

School District of Rhinelander  
Board of Education

**BOARD MEETING UPDATE**

Regular Monthly Meeting  
Monday, December 18, 2017

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Education was called to order on Monday, December 18, 2017 at 6:00 p.m. in the Superior Diesel Advanced Learning Center of Rhinelander High School, located at 665 Coolidge Avenue, Rhinelander, WI. Ronald Counter, Board President, led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

Board Members Present: Judy Conlin, Mary Peterson, Mike Roberts, David Holperin, Dennis O'Brien, Duane Frey, Ann Munninghoff Eshelman, Benjamin Roskoskey, and Ron Counter

Board Members Absent: None

Approximately ten guests were present for this meeting, as well as Superintendent Kelli Jacobi, Jamie Taylor of the Northwoods River News, and Eileen Persike of the North Star Journal.

Declaration of Public Notice

The 'Declaration of Public Notice' was printed on the meeting agenda. This notice identifies the public places at which the meeting agenda was posted and/or shared.

School Board Professional Development

Teri Maney, Director of Instruction, provided the school board members with information and explanation of District's state report cards and how the state was scoring the report cards this year in comparison to past years. The state uses a very cautious approach to relying on the school report cards as a critical indicator of school district achievement. Although some districts may have increased scores, this does not mean that they had accomplished better results or academics, as their achievement calculations are adjusted in accordance to the economically disadvantaged data reported. Also, although the state told school districts that they would be penalized for lack of test participation by schools, it did not follow through with the penalties, which could be considered inflation of academic performance.

Due to the scores that our school district received from the state, discussions have resulted in the following action plan:

**Focus on our own school district and what we can do to improve**

- ACT (American College Test) Scores: Rhinelander High School (RHS) will continue to test all students as required by state law.
- ACT/ACP (Academic and Career Planning) preparation: Grades 6-12 have already incorporated lesson activities into homeroom time in an effort to practice ACP and ACT testing skills.
- Implement 'Method Test Prep', the ACT prep software program.
- Develop the importance of taking the test and doing the best work possible in students.
- Reaffirm the impact of teacher and administration belief in students and their abilities (Hattie's research).
- Continue to increase attendance goals - students cannot learn if they are not present.
- Emphasis on connecting with students through relationships, interests, sports, activities, desires to be here. (Anthony Muhammad, Allison Posey)

**James Williams Middle School**

Forward Exam testing will be scheduled differently than last year. It will result in an adjusted schedule with all students testing in the morning with an adjusted schedule for the remainder of the day.

**Math**

- > Revise the sequence to promote Algebra in 8th grade for most students. If an additional dose is needed, then a redo will follow in 9th grade.
- > Eliminate Integrated Math (already done) from RHS options. Encourage Geometry for those students who are ready at 8th grade, preferably at the middle school.

**District Configuration**

Analyzing our School Report Cards shows that the District's current grade configurations penalize score results and students by not allowing for recognizable growth. We will be investing grade configuration options that would benefit students.

Board members were provided with the book *The Will to Lead, the Skill to Teach – Transforming Schools at Every Level*, written by Dr. Anthony Mohammad. A brief study guide for the book was also shared. The book is based on the “best practices” to support academic growth and achievement for all students. Board members were asked to read the book prior to the January 15, 2018 regular monthly meeting at which time contents of the book will be reviewed and discussed. Mr. Mohammad will be in our school district in February 2018 to work with staff on the skills they can use for student growth and achievement. The opportunity for a school district of our size to have one of the most recognized and leading experts in the areas of school culture and organizational climate is an exceptional opportunity. Other area school districts will be invited to send their staff to this professional learning opportunity.

## Report Topics

### President’s Report

President Counter shared that all the school board members have all received a copy of the Hodag Schools Foundation (HSF) Annual Report publication. On behalf of the Board, he thanked HSF for all of the financial support it has provided to the District. President Counter also informed the Board that agenda Item D., 2017 State Education Convention WI Association of School Boards Recommended Delegate Assembly Resolutions, and Item G., Proposed 2018-2019 School Year Calendar, have been removed from the agenda and will be considered at the January regular monthly school board meeting.

