

**Cooperative School Boards Work Session
RCW 43.30.080**

Tuesday, April 25, 2017
Endicott School Library 6:00-7:00 PM

St. John School Board Chair Janet Leifer, Endicott School Board Chair Marvin Schmick and LaCrosse Board Vice Chair Michael Stubbs called their respective boards to order and jointly opened the work session at 6:00 PM.

Attendance:

<u>Endicott School Board</u>	<u>St. John School Board</u>	<u>LaCrosse School Board</u>
Marvin Schmick	Janet Leifer	Michael Stubbs
Nancy Anderson	Alan Blumenshein	Kara Harder
Jamie Misner	Valerie Brewer	Tami Schwartz
Greta White	Jim Rogers	

Others In Attendance: Doug Curtis, Suzanne Schmick, Bruce Porubek, Jeff Pietila, Dana Crider, Darrell Miller, Billy Ray and Gary Luft.

Marvin Schmick welcomed everyone to the work session of the LaCrosse, St John and Endicott School boards. Superintendent Curtis provided copies of LaCrosse's proposal for the 2017-18 school year.

SJE Superintendent Schmick reviewed for the group where St John and Endicott schools are in the process of gathering information from patrons during the public forums along with updates of discussions held since the last meeting of the St John, Endicott and LaCrosse boards. The two main items that came from the public forums were 1.) Continue work with LaCrosse and 2.) Conduct a self-study of SJE/ESJ athletic programs. Superintendent Schmick announced that a committee has been formed to assess and make recommendations for SJE/ESJ athletics. She explained how the committee was formed and what their focus is for the coming weeks. This self-study is not to exclude LaCrosse but provides SJE/ESJ with an opportunity to better our programs in order to possibly work with new partners in the future.

Superintendent Curtis talked about the "3-Dimensional Coaching" clinic that was attended by him, Darrell Miller, Ken Gering and Mike Wiley. The philosophy of the program is to develop the athlete as a whole person (physical and mental strength). Also, it teaches coaches how to deal with the whole athlete i.e. emotions, etc. Superintendent Schmick is concerned that we have brought people in to coach but we have not properly trained them. This type of program would provide deeper training for coaches working with athletes.

Superintendent Doug Curtis shared with the board groups a listing of six ideas that the LaCrosse board has been thinking about in terms of the potential sports cooperative with SJE schools. Discussion then moved to the 6 points of the LaCrosse proposal. The 6-point listing/proposal was shared for the purpose of discussion by the board groups. Each item was discussed individually as described below:

1. Finances: If ALL-in, then LaCrosse pays 25% of all athletic expenses for each season.

- a. Rationale: With only having 1 game per sport, we are not equal members in regards to playing sites.**
- b. LaCrosse is paying to transport athletes for practices and games.**

LaCrosse board member Michael Stubbs asked if the paying percentage (25%) is commensurate with voting rights and involvement with athletics. St John board member Janet Leifer would like to think we are open enough to listen, discuss and make decisions that are good for kids. The idea of a “Sports Board” was brought up and asked how LWK had handled this in the past. They had an official “Sports Board” which consisted of all three (LWK) boards that met quarterly. The St John, Endicott and LaCrosse boards will review how a sports board’s decisions are made and then come up with our own plan to move forward, if deemed appropriate and necessary.

2. Practices: The week of the LaCrosse game site, Coaches will/can schedule some practices at the LaCrosse campus.

- a. Rationale: Give kids and coaches the home site feel and experience**

Practices would need to be staggered for boys/girls due to one gymnasium. Another suggestion would be to maintain practices in St John (for HS) and Endicott (for MS) and leave early on game day to create an opportunity for extended warm-up in LaCrosse.

3. LaCrosse AD: Be part of the interview/hiring and evaluations of coaches and programs. Be part of developing athletic guidelines and handbooks.

