

**REGULAR MEETING  
WINNEBAGO COMMUNITY UNIT DISTRICT #323  
MARCH 18, 2019**

Christopher Schoeneweiss called the Regular Meeting of the Winnebago Board of Education to order at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, March 18, 2019 in the Boardroom at McNair Elementary School. Members answering roll call were Todd France, Elizabeth Johnson-Lovett, Duane Lovett, Michael Rossol, Christopher Schoeneweiss, and Nichole Smith. Dennis Daly was absent.

At 5:31 p.m., Mr. France made a motion to enter Executive Session for the following reasons:

1. The appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the District or legal counsel for the District, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee or against legal counsel for the District to determine its validity. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1); seconded by Mr. Rossol.

Roll call vote:

Aye: Mr. Lovett, Mrs. Smith, Mr. France, Mrs. Johnson-Lovett, Mr. Rossol, Mr. Schoeneweiss

Nay: none

Approved: 6-0

At 6:02 p.m., the school board returned to Open Session.

Christopher Schoeneweiss called the Regular Meeting of the Winnebago Board of Education to order at 6:06 p.m. on Monday, March 18, 2019 in the Library at McNair Elementary School. Members answering roll call were Todd France, Elizabeth Johnson-Lovett, Duane Lovett, Michael Rossol, Christopher Schoeneweiss, and Nichole Smith. Dennis Daly was absent. All joined in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. France made a motion to approve the meeting agenda; seconded by Mr. Lovett. All voted aye, motion was approved.

For the Public Comment portion of the meeting, Mr. Schoeneweiss explained that speakers are called on and allowed to speak for a maximum of three minutes. The Board of Education listens to input from the public and does not conduct open discussion on issues. Discussion on personnel matters is not allowed. The following people signed up to make public comment:

Dan Lemke – WHS Assistant Principal – voiced concerns about the non-renewal of Mr. Gruber’s contract. He stated that he understands the evaluation process and knows it can be subjective. Mr. Lemke gave an example of a situation when Mr. Gruber connected well with students, staff, and families. He went on to say feels Mr. Gruber is a great leader and staff member, noting that he received high comments on the 5Essentials survey from students and parents.

Wendy Schneider – Parent – commented that Mr. Gruber has brought positive results for her students and their family. She spoke of the support she received from him when she wanted to form the WHS group, WRAMPS, and re-established post prom activities. She appreciates Mr. Gruber’s platforms on social media and noted test scores have gone up, as well as, 10% of the senior class are Illinois State Scholars under his leadership.

Lisa Mitchell – WHS Teacher – explained her appreciation for Mr. Gruber’s leadership at the high school, stating that he looks for ways to develop relationships and is approachable to students. She told that he has pursued dual credit courses and then found teachers to go along with them. While attending monthly Math

meetings, he provides advice, but then allows them work through things. Also noted was how he helped head off issues with final exams, offers guidance during evaluations, and has earned the respect of those at WHS.

Will Hartje – Activities Director – has had a working relationship with Mr. Gruber for six years and appreciates his open door policy. He commended Mr. Gruber’s communication with students and staff and told how he enjoys seeing students succeed in and out of the classrooms.

Mr. France made a motion to approve the items on the consent agenda; seconded by Mr. Rossol.

Items on consent agenda:

- 6.1. Approval of Minutes
  1. Regular Meeting – February 19, 2019
  2. Executive Session – February 19, 2019
2. Approve Accounts Payable
3. Approve Personnel Report –NEW HIRES: Carley George – Elementary Counselor – for 2019-20 school year to cover for leave of absence, Daniel Jack – McNair/WMS – Band Director – beginning with the 2019-20 school year, Kortney Lambert – Simon – Kids Club Tutor, Mark Miller – WHS – Vocal Director for Musical, Becca Francis and Carol Francis – WHS – Musical Staff; RESIGNATION: Matt Adams – District Technology Director – effective June 30, 2019, Ciarra Bartos – WMS – Math Teacher – effective end of 2018-19 school year, Claire Etchison – WMS – English Language Arts Teacher – effective end of 2018-19 school year
4. Report on monthly FOIA Requests
5. Approve Oregon Cooperative Bowling

Roll call vote:

Aye: Mr. France, Mr. Lovett, Mr. Rossol, Mrs. Smith, Mrs. Johnson-Lovett, Mr. Schoeneweiss

Nay: none

Approved: 6-0

## **ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS**

The following students were given certificates of recognition and congratulated for representing the Winnebago High School at the IMEA All-State Conference this school year: Danya Dorgan and Gracie Webb– Honors Chorus and Mika Monson – All-State Band.

Cindy Heckman – WHS – Special Education Teacher – had the honor of accepting the Yes I Can Award presented to Sara Patrick, a past student, who could not attend the national convention. Her report was about the other awards won by Ms. Patrick on her way to winning this award. Although she has hearing issues, she has become more comfortable with her disability and now attends a competitive college program. Mrs. Heckman shared a video of her reading a letter from Sara while accepting the Yes I Can Award on her behalf.

Coach Karen Hill, Winnovation Team members, and their robot were present and shared details and showed a video highlighting this year’s Robotics competition. They explained about robot height, width, and weight restrictions and showed how its elevator works. This year, they will be competing in regionals in Cedar Falls, Iowa and LaCrosse, Wisconsin. Both regionals will have well respected teams competing. If they win either regional, they will advance to the World Competition in Detroit, Michigan. It was reported that this year’s team consists of 8 students from Pecatonica Schools and 20 from Winnebago Schools. Alumni have also continued to stay involved, which benefits their team greatly.

