

**School District of River Falls  
Special Board Meeting**

Monday, January 11, 2021 - 6:30 PM

River Falls High School Media Center, 818 Cemetery Road, River Falls, WI 54022

Also available via YouTube at : <https://www.youtube.com/c/schooldistrictofriverfalls>

Agendas can be viewed at <https://www.rfsd.k12.wi.us/district/school-board.cfm> or at <https://meetings.boardbook.org/Public/Organization/1447>

1. **CALL TO ORDER - 6:30 p.m. in the River Falls High School Media Center also available via YouTube**

2. **MANNER OF PUBLIC NOTIFICATION OF MEETING**

3. **HEARING OF VISITORS OR DELEGATIONS**

4. **INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

A. **Social/Emotional student support (River Falls High School)**

**Description:** (Presentation link)

B. **Learning environment updates for Virtual/e-School, Hybrid grades 7-12, in school grades PK-6**

C. **Future considerations for shift/pivot in learning environment (proactive planning)**

5. **ACTION ITEMS**

A. **Consideration and/or Action to determine a change/pivot from the "HYBRID Learning Environment" and athletic/co-curricular programs, spectator updates, and/or any details contained within our Wildcat Roadmap (district plan document for school operations during COVID-pandemic.)**

1. **Staff and Student COVID-impact in District**

2. **Regional and school district COVID-statistics**

**Description:** Administration will discuss existing COVID-statistics in our region and local school district criteria and if there is a perceived need to shift into an alternative learning environment and/or revise our Wildcat Roadmap and/or revise plans for athletics, co-curriculars, facility use, music, and all related policy and governance decisions. (Presentation Link)

**Recommended Action:** Determine if we need to pivot/shift the "Learning Environment" and related programs to include but not limited to athletics, spectators, co-curriculars, and music policy and plans.

B. **Consideration and/or Action to approve a resolution of advocacy to state/county agencies to prioritize educator COVID-vaccines as soon as possible** **3**

**Description:** Administration will propose a resolution of advocacy to submit to state/county agencies.

**Recommended Action:** Approve a resolution of advocacy to state/county agencies to prioritize educator COVID-vaccines as soon as possible.

C. **Review resolutions to be addressed during the 2021 Wisconsin Association of School Board (WASB) Delegate Assembly on Jan. 20, 2021, and provide the delegate with direction for voting on WASB resolutions** **4**

**Description:** Each year, the WASB Delegate Assembly votes on proposed amendments and resolutions during its Annual Joint State Convention. Each eligible school district may cast one vote on those resolutions. Bob Casey is the appointed delegate to the 2021 convention.

**Recommended Action:** Provide Delegate, Bob Casey, with direction for voting on WASB resolutions. The Board may give voting direction on an item-by-item basis or on a specific item(s) only or direct the Delegate to vote in the best interest of the School District of River Falls.

D. **Approval of a financial commitment of \$30,395.00 to the Kinni River Land Trust (KRLT) for the purpose of improving access and/or improvements to school-owned forest property**

**Description:** These dollars have been held in a district account for the past decade which came from DNR funds related to school forest property being designated as a conservation easement. The money provided to KRLT will continue to support the access and use of our school forest while helping KRLT purchase the adjoining property.

**Recommended Action:** Approve financial commitment of \$30,395.00 to the Kinni River Land Trust (KRLT) for the purpose of improving access and/or improvements to school-owned forest property.

**E. Proposed/suggested items for the next regular and future Board meeting agenda(s)**

**Description:** As always, Board members will be given the opportunity to suggest items for future Board member agendas.

