

School District of Rhinelander
Board of Education

Regular Monthly Meeting
Monday, January 20, 2025

MINUTES

The regular meeting of the Board of Education was called to order on Monday, January 20, 2025, at 6:00 p.m., in the Superior Diesel Advanced Learning Center – Rhinelander High School, 665 Coolidge Ave., Rhinelander, WI.

Ronald Counter, Board President, led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

Board Members Present: Judy Conlin, Mary Peterson, Mike Roberts, Doug Artus, Duane Frey, Ronald Lueneburg, Merlin Van Buren, and Ronald Counter

Board Members Absent: Patricia Townsend

Others present at this meeting were: Superintendent, Eric Burke; Director of Business Services, Robert Thom; Director of Human Resources, Michele Cornelius; Director of Learning Support, Richard Gretzinger; Secretary/Deputy Clerk, Shelley Anderson; Principal – James Williams Middle School, Kyle Raleigh; Supervisor of Buildings and Grounds, Pat Kegley; Will Theisen and Dave Mertens from C.D. Smith, Meghan Retallick, Meghan Hildebrand, Rhea Goffe, and Heather Schaefer of the Northwoods River News. Nine other people were also present.

Declaration of Public Notice

President Counter indicated that the ‘Declaration of Public Notice’ was printed with the meeting agenda. This notice identifies the public places where the meeting agenda was posted and/or shared.

Citizens/Delegations

- Carrie Miljevich address the Board concerning the Target-Based Grading system.

Report Topics

President’s Report

- President Ron Counter stated that the 2025 Day at the Capital will take place on Wednesday, March 12. Any Board Members who wish to go should contact him.

Vice-President’s Report

- Vice-President Judy Conlin had no report.

Rhinelander Education Association Representatives Report(s)

- No report was given.

Empowering Potential: Maximizing Flex Periods for Student Success James Williams
Middle School – Meghan Retallick, Megan Hildebrand and Rhea Geoff

- Sixth-grade ELA and Social Studies teachers worked with their Instructional Coach to institute a fluency class each week during a Flex period.
- A fluency protocol, which is designed to increase student reading rate and expression, was used each week during the Flex period
- The group of 24 students improved overall in the AUTOREading Fastbridge screener and in their reading rates (correct words per minute) over the nine-week intervention.

Committee Chair Reports

Instruction and Accountability Committee

- Judy Conlin, Committee Chair, reported that the Committee met prior to the full board meeting and recommended item f to the Board for approval.

Operations and Strategic Planning Committee

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

Employee Relations Committee

- Duane Frey, Committee Chair, reported that the Committee did not meet.

Capital Projects Ad Hoc Committee

- Mike Roberts, Committee Chair, reported that the Committee did not meet. However, representatives from C.D. Smith will present information regarding item A to the Board on bid approvals.

CESA 9 Representative Report

- Merlin Van Buren, the Board's Representative to CESA 9, had no report.

Discussion, Reports/Updates, and/or Action Topics

Discussion and/or Action on the Construction Projects for Approval as a Whole. Additional Information to be Provided by CD Smith at the Meeting

Will Theisen and Dave Mertens (joined virtually) reviewed the following information with the Board:

- Project Budget: High-Level Summary.
- An explanation as to which bids were recommended for Board approval was given.
- Each line of the Part 1 recommendations for the Rhinelander High School remodel was reviewed with the Board.
- Each line of Part 1 recommendations for the James Williams Middle School remodel was reviewed with the Board.

MOTION: M. Roberts, seconded by M. Van Buren.

Board approve the Part 1 bid recommendations for the Rhinelander High School remodel project as outlined by C.D. Smith.

Aye: J. Conlin, M. Peterson, M. Roberts, D. Artus, D. Frey, R. Lueneburg,
M. Van Buren, R. Counter

Nay: None

Motion passed 8/0

MOTION: M. Roberts, seconded by D. Artus.

Board approve the Part 1 bid recommendations for the James Williams Middle School remodel project as outlined by C.D. Smith.

Aye: J. Conlin, M. Peterson, M. Roberts, D. Artus, D. Frey, R. Lueneburg,

M. Van Buren, R. Counter

Nay: None

Motion passed 8/0

Minutes of December 16, 2024, Regular Board Meeting

MOTION: R. Lueneburg, seconded by M. Roberts.

Approve the minutes of the December 16, 2024, Regular Board Meeting as printed.

M. Peterson abstained

Motion passed with a voice vote.

Review of the December Budget Status Report

Bob Thom, Director of Business Services, shared the following information:

- The District's financials are currently stronger compared to the same period last year.
- The Democratic legislators are pushing for legislation requiring the state to pay for free meals for all public and private school students.
- The state has unfairly funded low-revenue districts such as Rhinelander for 30 years.
- The Association for Equity in Fundings (AEF) 's number one priority is increasing the low revenue limit.

