

River Valley School District
Thursday, December 9, 2021
Regular Meeting
Middle School Library
7:00 p.m.

Present: Nelson, Jennings, Minich, Cates, Iausly, Bettinger, Maier
Absent: Carstensen, Young
Admin: Glasbrenner, Krey, Peterson, Blakley, Radtke
Others: Rachel Orcutt, Michelle Orcutt, Erik Krautbauer, Stephanie Osborn, Dave Chapman, Nate Royko Mauer, Jess Hisel, Dan Machovec, Jordyn Wendhausen, Brittainy Belche, Dr. Furukawa, Shawn Duren, Paula Wedge (Administrative Assistant)

President Jennings opened the meeting. She noted that there was an amended agenda and the meeting had been properly posted and notice had been provided to the appropriate media and each School Board Member. Maier moved to proceed with the legal meeting. Iausly seconded. Motion carried.

Consideration & Action on Approval of Agenda

Iausly moved to approve the agenda. Maier seconded. Motion carried.

Public Comments

Eric Krautbauer asked the Board to back the medical professionals and strongly pleaded that we keep masking in place until things change.

Stephanie Osborn open enrolls her children into the district and looked at masking when they decided to come to River Valley. We have changed from optional masking to setting thresholds and have now lowered thresholds and added masking for after school events. She doesn't think the current practice is a compromise and feels we will be masked indefinitely. She asked the Board to reconsider masking thresholds and go back to optional masking.

Dave Chapman supports masking in schools as long as the medical community supports it. While his children don't like to wear masks, they are concerned that not wearing masks will lead to Covid spread and then the district will go to virtual learning. He thinks it is a good idea to require masking before and after winter break and then use data to decide after that.

Jess Hisel advocated to remove masks during sports. He noted a lot of other districts do not have mask policies for sports. He asked the Board to make a motion to get rid of masks for sports and to keep up with the science.

Nate Royko Mauer noted that with our existing mask thresholds, we will already be masking through the holidays. He is in favor of masking along with vaccines and social distancing and feels wearing a mask is a small thing to do for a fixed period of time.

Student Council Report

Student council representatives were not present but provided Glasbrenner with a report. The Early Learning Center read the book "Pete the Cat Saves Christmas" by Eric Litwin and learned about the spirit of holiday giving by collecting food donations for the food pantry. Mr. Machovec's class at the middle school is learning about budgeting by choosing a career and

following a budget to purchase a home, pay bills and tuition, etc. The high school musical “Newsies” will be performed on December 17, 18, and 19. High school art students participated in a regional art show at Platteville and Vivian Jensen and Avery Homberg won awards and will have their work shown at the state level.

Review of 2020-21 District and School Report Cards

Glasbrenner provide a summary of district and school report card results. Our district meets expectations, similar to 80 percent of districts in Wisconsin. Absenteeism during COVID and more support needed for economically disadvantaged students were negative factors that affected our results. Our district goals for the current school year had already targeted the need to focus on economically disadvantaged students.

Update on School District Operations from Administration

Blakley noted that prom was held, winter sports are ongoing, and there are fun events planned before holiday break at the high school. There are some students experiencing anxiety with the holidays and we are working with those kids that need it. Parent/Teacher conferences were held recently.

Radtke noted middle school parent/teacher conferences were held recently. A required safety drill was held last week. Departments are meeting to discuss curriculum. Intervention teachers met to discuss student needs.

Peterson noted that Ms. Harris has started meeting after school with students involved in the Gifted/Talented Program. Fourth grade students are doing a holiday “shopping” event for family gifts, picking from free donated items. It was noted that elementary food drives for food pantry donations have been a success. Peterson noted schools provide important things for kids during holiday time, especially for their social and emotional well-being.

Board Reminders, Announcements, and Training Opportunities

None.

Legislative Update

ESSER 3 funding has been approved after being delayed in Wisconsin. The Budget/ERC Committee will discuss this more later tonight as it is an integral part of addressing our deficit.

Consent Agenda: - Checks, Invoices, Receipts – November 2021; Open Session Meeting Minutes November 11, 2021, Regular Meeting

lausly moved to approve the consent agenda items as submitted. Cates seconded. Motion carried.

