

The Rockbridge County School Board held their regular meeting on Tuesday, May 9, 2023, at the County of Rockbridge Administration Building.

Present: Chairman Neil Whitmore; Trustees Corey Berkstresser, Catie Brown, Kathy Burant, Wendy Lovell; Superintendent Phillip Thompson, Clerk Rhonda Humphries.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Whitmore called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

A Moment of Silence was observed in memory of Mr. Devin Michael Riley, who passed away May 7, 2023. Mr. Riley was a senior at Rockbridge County High School.

CHANGES TO THE AGENDA: None

STUDENT / STAFF RECOGNITION:

Superintendent Thompson introduced Rockbridge County Sheriff Steve Funkhouser to speak to the board regarding the Rockbridge County Public Schools Resource Officers. He stated that it is hard to fill positions within their department and that surrounding localities are having difficulties as well. He said he feels he has solid recruits for Rockbridge County School Resource Officers who are accountable and who are available.

- Superintendent Thompson stated that it is a priority of the Rockbridge County School Board to provide a safe environment and that each school now has a School Resource Officer.

Sergeant Troy Wilmer stated that Augusta County and Amherst County Public School divisions also received the same grant funding but that they are having difficulty filling SRO positions. Each school in Rockbridge County now has a School Resource Officer. Each officer is certified and ready to work. He stated that there will be a two-day training conducted for Rockbridge County Public Schools staff the week after school ends which will provide realistic emergency situations.

Sheriff Funkhouser expressed his appreciation and commended Superintendent Thompson for pursuing the funding. He also expressed his appreciation for support from the County of Rockbridge, Board of Supervisors, and principals who are the backbone of each school.

Sergeant Wimer introduced the School Resource Officers for Rockbridge County Public Schools:

- Central Elementary School: Junior Southers
- Fairfield Elementary School: Oliver Shriver
- Mountain View Elementary School: Scott Fitzgerald
- Natural Bridge Elementary School: Chris Norris
- Maury River Middle School: Troy Wimer
- Rockbridge County High School: Craig Lawhorne

Ms. Vicki Stevens, Principal, Maury River Middle School, recognized Mr. Matthew Schucker, Band Director, Maury River Middle School, as being named the 2023 District 5 Educator of the Year Award from the Virginia Band and Orchestra Directors Association.

- Superintendent Thompson reflected that Mr. Shucker was named Educator of the Year by the Chamber of Commerce two or three years ago and that he accepted on behalf of Mr. Shucker. The sentiment “kids don’t quit band and Maury River Middle School because of Mr. Shucker” was spoken then and is still true today.

CONSENT AGENDA

Upon recommendation by Chairman Whitmore, motion by Trustee Berkstresser, seconded by Trustee Lovell, the board approved the following items on the Consent Agenda:

- Minutes: 1) April 10, 2023 [Discipline Committee Hearing]; 2) April 11, 2023 [Regular Meeting]; 3) April 26, 2023 [Discipline Committee Hearing]; 4) May 3, 2023 [Discipline Committee Hearing]
- Field Trip Requests
- Fundraiser Requests
- Applications for Use of Facilities
- Appointments and Resignations

Appointments

Professional Staff

- Shaun Sparks, Assistant Principal, Rockbridge County High School, effective July 1, 2023
- Melissa Wallace, Teacher, Maury River Middle School, effective 2023-2024 school year
- Emily Bennett, Occupational Therapist, Central Office, effective 2023-2024 school year
- Joshua Bowen, Teacher, Rockbridge County High School, effective 2023-2024 school year
- Alison Gigante, Special Education Teacher, Natural Bridge Elementary School, effective 2023-2024 school year
- Taylor Bronaugh, School Psychologist, Central Office, effective 2023-2024 school year

Support Staff

Angela Troxell, Food Service Manager, Fairfield Elementary School, effective May 9, 2023
Vicki Funkhouser, Clerical Assistant, Fairfield Elementary School, effective 2023-2024 school year

Leslie Simmons, Community School Grant Coordinator, Rockbridge County High School, effective July 1, 2023

Jatniel Carvajal Rodriguez, Community School Grant Coordinator, Rockbridge County High School, effective July 1, 2023

