

## W-E-M BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES REGULAR MEETING

Monday, September 27, 2021, 6 p.m.

The WEM Board of Education met in regular session on Monday, September 27, 2021 at the Waterville Building. The meeting was called to order by Board Chairman Gary Michael at 6 p.m.

Board Members Jon Bakken, Travis Bowman, Michael, June Rezac, Jay Schneider, Jeff Stangler, and Jon Velishek attended the meeting. Also present at the meeting was Superintendent Joel Whitehurst, Principal Dr. Jennifer Wilson, Principal Bobbie Jo Bastian, Activities Director Jeff Boran, and Business Manager Margaret Jewison.

Motion by Schneider and seconded by Bowman to approve the agenda. Seven members voted in favor - motion declared passed.

Motion by Bakken and seconded by Stangler to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes from August 23, 2021. Seven members voted in favor - motion declared passed.

Motion by Bowman and seconded by Schneider to approve the August Finance Report. The bills and payroll from the report were \$1,544,269.50, deposits were \$775,826.01, and transfers were \$1,400,000. Comments on the report included a payment of \$5,000 to Holy Trinity Catholic Parish for the lease on the parking lot, a payment of \$550 to Margaret Jewison for 10 rolls of stamps, a payment of \$6,500.25 to Power School for Schoology technology software, and a payment of \$10,193.00 to Olympus Lockers & Storage Products, Inc. for 16 new locker room lockers.

Seven members voted in favor - motion declared passed.

Motion by Stangler and seconded by Bowman to approve monetary donations. The donations included:

- \$5,000 from the Choose Kindness Foundation for the Elementary and Junior High.
- \$5,000 from Douglas and Linda Canine to the Elementary and Junior High.
- \$500 from Steele-Waseca Electric Cooperative for a scholarship.
- \$2,500 from Compass Insurance Solutions for an athletics donation.
- \$2,500 from Agri-Systems of Waterville for an athletics donation.
- \$50 from Jerome and Carrie Brown for football donation.

Seven members voted in favor - motion declared passed.

### VISITOR COMMENTS

There were no visitor comments.

### REPORTS

**WEM Principal Bobbie Jo Bastian and WEM Principal Dr. Jennifer Wilson presented the following report:**

#### District

• Plans for our 2-hour late start in October are completed. We will be reviewing district assessment data and developing work around our student achievement so that we can build-up learning capacity post-COVID's distance and hybrid learning.

#### PreK-6 Grade

• The school year is off to a great start! We are so happy to have students and staff back in the buildings. September has flown by and there has been much action! Staff have been immersed in teaching routines, classroom expectations and diving into curriculum!

• Sept. 14 WEM 5th graders attended the Farm and Home Safety Day at Farm America sponsored by the Waseca Farm Bureau. Students received information about Electrical Safety, Chemical Safety, Lawn Mower/Chainsaw Safety, ATV/Snowmobile/Boat Safety, Tractor/PTO Safety, Animal Safety.

\* This week WEM Kindergarteners will be visiting the Montgomery Apple Orchard to learn about the life cycle of an apple!

• K-4 students had their first All School Bucs Pride Assembly. Students reviewed some Bucs Pride Expectations and were introduced to some of our kindness initiative activities as well as celebrating students' demonstration of Bucs Pride!

• Oct. 4 we will begin the after school program known as "Choices". Information and sign up information went home last week to students 3rd-8th grade. The purpose of the program is to support student learning through activities that reteach and/or enrich curriculum.

• Oct. 7 WEM 6th graders will be attending History Fest at Jack McGowan's Farm in Mankato. Students will have the opportunity to get hands-on learning experiences with periods in history. Students will experience a variety of entertainment and activities ranging from Historical Interpreters of 17th century Scotland and the Old West to launching a catapult, cider making, cannon shooting and so much more.

• Teachers in both buildings have worked in their grade level teams to review the PLC process and goals of a PLC.

