



Respectful, Responsible, Safe & Prepared

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
February 2, 2022 – 5:30 p.m.
Waupaca High School Community Room and [Live Stream](#)

Welcome and Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Committee Chairperson Dale Feldt at 5:29 p.m.

Roll Call:

All members of the Committee were present: Chairperson Dale Feldt and Steve Klismet in the WHS Community Room and Mark Polebitski via phone. Additionally, Board members Stephen Johnson, Patrick Phair, and Steve Hackett were present in the WHS Community Room.

Also Present:

Present in the WHS Community Room: Ron Saari, Sandy Lucas, Mark Flaten, Carl Hayek, Laurie Schmidt, and Carol Beyer-Makuski.

Approval of Agenda:

A motion was made by Mark Polebitski and seconded by Steve Klismet to approve the agenda as presented. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

Review of Board Meeting Norms:

The Board reviewed their collective commitments.

ESSER III Planning:

In response to a comment made at the stakeholder meeting that the Administration has “all the power,” Director of Business Services Carl Hayek advised that the Administration doesn’t see it that way – the Administration views themselves as servant leaders for all of the stakeholders/taxpayers of the District. He advised that as the District’s chief finance officer, his number one priority at this time is fully securing the \$2.4 million and not leaving any money on the table. He added that solidification of these dollars does not mean we cannot change the allocation of these funds, it simply means we are securing the money now. His second priority is how these funds can be used in conjunction with our overall budget to afford a cost of living increase in wages of 4.7% for all employees, which would be the largest wage increase since 1993.

Director of Teaching and Learning Mark Flaten then presented the proposed plan for the ESSER III funds and provided clarification of the plan that was shared at the stakeholder meeting on January 31, 2022. He reminded everyone of their roles and responsibilities in the hopes of viewing this information through a positive growth mindset. He further advised that the Board will need to vote on these recommendations and/or provide further direction to the Administration by the February 8, 2022, School Board meeting so the District’s ESSER III plan can be submitted on time to the DPI, by March 11, 2022.

Mr. Flaten summarized the three stimulus packages that were passed by the federal government which provided additional funding to the District to help offset expenses it incurred as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic – ESSER I, ESSER II, and ESSER III. He further outlined how the ESSER I and ESSER II funds were spent and what is being proposed for the ESSER III funds (as shared at the January Board meeting and Monday night’s stakeholder meeting). If the Administration’s recommendations to the Board are approved, when submitting the requests to the DPI for approval, the Administration will use language to provide the District with as much flexibility as possible.

Mr. Flaten pointed out that, as noted previously, the proposed claims associated with the ESSER III grant exceed the total amount by approximately \$250,000. The Administration believes it will be able to cover this overage by following the guidelines within our strategic plan, particularly relating to staffing in accordance to enrollment, and advised how some of that potentially may take place going into the 2022-2023 school year.

Mr. Flaten also provided additional information and clarification relating to the questions that were asked during the stakeholder meeting as well as emails received in order to aid the Board in understanding the recommendations being proposed.

Mr. Flaten concluded his presentation by stating that the administrative recommendations on the use of ESSER III funds as outlined are based on the information shared during previous Board meetings, and are in alignment with the mission, vision, priorities, strategic plan, and Board policies. Therefore, the Administration recommends that the Finance Committee and ultimately the full School Board adopt the proposed ESSER III plan as presented here.

The Committee, as well as the other Board members, thanked the entire Core Team for all of their effort in putting together this information as it answered many of their questions. However, in response to additional questions they had, Mr. Flaten provided clarification as follows: the ESSER III funds will be used during the 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 school years; any positions hired and paid through the ESSER III funds will be on a two-year, nonrecurring contract; the overage of approximately \$250,000 will be covered without tapping into the current fund balance; the \$900,000 in technology resources is already part of the budget but this would allow the District to have some flexibility.

Discussion then ensued as to whether the Board could receive a separate monthly reporting on the usage of the ESSER III funds. They believe it would provide greater transparency to the Board as well as to the public as to how the District is spending the funds. Mr. Hayek advised that there is a great deal of accountability on the use of those funds and it is very highly regulated, but he will work with his team to create a monthly report to be included on the Board’s consent agenda. However, Mr. Flaten pointed out that we cannot compare apples to apples with other districts as they will spend their dollars in completely different ways.

In response to an inquiry, Mr. Flaten advised that the District currently does not have a Dean of Students and that the purpose of the addition of that position is to focus on our students to help bring about a better academic performance. It would also free up some time for WHS Principal Michael Werbowsky and WHS Associate Principal Jenifer Erb so that they can be in the classroom more supporting teachers.

Mr. Flaten added that the next steps will be creating job descriptions and posting for the new positions, but fears there will be many districts posting for interventionists as well.

It was asked that the Administration continue to monitor the proposed claims to be sure we are getting the payback we are anticipating.

A motion was made by Mark Polebitski and seconded by Steve Klismet to make a recommendation to the full Board at the next regular Board meeting to approve the ESSER III Plan as presented today. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.

Adjournment:

A motion was made by Mark Polebitski and seconded by Steve Klismet to adjourn the meeting at 6:18 p.m. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.