Fall Coaches 2023-2024

Rockbridge County High School

Cheerleading

Ellie Lamb, Assistant Cheer Coach

Lindsey Ramsey, Volunteer Cheer Coach

Professional Staff

Resignation

Natasha Gengler, Teacher, Rockbridge County High School, effective end of the 2022-2023 school year

Support Staff

Retirement

Tina Bauernfeind, Clerical Assistant, Fairfield Elementary School, effective end of the 2022-2023 school year

Violet Vest, Secretary, Mountain View Elementary School, effective end of the 2022-2023 school year

Larry Sensabaugh, Bus Driver, Transportation, effective end of the 2022-2023 school year

Support Staff Approvals for Employment 2023-2024 School Year

Teacher Assistants

Aligood, Patsy	Teacher Assistant
Ashcraft, Sherita	Teacher Assistant
Ball, Toni	Teacher Assistant
Blackburn, Keller	Teacher Assistant
Bolen, Deborah	Teacher Assistant
Branch, Loretta	Teacher Assistant
Braddy, Mary	Teacher Assistant
Burch, Clayton	Teacher Assistant
Chaffin, Alesa	Teacher Assistant
Chittum, Reneda	Teacher Assistant
Clements, Emily	Teacher Assistant
Coffey, Stephanie	Teacher Assistant
Coffman, Lisa	Teacher Assistant
Conner, Derrick	Teacher Assistant
Crookshanks, Tiffany	Teacher Assistant
Day, Deborah	Teacher Assistant
Dongilli, Luann	Teacher Assistant
Early, Mary	Teacher Assistant
George, Catherine	Teacher Assistant
Harris, Amy	Teacher Assistant
Harris, Joyce	Teacher Assistant
Harris, Theresa	Teacher Assistant
Hattersley, Abigail	Teacher Assistant
Hostetter, Kimberly	Teacher Assistant
Jarvis, Tricia	Teacher Assistant
Jenkins, Emily	Teacher Assistant
Lawrence, Lisa	Teacher Assistant
LeMert, William	Teacher Assistant
Montgomery, Brandy	Teacher Assistant
Moore, Molly	Teacher Assistant
Morrow, Lindsey	Teacher Assistant
Nicely, Brooke	Teacher Assistant
Petty, Hailey	Teacher Assistant
Pufahl, Maria	Teacher Assistant

Teacher Assistants (continued)

Ramsey, Carolyn	Teacher Assistant
Schrader, Ann	Teacher Assistant
Shafer, Kerstin	Teacher Assistant
Sheltman, Brian	Teacher Assistant
Shipman, Makaila	Teacher Assistant
Showalter, Haley	Teacher Assistant
Snyder, Angela	Teacher Assistant
Staton, Brigitte	Teacher Assistant
Teague, Deborah	Teacher Assistant
Waterman, Ashley	Teacher Assistant
Zafar, ZebaNaz	Teacher Assistant
Zickafoose, Amy	Teacher Assistant
Ziegler, Christy	Teacher Assistant

Custodians

Eagle, David	Custodian
Eagle, William	Custodian
Hostetter, Jamie	Custodian
Hostetter, Joey	Custodian
Hostetter, Michael	Custodian
Reed, Melissa	Custodian
Richards, Carson	Custodian
Riley, Jack	Custodian
Shanks, Gregory	Custodian
Smith, Calvin	Custodian
Staton, Karla	Custodian
Staton, Rebecca	Custodian

School Secretaries/Bookkeepers/Clerical Assistants

Cash, Phyllis	Bookkeeper
Chism, Donna	School Secretary
Coffey, Joan	School Secretary
Dunlap, Tracy	Transportation Clerk
Emrey, Karen	School Secretary
Jones, Elizabeth	School Secretary
McCaleb, Bonnie	School Secretary
Miller, Lisa	Bookkeeper
Rogers, Travis	School Secretary
Shafer, Tracy	School Secretary
Swartz, Jane	School Secretary
Van Ravenswaay, Lisa	School Secretary
White, Morgan	Clerical Assistant

Maintenance

Beard, Kenneth	Maintenance
Bennett, Kurt	Maintenance
Cash, Gary	Maintenance
Floyd, Edward	Maintenance
Hogge, Jeffrey	Maintenance
Lilly, David	Maintenance
Mahood, Todd	Maintenance
Runkle, David	Maintenance
Staton, Roy	Maintenance

