

SCHOOL DISTRICT OF LA CROSSE DISTRICT WIDE PARENT COMMITTEE

Minutes submitted by: Dawn Wacek

DATE: Tuesday, April 13, 2021

TIME: 7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

LOCATION: To be held virtually Google Meet link: meet.google.com/gfw-pvcm-izw

In attendance: Nell Saunders-Scott, Jeremiah Galvan, Neal Meier, Penny O'Reilly, David Delimat, Amy Delimat, Dawn Wacek, Alicia Place, Pamela Hansen, Tammy Wills, Jessica Mcgough, Laura Eber, Elizabeth Digby-Britten, Dody Sobeck, Laura Olson, Katie Leaver, Ann Thurman, Amanda Mather, Anna Stindt, Trista Trelowne, Aaron Engel, Troy Harcey, Shelley Shirel, Stacey Everson, David Stoeffler, Aimee Zabrowski, Stefani Haar, Mike Larson

Minutes

1. Call to Order 7:01 pm

2. Land Recognition Statement

3. **Approve Minutes** (<https://www.lacrosseschools.org/minutes/>) The minutes need some edits and will be approved at the next meeting.

4. **Equity Showcase - Project Aware** - Stefani Haar shared that PA has a goal of increasing youth voice and family engagement. They began a storytime series featuring diverse local recognizable adults. Offered Love and Logic, Makes \$ense program, and other presentations of interest for families. They hosted a roundtable to invite some of the most marginalized families—including BIPOC parents and students, cultural liaisons, teachers, and community partners. A strong equity foundation is being built and while change is slow, Project Aware members are confident change is coming. Staff training, a new focus on cultural meals into menu. Parents interested in learning more or asking for ideas can contact Stefani. Staff have heard from the parent roundtable and has encouraged more thinking about how policies may affect BIPOC families.

5. **School Showcase - Special Education** - Aimee Zabrowski & Special Education Teachers

More than 200 staff members including teachers and support staff work to help students with a wide variety of disabilities. The department works collaboratively with regular staff to provide as close to a regular school experience as possible in order to meet goals of inclusive services. Special Ed staff were the first ones back in buildings working face to face. They deserve a huge kudos for doing the necessary work to best serve their students.

Penny O'Reilly shared what she is doing as a co-teacher with Pa Houa Vang at Hintgen. 13 students with 2 non-verbal high support needs. Sally and Billy (not their real names) likely wouldn't have been involved in a 4K traditional classroom previously. This mingled classroom is teaching empathy and

compassion for friends. Penny shared some very sweet stories about how the students will celebrate successes of their friends. Visual charts help staff and children communicate more effectively. The students are using a curriculum developed in the Twin Cities that teaches many skills. Students are demonstrating happiness with being in the classroom with their friends. Sally makes a heart with her hands when she arrives because she loves school so much.

Mike Larson shared that in middle school they do a lot of collaboration and cross helping to support student needs. They have special ed as a part of the grade unit so input and co-teaching works well. They see a lot of growth in middle school and they teach some self-advocacy skills.

Dody Sobeck shared how they support teens transitioning into the community. They get to use the PAES lab at Logan HS to learn business, construction, and other work skills. The hope is that inclusion into our community as a whole after high school can happen.

Questions were raised about parent involvement at various ages (parents have solutions, know their children best and are consulted frequently!) and how businesses getting involved in hosting students for training (answer: email Dody dsobeck@lacrossesd.org).

6. La Crosse Public Education Foundation – Executive Director, David Stoeffler (10 minutes) David wanted to make sure that our amazing staff members at all levels get recognition for their great work. They are requesting that we nominate staff members—ten will be randomly selected to win gift cards sponsored by the foundation. Nominations are due by May 3rd as the drawing will happen May 3rd! If successful it may continue. A reminder that donations can be sent to <https://lacrosseeducationfoundation.org/giving/>.

7. Sharing Concerns Elizabeth raised the point that removing gendered language from sites, Facebook pages and policies throughout would be a good start for supporting LGBTQ kids. Dr. Engel mentioned that this is an ongoing issue that is being addressed by staff. Once the resolution was set by the Board, the school staff begins working on action items and the history of the work being done at individual schools.

Reach out to Shelly Shirell or Aimee with any added questions about hosting school events. Notice is appreciated so safety plans can be reviewed.

8. Administrative Updates

a. **Superintendent Update** They are working with the County to get 16 and 17 year olds vaccinated. It is possible that there may be vaccination clinics specific to the students (Pfizer is approved for this age range.)

Long range facility plan options will be brought to community forums to see how we feel about the plans and how it fits into our community. They may be held at Central to allow for spreading out. The timeline is sometime in May for the forums. A survey to the whole community will go out in fall and the Board will plan in January 2022 for a possible referendum in April 2022.

Every two years there is a budget process-legislative advocacy for school funding is needed from community members in addition to our school leadership. Parents and caregivers can tell stories that

resonate with legislators. A template letter will be sent from Kelly G. to offer an example of what we could say to advocate for our schools.

b. Elementary Update: Shelley shared that Dirk Hunter and Laura Huber will be retiring from Summit and Coulee Montessori/ Northside. Interviews are already complete for the latter and a name will be submitted to the board. The process is just starting for Summit with a goal of mid-May to submit a name.

No changes will be coming this year at the elementary level as far as Covid safety. 6 feet will continue to be the minimum distance.

Lots of fun and exciting end of year school plans. Remember to submit the plans so safety plans can be approved.

A question was asked about visitors at the schools and at this point they don't anticipate allowing that yet. Another was asked about enrollment numbers, but there is not a lot of information available yet—they should know more in early May.

c. Secondary Update: Stacey shared how wonderful it is to go through the secondary schools and hear the chatter and see the students. It has been very smooth overall and they do aim for 6 feet distance with students but hallways and such make it challenging.

Graduation plans are coming together at the high schools. Logan will be at La Crosse Center and Central is planning for an outdoor graduation. Prom is also underway—hopefully outdoors.

Central is in search of a new principal and interviews are beginning next Friday.

Logan has students in a junior achievement simulation in running their own business and several students won awards.

A standards based grading report card will be launched in 2022-2023 school year for 6-12 grades and Stacey can share more info later. This has been a growing practice over the past few decades in various areas. Most elementary schools already use it.

9. Joys & Shoutouts

- Lincoln will be doing a fundraiser on May 6th featuring Press Break.
<http://bit.ly/cougarfundraiser>

Adjourned 8:28 Motion by David, Seconded by Dawn.