**Recommended Action:** As needed.

**F. Schedule next Board/Committee meetings**

**Description:** Upcoming Board meeting dates, times, and locations will be reviewed.

**Recommended Action:** Set meeting schedule as follows:

Board Retreat, Thursday, January 21, 2021, 6:00 pm

Regular Board of Education meeting: Monday, January 25, 2021, 6:00 pm (date change)

Educational Program Committee meeting: Monday, February 1, 2021, 6:00 pm

Finance and Facilities Committee meeting: Monday, February 8, 2021, 6:00 pm

Personnel Committee meeting: Monday, February 8, 2021, 6:30 pm

Regular Board of Education meeting: Monday, February 15, 2021, 6:00 pm

*All the above meetings will be held at River Falls High School, 818 Cemetery Road*

*February returns to the "Regular" Board meetings held on the 3rd Monday of the month, and committee meetings held on the 1st and 2nd Mondays of the month.*

**6. ADJOURN**



## *School District of River Falls*

### **ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE**

852 East Division Street, River Falls WI 54022  
715-425-1800 phone / 715-425-1804 fax

[www.rfsd.k12.wi.us](http://www.rfsd.k12.wi.us)

### **School District of River Falls Board of Education**

#### **Resolution in support of educators being prioritized for the COVID-vaccine**

**We recognize frontline medical workers, EMT's, nursing home, hospital staff, pharmacists, etc. must be first in line for vaccines;**

**We recognize the elderly and most vulnerable due to pre-existing conditions must receive the vaccine as soon as possible;**

**We recognize there are many essential workers that provide services to the general public (utilities, groceries, clergy, supply distribution, etc);**

**We recognize school faculty and staff are essential in the daily lives of supporting students academically, socially, emotionally, and physically AND therefore strong consideration should be given to provide educators the COVID-vaccine as soon as possible.**

***The School District of River Falls' Board of Education strongly encourages state and federal agencies, Governor Evers, DHS, and/or the Legislature to designate that educators be placed within that essential worker category to be prioritized by the state of Wisconsin in the earliest vaccine distribution plan as practical, reasonable, and feasible.***

1 **WISCONSIN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL BOARDS, INC.**

2 Madison, Wisconsin

3 November 18, 2020

4  
5 **REPORT TO THE MEMBERSHIP ON PROPOSED 2021 RESOLUTIONS**

6 WASB Policy & Resolutions Committee

7 Sue Todey, Sevastopol School Board, Chair

8  
9  
10 **Resolution 21-01: *One-Cent Sales Tax for School Infrastructure, Technology and Tax Relief***

11  
12 **Create:** The WASB supports the implementation of a new statewide one-cent (one percent) sales  
13 tax to help public school districts build, maintain, and upgrade facilities, upgrade district  
14 technology infrastructure, software, and teacher training related to technology and help lower  
15 property taxes for Wisconsin taxpayers. District electors would need to approve a one-time  
16 revenue purpose statement before these sales tax funds could be expended and funding from the  
17 sales tax could not be spent on supplies, hiring additional staff or employee salaries and benefits.

18  
19 This one-cent sales tax is intended to provide equitable, designated funding for all public schools  
20 and all students, distributed on a per-student basis, as a new, ongoing revenue stream for the  
21 stated purposes and should not be used by the legislature to replace existing state revenues or for  
22 other purposes. This tax should remain in place for a long enough period of time to enable schools  
23 to borrow (issue bonds) against this revenue stream.

24  
25 **Rationale:** Existing WASB resolutions support “new state revenues, including sales and income  
26 taxes, and proposals to broaden the base of state tax programs in order to provide state revenues  
27 to school districts consistent with WASB policies” as well as, “developing a well-balanced tax  
28 system that lowers Wisconsin's heavy reliance on ... property taxes while properly funding  
29 existing mandates.”

30  
31 This resolution endorses a specific approach to augment those general statements. Supporters of  
32 this resolution argue that providing revenue to schools through a sales tax increase has the  
33 benefits of reducing the dependency on the property tax and including out-of-state visitors in  
34 sharing in the cost through sales tax collections attributable to tourism. Other states, including the  
35 neighboring states of Iowa and Illinois, have implemented “one-cent sales tax for schools”  
36 programs. Supporters argue local communities in those states are using the funding based on  
37 their unique facility/infrastructure needs and that it allows school boards in those states to create  
38 more reliable long-term plans and budgets. Local school boards oversee facility planning, with  
39 local community approval of the broad purposes and uses of the funding stream sought by this  
40 resolution.

