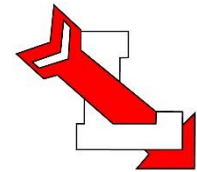


Board Briefs



Regular Meeting of July 8, 2024

Consent Items Approved

- Minutes from June, 2024
- Payment of bills for June, 2024
- Approval of the following new hire
Matt Laura, Middle School At-Risk Counselor:

Reports

Liz Pratt was honored by the Board of Education as the winner of the Marsha Wilcox Award. This award was established by the Board of Education in 1998 to recognize members of the community for their service to community and dedication to public education.

Action Items

- Middle School Furniture Order
- LEA Contract
- LPAC Audio System
- Baker Tilly Investment Services Contract
- Michigan CLASS Interlocal Investment Pool

Discussion

The Board conducted a first reading of policies 2264 and 2266. Revisions to Board policies occur on a regular basis to reflect changes in state and federal laws. These revised policies will be brought to the Board at the next meeting for approval.

Human Resources Update

Dustin Cichocki reported that bus driver recruitment is continuing. He is finishing up non-union contracts. Teacher contracts will be signed and mailed to teachers. Union representation and administration are working on re-formatting the teacher contract.

Budget Update

Sonia Hodge asked the Board for their feedback regarding the monthly financial reports. She would like to revise how the information is presented to the Board due to the new financial software. She stated that the State approved the budget. She distributed two documents which provided more detail. Mr. Krajewski asked which schools were awarded the Before and After School Programs Grant (32n). Mrs. Hodge will provide that information to the Board.

Board Comments

- Jennifer Dougherty stated that the Board does not just vote on things without having the appropriate information. Packets are received and questions are asked prior to the meeting. Everyone on the Board is doing their due diligence and doing their best for students.
- Brian Krajewski thanked the negotiation team and Board of Education for a highly collaborative and good teacher contract.

Curriculum Update

Dan VanderMeulen stated that summer school is back in session after the holiday break. Over 50 high school students are enrolled in summer school credit recovery classes. Advanced Placement (AP) scores have been released:

- 80% of Lowell students earned a 3 or better which is a 15% increase from last year
- 275 students took 516 tests and 219 earned a 3 or better which is a significant increase
- 14 AP courses are offered at the High school. 8 courses showed improvement, while the other 6 were flat based on last year
- 25 students took AP English Literature - 23 received a 3 or better.
- The National AP average (score of 3 or better) dropped from 77% to 73%, while Lowell scores improved.

Public Comments

Three audience members made public comments. No action taken.

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Fowler stated that lots of work continues during the summer that includes grounds work, building maintenance, CAD lab update, design meetings for Cherry Creek Elementary, summer camps, summer school and bus garage bus wash bids and planning. Fowler thanked Big L Lumber in Clarksville for donating materials to the Junior Master Gardener program to build raised garden beds. He congratulated students and staff for the AP scores and former Lowell student Katie Brim for qualifying for the summer Olympics. Mr. Fowler commented on some past public comments:

- The book "Skin & Bones" is in the library and does contain profanity.
- The Title IX policy was discussed at the June Work Session and is in different places in different states. The district is preparing for changes on August 1st and will be following Department of Education guidelines with the anticipation that this policy will play out in the courts with possible changes. There is a concern about having different people protected, within the same school, with different policies.

Mr. Fowler stated that Stefanie Boone has filed a lawsuit against the district and a number of employees. The district has retained counsel to represent the district and employees against this lawsuit. Lowell Area Schools denies Mrs. Boone's claims and will continue to focus its efforts on educating students. Mr. Fowler stated the district had 12 firms submit bids for the bond sale. He believes this reflects a strong school district with strong policies, sound budget management and also speaks well of West Michigan. He hopes that everyone enjoys the rest of the summer. Next meeting is in August.

Lowell Area Schools Board of Education

Brian Krajewski, President • Lauria Kuna, Vice President • Pat Nugent, Secretary • Tom Kaywood, Treasurer
Jennifer Dougherty, Trustee • Jared Blough, Trustee • Jessica Curtis, Trustee