### Vice-President’s Report

In response to the results of the state report card, Vice-President Conlin shared a quote and asked that the school board and all school district staff ask the question, “How can we get better?”

### Superintendent’s Report

Superintendent Jacobi reminded everyone present that the HSF Gala will be held on January 20<sup>th</sup>. She also shared that she has approved the request for the development of a co-op with Northland Pines for the Alpine Ski Team. Both districts had low student involvement and with the co-op the students can work as a team for competitive skiing.

### Student Representative Report

Tyler Fredrick, Student Council Representative, reported that in December the student focus has been on charity to our community’s less fortunate families. He also reported that students have been doing bell ringing for the Salvation Army at Trig’s and have been delivering cookies to the local nursing homes, and city departments (i.e. fire, police). The students are also in the planning stages for the upcoming winter dance.

### Professional Staff Report

Shari Wendland, Professional Staff Representative, did a short exercise with the school board and then introduced the Rhinelander High School Science Dept. staff. Kay Coates, Gretta Lehman, Cheryl Esslinger, and Liz Van Remortl reported on their teaching responsibilities, shared their gratitude for the funding they receive through the *Donors Choose* grant programs, and shared learning experiences through their attendance at recent conferences and workshops. The group thanked the school board and administrators for making their attendance at these events possible.

## Committee Reports

### Instruction and Accountability Committee

Judy Conlin, Committee Chair, reported that the Committee did not meet in December.

### Operations and Strategic Planning Committee

Mike Roberts, Committee Chair, reported that the Committee did not meet in December.

### Employee Relations Committee

Committee Chair Duane Frey reported that the Committee met just prior to this meeting. Mr. Jeff Leverich, Senior Researcher for the WI Education Association Council, provided the Committee with a report on the school voucher system and the following topics were recommended for school board approval:

- Wisconsin Voucher Taxpayer Transparency Bill Resolution
- Change of language to the support staff handbook pertaining to assignments and transfers
- Changes to language in the professional employee handbook pertaining to licensure and payback of credits

### Capital Projects Ad Hoc Committee

Mike Roberts, Committee Chair, reported that the Committee did not meet in December.

### CESA 9 Report

CESA 9 Board of Control Representative Duane Frey reported that the Board of Control met on December 6th which focused on the 2018 State Education Convention.

### Oneida/Vilas School Supt.-Board Report

Superintendent Jacobi reported that the Oneida/Vilas group has not recently met.

### Citizens/Delegations

No citizens/delegations wished to address the school board.

### Action and/or Discussion Topics

#### Meeting Minutes

The Minutes of the November 20, 2017 regular monthly meeting were approved.

#### Payment of November Claims and Services

The November 2017 payment of claims in the amount of \$927,606.01 and the November 2017 payment of contracted services in the amount of \$861,485.72 were approved as printed.

#### Gift/Donation Acceptance

The following gifts/donations with accepted with sincere appreciation:

- ◇ \$500 from the U.S.W. Union, Local #2-15 of Rhinelander to be used toward new tools and supplies for the Rhinelander High School Building Trades program.
- ◇ A Cricut cutting machine with cartridges, valued at \$350 from the Renee Biesterveld Family of Rhinelander to be used by teachers and other staff for the creation of bulletin board and other classroom/building decorations.
- ◇ \$80 from Mr. Matt Haase of Rhinelander, to be provided to the Hodag Cares Student Lunch Account program to help offset student lunch accounts when students otherwise wouldn't be able to have a meal.
- ◇ \$500 from Bob & Suzi Vig of Fitchburg, WI to be used toward the 'Friend of the Forest' campaign which helps to supplement costs related to the Cedric A. Vig Outdoor Classroom (CAVOC) programs.
- ◇ One copy of 'The Blue Estuaries' by Louis Bogan and one copy of "The Voice That is Great Within Us' edited by Haden Carruth, valued at \$25, from The Louise Bogan Charitable Trust, Elizabeth Frank, Trustee, of New York, NY
- ◇ Fresh cow leg bones (cut in half lengthwise), valued at \$25, from Geiss Meats of Merrill WI, to be used by the high school anatomy and physiology classroom students for hands-on learning opportunities
- ◇ \$600 from Susan Hanson, Hanson's Garden Village, LLC of Rhinelander, to be used toward FBLA/DECA student travel costs
- ◇ Donations to be used by the Rhinelander High School Dance Team for National Competition Costs:
  - \$20 from Friendship House, Tony & Elfisa Sabani, of Rhinelander
  - \$25 from Tricia Novak, JT Novak Enterprises, LLC, DBA Tricia's Treasures of Crandon, WI
  - \$50 from Pawz N' Clawz, Dan & Shirlee Galagher, of Rhinelander
  - \$50 from Robert and Ann Heise of Rhinelander
  - \$50 from Nicolet National Bank of Green Bay, WI
  - \$100 from Poulsen Family, Craig A. Poulsen, of Agoura, CA
  - \$100 from Northern Title & Abstract Corporation of Rhinelander
  - \$100 from Drews Dental, LLC, Dr. Summer Drews, of Rhinelander
  - \$100 from Boyd Financial Services, Michael R. Boyd, of Rhinelander
  - \$100 from Rhinelander GM Auto Center of Rhinelander
  - \$100 from Walmart, Brent Sundby-Manager, of Rhinelander
  - \$250 from Gremban & Gremban Dental, Drs. Darrin and Greg Gremban of Eagle River, WI