1 **Resolution 21-02: *Broadband Access***

2  
3 **Create:** The WASB supports legislation to expand affordable, reliable, quality broadband access  
4 for all Wisconsin communities, including funding for school districts to ensure broadband access  
5 and devices for students and staff in their schools, school districts, and communities.  
6

7 The WASB also supports expanding federal funding for school technology provided through the  
8 E-Rate program as well as loosening restrictions on the use of E-Rate funding that limit  
9 permissible expenditures of such funds to items on or pertaining to school premises.  
10

11 **Rationale:** The experience of school closures last spring laid bare significant inequities in  
12 students' ability to access to broadband internet connections in their homes and outside of  
13 classrooms. A survey of Wisconsin school districts released in June 2020 by the Wisconsin  
14 Educational Media & Technology Association (WEMTA) reported that 64 percent of Wisconsin  
15 school districts said parts of their district lack broadband or cellular access, and 37 percent said  
16 they were unable to provide hotspots or Wi-fi cards. Sluggish DSL connections, inadequate data  
17 caps, and connections that slow even further so customers don't exceed their data cap hamper  
18 students' ability to work away from school and receive an equitable education that is on a par  
19 with that received by their peers in areas where quality broadband is readily available. This  
20 resolution supports efforts to increase broadband access and address the so-called "homework  
21 gap" at both the state and federal levels.  
22  
23

24 **Resolution 21-03: *Enrollment Hold Harmless***

25  
26 **Create:** The WASB supports legislation to create a hold harmless exemption in district  
27 membership calculations used for revenue limits and per pupil categorical aid to mitigate the  
28 effects of enrollment fluctuations caused by extraordinary public health emergencies or other  
29 disasters or emergencies that disrupt large portions of the state. This statutory exemption would  
30 be authorized by the DPI upon consultation with state and local leaders.  
31

32 **Rationale:** Student counts on the third Friday in September, the second Friday in January and in  
33 summer school can significantly impact a school district's revenue limit, per pupil aid, and  
34 general aid distribution. It is widely assumed that COVID-19 and its impacts have caused fall  
35 2020-21 student counts to decrease, and in fact caused 2020 summer school enrollment to  
36 decrease, leaving school districts to face negative fiscal consequences in 2020-21 and beyond.  
37 The DPI cannot address this issue through the waiver process; a statutory change is required. This  
38 resolution also recommends a triggering mechanism whereby the DPI would be authorized to  
39 make statutorily approved adjustments or changes upon consultation with state and local leaders.  
40  
41

42 **Resolution 21-04: *Instruction on Indigenous Tribes (1989 Wisconsin Act 31)***

43  
44 **Create:** The WASB calls upon the DPI to provide sufficient curricular resources and  
45 professional development opportunities for teachers to assist all school districts in fulfilling the  
46 requirements of 1989 Wisconsin Act 31, including initiatives that promote increased student  
47 academic competency regarding 1989 Wisconsin Act 31.

1 **Rationale:** In the 1989-91 biennial budget bill (1989 Wisconsin Act 31), the Legislature enacted  
2 a set of instructional mandates colloquially referred to as “Act 31” that generally require all public  
3 school districts to provide instruction on the history, culture, and tribal sovereignty of  
4 Wisconsin’s eleven federally-recognized American Indian nations and tribal communities. Some  
5 argue that school districts are not meeting their Act 31 obligations. Current law does not require  
6 data collection, tracking of compliance with Act 31 requirements, or evaluation of the efficacy of  
7 the Act. Although the DPI and others (e.g., PBS Wisconsin) have made high-quality, standards-  
8 aligned curricular resources related to Act 31 available, this resolution calls for further efforts to  
9 provide resources and professional development opportunities and other initiatives aimed at  
10 helping districts to meet Act 31 obligations.

11  
12  
13 **Resolution 21-05: *Special Education Flexibility to Address Emergencies***

14  
15 **Create:** The WASB supports legislation that would grant state and federal flexibility for districts  
16 in providing educational services, particularly special education services, to students during  
17 school years disrupted by extraordinary public health emergencies or other emergencies that  
18 affect large portions of the state or the nation. The primary goal of this flexibility should be to  
19 enable schools to bring students to the level of achievement they would have been at had the  
20 extraordinary emergency not occurred.