Sheila Erickson – WHS – Culinary Arts Teacher – attended the meeting to share information about their Summer 2020 trip. Mrs. Erickson noted that two years ago the trip went to New York City. This trip will be to Europe and use the same travel company, who specializes in helping educational entities. She provided rationale for the trip including: learning about hospitality, foods from around the world, how differing cultures act while dining. The travel company will provide a guide to stay with the group for the entire trip, are committed to safety, and has a liability plan. The 10 day trip will have very full days and will visit London, Paris, Florence, Rome, and Italy, where they will take a cooking class. The cost per attendee will cover all meals except lunches and souvenirs. When asked, Mrs. Erickson stated that she would like to have a group of 12-15 people sign up, but a minimum of 6 is needed, and a payment plan being established. In order to offset costs, students will be able to have others gift funds directly into their accounts. Currently, there are approximately 95 students in the Culinary Arts Program, and there has been interest expressed in going. It was noted that the only cooking that will be done is in Italy on day 9. Approval is not being sought at this meeting.

Matt Adams – Technology Director – reported on internet connectivity because leases are going to be up and new contracts are needed. Since those leases were set up five years ago, the tower built on the main campus making connection possible to Rockford and links to Simon Elementary School, as well. The total internet costs currently are \$61,000 for installation and hardware costs. The goal has been to have guaranteed speed for both downloads and uploads, update connections, get faster speeds, and pay less. A new dish will be added to the tower, which will increase available bandwidth. Costs will now total less than \$50,000 with typical contracts ranging between three and five years.

Will Hartje – Activities Director – was asked about details provided in his written report. He confirmed that his report is informational and contains a listing of potential needs. Mr. Hartje corresponds with other districts in the conference to compare facilities. It was reported that the track is showing its age and has areas needing to be patched or the track completely re-surfaced. Discussion took place on various storage sheds and who uses each one. When talking about water damage to the high school gym floor, it was reported that the two exterior doors leading directly into the gym were not replaced with others during the referendum construction projects, and they have been leaking. This situation is going to be discussed with the Strategic Plan Facilities Committee to decide on what action steps are needed.

## **SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT**

Dr. Schwuchow gave an update on the Strategic Plan process explaining that Action Groups – Facilities/Staffing, Social Emotional, Curriculum, and Communication - have been established. Groups have met to go through what is going well and what improvements are needed. It is the intention to form and put a two to three year plan in place. Parents are being sought to join in. Dr. Schwuchow asked Cathy Finley – WMS Principal, and Deanne Gustafson – WMS Science Teacher to share information about the Pearson Science curriculum being piloted. They reported that this curriculum offers a print side, as well as a digital side, aligns well with the standards, and connects with google classroom. At this time, they feel comfortable in recommending the program for WMS. Dr. Schwuchow spoke about the Salary Committee, which has been meeting monthly. Recently discussed were salary schedules in place at other school districts. Dr. Schwuchow reported on the ISBE Indicator 13 Audit stating that the original ten IEPs submitted had been revised and were deemed compliant. The next step is to provide five additional IEPs to confirm compliance. Dr. Schwuchow told that the McNair elevator will soon be coded and inspected. Once this takes place, the elevator flooring will be installed, and the elevator will be ready to use.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### Second Reading Board Policies

- 2:80 Board Member Oath and Conduct
- 2:120 Board Member Development
- 2:260 Uniform Grievance Procedure
- 4:40 Incurring Debt
- 4:45 Insufficient Fund Checks and Debt Recovery
- 4:80 Accounting and Audits
- 4:130 Free and Reduced-Price Food Services
- 4:130-E Exhibit - Free and Reduced-Price Food Services; Meal Charge Notifications
- 4:170 Safety
- 5:30 Hiring Process and Criteria
- 5:60 Expenses
- 5:100 Staff Development Program
- 5:200 Terms and Conditions of Employment and Dismissal
- 5:220 Substitute Teachers
- 6:20 School Year Calendar and Day
- 6:60 Curriculum Content
- 6:220 Bring Your Own Technology (BYOT) Program; Responsible Use and Conduct
- 6:240 Field Trips and Recreational Class Trips
- 6:250 Community Resource Persons and Volunteers
- 6:310 High School Credit for Non-District Experiences; Course Substitutions; Re-Entering Students

Mr. France made a motion to approve the policies, as presented; seconded by Mr. Lovett.

Roll call vote:

Aye: Mr. France, Mr. Rossol, Mrs. Smith, Mrs. Johnson-Lovett, Mr. Lovett, Mr. Schoeneweiss

Nay: none

Approved: 6-0

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Action on the Resolution Authorizing Notice of Non-Renewal of School Principal was tabled. Another meeting will be set to give this consideration.

Mr. France made a motion to approve the Scholastic Bowl Team traveling to an out-of-state Championship Tournament, as presented; seconded by Mrs. Smith. Coach Kristin Strey was in attendance and shared details about the team placing 4<sup>th</sup> at the Illinois State Competition. It was noted that the team has grown under her leadership and have excelled as a team at their competitions.

Roll call vote:

Aye: Mrs. Smith, Mr. Lovett, Mr. Rossol, Mrs. Johnson-Lovett, Mr. France, Mr. Schoeneweiss

Nay: none

Approved: 6-0

It was reported that at the recent Chamber of Commerce event, Staci Thompson and Nichole Smith were awarded 4 under 40 Awards. Also, it was noted that the PTO Fun Fair held on March 16, 2019 was successful bringing in many families.

At 7:20 p.m., Mr. France made a motion for the meeting to adjourn; seconded by Mrs. Johnson-Lovett. All voted aye, meeting adjourned.

Approved: April 15, 2019

Respectfully submitted:

---

Christopher Schoeneweiss, President

---

Jennifer Lindgren, Secretary