

Kenosha Unified School moves to dissolve eSchool; no longer a charter

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The Kenosha Unified School District Board of Education voted unanimously to transition the Kenosha eSchool from a charter school to a Kenosha Unified program in a School Board meeting Tuesday night.

The transition, recommended by the Department of Instruction, will have minimal impact on current eSchool students. Changes include no longer accepting full-time open-enrolled eSchool students, which is a total of two students currently, test scores aligning with student boundary schools, school diplomas will be issued by the boundary school and the charter agreement would no longer govern operations.

According to the 2022-23 school year Third Friday Count, the eSchool had 119 students, which is 57 fewer students than the 2021-22 school year.

The decision to transition to a Unified program comes after changes to the Wisconsin Department of Instruction requirements pertaining to students who are unable to participate in regular programming due to medical concerns, also known as MEDVI students. eSchool has not significantly changed its charter since its inception in 2006.

According to board documents, the Department of instruction would not allow preferential en-



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rollment for MEDVI students, students enrolled in the middle school enrichment program or abeyance/expelled students, which, according to the documents, would, “greatly diminish eSchool’s ability to service these special populations, as students would be placed on a waitlist behind alternate applicants.”

“We can no longer give preferential treatment to those special groups,” said eSchool Principal Anthony Casper. “So, if I were to have a student, according to DPI, that I wanted to enroll because they were a teen parent or became a teen parent, I could not give that student a preferential enrollment

in online learning over somebody else who might be on a waitlist.”

The eSchool will transfer from a Charter Agreement to a Program Guide, which uses much of the same language as the charter and will serve as an outline for the program description. Additionally, the eSchool teacher handbook will serve as a reference for teacher obligations as they may differ from many other in-person teaching positions. Fiscally, there should not be any impact to the budget.

KTEC charter renewed

The Kenosha School of Technology Enhance Curriculum’s charter

was renewed by the School Board in the same meeting in a 6-1 vote with Board member Kristine Schmalting as the single dissenting vote.

The motion included the approval of the renewal of the charter agreement with the inclusion of an annual meeting with the two boards for a period of five years starting the first day of July 2023 through the 30th day of June 2028.

Prior to the aforementioned motion, there were two amendments motioned and voted on: one called for a one-year contract with KTEC with the option of a five-year renewal, and the other called for annual meetings during the five-year extension of the charter.

The one-year contract amendment motion, introduced by Schmalting and seconded by School Board member Eric Meadows, did not pass. The amendment to add annual meetings passed in a 4-3 vote, with Board Members Todd Battle, Mary Modder and School Board President Yolanda Adams casting the dissenting votes.

Earlier in the meeting Schmalting expressed concern over un-discussed aspects of KTEC’s operations.

“I feel like there’s so many things that we need to go over,” Schmalting said. “How does KTEC service disabilities, in KTEC East how are we servicing kids with wheelchairs, we’re going to have to close more schools (so) how can

we close a boundary school and not think about a charter school?”

Schmalting also expressed concern over the KTEC governance board and Kenosha Unified’s School Board’s meeting frequencies.

“(I saw) somewhere, I can’t find it, that we should be meeting with the governance board annually,” Schmalting said. “I know that hasn’t been done. I’ve asked, and I think we need to put that back into practice.”

School Board member Todd Price echoed similar sentiments.

“I think that would be something I would like to see, too, a little bit more oversight,” Price said. “Yes, we do see a lot of information, but I think part of it is a bit more proactivity.”

Board organization

Prior to the School Board’s regular Tuesday night meeting, the board held its organizational meeting to determine the new positions on the board following the April 4 election.

After votes were tallied in each individual position was voted on, Yolanda Adams retained her position as president, Mary Modder retained her position as vice president, Rebecca Stevens retained her position as treasurer and Todd Price retained his position as clerk. Stacy Schroeder was reappointed to the position of secretary.