

SCHOOL DISTRICT OF LA CROSSE
DISTRICT WIDE PARENT COMMITTEE
Minutes to be taken by: Laura Eber

DATE: Tuesday, March 9, 2021

TIME: 7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

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

A G E N D A

1. Call to Order Meeting called to order at 7:01pm

2. Land Recognition Statement

Tonight, Elizabeth Digby-Britten recognized the women in La Crosse history. Pearl Street had once been called the “Red Light District”, which had many brothels, roughly from 1880-1930. She brought awareness for all to recognize that women who have chosen to be said for sexual favors are not the same as those who are trafficked for sexual favors, as those trafficked don’t have the choice in the matter. Trafficking does happen and exists in La Crosse, so we should be aware of that for our community.

3. Approve Minutes (<https://www.lacrosseschools.org/minutes/>). An edit requested to state in last month’s minutes to say that La Crosse was a sundown town. Motion to approve by Tammy Wills, 2nded, & approved.

4. Equity Showcase - FEM Club - Central High School (15 minutes)

Kim Butterfield, the Advisor for FEM Club was present & 2 members, Lilly Bendel & Katie Murphy presented on the club. They do projects to help marginalized groups (LGBTQ, women of color, etc.). In the past, they have sponsored a family at New Horizons and are advocates for intersectional feminism (all systems of oppression are connected)

They are focused on helping women in need of women’s hygiene & have provided receptacles & supplies in all the women’s restrooms in the middle schools & high schools in the district.

1/5 of women will miss school due to menstrual hygiene. Currently the club is working on getting more environmentally friendly products in the community & bring awareness to those, such as the period cup.

5. School Board Candidate Showcase - (25 minutes)

- Brad Quarberg: Involved in the community (service & school wise). He & his wife have an endowment @ Logan HS for band & choir. He has been on the school board for 2 terms & knows the equity issues & projects going on in the district, like the Hamilton Project. He feels community programs need to continue and there is room for growth/increase. Regarding board members being in the schools to see what goes on, he is in favor of that & currently does this. As far as what the pandemic has done, there are not enough subs in the district, let alone qualified subs, so this is something of concern to take action to address.
- Kraig Brownell: Resident of La Crosse, attended Emerson, Lincoln MS, & Central HS. He was a classroom teacher at Logan HS, & retired from there last spring. The community now has more diversity & the school district can take more action on

improving & working on social issues. He feels it is important for school board members to go into classrooms and spend time in them, including bringing parents in to sit as well to see what happens in the classroom. As far as the pandemic & what that has done, he feels that the district & board should find a way to empower the teachers more, some of that being through the in-services and teachers having the ability to structure the in-services to meet classroom needs.

- Annie Baumann: She is a parent & firm believer that she has a stake in what transpires in the schools & community. She has worked as a librarian at Viterbo and committed to advocacy & action to decrease racism. She does community service & volunteering in order to take action. She believes that going into the schools, as a board member, can allow for great work to get done & can assist in advocating for better community building/relationships. The pandemic has led to great amounts of stress & burnout to many teachers & staff, as well as parents., which should be improved upon with the right tools.
- Martha Linville: She is a newer resident of La Crosse (4 years). She has a daughter that is a professor at UW-L & is an advocate for education, for her grandchildren & community. She has worked in library & public-school systems in the past. She feels that there are many perspectives that need to be looked at in schools. She is in favor of spending time in schools & see all the buildings in the district. The pandemic has brought her to evaluate & think of the need for more collaboration days for teachers during the school days, where substitute teachers would be brought in for the teachers to meet.
- Rob Abraham: His family has been in La Crosse for over 100 years. He is a parent & believes parents should be heard, helping to make choices and decisions for schools. He also has a niece & a nephew that he has interest to continue to understand and help the school district for their upcoming educations. He feels strongly that board members should be in the schools to see what goes on. Due to the pandemic, he feels that teachers need support, and with budgets being tight in the school district, budgets need to be evaluated. He feels step-raises are needed in the district for employees.

***. There will be an online forum for the school board candidates on Thursday, March 18th from 6:30-8pm. This is being put on by the League of Women Voters. Any questions for the candidates should be emailed to: lwvlawi@gmail.com by Wednesday, March 17th, noon.

6. La Crosse Public Education Foundation – Executive Director, David Stoeffler (10 minutes)
No update

7. Sharing Concerns (10 minutes)

There was more talk, wishing there was more time to ask the candidates running for the school board questions, even some as individual questions for a particular candidate. There had to be a time limit on this, so the forum is the best place to ask these questions.

8. Administrative Updates (25 minutes)

a. Superintendent Update

- Football has started at the high schools, as well as a few other fall sports. The spring sports season has been pushed back a little later in order to make this happen.
- More work on equity implementation is being done, and working to engage more with the community to develop more partnerships.
- Secondary Schools – return to 5 days/week is being evaluated & planned. All staff will be vaccinated fully for COVID in the upcoming weeks, which then can avoid staff having to quarantine due to being a close contact, ensuring teachers to stay in the classrooms & less substitute teachers needed. The district is already in short supply of subs. The goal is still to keep all staff & students safe. It is impossible to achieve the updated guidelines (by the World Health Organization & the Harvard Model) of 3 feet social distancing in all classrooms. Masking will continue to be implemented, but parents will need to be aware of the potential risk of having close contacts in classrooms & students having to quarantine for 14 days. The district is considering to move in this direction. By next Wednesday, they will have clearer guidelines & plans should be set more, to start on Tuesday, April 6th. Could La Crosse Polytech be considered differently than the middle schools & high schools, due to size & space for adequate social distancing – yes, the school district is considering all options.

b. Elementary Update - given by Dr. Engel

PTO's will be able to do more, looking at outside events, working within the County's safety guidelines. PTO's will need to submit a plan for the activity that includes safety measures & guidance to their respective school's principal to then take to Shelly Shirel & Aimee Zabrowski for approval. Timeline for submissions should be 3 days prior to event or before any money is committed to the fundraiser.

c. Secondary Update

Conferences have had an increase in participation with them being virtual.

There is a Black Youth Summit with Leadership being the theme. It is taking place this Saturday, virtually from 10am - 2pm

Prom is being considered & planned for outdoor (Copeland Park & Riverside Park as locations)

Graduation: preliminary plans are underway

9. Joys & Shoutouts (5 minutes)

The student section at Logan HS is set up better now for students with disabilities

Meeting adjourned: 8:21pm

Please send any future meeting topic suggestions to kgalvan@lacrossesd.org .

Suggested topics:

- Legislative updates on laws affecting education, for Dr. Engel to speak about
- Special education programs (special ed. students being integrated into regular classrooms)
- Guidance counselors & social workers

