

MINUTES
SCHOOL BOARD, DISTRICT #2342
WEST CENTRAL AREA SECONDARY SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER
November 18, 2020

Meeting called to order at 6:32pm by Nessman. Members present per roll call: Christenson, Strunk, Grosz and Nessman. Members Absent: Sabolik, Beuckens, Ulrich Administration present: Hogie, Powers, Prasch, Knutson, Foslien and Moerke. Administration Absent: McNamara and Amundson

Visitors: Chrissy Oachs, Chris Ray, John & Kari Kreft, Auditor Mary Reedy and Kayla Sanstead

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and the Mission Statement read aloud.

Motion by Strunk, seconded by Christenson to approve the modified agenda. *MCU*

Motion by Christenson, seconded by Grosz to approve the minutes of the October 21, 2020, November 4, 2020, and November 12th, 2020, meetings. *MCU*

Motion by Strunk, seconded by Grosz to approve the payment of claims in the amount of \$882,457.39. *MCU*

Motion by Grosz, seconded by Strunk to approve Jill Beuckens joining the meeting at 6:43PM. *MCU*

Communication & Discussion

- 1) Kari Kreft presented to the Board on all the ways the NEA Grant was used.
- 2) The Board was presented documents pertaining to the Region 1 Joint Powers Board election.
- 3) Auditor Mary Reedy from Clifton Larson Allen LLP presented a summary of her completed audit.

Reports

Technology Coordinator: (Kevin McNamara) – Mr. McNamara reported that the change in devices for Juniors and Seniors from Windows laptops to Chromebooks has been very successful. The primary challenge we continue to face is our PSEO students needing specific lockdown browsers for tests and quizzes. We continue to struggle acquiring enough iPads for our elementary students. The new SMART Panels in the elementaries have been working well and we will continue with this style SMART Panel in the Secondary School as we replace older SMART Boards. Our network infrastructure has proven to be more than capable of handling our current technology needs and should continue to provide everything we need for the foreseeable future. Our live streaming sporting events on the NFHS Network have gone well and we continue to work on improving the viewer's experience. Our Facebook live stream events have been well attended and we continue to work on finding ways to make our events accessible to the public. As our technology needs continue to grow exponentially, Stacy and I are finding ourselves spread very thin between the three buildings. As always, Stacy is the world's greatest. When you see her please make sure to tell her thank you. She is a gigantic reason why we are able to do the awesome things we do with technology in our school district!

Community Education: (Naomi Moerke) – Ms. Moerke. *Youth Classes:* Volleyball camp had 39 participants on Saturday Nov 7th. This was a camp offered to grades K-6 in 2 separate groups. All COVID-19 related guidelines were properly followed. Football camp had 36 participants on Saturday Nov 14th. Camp was offered to K-6 students in two separate groups. All COVID-19 related guidelines were properly followed. Art Academy has 15 registrations. Mrs. Stark is holding each session in her classroom where social distancing and masking are being followed. Mrs. Stark held a class on Thursday, November 12 and another one will be this Thursday, November 19th. Thursday Skiing: Currently still working with Andes about transportation. Mr. Hogie made a list of requirements that we as a school district need to follow for transportation that was sent over to Andes. I have not heard back as of Monday afternoon.

Students can still register, there just is no transportation at this time out to Andes after school due to cost, and shortage of bus drivers this year. *Adult Classes:* AARP-I just received an email from Duane Samuelson and AARP has officially cancelled all in person classes through March 2021. Chrissy and I have been reaching out to cities to see if we can use facilities for an attempt to get a Defensive Driving instructor in. This is a separate entity from AARP and they do offer in person classes currently. I will push information out as we receive it. Co-Ed Volleyball League- Currently I have 10 teams that are registered. We will continue to use the building in the evening. High school students will not referee this year. Equipment will not be shared, guidelines for sports will be followed - ex. Temps checked, names written down, COVID questions, masks required to enter the building. *Child Care:* Wrap Around - Melanie Belsheim is doing a great job taking over while Mrs. Holmes is out on maternity leave. There are a mixture of numbers! There are between 3-12 students each day. Wednesday's there are between 12-18. After School Care- There are consistently over 20 students each day at after school care. Molly Bertram is heading that. We have had paras assist after school due to numbers regulations. I have been in search of a high school student to help out to keep cost down, and have finally found 2 students: Robert Torkelson (10th grade) and Morgan Stark is planning to help out after volleyball season. She helped last year and is fantastic!

