

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

REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES

August 10, 2021 - 6:00 PM

1. CALL TO ORDER:

- A. Silent Prayer
- B. Roll Call
- C. Reading of Board Team Commitments

At approximately 6:00 PM, Board Chair Mink called the meeting to order. All members were present. Mrs. Woods read the Board Team Commitments. Superintendent Ballinger introduced newly hired Central Office department heads, Jessica Willis, Coordinator of Teaching & Learning and Rebeca Hubbard, Director of Special Education.

2. ADOPT AGENDA/ACTION

Mrs. Mink requested Item 9 Public Comment be moved to follow Operations & Actions. Superintendent Ballinger requested the addition of Item 5J Superintendent's Professional Growth Plan. Ms. Goff made a motion to adopt the agenda with the requested revisions. Mrs. Lakes seconded the motion. All members present agreed.

(Agenda amendments are italicized.)

3. COMMUNITY SHOWCASE:

- A. Energy Project Update (CMTA)

Brian Mason of CMTA provided an update on the district's energy savings project. He noted that LED lighting had been installed at RCMS, MVES, the Academy and currently in progress at RES. He added that BES, RCHS, Central Office, Bus Garage and athletic buildings were scheduled to be next.

Showing drone footage of the building, Mr. Mason noted the solar panels had been installed at RCHS. He added that they were working on the retrocommissioning at RCHS including setpoint adjustments, building scheduling, resolving communication errors, along with lead/lag arrangements.

Bipolar ionization equipment installation at MVES and RCHS was completed and RES was in progress. BES and RCMS were scheduled for installation next.

He added that the fluid cooler changeout at MVES is scheduled to take place during fall break.

4. OPERATIONS/ACTIONS:

- A. Approve Minutes of the July 13, 2021 Regular Board Meeting
- B. Approve Bills for Payment
- C. Approve School Trips
- D. Approve Educational Leave Requests
- E. Approve 2021-2022 KEDC Membership Agreement
- F. Approve 2021-2022 KPC/KEDC Bakery Bid with Klosterman Baking Company
- G. Approve 2021-2022 KPC/KEDC Dairy Bid with Prairie Farms - Somerset
- H. Approve Community Education Grant
- I. Approve AppHarvest 2021 Grant Agreement
- J. Approve Sale & Purchase Agreement with Vertical Crop Consultants
- K. Approve MOU with the City of Mt. Vernon for School Resource Officer

Mrs. Lakes made a motion to approve Operations and Actions. Mrs. Woods made a second. All members present agreed.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Ms. Rachelle Riddle, parent, shared her support for universal masking to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in our schools. She shared the personal story of someone in the community that suffered from encephalitis following a COVID diagnosis.

Ms. Paula Pierce, parent, shared her appreciation to the district for agreeing to give parents a choice in regards to masking prior to the Governor's mask mandate. She shared her personal opinion that masking causes illnesses such as strep throat.

Mr. Jason Smith, parent, shared his opinion that masking is not effective in preventing the spread of COVID-19 and that parents should be given a choice.

6. DISCUSSION/ACTION:***Tax Rate Discussion with Compass Financial***

- A. Review/Approve to Move Forward with Tax Hearing & Advertising (Mrs. Ballinger)

Superintendent Ballinger presented information regarding the current state of the RCMS building structure. She noted that the building is over 50 years old and is rated the 33rd worst school building in the state of KY. Additionally, she shared photos of the building's issues, noting that the cost to renovate would be \$17 million vs. \$30 million to build new.

Compass Municipal Advisors shared three options of General Fund Tax Levy Analysis.

Superintendent Ballinger recommended Option 3 at a rate of 42.9 for the opportunity to move forward with building a new middle school and make the district eligible for Equalization Funds.

Mr. Hammond inquired as to whether a raise would be possible for the next school year with this option. Superintendent Ballinger noted that the board had recently approved a 3% raise, but added that Option 3 would not impact any future raises.