Consideration & Action on Potential Revisions to Operations Prior to and Following Winter Break

The administrative team and district nurses met to discuss Covid numbers in our district, community, and neighboring communities. While the nursing staff feels we should take additional measures to prevent spread, the administrative team was not in agreement about what to do. It was noted that we will lose track of Covid data during the 10 days of break. Some ideas were to mask up until winter break and then mask for a time period upon return. When discussing the idea of virtual learning for a few days following break, there was different perspective at the different grade levels. Jennings would like the Board to discuss if we should

mask before and/or after winter break and if virtual learning might be an option for some days upon return from break.

Wendhausen and Belche, school nurses, noted that there are currently 25 active Covid cases in our schools, which is the highest this year and last. There have been 112 cases this year to date, compared to a total of 57 last year. Last year we followed virtual learning for a week after break. While not asking to repeat that, they suggested maybe 2 days of no school after break for testing. Each building is masking right now, due to our thresholds, and all will drop the mask mandate the week before break. Blakley noted that by using our thresholds, the high school is masking for the first time since homecoming. Iausly noted that just by following our thresholds, we might be masking until break anyway, but we could extend masking regardless of numbers for 3 more days. He is in favor of masking for 5 days after break. The nurses would like to see masking for 14 days after break to get us through the incubation period. Dr. Furukawa agrees with 14 days of masking after break, especially when we do not have vaccination data to help make decisions. Maier wants to follow our current practice using thresholds to determine masking up until winter break. Nelson stated that based on medical staff advice, we should mask now until winter break, which is different than our current practice.

Nelson moved to have masks worn up to winter break based on the recommendations of medical staff. Iausly seconded. Iausly noted that if medical staff have identified an issue, then we need to listen to professionals. If they are concerned, then Iausly is concerned. Per Iausly, looking at numbers, River Valley has the highest confirmed cases of 100,000 compared to our neighbors. We have a high degree of transmission in our district. He noted this is likely a moot action due to the numbers along with our current practice. He is concerned about medical staff getting burned out.

For the motion: Nelson, Cates, Iausly, Minich
Against the motion: Bettinger, Maier, Jennings
Abstain: N/A
Absent: Young, Carstensen

Motion carried.

Consensus was to not have virtual learning following break. Principals noted this is not a desired option from an education standpoint as its more complicated in reality since some families don't have access and there are no devices for our youngest students. There was discussion about having additional days off for students for testing and gathering data. Some feel it is a hardship on families to add 2 more days off or is just 2 more days of gatherings. Glasbrenner added that we have noted that being at school, with measures in place, is important.

Nelson moved to make Monday and Tuesday after winter break as no school days with inservice for staff and then mask on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. Minich seconded. There was discussion if families would take advantage of the two days off school to get tested by our nursing staff. The comment was made that if students were at school on those days, we could observe symptoms and recommend testing. Bettinger noted if we have two days off following winter break, we should not have inservice but add those two days to the end of the school year as student contact days.

For the motion: Nelson, Minich

Against the motion: Iausly, Cates, Bettinger, Maier, Jennings
Abstain: N/A
Absent: Young, Carstensen

Motion failed.

Iausly moved to require masks for two weeks following winter break. Jennings seconded. Dr. Furukawa and district nurses noted 14 days would be ideal. When asked if we need to mask for the rest of the school year, Dr. Furukawa noted the Board and community have decided to respond to thresholds and that has worked with some ups and downs, although he would do some fine tuning. Masking for two weeks following winter break would minimize the spike we anticipate with travel and variant. Although the CDC recommended mask mandates for schools in the fall, we are looking at local data, and looking at the current spike, there could be a lot of school days lost.

For the motion: Nelson, Minich, Iausly
Against the motion: Cates, Bettinger, Maier, Jennings
Abstain: N/A
Absent: Young, Carstensen

Motion failed.

Cates moved to mask for 5 days after winter break. Iausly seconded.

For the motion: Cates, Minich, Bettinger, Maier, Jennings
Against the motion: Nelson, Iausly
Abstain: N/A
Absent: Young, Carstensen

Motion carried.

Jennings initiated conversation regarding if we should allow students to not mask during extracurricular events. Currently, if we have a mask mandate in place due to thresholds, all visitors mask also. Then we follow the site requirements when traveling to other schools. Maier noted he would like to see no masks for kids during practices as well as events, kids don't wear the masks properly now, it is not healthy to breathe through masks, and kids can now get vaccinated. Nelson has a problem of unmasking when other districts come here and we are close up with them.