• Sept. 27- Oct. 1 Elementary students will participate in some Homecoming activities including dress up days and parade/pep fest fun.

- We are hosting student teachers this year in the elementary. Currently Karen Marzahn and Julie Hayford each have a student. They are both in their first block, so here part-time and in classes at MSU part-time. Second semester they will be in the building daily working up to their full time student teaching experience.

- Formal observations of new teachers will begin soon!

### **7-12 Grade**

- We are excited and happy to have students and staff back in our buildings and we are off to a more traditional start to the year! While it has been a whirlwind September, our leadership staff, PBIS and PLC groups have all met at least once this month for planning and to grow as a staff.

- Southern MN Counseling Services continues to serve our students. A therapist that has long served our Waterville students is out on maternity leave, but the therapist in Morristown is filling in and helping out. The transition has been seamless.

- Formal observations for our new staff are underway. All secondary staff newly hired will have a formal observation by the end of the week. All non-tenured staff will have a formal observation before the end of October. All non-tenured staff will receive three formal observations, while tenured staff will be on a rotation. Informal observations will continue. Due to the decrease in restrictions and room capacities observations can be conducted throughout the district with an increase in intensity compared to 2020-2021.

- Thank you to our SRO, Officer Petrsek for assisting with activity in the building over the last week. I appreciate his insight, rational problem solving and continuous positive presence in the district.

- Homecoming is this week, thank you to Mrs. Butzer (HS student council advisor) and Pam Heinz (JH student council advisor) along with our senior class advisors who have helped lead the planning for the week with our student council. The week is looking to be very active, but also engaging. We are very excited to welcome back traditional events such as our annual Homecoming Parade and PepFest! Go Bucs!

- Paul Moe from Josten's will be coming into the high school in the next few weeks to meet with sophomores (class rings) and seniors (graduation materials). This is a fun time for both our sophomores and seniors as they begin the ordering process.

- October is College and Career month. High school counselor Bridgette Reuvers has a number of fun things planned for the month for students, including college representatives coming in to host informational meetings.

- County truancy offices have increased their communication already this year. While Waseca County's truancy office was fully operational throughout the 2020-2021 school year, other counties in our area took different approaches to truancy. Through the process it appears that new systems are being adapted and I believe more user friendly/streamlined. While it was frustrating last year to work through truancy cases with some counties, I believe we are back to partnering and for the better to support kids in our building if truancy becomes an issue.

- Mrs. Reuvers and I have been working with families and students as a proactive measure on credit checks. We are dedicated to being transparent and helpful in credit needs for our students, seniors in particular, to assure on-time graduation.

- The high school will host a Level 3 teacher candidate from MNSU this fall. The candidate will be working with Mr. Hauer and Mr. Smith in social studies. The placement includes less than 40 hours of work. We have also been asked by the service coop to host special education teacher candidates, which we have interest in from the Morristown building.

### **WEM Activities Director Jeff Boran presented the following report:**

#### **Community Services:**

- School Age Care is up and running before and after school with 34 registered students.
- Currently 55 enrolled in the Kindergarten Connection (Pre-School) program, M-W a.m. - 18 students, M-W p.m. - 19 students, and Th-F a.m. - 18 students. These are large classes for "pre-school."

#### **Activities:**

- Football: We are currently at about the halfway point in the regular season. The Bucs play the Medford Tigers Friday night at 7 p.m. for Homecoming. Varsity has played four games and are currently 2-2. Section 2AA playoffs begin October 26. The JV has played two games (3rd tonight) with three more games scheduled. Junior High (7th-8th) have played four times (7th two games and 8th 3 games) and each have four games remaining.

- Volleyball: Volleyball is also at about the halfway point. It has been a very busy three weeks for the Lady Bucs. All levels have played seven regularly scheduled games with the varsity mixing in two tournaments and the JV and C-squad having played in one. The varsity Bucs are currently tied with Bethlehem Academy for the Conference lead at 4-0 each. With the addition of a 4th class in volleyball, the Bucs have moved up to Class AA this season. The Bucs will play the Belle Plaine Tigers for our Homecoming game.