### 2018 State Education Convention WI Association of School Board Recommended Delegate Assembly Resolutions

This topic was moved to the January 15, 2018 regular monthly meeting.

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading and Adoption of Policy 7540.1, Technology Privacy, and new Policies Relating to the Use of Recording Devices During Meetings or Conversations

At the November 20th meeting, new policy 7540.01, Technology Privacy and new policies relating to the use of recording devices during meetings or conversations, one for professional staff and one for support staff, were approved for a first reading.

NEOLA has recommended adoption of Policy 7540.01, Technology Privacy (Property) for the protection of staff member privacy in the educational and workplaces settings, and to protect the Board's interests with technology use. All District technology resources are the District's property and are intended to be used for school district business purposes. The Board retains the right to access information on District-owned technology resources.

The two new policies (for support and professional employees) relating to the use of recording devices during meetings are being recommended for adoption due to a recent incident where a private and confidential meeting with administrators and professional employees was held, and the meeting was recorded by one of the professional employees without the others knowing that they were being recorded. The District does not currently have policy protecting employees, parents, students, or community members from someone recording a privately held meeting or privately held conversation without their knowledge. If these policies are adopted, NEOLA will provide the District with a policy number for each one so they can be included in the policy manual and will use our policies as samples for other school districts in need of similar policy language.

The Board approved the 2<sup>nd</sup> reading and adoption of the three proposed policies.

Resolution in Support of the Wisconsin Voucher Taxpayer Transparency Bill

The Wisconsin Voucher Taxpayer Transparency Bill asks that property tax bills show our taxpayers what the cost of the expanding voucher program is and what the net reduction in state aid to our public schools is as a result of that program; just as property tax bills show how much money goes to public schools and technical colleges. Since the state has made it clear that the voucher program will continue and will expand rapidly over the next several years, area school districts and school districts throughout the state are asking that the state be open, honest, and transparent with taxpayers with regard to the voucher program and the aid being provided to it. With the state's increased funding to the voucher program, the aid to public schools will be reduced; however, this is not always clear to our taxpayers.

Pursuant to the recommendation of the school board's Employee Relations Committee, the Board approved the resolution, which reads as follows:

**Resolution in Support  
of the  
"Wisconsin Voucher Taxpayer Transparency Bill"**  
(Assembly Bill 267 and Senate Bill 183)

WHEREAS, the School District of Rhinelander Board of Education, administrators, professional and support personnel, parents, and community members are united in the efforts to provide all children with the highest quality educational opportunities possible; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Education supports local control and makes conscientious decisions in support of high quality educational opportunities for students; and

WHEREAS, private school voucher advocates have consistently urged for expanding the use of taxpayer-funded vouchers to pay tuition for students in Wisconsin's private schools; and

WHEREAS, the Governor and members of the Wisconsin Legislature have proposed expanding voucher programs into many more Wisconsin communities, and have proposed increasing state payments to voucher schools; and