December Payment of Claims and Contracted Services

MOTION: M. Roberts, seconded by D. Frey.

Consider the Approval of the December 2024 Payment of Claims in the Amount of \$956,198.12 and the December 2024 Payment of Contracted Services in the amount of \$712,996.54 as printed.

Aye: J. Conlin, M. Peterson, M. Roberts, D. Artus, D. Frey, R. Lueneburg,

M. Van Buren, R. Counter

Nay: None

Motion passed 8/0

Consider Acceptance of Various Gifts/Donations Contributed to the District

MOTION: M. Peterson, seconded by M. Roberts.

Accept with sincere gratitude the following gifts/donations:

- \$94.58 from Vital Industries, LLC.
- \$1,000.00 from the Rhinelander Professional Police Association
- \$225.00 from the Wisconsin Department of Transportation

Motion passed with a voice vote.

Discussion and/or Action on the 2025 Summer School Proposals

MOTION: J. Conlin, seconded by M. Peterson.

Board approve the 2025 elementary, middle school and high school summer school sessions as proposed.

Motion passed with a voice vote.

Discussion and/or Action on the 2025-2026 Public School Open Enrollment Determination of Availability

MOTION: J. Conlin, seconded by M. Van Buren.

School District of Rhinelander to approve or deny 2025-2026 regular education student open enrollment applications pursuant to state requirements and based on the criteria outlined in the District's Open Enrollment Program #5113. For the School District of Rhinelander to deny any open enrollment applications for the 2025-2026 school year for students requiring special education programming or services due to zero spaces available in the following service areas: early childhood special education, elementary cross-categorical special education, middle school cross-categorical special education, high school cross-categorical special education, deaf and hard of hearing, visually impaired, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and speech and language pathology.

Motion passed with a voice vote.

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Eric Burke provided the following update to the board:

- Due to the absence of a board member, agenda item H, "Training on Board Member Responsibilities," will be postponed and addressed at the full board meeting in February.
- All board members are reminded to submit their information for the Superintendent evaluation to Shelley by February 10.
- The 2025 Wisconsin State Education Convention will be held this week in Milwaukee. Attending on behalf of the district are Board Members Doug Artus, Judy Conlin, Ron Counter, Patricia Townsend, and Merlin Van Buren, Mr. Burke will also be in attendance.
 - As previously communicated, an update on Target-Based Grading will be presented at the February board meeting.
 - The first semester concludes on January 23.
 - A grade comparison will be conducted following the semester's end.
 - The implementation of the Target-Based Grading system has been a structured three-year process.
 - The flex period under this system is utilized more strategically to support student learning.
 - The District remains committed to evaluating and revising the system as necessary.
- On February 27, District representatives will travel to Madison to participate in the Legislator Workshop Panel to discuss our partnership and pathway program.

Enter Closed Session

MOTION: R. Counter, seconded by D. Frey.

Enter closed session pursuant to

- a. Wis. Stats. 19.85 (1) (c), to consider employment, promotion, compensation, or performance evaluation data of any public employee over which the governmental body has jurisdiction or exercises responsibility.

b. Wis. Stats. 19.85 (1) (f) to consider financial, medical, social or personal histories or disciplinary data of specific persons, preliminary consideration of specific personnel problems or the investigation of charges against specific persons which, if discussed in public, would be likely to have a substantial adverse effect upon the reputation of any person referred to in such histories or data, or involved in such problems or investigations.

More specifically, to address matters related to staff contracts, including the hiring of staff, staff layoffs, and/or resignations, and retirements, as well as to review an agreement concerning a specific individual and/or contracted service and/or to consider the histories and/or disciplinary data of specific individuals.

Aye: J. Conlin, M. Peterson, M. Roberts, D. Artus, D. Frey, R. Lueneburg,
M. Van Buren, R. Counter

Nay: None

Motion passed 8/0 at 6:59 p.m.

Closed Session

Closed-session topics were discussed.

Return to Open Session

MOTION: D. Frey, seconded by R. Lueneburg.

Return to open session.

Aye: J. Conlin, M. Peterson, M. Roberts, D. Artus, D. Frey, R. Lueneburg,
M. Van Buren, R. Counter

Nay: None

Motion passed 8/0.

Open Session

MOTION: J. Conlin, seconded by D. Frey.

Approve the hire of Jaiden Thiel and Mark Incha as proposed.

Motion passed with a voice vote.

MOTION: J. Conlin, seconded by M. Roberts.

Approve the retirement of Gayle Daniel and Paul Johnson as proposed.

Motion passed with a voice vote.

Adjournment

MOTION: R. Lueneburg, second by D. Frey.

Move to adjourn.

Motion passed with a voice vote at 7:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Peterson, Board of Education Clerk