 8 out of 10 and North as 4 out of 10. The percentage of students from low income families at Memorial is 26% and at North it is 43%. The AP passing rate at Memorial is 84% and at North it is 61%. She questioned putting money into athletics when there are so many other needs in the District. She said when Memorial had to be closed to open enrollment, because it was the 'more desirable' school, it drove a deeper wedge in the divide between the schools. She felt that Carson Park is a balanced middle ground for cross-town rivalries and has a long-standing tradition in Eau Claire. She said that while it may be necessary to update aging facilities, building a whole new complex is excessive.

Martha Nieman is a member of the Child Poverty Task Force, Clear Vision, the Poverty Summit, and is a County Board Supervisor. She urged the Board to consider adoption of the resolution requesting legislation aimed at decreasing child poverty and racial disparities in Wisconsin. She said that addressing child poverty has benefits to individuals and society, health, quality of life, and economic wellbeing.

4. CONSENT RESOLUTION AGENDA

Motion by Eric D Torres, second by Charles Vue, to approve the following Consent Resolution Agenda items:

- Minutes of March 18, 2019
- Minutes of Closed Session - March 18, 2019
- Human Resources - Employment Report
- Resolution Requesting Support for Legislation Aimed at Decreasing the Level of Child Poverty and Racial Disparities in the State of Wisconsin
- Revenue Committee Proposal #2

Motion carried

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

5. INDIVIDUALLY CONSIDERED RESOLUTION(S)

5.1 Memorial High School Athletic Field Proposal

The Board discussed the proposal for the Memorial High School athletic fields and asked questions of administration. The donors would commit \$1.2 million and would ask the District to match that amount. Superintendent Hardebeck shared a

list of potential contingencies for the Board's consideration such as entering into a sponsorship agreement with each donor related to naming and advertising rights, bidding and approval of contracts, verifying amounts and costs of project, the roles of the Board, the roles of the donor, and creating a plan for raising funds.

The Board talked about potential options for funding the District's portion of \$1.2 million. This could include fundraising, a state trust fund loan, five-year capital improvements, and grant funding. They also discussed implications to the budget if the Board approved this expenditure including increasing class sizes, staff pay freezes, elimination of professional development, etc. The Board also discussed collaborating with the Eau Claire Public Schools Foundation for fund raising, grant writing, or donor advised funds and trusts. Some Board members were concerned with the short timeline to make a decision on this project.

Board members acknowledged the very generous donation but wondered if contingencies could be added so the Board could work with the donor to come up with a more thoughtful, longer-term plan. It was suggested that a comprehensive development plan that is equitable and benefits all students be completed so the donation could be part of larger donation campaign.

Motion by Lori Bica, second by Chris Hambuch-Boyle, to accept the \$1.2 million donation.

After discussion, Coms. Bica and Hambuch-Boyle withdrew that motion.

Motion by Chris Hambuch-Boyle, second by Laurie Klinkhammer, that the District create a comprehensive development plan for public-private partnerships and support for District facilities and programs.

Motion carried

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

Motion by Laurie Klinkhammer, second by Aaron Harder, that the District accept the \$1.2 million gift from the donors contingent on approval of a sponsorship agreement and timeline by both parties.

Motion failed as a two-thirds majority vote was needed to pass this motion.

Yes: Aaron Harder, Laurie Klinkhammer, Joe Luginbill, Charles Vue

No: Lori Bica, Chris Hambuch-Boyle, Eric D Torres

Motion by Lori Bica, second by Chris Hambuch-Boyle, that the District accept the \$1.2 million gift from the donors contingent on approval of a sponsorship agreement for private funding and timeline by both parties.

Motion carried

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

5.2 Charter School Agreement between ECASD Board of Education and Eau Claire Virtual School, Inc.

Dave Oldenberg, Director of Academic Services, Andrew Seveland, Academic Services Coordinator, and Shannyn Pinkert, Board President of the Eau Claire Virtual School, were present to discuss the proposal to establish a new charter school by agreeing to the proposed Eau Claire Virtual School charter contract. They shared a proposed timeline should the Board approve the charter contract. A Virtual School Board of Directors has been established along with articles of incorporation, bylaws, and the selection of officers.

Mr. Seveland said there were two virtual school model options for the Board to consider. Option 1 would use ECASD teachers to lead instruction and provide virtual and hands-on activities to students and caretakers. With Option 2 the ECASD would contract with a virtual education provider equipped with Wisconsin-licensed teachers to provide virtual instruction. The Virtual School Board recommended starting with a contracted service provider and using community feedback and student enrollment to shape the hiring of any needed personnel.

A range of potential scenarios were shared that would impact the budget. Newly-enrolling students already residing in ECASD boundaries would have the most positive budgetary impact. Enrolling students in the charter school who are already in the District could yield a loss of revenue. Consequently, the targeted population would be students who are not currently receiving services such as home-schooled students.

The goal of this charter school is to provide an innovative educational path that allows for the creative blend of options and opportunities to continually build the strengths of each learner. The school will enable the District to provide services to students the District has not been able to reach previously.

There were four options for the Board to consider:

Option 1: Approve the charter contract as it is and open in the 2019-20 school year.

Option 2: Approve the charter contract on the condition that the school open in the 2020-21 school year, which would allow the District more time to plan and develop program options that best meet the needs of prospective students.

Option 3: Delay the vote to approve the charter at this time.

Option 4: Vote to not approve the charter contract.

