



SCHOOL BOARD RETREAT MINUTES
January 16, 2023 – 5:30 p.m.

Pursuant to the regulations, the Board of Education met in a retreat format on the above date in the Waupaca High School Community Room.

The purpose of the Board Retreat Minutes is to capture the essence of discussions. These minutes should not be interpreted to represent a transcription of the meeting.

Call to Order:

Board President Stephen Johnson called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m.

Roll Call:

Present in the WHS Community Room: Stephen Johnson, Dale Feldt, Steve Klismet, Molly McDonald, Patrick Phair, Betty Manion, and Ron Brooks.

Also Present:

Present in the WHS Community Room: Ron Saari, Sandy Lucas, Mark Flaten, CEC Principal Carrie Naparalla, CEC Governance Council Vice President Sandy Robinson, and CEC 5th/6th grade teacher Brianna Hass.

Approval of Agenda:

A motion was made by Dale Feldt 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.

Charter School Summary:

Board President Johnson advised that we are going to begin by reviewing some information regarding the charter school for the benefit of our newer Board members.

A sheet of paper containing several different pictures on it was given to everyone. Director of Teaching and Learning Mark Flaten asked them to pick a picture depicting how they felt about the meeting today and then speak as to why they chose that picture.

Mark Flaten – Trophy
Ron Brooks – Ear
Betty Manion – Swimmer
Patrick Phair – Rocket Ship
Stephen Johnson – Houses
Ron Saari – Houses

Dale Feldt – Lips
Steve Klismet – Drink
Molly McDonald – Houses
Brianna Hass – Ear
Sandy Robinson – Swimmer
Carrie Naparalla – Powerlifter

Then Mr. Saari asked everyone to draw a picture of what they believe the relationship between a charter school and the school district should look like.

Ron Saari – Circle with a bubble	Carrie Naparalla – Circle with arrows
Dale Feldt – People hand in hand	Mark Flaten – Circles and circles
Steve Klismet – People hand in hand	Ron Brooks – Circle
Molly McDonald – People hand in hand	Betty Manion – Heart
Brianna Hass – Circle	Patrick Phair – Umbrella
Sandy Robinson – People on trampolines	Stephen Johnson – Umbrella

Mr. Saari advised that the purpose of the above activities was to highlight that relationships are the key to a positive working relationship.

A short video regarding charter schools was then shown.

Mr. Flaten asked the group to share what they believe are similarities and differences between the charter school and a traditional school.

Similarities

- Desire to engage and educate the students
- Ability to participate in co-curriculars
- Passionate teachers
- All are SDW students, staff, and administrators
- SDW ancillary services (ex. food services, student services, bussing, etc.)
- Volunteerism
- Waupaca Way

Differences

<u>Charter School</u>	<u>Traditional School</u>
Smaller class sizes: 18:1 in grades 4K-3 rd 20:1 in grades 4 th -8 th	Same in grades 4K-3 rd (18:1) 23:1 in grades 4 th -8 th
Costs – more expensive per student: \$11,000 per student	\$9,000 per student
State/DPI exemptions	No DPI exemptions
Project-based learning using SDW learning targets	Traditional learning using SDW learning targets
Do passion projects	
Do community service learning	
Has a stigma of “other” kids (rural, lakes, country kids)	
Concentrate on 4 major focal areas: ag, environmental education, STEM, and arts	
Governance Council is appointed	School Board is elected
Parent engagement (higher percentage than traditional)	

Differences (cont.)

Charter School

Parents want to be more involved and be by other engaged parents

Families must apply to attend (based on space; first come first served then lottery)

CEC staff feel like a tight-knit community / staff specifically chose the CEC

Core resources

Traditional School

Parent involvement is encouraged

Everyone can attend

Board member Brooks commented that if the way we teach at the CEC is truly a better way, why aren't we incorporating it throughout the District. Mr. Flaten advised that the path is: 1) to get learning targets agreed upon and aligned; 2) create assessments; 3) then set up instructional practices.

Ms. Hass was asked if she was aware of the WLC staff's perception of CEC staff and she advised that some understand better than others. Mr. Flaten added we try to fend off the "us vs. them" mentality, and it is much better than in the past.

The group shared the following answers to the question: **Why do we want/have a charter school?**

- Provide a choice for families, students, and staff
 - Options to attract staff
- Children learn differently
 - Parents seeking something that better fits their child
- Lab school / to explore different learning / instructional practices (ex. project-based learning)
- School environment / learning ownership
 - School setting choice
- Availability of grant dollars years ago (\$650,000 over 5 years)
- Engaged parents
- Maintain / increase open enrollments-in
- Cross section of community support

The final question posed to the group was: **What do we need in place to have a successful charter school?**

- Contract
 - Measureables / objectives and evidence (SDW Strategic Plan)
 - Clear vocabulary / language (ex. autonomy)
 - Autonomy for accountability (measureables)
 - DPI charter school benchmarks
 - Created together; a mutual agreement between the CEC Governance Council, SDW Board of Education, SDW administration, and CEC administration
 - Roles and responsibilities of Governance Council, authorizer, and administration
 - Stay in our lanes and know where the boundaries are
 - Chain of command
 - Contract renewal timeline / language

- Ongoing and open communications (a two-way street) / scheduled in-person meetings – builds trust, positive relationships, transparency, active communication (ex. Mission, policies, etc.)
- Have the right advisors
- Sustainability
 - Governance Council?

Mr. Saari provided definitions of the following:

- Contract – items we want included in the contract which is legally binding between the SDW and the CEC Governance Council.
- Instrumentality – which gives charter schools more autonomy in exchange for accountability to the authorizer.
- Autonomy.
- A list of state education requirements that charter schools are not exempt from.

Discussion of Chain Exploration Center Charter School Contract:

Board President Johnson advised of the following timeline requirements:

January 25, 2023:	SDW Board of Education meeting to discuss CEC contract
February 1, 2023:	Open enrollment starts SDW needs to make decision on moving forward with CEC
February 28, 2023:	Draft contract must be submitted to DPI
June 30, 2023:	Final contract must be submitted to DPI

Board President Johnson added that because the CEC sends out letters to current families on February 1st regarding their intentions of enrolling for the next school year, it is necessary for the SDW Board of Education to decide by February 1st if it is going to continue with the charter school or not. If we do decide to continue with it, because we are in a bit of a time crunch, the Administration may need to hire someone to assist them in putting it all together.

Board member Brooks commented he would like to revisit the idea of having a one year rolling contract.

Board member Feldt reiterated that we are not closing the school, and Ms. Hass advised that Mr. Saari recently spoke to the CEC staff and quelled the fear of closing the school/losing jobs.

Board President Johnson advised that we will have a Special Board meeting right after the Personnel Committee meeting scheduled for January 25, 2023, at which time the Board will make a decision whether to move forward or not with a charter school contract. Then another meeting will be scheduled for the CEC Governance Council to present their explanation regarding the whys in their revised contract recommendations, and the Administration will revisit the items presented on November 28th. Then we will piece this all together.

Adjournment:

A motion was made by Dale Feldt and seconded by Steve Klismet to adjourn the meeting at 6:57 p.m. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.