Activities Director: (Jacob Foslien) – Mr. Foslien. 1) The Governor's Order this evening will pause all sports after Friday. This impacts football playoffs and volleyball. He commended the coaches for being incredibly flexible and patient with so many changes and challenges this season. 2) Mr Foslien met with the elementary basketball coaches to discuss facility usage and guidelines. I will be meeting with the youth wrestling coaches in the near future. 3) A parent transportation form has been created and discussed with coaches. This provides parents an opportunity to transport their own child to contests during the pandemic. 4) All winter sport schedules are done and published on RSchool. 5) Winter sport practice start dates are as follows: a. C, JV, V Boys Basketball: Nov. 23. First Contest Dec. 4. b. 7-12 Wrestling: Nov. 30. First Contest Dec. 10. c. C, JV, V Girls Basketball: Dec. 7. First Contest Dec. 17. d. JH Girls Basketball: Jan. 4. First Contest Jan. 12. e. JH Boys Basketball: Feb. 15. First Contest Feb. 23. 6) Sports Fees for Winter sports have also been proportionately adjusted to match season reduction. 7) Currently we are not aware of any confirmed Covid transmission w/ our athletes or from our opponent's athletes (to our athletes) in our sports events. 8) We know there has been some issues (beyond our control) with the streaming system in the gym. Thank you to Mr. McNamara for his continued work trouble shooting these as they come up. 9) We have begun a very preliminary branding process for the Barrett building. Lengthy process and will evolve over time. Starting with the Barrett site first and then will transition to the elementary buildings later in the future.

Buildings & Grounds Director: – No report.

Elementary School Principal: (Natalie Prasch) – Ms. Prasch reported that 1) We have made it through quarter 1 and everyone is thrilled that we have been able to stay in-person for so long. 2) Conferences are next Monday and Tuesday for our families. We have given our families the option of Google Meets, telephone or in-person conferences due to the large number of COVID-19 cases. We have historically had great attendance and we are hoping for the same this year. 3) We are preparing for the move to distance learning. Teachers will be offering live instruction for students. If this option does not work for families, lessons will also be recorded so students can watch them at a different time. We will be sending home a list of expectations for students and families at conferences. 4) Report cards were sent home on Friday. If a parent needs a new copy or did not see the original, please let the office know. 5) I have to send a huge thank you to our staff for being so flexible as we struggle to find substitutes for all of our classrooms. Our intervention staff has been filling in for staff on quarantine and has done so with great professionalism. Their subbing puts a strain on our classroom staff as they have larger groups for intervention and must fill in for media classes as well.

Secondary School Principal: (Susan Knutson) – Ms. Knutson reported that 1) Good Things Happening - We completed 1st quarter in person! The end of the quarter CODE Bingo event was enjoyed by all. We recognized CODE winners for the week, month and quarter. Students played a Kahoot game in their advisor rooms and then Bingo via a building-wide Zoom meeting. Our Health Field Sciences Career Pathway received the 2020 Innovation Award on Sunday night from the Mn Rural Education Association. We are

extremely proud as there were only two programs awarded the honor. 2) Distance Learning - We have 20 (decrease of 8) out of 485 students in grades 5-12 that have elected to do Distance Learning through WCA. We have three students with doctor approved mask exemptions and thirty-seven students on quarantine due to close contact with a COVID case or suspected case. We are working on improving our DL from the model we experienced last spring. Teachers and paras will be working to keep kids engaged, increase rigor and hold kids accountable during DL. In one week of time, we went from 60% of our staff indicating that they did not think we should go into distance learning to only 13%. Staff overwhelmingly indicated that the current delivery model, Hybrid with DL and Quarantine students, is pushing them to their limits and can't be sustained. 3) Staffing - We continue to struggle getting staff covered when absent. In the month of October we only had a 43% fill rate for absences. We only had four days in October fully staffed. The good news is we did get our para position filled with a new hire, Megan Stangler.