Mrs. Lakes asserted that the community would need to be provided with information to better understand the tax rate, noting that Rockcastle has one of the lowest tax rates in the state.

Superintendent Ballinger asserted that Option 3 respects the community and that the district can absorb the general fund loss with ESSER II funding.

Superintendent Ballinger and Board Members requested to set the Tax Hearing date for September 2, 2021 at 6:00 PM, with the hearing being advertised in the local newspaper on Aug 19, 2021 and Aug 26, 2021. Ms. Goff made a motion to approve the tax hearing date and advertisement dates. Mrs. Lakes made a second. All members present agreed.

- B. Review/Approve Monthly Financial Reports (Mrs. Sweet)
1. Month Ending Balance Sheet
 2. Revenue & Expenditures for the Month by Fund

Ms. Goff made a motion to approve the monthly financial reports. Mrs. Woods made a second. All members present agreed.

- C. Review/Approve JAG KY Comprehensive Job Specialist Position (Mr. Reppert)

Mr. Reppert requested the approval of the JAG position noting this person will be responsible for helping students with mentoring, soft skills, and maintaining communication up to 1 year after high school graduation. He asserted that the position is grant funded. Mr. Hammond made a motion to approve the JAG KY Comprehensive Job Specialist Position. Ms. Goff made a second. All members present agreed.

- D. Review/Approve Mental Health Advocate Position (FRYSC Grant) (Mr. Reppert)

Mr. Reppert requested the approval of the Mental Health Advocate Position noting this person would help implement the district's Trauma Plan, administer mental health assessments and social/emotional curriculum. Mr. Reppert noted this position is funded through a FRYSC grant. Ms. Goff made a motion to approve the Mental Health Advocate Position. Mrs. Woods made a second. All members present agreed.

- E. Review/Approve RCHS School Grounds Monitor Position (Mr. Reppert)

Mr. Reppert requested the approval of a School Grounds Monitor Position at RCHS. He noted that this isn't a new position, but was not on the previously approved salary schedule. He added that the duties of this person is to maintain and monitor school safety on the grounds of RCHS during the school day. Ms. Goff made a motion to approve the School Ground Monitor Position. Mrs. Woods made a second. All members present agreed.

- F. Review/Approve Full-Time Substitute Bus Driver Position (Mr. Hopkins)

Mr. Hopkins requested the approval of a Full Time Substitute Bus Driver Position to help recruit and retain more drivers. Mr. Hammond made a motion to approve the position. Ms. Goff made a second. All members present agreed.

- G. Review/Approve - Reconvene the Local Planning Committee (LPC) for the purpose of revision of the current District Facilities Plan(DFP) to change status of Rockcastle County Middle School from a Permanent Center to a Transitional Center with the intention of showing a new Middle School to be built and deleting renovation need shown in priority 2c.3 of the current DFP. (Mrs. Ballinger – Mr. Clark)

Ms. Goff made a motion to Reconvene the Local Planning Committee (LPC) for the purpose of revision of the current District Facilities Plan(DFP) to change status of Rockcastle County Middle School from a Permanent Center to a Transitional Center with the intention of showing a new Middle School to be built and deleting renovation need shown in priority 2c.3 of the current DFP. Mrs. Woods made a second. All members present agreed.

- H. Review/Approve Membership of Local Planning Committee (LPC) (Mrs. Ballinger – Mr. Clark)

Mrs. Lakes made a motion to approve the membership of the Local Planning Committee. Mrs. Woods made a second. All members present agreed.

I. Review/Approve Full-Time Substitute Cook/Baker (Mrs. Saylor)

Mrs. Saylor requested the approval of a Full Time Substitute Cook/Baker. She asserted that this would help recruit and retain at least one back-up employee during long-term absences, quarantines, etc. Mrs. Woods made a motion to approve the Full Time Substitute Cook Position. Ms. Goff made a second. All members present agreed.