Mr. Schmitt said the Board could limit the footprint to 26 to 50 students during the first year to keep the financial risk to a minimum. This could be done in the form of a pilot program.

Board members had several questions pertaining to the charter contract. It was decided that rather than go through each question, Board members should send

any questions they have to Dr. Hardebeck so they could be addressed in the Friday Letter to the Board.

This item will be brought back to the Board at the next meeting for consideration.

President Luginbill announced that he received an email from the donor group for the Memorial athletic fields that they were withdrawing their donation proposal after hearing the outcome of the School Board's vote.

5.3 Dual Immersion Lottery Options

Dave Oldenberg, Director of Academic Services; Brianna Smit, English Learner Coordinator; and Sarah Fisher, Longfellow Principal shared information on lottery options for the Dual Immersion Program.

The following recommendation was made by administration for approval of the lottery:

Step 1: Returning students would be automatically enrolled in the next year of the program. This includes students from families living within ECASD boundaries and open enrolled families.

Step 2: Siblings of returning students would be automatically enrolled when they apply for admission. This would include students from families living within the ECASD boundaries and open enrolled families.

Step 3: After Step 2 there would be a lottery for the remaining seats. The lottery in this step would be for ECASD enrolled students who apply for the program and live within the ECASD boundaries. Fifty percent of the students would be Spanish-speaking and fifty percent would be non-Spanish speaking students. No preference would be given to students from a particular District school.

Step 4: If there is space for admission to the program after Step 3, there would be another lottery for ECASD open enrolled students who applied to the charter school.

It was noted that at every step there would be no preference given to children of Dual Immersion staff.

Motion by Charles Vue, second by Eric D Torres, to approve the four-step student lottery-selection process for the Dual Immersion Program as presented with 50% Spanish speaking students and 50% non-Spanish speaking students.

Motion carried

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

5.4 Joint Petition with the City of Eau Claire for Annexation of Former Little Red School Property

Motion by Laurie Klinkhammer, second by Chris Hambuch-Boyle, that the School Board join the City of Eau Claire in a joint petition for annexation of the former Little Red School Property.

Motion carried

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

6. ADJOURN TO COMMITTEE

7. COMMITTEE REPORTS/ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

7.1 2019-20 Health and Dental Insurance Information

Bill Heinz from Associated Benefits and Risk Consulting said the District went out to the market for its health and dental plans. The District send requests for proposals to 15 different vendors for health insurance, and 4 came back with insurance proposals.

Mr. Heinz reviewed the District's current health insurance benefits for all insured employees. He shared renewal costs if no plan design changes were implemented. This would increase the District's portion for health insurance to \$2.6 million.

There were four options for the Board to consider:

Option A:

- Change health carriers to Prevea; offer dual choice of HMO and PPO

Option B:

- Increase deductible from \$4,000/\$8,000 to \$5,000/\$10,000
- Change the prescription drug 4th tier from \$250 to 25%
- Increase office visit from \$25 to \$50
- Reduce HRA contribution from \$1,000/\$2,000 to \$900/\$1,800

Option C:

- Increase deductible from \$4,000/\$8,000 to \$5,000/\$10,000
- Increase the maximum out of pocket expenses to \$6,000/\$12,000
- Change the prescription drug 4th tier from \$250 to 25%
- Increase office visit from \$25 to \$50

Option D:

- Increase deductible from \$4,000/\$8,000 to \$5,000/\$10,000
- Increase the maximum out of pocket expenses to \$6,000/\$12,000
- Change the prescription drug 4th tier from \$250 to 25%
- Increase office visit from \$25 to \$50

- Reduce HRA contribution from \$1,000/\$2,000 to \$900/\$1,800

Mr. Heinz looked at each option and shared the proposed employee monthly increase in premium for each one. He also looked at the pros and cons of each option. A table with a summary of the options presented was reviewed:

	Current	Renewal	Option A		Option B	Option C	Option D
Employee Monthly Contribution	SHP	SHP	Prevea HMO	Prevea PPO	SHP Deductible, copay, change & reduction in HRA contribution	SHP Deductible, copay, coinsurance change	SHP Deductible, copay, coinsurance change & reduction in HRA contribution
Single Plan	\$93	\$109	\$84	\$186	\$103	\$97	\$97
LTD Family	\$195	\$220	\$176	\$388	\$206	\$198	\$198
Family Plan	\$242	\$270	\$219	\$482	\$253	\$243	\$243
District Change (87.4%) from Current		\$2,639,157	-\$1,983,863		+\$923,705	+\$273,485	+\$44,985

When the ECASD Holistic Committee reviewed the options, they rated Option B with Security Health Plan as their top option, then Option C, then Option D, and their last choice would be Option A.

Dr. Hardebeck said the Executive Team will share their recommended option with the Board on April 15, 2019 based on the Board's comments and the preference of the Holistic Committee.

Mr. Heinz stated that there would be no increase in the dental insurance renewal.

7.2 Demographic Trends & Facility Planning Committee Updates & Recommendations

This item was postponed due to the late hour.

7.3 Discussion & Possible First Reading of Policy 342.5 - Title I Program

The Board shared a first reading of the change to Policy 342.5 – Title I Program.

As required by federal law, the District has established and is implementing a District-wide salary schedule. The District shall ensure equivalency among grade levels in teachers, administrators, support personnel, curriculum materials, and instructional supplies.

The Board agreed to move this item forward on the next consent resolution agenda.

8. REQUEST FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

There were no requests for future agenda items.

9. ADJOURN

Motion by Chris Hambuch-Boyle, 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 11:44 p.m.