WHEREAS, the current voucher amount is \$7,530 for pupils in kindergarten through eighth grade and \$8,176 for pupils in grades 9-12; and,

WHEREAS, a memo from the nonpartisan Legislative Fiscal Bureau demonstrates that payments to voucher schools under Governor Walker's proposed budget would range from \$7,757 to \$8,403 per student by 2018 and with the inclusion of all of Governor Walker's proposed increases, some public schools might receive as much as \$1,700 less per student; and

WHEREAS, the memo from the nonpartisan Legislative Fiscal Bureau also shows that tax dollars for voucher operations are increasing twelve (12) times faster than total public school aids, and voucher payments would more than double over eight years; and

WHEREAS, the increase in statewide property taxes due to school boards levying to offset lost aid due to the voucher system was over \$25 million in 2016-17, with the statewide property tax impact estimated to grow to \$37 million in 2017-18 and to \$47 million in 2018-19; and

WHEREAS, with tax dollars for voucher operations increasing twelve (12) times faster than total public school aids and voucher payments doubling over eight years, net general aids that support public schools and reduce property taxes would decrease by 1.3%; and

WHEREAS, if private school voucher programs expand to the Rhinelander community, the School District of Rhinelander will lose state aid to the voucher schools, and the Board of Education will be required to raise additional property taxes to replace the aid lost to the voucher schools or lose that funding permanently under the state-imposed revenue limits; and

WHEREAS, if private school voucher programs do expand to the Rhinelander community and the School District of Rhinelander is then required to levy taxpayer dollars to be allocated to the statewide voucher program, just as property tax bills show how much money goes to public schools and technical colleges, taxpayers deserve to be informed of the cost of expanding the voucher program; and

WHEREAS, the *Wisconsin Voucher Taxpayer Transparency Bill* (Assembly Bill 267 and Senate Bill 183), authored by Rep. Dana Wachs (D-Eau Claire), would require property tax bills to include information from the school district where the property is located regarding the amount of any net reduction in state aid to the district as a result of pupils enrolled in the statewide voucher program, the Racine voucher program, or the Milwaukee voucher program; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education appeals to Governor Walker, the Wisconsin State Assembly, and the Wisconsin Senate to support the *Wisconsin Voucher Taxpayer Transparency Bill* in an effort to be open, honest, and transparent with the taxpayers of the School District of Rhinelander and the State of Wisconsin.

#### Change in Language to the Support Staff Handbook

Recently, it was discovered that there was some discrepancy in the process for filling vacancies or making transfers and/or reassignments to support staff positions. To clarify the District's intent of how vacancies should be filled and how the administration may make decisions to transfer or reassign support staff from one position to another, the following revision was made to Section 3.12 of the Support Staff Handbook:

#### Section 3.12. Vacancies, Transfers and Reassignments

All new postings can be found on WECAN, the internet hiring system used by the District. Such posting shall show qualifications and assignment.

Appointment and promotion to positions in the District shall be based upon merit, qualifications, and the needs of the District. When possible, the District shall endeavor to fill job vacancies and new positions by promotion with qualified employees with successful job performance histories from within the organization. Any employee wishing to be considered for transfer from one position to another will notify the Director of Personnel or his/her designee in writing within the time limits outlined on the job posting form. A present employee applying for a position **may** be interviewed based on his/her qualifications.

Employees who do not give the District at least two (2) weeks advance notice of intent to quit will have three (3) days' pay deducted from their last paycheck.

The Board approved of the change as proposed.

#### Change the Language in the Professional Employee Handbook

Due to the change by the WI Department of Public Instruction regarding licensure and required earned credits, Article V, Professional Licensure, the Professional Employee Handbook was revised to reflect the change. Changes were approved as proposed. Changes will be made to the Professional Employee Handbook as well as the Professional Employee with Supervisory Responsibilities Handbook as follows:

**Language from the Professional Employee Handbook - Credits**

**ARTICLE V  
PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE**

A. Requirements

Professional employees are required to hold a valid Wisconsin Department of Public Education (DPI) license(s) in their area(s) of teaching ~~by successfully completing the Professional Development Plan (PDP) process or by earning six (6) credits every five (5) years.~~ Each professional employee will be responsible for his/her own license requirements and for keeping the District current by providing the Human Resource Office with a copy of his/her license. **Those Professional Employees with a life licensure must earn at least six (6) credits every five years. Professional development will be addressed through the District's Professional Development Plans (PDPs) and District initiatives.**

Failure to meet the above-stated requirement(s) will prevent the professional employee from receiving any salary increase until he/she has obtained a valid Wisconsin DPI-approved license and a subsequent District contract has been provided to him/her.