Central Office Support Staff

Burchfield, Abreena	Benefits Specialist
Church, Ana	School Nutrition Services Secretary/Finance Assistant
Cox, Kelly	Receptionist/Records
Dunlap, Tracy	Transportation Clerk
Hamilton, Kim	Secretary for Special Education
Humphries, Rhonda	Administrative Assistant/Clerk of the Board
Johnson, Carolyn	Secretary for Facilities
Loope, Dana	Accounts Payable Specialist

School Nurses

Hong, Cheryl	School Nurse
Marcum, Katina	School Nurse
Martin, Dawn	School Nurse
Sheltman, Heidi	School Nurse
Staton, Meagan	School Nurse

Technology

Bundy, Justin	Technology Specialist
Coleman, Mark	Technology Specialist
Kerr, J.D.	Technology Specialist
Patterson, Mike	Technology Specialist
Staton, Cole	Technology Specialist

Food Service

Arthur, Mary (Time Sheet)	Food Service
Burch, Patricia (Time Sheet)	Food Service
Campbell, Gwen	Food Service
Coffey, Marlene	Food Service
Coburn, Shannon (Time Sheet)	Food Service
Clark, Melissa (Time Sheet)	Food Service
Crawford, Diane (Time Sheet)	Food Service
Cruz, Becky (Time Sheet)	Food Service
Emore, Kassandra (Time Sheet)	Food Service
Goad, Delores (Time Sheet)	Food Service
Hedrick, Dawn	Food Service
Kerr, Brenda	Food Service
Manspile, Catherine (Time Sheet)	Food Service
Manspile, Sarah (Time Sheet)	Food Service
Martin, Teresa	Food Service
Minter, Delores (Time Sheet)	Food Service
Skipper, Amber (Time Sheet)	Food Service
Skipper, Kathryn (Time Sheet)	Food Service
Smith, Charlie (Time Sheet)	Food Service
Smith, Kathryn	Food Service
Smith, Sharon (Time Sheet)	Food Service
Sorrels, Roxie	Food Service
Tomlin, Belinda (Time Sheet)	Food Service

Hansley, Lenya (Grant NBES)

Easley, Dan (Grant MRMS)

• **Business Items**

- Approved appropriation for School Safety Equipment in the amount of \$335,000.00.
- Approved Monthly Financials in the amount of \$4,657,184.05.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None**BUDGET PLANNING:** None**COMMITTEE REPORTS:** None**INSTRUCTIONAL REPORT:** None**INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:**

Superintendent Thompson provided a report on Administrative Safety Protocol. He stated that at the regular school board meeting in February, one of the many items discussed was the importance of school safety and ensuring that our administrators are well versed in the appropriate steps to take in an emergency situation. Part of the discussion was also how the school division might work to gain more consistency with our disciplinary dispensations. Superintendent Thompson also shared that principals would begin working on two primary documents that would assist them in these tasks. He stated that work has been underway and drafts of both documents have been created. Administration is currently in the process of reviewing and editing those documents. Once

the documents are in a final draft form, they will be part of our training over the summer at our administrative retreat. Those documents will then be shared with the Rockbridge County School board for discussion and review.

- Chairman Whitmore expressed his appreciation for meeting the School Resource Officers at this meeting and also that the documents for crisis situations are being given a framework.

Mr. Jason Kirby, Chief Business Officer, provided information on the Early Retirement Incentive Program. He stated that the following are the changes to the current ERIP plan:

- \$40 per hour for administrative duties for the first 200 hours
 - \$32 per hour after 200 hours
- \$30 per hour for teaching and other professional staff duties (teaching, counseling, library, etc.) for the first 200 hours
 - \$22 per hour after 200 hours
- \$20 per hour for clerical, janitorial, food service, and driving duties for the first 200 hours
 - \$16 per hour after 200 hours
- Participants under this plan may not hold over days from month to month and all ERIP days must be completed before working for regular substitute pay. ERIP participants may only bank up to 5 days from year to year with approval of the Chief Business Officer/Director of Personnel.
- Chairman Whitmore inquired how many retirees currently participate in ERIP.
 - Mr. Kirby stated that there are currently approximately 40 participants.
 - Trustee Lovell stated that this is an important program for staff as well as for the school division.
- Superintendent Thompson stated that the plan was changed a couple of years ago which had some impact on staff; the change in the plan and Covid made some staff members decide to retire. This resulted in the largest incoming of new staff members to begin a new school year.
 - Mr. Kirby stated that there are less than ten retirees for the end of the 2022-2023 school year.
 - Superintendent Thompson stated that the number of staff retiring is leveling off and that as a result turnover has dropped.