J. Review/Approve Superintendent's Professional Growth Plan (Mrs. Ballinger)

Superintendent Ballinger shared her Professional Growth Plan with Board Members. Mrs. Ballinger noted that she has chosen to focus on Human Resource Leadership and Instructional Leadership as part of her plan. Mrs. Lakes made a motion to approve the Superintendent's Professional Growth Plan. Ms. Goff made a second. All members present agreed.

7. DISCUSSION/REVIEW:

A. Review Superintendent's Personnel Action Report (Mrs. Ballinger)

Superintendent Ballinger shared the Personnel Action Report via Google Drive.

8. DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Department reports were made available via Google Drive.

Transportation - Ken Hopkins

- Bus Driver Vacancies

Special Education/Preschool - Rebecca Hubbard

- Special Education Teacher Caseloads
- Upcoming FERPA and ARC Trainings
- Preschool Screenings

Student Services - Marcus Reppert

- Professional Development
- School Safety Trainings
- Telehealth Promotion
- Vaccine Clinics
- Social/Emotional Learning Curriculum

Instruction / Assessment - Jessica Willis

- Project Lift
- Benchmark Advance Literacy
- Elgin Foundation
- SBDM Trainings
- Fall Data Review
- iReady Diagnostics

Finance - Jenny Sweet

- ESSER II YTD Spending Analysis
- Recap of COVID related funds received

Food Service - Jamie Saylor

- July Meals Served
- Food Service Vacancies and Hiring Sub Cook/Bakers
- Food Service Professional Development
- P-EBT Update

Technology - Brandon Reynolds

- Hot Spot Funding
- New technology
- New Website
- New Instructional Learning Platforms / Tools

Facilities - Trent Clark

- GESC Update
- RATC Lighting Upgrades

9. SUPERINTENDENT COMMUNICATION

Superintendent Ballinger shared the Governor's mask mandate that was released earlier in the day noting the district would send out updated communication the following day. Superintendent Ballinger shared her excitement and encouragement for in-person instruction as the new school year begins.

~~10. PUBLIC COMMENT (Item 9 prior to agenda amendments)~~

~~A. Rachelle Riddle - Mask Requirements~~

~~B. Paula Pierce - Mask Requirements~~

11. BOARD COMMENTS

Mr. Hammond inquired to Mrs. Lakes about her comments at the prior meeting regarding his service to the board though he is Superintendent in another county. Mrs. Lakes responded that she has received inquiries from community members and asked if he has received any information for the Attorney General's office. Mr. Hammond noted he had not received any information and therefore there must not be any issue with his service. Mrs. Lakes referenced a slide shared at a KSBA training which stated a Superintendent could not ethically serve as a board member. Mr. Hammond responded that he had since attended another KSBA training and explained his situation to others and they also felt there was no issue. Mrs. Mink stated she is also interested in an opinion from the Attorney General. Ms. Goff added that "unethical" does not necessarily mean "illegal". Mrs. Woods requested that the issue be put to rest.

Mr. Hammond shared a community concern that a board member attended a meeting virtually, while driving, and the potential for that to be a safety issue.

Mrs. Woods stated her interest in the board to showcasing students each month. Superintendent Ballinger asserted we would start that next month, after school has resumed.

Mrs. Lakes shared her appreciation for the district allowing parents to decide on masking, even with the Governor's mask mandate earlier that day.

Ms. Goff shared her appreciation to Central Office staff for their 24/7 dedication to Rockcastle County students.

Mrs. Mink shared her appreciation for Superintendent Ballinger's leadership and to all the staff for their hard work. She added that board members would like to visit schools throughout the school year. Mrs. Mink added that she appreciates the other board members and their responsibility to making good decisions for students. Mr. Hammond added that we should be promoting school business and what's good for our students.

12. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Hammond made a motion to adjourn at 9:45 PM. Mrs. Woods seconded. All members present agreed.

Angela Stallsworth-Mink, Board Chair

Carrie Ballinger, Secretary