

MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING  
Manitowoc Board of Education  
August 24, 2021

A special meeting of the Board of Education was called to order by Board President Dave Nickels at 12:04 p.m. Members present were: Mr. Collin Braunel, Ms. Lisa Johnston, Mr. Dave Nickels, Ms. Meredith Sauer, Ms. Stacey Soeldner, Mr. Kerry Trask, and Ms. Kathy Willis (attending virtually). Also present were Superintendent Mark Holzman and Board Secretary Laurie Braun.

The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance. Board members logged into BoardBook and the virtual meeting connection was confirmed.

A motion was made by Kerry Trask, seconded by Stacey Soeldner, and unanimously carried (7-0), to approve the minutes from August 3, 2021, Special Meeting/Board Workshop and August 10, 2021, Regular Board Meeting and Closed Session.

Curriculum Committee Chairperson Meredith Sauer shared a summary from the August 16, 2021 meeting. A proposal for out-of-state travel was presented to the committee by Dave Steavpack. The request is for the Lincoln Cross Country Team to attend the Dawson Cross Country Invitational in Gurnee, IL. The current Health Services Policy 5310 was discussed along with the updated policy NEOLA suggested. The 2021-22 Student Learning Office Professional Calendar for our K-12 English Language Learners, English Language Arts, Reading, Mathematics, Math Coaches, and Physical Education opportunities were discussed. Building Action Plans for the 2021-22 school year to aid in the growth of student achievement and improve instructional practices for the Elementary Schools, Middle Schools, and High School. A motion was made by Meredith Sauer, seconded by Kerry Trask, and unanimously carried (7-0) to approve the minutes from the August 16, 2021, Curriculum Committee Meeting.

Director of Human Resources Joyce Greenwood-Aerts presented the Personnel Report and Addendum. The Personnel Report consisted of five (5) resignations, one (1) retirement, seven (7) professional staff positions, five (5) support staff positions, two (2) level movements, and extra-curricular position stipends. Ms. Greenwood-Aerts asked the Board for approval noting recommending the removal of one new-hire candidate from the report. On motion from Kerry Trask, seconded by Meredith Sauer, the Personnel Report was unanimously approved (7-0) reflecting the removal of candidate Samantha Hafner from the report. An Addendum to the Personnel Report was also presented. On motion from Meredith Sauer, seconded by Kerry Trask, the Board approved (6-1) the Addendum as presented, with Board member Collin Braunel opposing.

Director of Business Services Angela Erdmann presented 2021-2022 Meal Pricing. The annual memo reflects a no-cost increase and also noted there is no meal cost to students for the 2021-2022 school year. A motion was made by Kathy Willis, seconded by Lisa Johnston, and unanimously approved (7-0) to accept the 2021-2022 Meal Pricing.

Superintendent Holzman provided a District Activity Update sharing all staff is back in their respective buildings working through some final logistics of getting ready for the start of the school year. Mr. Holzman thanked all staff for their hard work and efforts to welcome back students for in-person, five-days per week learning.

The 2021-2022 Covid-19 Protocols were the next topic of discussion. Superintendent Holzman shared how we recommend starting the school year, keeping staff and students safe, and in a face-to-face learning model. After reviewing the data from our Federal, State, and Local Governments, along with the health professionals, Superintendent Holzman gave the recommendation to the Board for mandatory masking for our staff, students and visitors while in our buildings. Mr. Holzman also recommended these protocols be monitored, having continued conversations with the Board and be ready to make adjustments as needed. We currently have positive cases in staff and students and universal masking would provide us with less quarantining for staff and students, and allow us to sustain face-to-face learning. Board members had the opportunity to make comments and ask questions. Board member Soeldner expressed not being in favor of mandatory masking and would rather support the district highly recommends wearing masks. Board member Braunel stated he is not in favor of mandatory masking, sharing the concern that parents should be making this decision for their children. Board member Trask reminded the Board it is our responsibility for the safety of every student and staff person in our district and to preserve an in-person educational learning environment for our students. Board member Willis stated the district has many requirements for our students and needs to consider the greater good and is in favor of a universal mask mandate at this time. Board member Sauer agreed that wearing masks is a means of protection not for ourselves, but for others and we need to follow the recommendations of the professionals that have done the work as this will be key to keeping kids in school. Board Member Johnston expressed we need to follow the recommendation from our Superintendent and the data he has provided to the Board. Board member Nickels shared the most recent report has listed our county burden rate/level as being high. Discussion continued surrounding data in support of and against wearing masks.

Board Member Trask provided an update of where the Board was at with the Superintendent Evaluation Process/Procedure. Mr. Trask provided an overview of the evaluation process and suggested each Board member complete the evaluation form, submit the form so we can collect the data at the next Board meeting. After significant discussion and some questions about the process, it was recommended by Board member Nickels this process again be brought to the Personnel Committee to be finalized with clear guidelines. Mr. Nickels also stated in all fairness to the person being evaluated, the Board has an obligation to complete this evaluation in a timely manner. The Superintendent Evaluation process will be discussed and finalized at the next scheduled Personnel Committee Meeting.

The Academic Achievement Gap was next discussed. Superintendent Holzman addressed we currently do not have an agreement with any outside organizations to help with this, however, we need to look at how we are educating all of our kids to help improve student's successes and outcomes. Mr. Holzman suggested having the Board engage in creating a plan to help move this district forward closing the achievement gap. This is an opportunity to put the focus back on the student to ensure success for all of our students. Mr. Holzman proposed bringing in an outside organization with the main focus to be the academic achievement gap. The group would meet with the Board to assist with creating a plan that will support student achievement and closing the achievement gap. The Board had the opportunity for comments and questions. It was clarified that any outside organization brought in would be to help with achievement gaps, not disproportionality. Disproportionality has a separate action plan that is approved by the state. Board member Braunel expressed being in favor of Board involvement in creating this plan.

Superintendent Holzman stated building that sense of community within our group/board and extending that out to our staff is key to the success in closing the achievement gap in our district. It was clarified that the Board will be involved with the approval of which outside organization will be utilized to partner with our district.

On motions brought forward from the 8-16-21 Curriculum Committee Meeting, the Board **unanimously approved (7-0) the Out-of-State travel Request-LHS Cross Country 2021 Fall Competition in Illinois with the stipulation that guidelines surrounding Covid are followed.**


Board President Dave Nickels acknowledged the WASB 2021 Fall Regional Meeting and Workshop will be held October 5th at Millhome Supper Club in Kiel. If any Board members are interested in attending, please contact the Board Secretary so she can submit the registration.

Future meeting dates included Finance & Budget Committee Meeting on September 1, 2021. The Curriculum Committee has a meeting scheduled for September 16, 2021. Buildings & Grounds will schedule a meeting within the next few weeks. The next Board Meeting is scheduled for September 14, 2021. The Personnel Committee will also schedule a meeting prior to the September 14, 2021 Board Meeting.

The Board agreed not to convene into Closed Session at this time and will reschedule at a later date.

A motion to adjourn was made by Collin Braunel, seconded by Lisa Johnston, and unanimously carried (7-0), the meeting adjourned at 1:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Laurie Braun, Secretary

  
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Dave Nickels, Board President