- Cross Country: The Grizzlies have participated in six races to date with four races remaining. This week the Grizzlies will host our annual "Pie Run" at Prairie Ridge Golf Course in Janesville. Races start at 4:30 p.m. The conference meet is in New Richland this year on October 19.
- Cheerleaders: Coach Tiffany Schmidtke and the cheerleaders have been a great support for the Buccaneers...This week especially as they help WEM celebrate Homecoming.

Motion by Bakken and seconded by Rezac to approve the 5th grade request to attend Eagle Bluff. See attachment. Seven members voted in favor - motion declared passed.

Motion by Schneider and seconded by Rezac to approve the workers' pay schedule. See attachment. Seven members voted in favor - motion declared passed.

#### **WEM Board Member Reports**

There were no reports given.

#### **WEM Board Committee Reports**

- There were no reports given. Chairman Michael appointed Jon Bakken to the Negotiations Committee and the Superintendent Search Committee. Michael also relinquished his spot on the Superintendent Search Committee. He also added June Rezac to the Policy Committee.

#### **WEM Superintendent Joel Whitehurst presented the following:**

- Whitehurst welcomed everyone to Homecoming Week, said construction is winding down, and said the construction manager had one week left on the building project.
- There was discussion on the Future of WEM Preschool Planning. See attachment. No action taken - just an informational item.
- The district fall students enrollment is 746. The budget was built upon an anticipated 705 students. The increase in students will add approximately \$200,000 in revenue.
- The 2019-2021 bus driver contract was brought forth. See attachment.

- Motion by Rezac and seconded by Michael to approve Joel Whitehurst as Designated Identified Official with Authority for Education Identity Access. Seven members voted in favor - motion declared passed.

\* Motion by Bakken and seconded by Rezac to approve the 2021-2022 Professional Development Explanations and Professional Development Book for 2021-22. See attachments. Seven members voted in favor - motion declared passed.

- Motion by Stangler and seconded by Schneider to approve certifying "Maximum" on Pay 2022 Levy. Truth in Taxation Meeting to be conducted on December 20, 2021 at 6 p.m. The levy will increase 1.34 percent of \$46,188.74. Seven members voted in favor - motion declared passed.

Motion by Bakken and seconded by Rezac to approve the Minnesota School Board Association to help with the superintendent search process. See attachment. Seven members voted in favor - motion declared passed.

#### **PERSONNEL**

Motion by Schneider and seconded by Rezac to approve the letter of retirement from Joel Whitehurst, effective June 30, 2022. Whitehurst has been the district's superintendent for the past 20 years. Seven members voted in favor - motion declared passed.

Motion by Schneider and seconded by Bowman to approve the following hires:

- Nancy Delaske, Bus Route Driver - \$17,850.
  - Brian Biehn, Custodian, B22/Step 6 - \$15.13/hour.
  - Alex Heuss, Peer Tutoring - \$10/hour.
- Seven members voted in favor - motion declared passed.

Motion by Schneider and seconded by Stangler to approve the lane change for Crystal Lamont, MS to MS+20. Seven members voted in favor - motion declared passed.

Motion by Bowman and seconded by Stangler to approve the following additional assignments:

- Sonja Fiedler, Minnesota Honor Society - \$597.
  - Jennifer Wilson, AVID Coordinator - \$2,580.
- Seven members voted in favor - motion declared passed.

Motion by Rezac and seconded by Bakken to approve Sonja Fiedler, Junior High Volleyball Coach - \$2,261.  
Seven members voted in favor - motion declared passed.

Motion by Schneider and seconded by Stangler to adjourn the meeting at 7:06 p.m.  
Seven members voted in favor - motion declared passed.

Gary Michael, Attest Jay Schneider, Attest