When asked for medical advice regarding this topic, Dr. Furukawa replied that masking decisions should be based on school numbers. If the numbers are high, then masking prevents our athletes from spreading Covid to another district. He noted that vaccination rates would be nice to know and if unmasking starts, he would advocate starting unmasking during co-curriculars since time of exposure is short. Also, if the student body is in school with mitigation measures, by the time they participate in events, risk should be low. It is a disadvantage to have to mask. Maybe consider after we return from winter break and after masking for 5 days. The school nurses noted it's hard to decide since in the fall we did have spread in every sport even when they were outside. Dr. Furukawa shared information from a conference football study

regarding rates of transmission and the mode of transmission is usually not competition. Fans and inactive athletes would still mask during a threshold mandate.

Jennings moved to allow masks optional for students during active competition but students will be fully masked during practices and on the bus. Maier seconded. Jennings and Maier retracted the motion and the second.

Jennings moved to allow masks optional for students during active competition or practices. Maier seconded. Bettinger challenged the Board since discussion had just occurred this evening regarding high numbers, preventative masking, and almost shutting down school for 2 days and it seems illogical to now take masks off during competition. Minich would like to see what happens over the holidays and then decide on this later as she understands the issue and requests from families.

For the motion: Maier, Jennings

Against the motion: Cates, Bettinger, Nelson, Minich, Iausly

Abstain: N/A

Absent: Young, Carstensen

Motion failed.

Consideration & Action on Resolutions Accepting Resignations, if any

None.

Consideration & Action on Hirings, if any

None.

Consideration & Action on Evaluation of Biannual Safety Drills at Each School Building

Bettinger moved to approve the evaluation of the biannual safety drills that were done at each building. Maier seconded. Motion carried.

Consideration & Action on Policy Committee Recommendations

Jennings noted there are no recommended changes to 728 Wearing Masks and Face Coverings.

As recommended by the Committee, Jennings moved to approve the 2nd reading of the following policies: 330 Curriculum Development; 352 Exhibit 2–School Field Trip Checklist; 652 Revenues from Investments; and 722.1 Safety Drills. Cates seconded. Motion carried.

As recommended by the Committee, Jennings moved to approve the 1st reading of the following policies: 833 Use of Recreational Vehicles on School Property; 546 Police School Liaison Officer (PSLO) and job description; 655 Raffles; 543 Support Staff Recruiting/Hiring; and 171.1 Public Notification of Board Meetings; and the review but no changes to 423 Public School Open Enrollment; 423 Rule Public School Open Enrollment; 742 Authorized Use of School-Owned Equipment; and 742 Exhibit Rental/Use of School Equipment Form. Maier seconded. Motion carried.

Consideration & Action on Buildings and Grounds Committee Recommendations

The Committee heard a presentation from an Eagle Scout candidate requesting implementation of a disc golf course on the Spring Green campus. He will come back to the December meeting with more details. Support for the Stadium Upgrade Project has been overwhelming with

\$640,000 raised to date. The Committee will look at project bids in December with a recommendation to the Board in January.

Consideration & Action on Budget/Employee Relations Committee Recommendations

The Committee discussed adjusting the amount budgeted for 2022-23 salaries to meet the anticipated CPI of 4.5%. The CPI will be released and finalized in January 2022.

The Committee discussed the amount for an April 2022 referendum for operational needs. Part of the discussion was the desire to use monies from fund balance over the next few years to bring fund balance in line with the policy of 25-30%. If we utilize some fund balance monies and bring it down to 28%, the total of a 3-year, non-recurring referendum amount could be reduced to \$10.9 million. There are no state budget increases for 21-22 and 22-23. We don't have data for 23-24 and 24-25, but assume there will not be any increases. The Committee will meet in January and bring a recommendation for action at the January Board meeting.

The Stadium Upgrade Project has raised \$640,000 to date. Monies from Fund 49 will help pay for the project. The Buildings and Grounds Committee will look at project bids in December and make a recommendation to the Budget/ERC Committee and then the Board in January.

Consideration & Action on Resolutions Accepting Gifts, if any

Bettinger moved to adopt the Resolution Accepting Gifts of \$500 from the Lew and Gerry Schmidt Family and Scholarship Fund to the High School Music Department for musical performances. Maier seconded. Polled vote was 7-0 in the affirmative with 2 absent. Motion carried.

Iausly moved to adopt the Resolution Accepting Gifts of \$300 from Eric and Kiley Cates for the Stadium Upgrade Project. Minich seconded. Roll call vote:

For the motion: Bettinger, Iausly, Jennings, Maier, Minich, Nelson
Against the motion: N/A
Abstain: Cates
Absent: Young, Carstensen

Polled vote was 6-0 in the affirmative with 1 abstention and 2 absent. Motion carried.

