

WAUSAU SCHOOL DISTRICT
Education Committee Minutes

Submitted by: Dawn Teske

The EDUCATION COMMITTEE met at 6:00 p.m. on Monday, March 31, 2008, in the Nicholson Board Room at the Longfellow Administration Center. The meeting had been properly posted in compliance with the Wisconsin Open Meeting Law.

PRESENT: Keith Montgomery, Chairperson; Scott Kreuser and John Ostertag
Absent: Jenny Garver

ALSO PRESENT: Patrick Keefe, President, Board of Education; Don Viegut, Deputy Superintendent of Education; Nell Anderson, Director of Education; Karen Wendorf-Heldt, Director of Education; Roger Rindo, Director of Education; and Joel VerDuin, Director of Technology & Media Services and Dawn Teske, Recording Secretary

I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Montgomery called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ostertag moved to approve the minutes from the February 25, 2008 Education Committee meeting. Kreuser seconded. Motion carried.

III. CHARTER SCHOOL CONTRACT REVISION

Nell Anderson, Director of Education, was present to share information regarding the criteria for change in the Charter School Contract and policies with the Board of Education and the Enrich, Excel, Achieve Charter School. The federal government has been working with the State of Wisconsin in formulating new charter school guidelines to bring the State of Wisconsin in line with the full intent of the federal charter school initiative which is tied to federal funding.

Department of Public Instruction recently conducted a positive on-site visit. The Wausau School District is currently reviewing their charter school contract and application to bring it into compliance with DPI's recommendations.

Following the examination of the contract by Barry Golden of DPI, the contract will then be brought to the Education Committee for review.

IV. SUMMER SCHOOL 2008 UPDATE

Karen Heldt, Director of Education, shared enhancements that have been developed by the Summer School Planning Team consisting of Marla Berg, Summer School Elementary Administrator; Bob Voelker, Assistant Elementary Summer School Administrator; Andy Grimm, Summer School Secondary Administrator; Kelly Halvorsen, kindergarten teacher at John Marshall Elementary School and Karen Heldt to continually improve the Wausau School District Summer School Program.

Five teacher leaders within the district, either recently certified or completing administrative certifications, will be serving as Site Coordinators for Summer School (formerly called "Teachers in Charge"). Other enhancements for this summer include the purchase of science materials to strengthen the science curriculum, reading interventions will be extended into the summer school setting, a community partnership with the Wausau Woodchucks has been developed to improve summer school attendance, and third year summer school teachers will receive an increase in pay.

A 2009 Summer School planning session is scheduled for June. Ostertag suggested the Community Service Fund 80 as a possibility to assist with the cost of restructuring.

V. STATUS REPORT ON ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION PLANNING GRANT

Roger Rindo, Director of Education, was present to share information on the status of the Environmental Education Planning Grant. The District administration explored the possibilities to succeed with an environmental education charter school in the Wausau School District, which would be located at the Wausau School Forest. After attending site visits, workshops and researching best practices in the area of environmental and "green" schools around the state and country, the implementation of an environmental charter school in Wausau is clearly a viable idea.

Rindo stated a successful planning grant requires school implementation within twelve months. In addition, charter grants do not allow districts to pay for teacher salaries out of grant funds. Moving forward at this time as the District progresses through its strategic planning process would be premature, and it is not financially feasible to implement another charter at this time as the District is making significant budget reductions.

However, Rindo recommended that the District continue to explore this charter possibility at a time when we are in a stronger fiscal position.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Ostertag moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:20 p.m. Krueser seconded. Motion carried.