

Rockcastle County Board of Education

Angela Stallsworth-Mink, Chairman ♦ Anna Stevens-Goff, Vice Chairman
Larry Hammond ♦ Misty Lakes ♦ Angela Parsons-Woods

Rockcastle Teaching & Learning Center
250 Richmond Street, Mt. Vernon, KY 40456

SPECIAL BOARD MEETING MINUTES

April 12, 2021

6:00 PM

1. CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Angela Stallsworth-Mink at approximately 6:00 pm.

- A. Silent Prayer: At the direction of Mrs. Mink, the board observed a moment of silent prayer.
- B. Roll Call: All members present.
- C. Reading of the Board Team Commitments: Mrs. Mink read the Board Team Commitments.

2. ADOPT AGENDA/ACTION

Angela Parsons-Woods made a motion to adopt the agenda. Misty Lakes made a second. All members present agreement.

3. DISCUSSION/REVIEW

A. Discussion of Salary Schedule 2016-2020 and follow up reporting to state agencies

Mrs. Mink welcomed Board Attorney Teresa Combs and opened the floor to discuss the 2016-2020 salary schedule realignment. Mrs. Combs stated that the change in the salary schedule would not be considered a criminal act, but a violation of KRS 522. Mrs. Combs went on to assert that Mrs. Ballinger had contacted her when she was first made aware of the salary schedule issue in November. At the advice of Mrs. Combs, Mrs. Ballinger then reported the issue to a KDE attorney and the KDE attorney notified EPSB. Mrs. Mink asked Mrs. Combs if it was her recommendation that everything that needed to be done, had been done, in regards to the salary schedule issue. Mrs. Combs asserted that Mrs. Ballinger had properly reported the issue and there is nothing further that needed to be done. Mrs. Mink asked if we will hear something from the agencies that Mrs. Ballinger reported to. Mrs. Ballinger asserted that she had received a confirmation email and Mrs. Combs had also received a copy.

Mrs. Mink requested that board members be notified when positions with 64 extended days are vacated so that the extended days could be discussed before the positions are posted to be filled.

B. Issue of RFP for Financial Audit

Superintendent Ballinger recommended that the district issue an RFP for the annual financial audit. Finance Director Jenny Sweet agreed, noting that it would be good practice to seek other audit companies to review annual audit costs, but the district has had a good working relationship with White & Associates. Mrs. Ballinger asserted that this would be a "fresh start" for our finances. All board members were in agreement, with Mr. Hammond noting that he did not have a preference as to using the same auditor or soliciting a new one.

C. Salary Schedule Addendum for Summer School 2021

Superintendent Ballinger requested that we utilize the district's CARES and ESSER funds to pay all summer school staff (classified and certified) \$35 per hour. Mrs. Ballinger noted that it would be difficult to find staff without an increase in the summer pay rate. Mr. Hammond questioned applying the \$35 an hour across the board, but suggested looking at the daily rate.

D. Vision for Rockcastle County Academy for 21-22

Director of Student Services Marcus Reppert first asked the board to consider raising the pay rate for FRYSC coordinators. He noted that new hires are currently paid \$27,000 annually for a 240 day contract, which is near the lowest in the region. Superintendent Ballinger added that in years past, salaries consumed most of the FRYSC grant, which is why they were initially lowered. However, Mrs. Ballinger noted that numbers would be looked at and we could determine what is possible under the current budget.

Mr. Reppert expressed the need for the virtual learning option through MyRock Online to be offered again next school year. Mr. Reppert explained that in order for our district to be competitive, having a digital instruction program is essential. The vision for the 2021-2022 school year would be to have teachers dedicated to the MyRock Online program and be housed at the Academy. He noted that there is currently a Head Teacher, but an Administrator will be needed to oversee, monitor and evaluate the staff. Mrs. Ballinger noted the Administrator would also be responsible for conducting home visits. With input from principals, Mr. Reppert estimates that 100+ students will participate in virtual learning.

Mr. Hammond noted that we had to be cautious of adding new positions with declining enrollment. Mrs. Mink inquired as to whether the Administrator position would be factored into RCMS and RCHS SBDM allocations. Mrs. Ballinger explained that the Administrator position would be separate.

Ms. Goff inquired as to how unsuccessful students would be handled. Mr. Reppert explained that the program would be restructured with a very clear pathway and process for each student, including a strong orientation and providing a detailed description of student/parent expectations. If a student does not follow through, they will be required to return to in-person instruction or truancy charges would be filed.

Mrs. Woods inquired as to why the district would need to offer a virtual option. Mrs. Ballinger explained that offering a virtual program is a way to be more competitive with those students that may otherwise go to homeschool. Mrs. Ballinger added that when the open borders law goes into effect, we will need a virtual option or our students will choose to go to another district. Mrs. Woods expressed concern regarding the negative connotation surrounding the Academy. Mrs. Ballinger added that we may need to consider rebranding the Academy to encompass all the facility has to offer.

E. Creation of new positions and position realignments for 21-22 school year

Mrs. Ballinger discussed positions that need to be created or realigned for the 2021-2022 school year with the first being an Academic Interventionist for each elementary school through the 2023 school year. These positions would be covered through the use of ESSER II funds. Academic Interventionists would work strictly on student instruction and closing student achievement gaps.

Mrs. Ballinger also requested board support for the creation of a Human Resource Manager position. This position would be responsible for tracking employee related documentation, certifications, hiring procedures, etc. Mrs. Ballinger added that several district staff currently assist with various parts of human resources, but having one person would make the process cleaner and more efficient. Mrs. Mink inquired about the qualifications for this position. Mrs. Ballinger noted that this would be a classified position requiring a bachelor's degree and the salary would be based on other employees with the same qualifications at the district level.

4. ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. Woods made a motion to adjourn at 8:00. Mrs. Goff made a second. All members present agreed.