Maier moved to adopt the Resolution Accepting Gifts of \$10,000 from John, Pam, Taylor, Lauren, and Lukas Bettinger for the Stadium Upgrade Project. Cates seconded. Roll call vote:

For the motion: Cates, Iausly, Jennings, Maier, Minich, Nelson
Against the motion: N/A
Abstain: Bettinger
Absent: Young, Carstensen

Polled vote was 6-0 in the affirmative with 1 abstention and 2 absent. Motion carried.

Maier moved to adopt the Resolution Accepting Gifts as follows for the Stadium Upgrade Project:

\$250 Chad Norton; \$500 Jerri Prem; \$2,500 anonymous; \$2,000 Spring Green Lions Club; \$250 Jim and Marie Schwingle; \$1,000 Kyle, Jenna, Carter and Ava Heckendorf; \$1,000 B STRONG in Memory of Bryce Heckendorf; \$100 Michael and Barbara Teff; \$500 Kelsey Gilbertson; \$1,000 Phil and Cindi Manske; \$100 Damian Barta; \$1,000 RingBrothers LLC; \$550 Emily Nachreiner; \$250 Michel Olson Agency – American Family Insurance; \$500 McKenzie Liegel (In Memory of Terry Maxwell); \$2,000 Anthony and Alisha Hahn; \$200 Lark Gibson; \$1,000 Carl and Rhonda Gruber; \$1,000 Jamie and Stephanie Hegland; \$10,000 Ed and Sharon Bettinger; \$500 Joel, Jackie, Seth, and Rece Rhoades; \$500 Jason, Terri, Keegan, Kameran, and Kyllie Smith; \$50 Justin Kramer; \$5,000 Jewell Associates Engineers, Inc.; \$1,000 Jason Sprecher, Mel Plumlee, Griffin Sprecher, Urijah Sprecher, Ajay Sprecher, and Kaden Plumlee (*\$100 Griffin Sprecher - In Recognition to American Foods, Tim Leonard; \$100 Urijah Sprecher - In Recognition to Royal Bank; \$100 Ajay Sprecher - In Recognition to Prem Meats; \$100 Kaden Plumlee - In Recognition to The Peoples Community Bank; \$600 Jason Sprecher and Mel Plumlee*); \$1,000 Tim and Sally Liegel; \$1,000 Chadd and Kasey Maxwell; \$500 In Loving Memory of Lew and Gerry Schmidt; \$500 Aaron and Shelley Prochaska; \$500 Ralph and Mary Liegel; \$500 Knights of Columbus; and various donations “In Memory of Terry Maxwell as follows: *\$50 Monica Hamm; \$50 Brian and Gwen Gorman; \$100 David and Amanda Krey; \$560 Chadd and Kasey Maxwell; \$500 Tim and Sally Liegel; \$100 Jaime and Stephanie Hegland; \$50 James and Teryl Russell; \$50 Susan Jones-Pfarr; and \$100 Christine and James Carpenter.*

Cates seconded. Polled vote was 7-0 in the affirmative with 2 absent. Motion carried.

Maier moved to adopt the Resolutions Accepting Gifts and the Donation Acceptance Agreement for \$50,000 from Prem Meats for the Stadium Upgrade Project. Minich seconded. Polled vote was 7-0 in the affirmative with 2 absent. Motion carried.

Iausly moved to adjourn to closed session at 9:03 p.m. pursuant to Wisconsin Statutes 19.85(1)(f) for Discussion of 2021-22 Parent Transportation Contract and Discussion of Request for Use of Reimbursable Leave Sharing Program; and 19.85(1)(c) for Discussion of District Administrator and Administrator Annual Evaluations and Recommendations for Contract Renewals. Cates seconded. Polled vote was 7-0 in the affirmative with 2 absent. Motion carried.

The Board reconvened in open session at 10:39 p.m.

Consideration & Action on 2021-22 Parent Transportation Contract

Bettinger moved to approve the parent transportation contract as presented in closed session. Maier seconded. Motion carried.

Consideration & Action on Request for Use of Reimbursable Leave Sharing Program

Cates moved to approve the request for use of Reimbursable Leave Sharing Program as presented in closed session. Jennings seconded. Motion carried with Bettinger opposed.

Jennings moved to adjourn at 10:41 p.m. Maier seconded. Motion carried.

Submitted by Paula Wedige for:



Deborah Nelson, School District Clerk