Professional employees who do not hold a license(s) as required ~~herein or have not earned 6 credits for those holding a life license, may, at the discretion of the Board,~~ be laid off **or non-renewed.**

B. Definition of Credits

In addition to the PDP process, the following means of accumulating credit(s) will fulfill the requirements of provision A. above, and is meant to serve as a guideline to determine applicable credits:

1. Graduate Credits:

- a. Graduate credits are those credits defined as such by accredited colleges and universities. These credits must be approved in advance by the Administration and prior to the professional employee beginning to earn such credits.
- b. Beginning July 1, 2017, payment for graduate courses will be made by the District up to an amount of \$5,000 per calendar year with a lifetime limit of \$20,000 (beginning 2/20/2017). All courses are to be approved by administration in advance of beginning the course. The rate of reimbursement will be based on the current cost of tuition at the university that the employee attends, but shall not exceed the University of Wisconsin (Madison) rate. Failure to complete the course will result in repayment of all costs to the District.

The professional employee who leaves the District or is no longer employed by the District after completion of the course shall repay the District as follows.

Employment for:

3 full-time equivalent (FTE) years	No re-payment to District
2 FTE years	1/3 re-payment of total costs to District
1 FTE year	2/3 re-payment of total costs to District
Less than 1 FTE year	Full re-payment of total costs to District

**Costs owed must be paid back to the District within 30 days of submitting a letter of resignation.**

- c. Graduate credits earned prior to the start of the 2011-2012 school year, will continue to be recognized and compensated at the rate applied when they were earned. Part-time professional employees will continue to have their earned credits prorated based on their FTE.
- d. There will be no reimbursement for credits or courses outlined in Section B or C above that have not been pre-approved by the Superintendent/designee as outlined on the District's 'Application for Approval of Credits' form.

2. Undergraduate Credits: Credits earned under this provision may be earned through accredited colleges or universities. No remuneration or payment will be made for these courses or credits.
3. Simple In-service Credits (SIC): Professional employees may earn in-service credits in lieu of college credits through work for the District, such as curriculum development or approved workshops based on mutual agreement between the professional employee and the Superintendent/designee. Fifteen (15) hours of such work shall be equal to one (1) college credit. No remuneration will be made for these credits. However, the District may pay for the costs of the course provided it is outside the normal workday. Costs for courses taken during the workday shall be the responsibility of the professional employee.

SICs are awarded for actual hours of participation, which means those hours when the professional employee is with the presenter or in an activity resulting from and under the presenter's direction. It is not meant to include such things as registration, breaks, and meals, unless there is a program or presentation going on as part of the meal.

SICs are generally not earned when there is a cost to the District in fees, travel expense, or loss of normal working hours. Proof of attendance is always required in order to receive the credit. SICs are awarded for the following actual hours of participation:

Actual Hours of Participation	Credits
0-2.0	1/8
2.1-4.0	1/4
4.1-6.0	3/8
6.1 - 8.0	1/2
8.1 - 10.0	5/8
10.1 - 12.0	3/4
12.1 - 14.0	7/8
14.1 - 15.0	1.0

Any fraction beyond the above hours will be prorated accordingly (i.e. 20 hours - 1.375 credits).

4. Approval for Remuneration: Prior to enrollment, all graduate coursework or SICs must receive approval in advance and in writing by the Superintendent/designee as outlined on the District's 'Application for Approval of Credits' form. Approvals will be based on Section B and (B) (1) (a, b, and d) of this Article. Should an approved graduate course not be available, a professional employee may inform the Superintendent/designee, in writing, of a proposed substitution, and payment, for this will be considered at the beginning of the next term, if approved by the Superintendent/designee.

Closed Session

The school board considered the hire and/or non-renewal of coaching staff and the resignation and/or hire of professional employees.