- a. Rationale: To represent our students, parents and community**

LaCrosse is not sure what they are going to do with their current athletic director position. The LaCrosse administration has proposed three options for their building:

1. No Athletic Director
2. Limited Athletic Director position
3. Share job descriptions with SJE and ESJ

Superintendent Curtis explained how the AD’s worked together when they were in the LWK cooperative. They each took care of 1-2 sports and did scheduling, equipment ordering, transportation, etc. that pertained to that specific sport. All three of them were involved in job postings, hiring recommendations, etc. This situation can work but communication is key. It can breakdown very easily with three people involved. LaCrosse board member Michael Stubbs recommends the boards have a clear and concise message to all AD’s the importance of communicating and working together.

4. LaCrosse Board: Part of voting either as a board or as individual board members in approving athletic policies and decisions at the board level.

a. Rationale: To represent our students, parents and community

These are not decisions that the Athletic Directors would make but would include policies & procedures involving athletics, dissolving sports programs, etc. Superintendent Schmick stated that St John and Endicott boards work together and would see all three boards making decisions for both middle school and high school athletics. LaCrosse board member Kara Harder asked if having a sports board has merit. Endicott board member Jamie Misner responded with yes, and we would potentially have representatives from each board to make it fair and equitable. The idea of a sports board will require further discussion and study.

5. Contracted agreements: 1-year agreement with yearly review by April 1st. Combined boards meet quarterly throughout year.

LaCrosse is proposing a 1-year agreement however; St John and Endicott would like to see a 3-year agreement with annual reviews. St John and Endicott believes this shows there is a commitment. Speaking for herself, LaCrosse board member Kara Harder believes at this point three years is too long. She wants to know that we are all working together for a positive experience before committing to more than one year. Everyone needs to be willing to make sacrifices. She also stated that there are no ulterior motives and the LaCrosse board is not meeting with other schools. Before committing to a 3-year agreement, Ms. Harder would like to see equal governance, annual review and bring the high school on board in 2017-18 rather than wait until 2018-19.

LaCrosse board member Michael Stubbs stated that their community is looking for some continuity and consistency....a foundation. He hopes this is a lasting situation and the kids will have something to be proud of. Mr. Stubbs understands that there will be issues along the way but would like to think that we are going to be stronger and better than we are now as we move forward. The issues in front of us now are not insurmountable. He realizes that St John and Endicott have community members that are waiting for something to happen without giving away the farm. SJE can't give it all away but he doesn't see anything we can't work out.

Superintendent Schmick shared that at the SJE work session the night before, the St John and Endicott boards agreed to go back to the patrons to ask for feedback regarding moving forward with high school athletics for 2017-18 without high school volleyball. The board members want to stay in good integrity with the patrons and feel this is important due to the fact that SJE's original proposal of ALL sports was drafted prior to LWK meetings and the agreement to keep LWK high school volleyball for one more year along with the assurance from LaCrosse that 2017-18 is the last year. After that, Washtucna is completely out of the tri-op.

6. Role of Administration: To work together in overseeing Athletic Directors in regards to their involvement as athletic co-op progresses.

The Athletic Directors must work together as they are critical in making this arrangement work. Communication is key. Administration will oversee and evaluate the Athletic Directors.

St John board member Valerie Brewer asked if at the end of the 3 years, would LaCrosse expect more games to be at their home site? LaCrosse board member Michael Stubbs hopes that at some point in time, we have had a positive working relationship and hopes to possibly have more than one game in LaCrosse. Mr. Stubbs further commented, Do we pay more than 25%; probably. When asked if families that have transitioned to Colfax in the last couple of years would come back if there were more games in LaCrosse, Superintendent Curtis stated those families are already established in Colfax but it would keep others from leaving.

Superintendent Curtis thanked everyone for the discussion and asked the group to set a date for another meeting in May after the St John and Endicott survey results are tallied and the SJE/ESJ athletics self-study is complete. It was decided they would reconvene for a two-hour work session on Tuesday, May 16, 2017 from 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm in the Endicott School Library.

St. John, Endicott and LaCrosse board chairs closed the work session at 7:15 pm.