21  
22 The WASB also supports efforts to relax certain federal financial requirements imposed on school  
23 districts such as maintenance of effort requirements and proportionate share requirements that are  
24 difficult or impossible to meet during periods when special education services are disrupted by  
25 extraordinary public health emergencies or other emergencies that affect large portions of the  
26 state or the nation. .

27  
28 **Rationale:** When schools were ordered closed in the spring of 2020 due to the COVID-19  
29 pandemic, special education services to many students with disabilities were disrupted. With  
30 schools shut down for instruction, and with students not being transported to the extent they had  
31 been prior to the pandemic, it was difficult to provide in-person services to many students with  
32 disabilities. As a result, schools’ expenditures for many IEP related services may have decreased  
33 due to factors beyond their control. Many students with IEP’s for whom in-person instruction  
34 could not be provided last spring will likely need additional services to restore them to the  
35 learning level they were at when schools shifted to virtual instruction. Strict enforcement of  
36 maintenance of effort and proportionate share requirements could unfairly penalize school  
37 districts for circumstances over which they had little control without benefitting students. Schools  
38 should not face a “double whammy” of increased costs and reduced resources as they try to meet  
39 the needs of students with disabilities.

1 **Resolution 21-06: Assessment and Report Card Waivers**  
2

3 **Create:** The WASB supports that public school districts should continue to assess student growth  
4 and performance using assessments and measures approved locally. However, the WASB also  
5 supports legislation specifying that in any school year during which a public health emergency  
6 (pandemic) or other disaster or emergency occurs that affects large portions of the state, state law  
7 requiring assessments to be administered annually to pupils attending school in a public school  
8 district, independent charter school, private choice school, or special needs scholarship program  
9 school would not apply and the DPI would be prohibited from publishing school and school  
10 district accountability reports in the following school year.

11  
12 **Rationale:** State law imposes statutory requirements on the DPI to administer assessments and  
13 issue school and district report cards based on the results of those assessments. These statutory  
14 requirements may only be suspended by legislative action.  
15

16 Administering assessments during a public health emergency such as a pandemic presents unique  
17 challenges. One challenge is that test vendors or companies generally do not allow their tests to be  
18 administered to students who are not physically present in school or another setting in which a  
19 proctor is not present because of concerns over test security and data integrity. This presents  
20 potential problems with so many students currently learning virtually or shifting between in-  
21 person, hybrid, or virtual instruction due to health-related isolation or quarantine protocols due to  
22 the current pandemic. Schools that are in virtual instruction mode during the testing windows  
23 may not be able to administer the tests fairly or equitably to all students or may not be able to  
24 administer the tests in a way that accommodates the concerns of test vendors.  
25

26 The locally approved assessments referred to in the resolution are meant to augment state and  
27 federally required assessments and can be administered multiple times during the school year.  
28 Examples of locally approved assessments currently in use to assess student growth throughout  
29 the year include tests such as the Star assessments and MAP assessments, among others.  
30  
31

32 **Resolution 21-07: Rehiring Retired Teachers and Staff**  
33

34 **Repeal and Recreate Existing Resolution 4.37 as follows:** The WASB supports legislation to  
35 remove any impediments to rehiring retired teachers and staff. Policies and standards for rehiring  
36 retired staff should be set by each local school board.  
37

38 **Rationale:** This resolution would substitute simplified language for the current language of a set  
39 of existing WASB resolutions relating to impediments to rehiring retired teachers and staff,  
40 including WRS pension and health insurance issues, and issues under the Affordable Care Act.  
41

42 This resolution broadly authorizes the WASB to advocate for legislation removing impediments  
43 to rehiring retired teachers and staff and enabling districts to have greater authority and flexibility  
44 to rehire retired teachers and staff without identifying specific laws that need to be changed to  
45 provide such authority. Rehiring retired employees can reduce a district's costs and provide the  
46 district with employees who have experience and may have connections to students, other staff,  
47 and the district.