Business Manager: (Diane Powers) – Ms Powers reported that 1) A huge thank you goes to the City of Barrett. We received \$20,544.95 in Cares Relief Funds from the City. The funds were used to purchase technology items for classrooms and distance learning along with 3 disinfecting foggers. 2) WCA has claimed \$152,282.74 of the \$199,128 CRF funds allocated to the district by MDE. The balance needs to be claimed by the end of December. 3) A huge thank you to Ali for all her hard work all year and especially the extra work with the shutdown last spring, distance learning, ordering all the COVID & distance learning supplies and getting ready for and helping with the audit. All of this is on top of her regular day and duties. 4) The 10.31.20 budget v actual has been provided.

Superintendent: (Dale Hogie) - Mr. Hogie gave big praise to the Administrative team and gratitude for the amazing work during these unprecedented times. They have gone way above and beyond and are a wonderful group to work with. He also reported that 1) Transition to Distance Learning: Weekly case rate estimates are provided to superintendents by Horizon Public Health one week prior to the release of the 14-Day County Case Rates. Horizon provides the unofficial estimate to provide school administrators an indication of where County rates are projected to be the following week. State calculated rates will fluctuate some as other data is verified, including current residence. The administrative decision to transition to distance learning was primarily based on staff availability and hybrid model effectiveness. In all three buildings, we were faced with a need to fill subs immediately and do not have the availability of subs to do that. Teachers were essentially managing three different groups of students: in-person, distance learners, and students moving in and out of quarantine. There are also students at varying levels of ability and self-motivation in each group. Also taken into account were the County and State projections for an increased spread of positive COVID-19 cases that will likely lead to an increase of quarantined students and staff. 2) Distance Learning End Date: Administratively, we would like to have staff and students return to our Hybrid Model on December 14th. Return will be contingent upon a few key factors. We will need to monitor staff availability, the positive COVID incidence rate for WCA students, and the number of students who will be in quarantine or distance learning on December 14th. 3) Meal Delivery During Distance Learning: The initial plan was to have meals available for families to pick up at designated locations and times. If no adult is home in the household, it would result in a student missing a class to pick up the meal. Through no additional cost to the District, arrangements have been made with Palmer Bus Service to provide home delivery of meals, five days per week. 4) Payroll Manager: Brady Martz continues to provide services for the final steps in processing payroll but Diane and Ali complete the data gathering for payroll. Chrissy has assisted with some of the document filing. Initial interviews were conducted and offers were made to two candidates and each declined. An interview was conducted on November 16th and another is planned for November 19th. 5) Maintenance Supervisor: Four applications have been received. The applications will be reviewed on November 19th and interviews will be conducted next week. 6) Governor Walz's November 18, 2020 Press Conference: Governor Walz conducted a press conference on November 17, 2020 and provided initial indications of what would be shared today.

Consent Items:

Motion by Strunk, seconded by Grosz to approve the following: Approve the resignation of Pete Amundson as Buildings and Grounds Director. And, approve the hire of Megan Stangler as a full-time paraprofessional for Secondary at Step 1. *MCU*

New Business:

Motion by Beuckens, seconded by Strunk to approve the final reading of Policies 624, 713, 721 and 802 to reflect the updated MSBA model policies and statutory verbiage. *MCU*

No action taken on the pursuit of a MOU with the WCA EA related to Gov, Walz's Order 20-94 and teacher preparation time.

Motion by Strunk, seconded by Grosz to approve the parental/guardian transportation of students for school activities during the pandemic. *MCU*

No action taken on the pursuit of a MOU with the WCA EA to compensate activity coaches for mileage to and from contests during the pandemic.

Motion by Grosz, seconded by Strunk to approve the FY20 Audit as presented by Clifton Larson Allen LLP. *MCU*

Motion by Strunk, seconded by Grosz to adjourn. *MCU Time: 8:03 PM*

Sara Strunk, Clerk