

River Valley School District  
Monday, December 12, 2022  
Special Meeting  
Middle School Library  
5:30 p.m.

Present: Nelson, Carstensen, Minich, Jennings, Iausly, Bettinger, Maier  
Absent: Young, Cates  
Admin: Glasbrenner, Krey, Peterson, Radtke  
Others: Kevin Eipperle, Paula Wedige (Administrative Assistant)

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

#### Consideration & Action on Approval of Agenda

Minich moved to approve the agenda items as submitted. Iausly seconded. Motion carried.

#### Consideration & Action on Resolution to Commence the School Term Early for the 2023-24 School Year

There has been some discussion about the idea of starting the 2023-24 school year prior to September 1. Wisconsin Statute states that a district must file a waiver request with the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction by January 1 of the year in which an early start is being requested. A survey of staff and parents with 335 responses shows 66.3% want to start prior to September 1 and 60.4% want to start the week of August 21. It was noted that many students are already involved in school-related activities by mid-August. We would request to start on Wednesday, August 23, 2023. We would estimate a response from DPI to be 1 to 2 weeks after receiving our request, so hopefully by January 1.

We learned that Lodi recently had their request approved by DPI. Our reasons are similar to Lodi—to provide for the mental health support of our students and staff as we continue to recover from the COVID-10 pandemic.

Our letter to DPI would state: *Allowing for the earlier start time, not only meets the desires of our families, staff, and students (as demonstrated through survey results) it also allows the District to provide a more natural and meaningful mental health break for our students and staff at the midpoint of the school year around the holiday season (already a stressful time for families). By allowing the District to start on August 23, 2023, this allows for the end of the semester to fall prior to the December holiday break. This allows students (and families) to have a true holiday break versus spending time studying over this break for upcoming end of the semester projects and exams, which adds stress to students and families. This calendar also provides a clear break for our staff, as they are not working over this break finalizing plans for the last few weeks of the semester and answering student and family communication about ongoing projects and assignments. In addition, with this proposed calendar, the District would plan to build in a work day at the end of the holiday break for staff, giving them the resources they need to take an actual break (and supporting their mental health) and allow them to come back more refreshed and reinvigorated to meet the needs of our students.*

Iausly moved to adopt the Resolution to Commence the School Term Early for the 2023-24 School Year. Carstensen seconded. Roll call vote:

For the motion: Bettinger, Carstensen, Iausly, Jennings, Maier, Minich, Nelson

Against the motion: N/A

Abstain: N/A

Absent: Young, Cates

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

Consideration & Action on 2023-24 School Calendar Option, if DPI Approves the Request to Commence the School Term Early

Carstensen moved to approve the 2023-24 school calendar option, if DPI approves the request to commence the school term early. Minich seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Iausly moved to adjourn at 5:40 pm. Carstensen seconded. Motion carried.

Submitted by Paula Wedige for:

\_\_\_\_\_ Deborah Nelson, School District Clerk