1 **Resolution 21-08: *Superintendent Evaluations***  
2

3 **Create:** The WASB supports confidential Superintendent evaluations to allow school districts to  
4 continue to improve by providing a confidential framework for the leader of the district to  
5 improve, therefore allowing or helping the district to improve. Disciplinary records are separate  
6 and distinct from evaluations and would not be considered confidential under this resolution.  
7

8 **Rationale:** Under current law, evaluations of a school principal that are part of educator  
9 effectiveness are expressly required by statute to be kept confidential and are not subject to public  
10 disclosure under the Public Records Law. By contrast, evaluations of a district's superintendent  
11 are generally subject to public disclosure under the Public Records Law. Thus, under current law,  
12 when a district receives a public records request asking for access to the performance evaluation  
13 records of the district's superintendent, the records custodian (e.g., the school board) must apply a  
14 balancing test (i.e., consider whether the public interest in confidentiality outweighs the public  
15 interest in disclosure) to determine whether or not to grant access. Further, a district's  
16 superintendent has the right to rebut or make corrections to the evaluation. This can potentially  
17 be confusing to members of the public.  
18

19 Proponents of this resolution argue that from a public policy standpoint, a board might be more  
20 candid or more frank in its written evaluation of the district's superintendent if it knew that the  
21 evaluation would remain confidential and would not be subject to release under a public records  
22 request. Proponents also note that in private employment, it is rare for employees to be able to  
23 obtain access to the evaluation records of their supervisors.  
24  
25

26 **Resolution 21-09: *Comprehensive School Safety Legislation***  
27

28 **Repeal and recreate existing resolution 6.115 to read as follows:**  
29

30 The WASB supports comprehensive school safety legislation, including:  
31

- 32 a. New, permanent, and consistent funding that allows districts to enhance safety and  
33 security by supporting one-time and ongoing costs, including, but not limited to:  
34 i. Security improvements to infrastructure;  
35 ii. Hiring SROs;  
36 iii. Coordinating with community agencies;  
37 iv. Training for staff and students about threats to safety, restorative practices,  
38 de-escalation techniques and anti-bullying;  
39 v. Mental health services;  
40 vi. Equipping school crisis teams to react to threats; and  
41
- 42 b. Allowing prosecutors to bring appropriate charges against any individual who  
43 conveys a threat or false information concerning an attempt to injure or create  
44 great bodily harm or threat of to a person on school property, school transportation,  
45 or at a school event.  
46

1 **Rationale:** This resolution would repeal and recreate existing resolution 6.115 to essentially  
2 reorganize what is in the resolution already and make a number of wording changes. For  
3 example, this resolution would substitute “New, permanent, and consistent funding” for the  
4 existing “Allocating sufficient funds.” It also adds “coordinating with community agencies,”  
5 “training for staff and students” and “restorative practices, de-escalation techniques and anti-  
6 bullying” to the list of items for which school safety-related funds may be used and explicitly  
7 calls for such funding to be used to “support ongoing costs.”  
8  
9

10 **Resolution 21-10: *School District Mascots, Logos and Imagery***

11  
12 **Create:** The WASB encourages school boards and districts to identify imagery, practices or  
13 processes that may create a school environment that is not safe and welcoming to all students,  
14 regardless of their race, ancestry or ethnicity, and to initiate discussions at the district level that  
15 would lead to the retirement of mascots, logos, imagery, practices or processes that may create a  
16 hostile, divisive or unwelcoming school environment.  
17

18 **Rationale:** Supporters of ending the use of race-based imagery, including school mascots and  
19 logos, contend that such imagery interferes with learning by creating, supporting, and maintaining  
20 oversimplified and inaccurate views of peoples and their cultures. They argue such imagery  
21 teaches or encourages students to stereotype groups of people on the basis of race, ancestry, or  
22 ethnicity. This, in turn, creates barriers to learning by making school an inhospitable place for  
23 some children.  
24