Ms. Tracy Hinty, Supervisor of Federal Programs, provided information on the Federal Grants, which will become available on July 1. She stated that the allocations used are based on the current year and that these are non-competitive grants. She provided information on the individual and consolidated state and federal entitlement grants, which are Title I, Title II, Title III, and Title IV. Federal Grants will be presented as an Action Item at the June board meeting.

- Chairman Whitmore inquired how the funding is gauged. He also inquired if it is tied to inflation, while understanding that there is a wide range of factors tied to funding.
 - Ms. Hinty stated that it is possible that Title I funding may change because of the census. She also stated that there are a lot of rules in spending the money.
 - Trustee Lovell expressed her appreciation to Ms. Hinty, as there is a lot to manage with the federal grant monies.

ACTION ITEMS:

Upon recommendation by Chairman Whitmore, motion by Trustee Burant, seconded by Trustee Brown, the board voted 5-0, to approve the Rockbridge Area Special Education Council 2024 as presented.

Upon recommendation by Chairman Whitmore, motion by Trustee Lovell, seconded by Trustee Brown, the board voted 5-0, to approve the Special Education Annual Plan and Applications for Federal Funds, as presented.

Upon recommendation by Chairman Whitmore, motion by Trustee Berkstresser, seconded by Trustee Burant, the board voted 5-0, to approve authorization for the Superintendent/Designee to process GRANT payment and other accounts payables as necessary at the end of May 2023. A final report summarizing these actions will be distributed during the month of June. All transactions will require signatures of two of the following staff positions: Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Chief Business Officer, Chief Operations Officer, or Director of Financial Services.

Approved authorization for the Superintendent /Designee to close out the current fiscal year. This authorization would include payment of remaining accounts payable and payroll expenses and the preparation of necessary expenditure transfers, budget adjustments, appropriations of additional revenues and requests for category transfers from the Board of Supervisors, if needed. A final report summarizing these actions will be distributed during the month of July. All transactions will require signatures of two of the following staff positions: Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Chief Business Officer, Chief Operations Officer, or Director of Financial Services.

Upon recommendation by Chairman Whitmore, motion by Trustee Berkstresser, seconded by Trustee Burant, the board voted 5-0, to approve the FY24 Line Item Budget in the amount of \$36,244,134.

Superintendent Thompson stated that this budget represents a balanced Line Item Budget based on known funding. This budget allows for the priorities to be met as set by the Rockbridge County School Board. 1) Increased salaries and investing in faculty and staff; 2) Affordable health care options for employees; and 3) Alternative Education setting with two positions at Maury River Middle School. This budget also includes a 5% salary increase for all employees. Once the final state budget is received from Richmond, the budget will be tweaked and brought back to the board for a final adoption.

- Chairman Whitmore inquired if this will interfere with the issuing of contracts.
 - Superintendent Thompson stated that it is anticipated that contracts will be issued the week of May 15, 2023, which is now done electronically. The contracts do include a 5% pay raise. As with every yearly contract we offer, there will be a statement on the contracts "pending budget funding available."
- Trustee Lovell inquired if the message has been communicated from the Supervisors to the General Assembly as to how difficult it is to build a budget under these time constraints.
 - Superintendent Thompson stated that other Superintendents and the Board of Supervisors have had conversations and that the legislators are well aware; no reasons were offered as to why this is the process. Superintendent Thompson stated that he feels confident all will be well, while realizing that staff and patrons may not feel as confident because they are not aware of ongoing conversations.
 - Trustee Lovell stated that she appreciates the illumination of the timing issue to Richmond.

NEW BUSINESS:

Trustee Lovell expressed her appreciation for an invitation received from a fourth grade Fairfield Elementary School student to come to their plant sale which will profit the SPCA; each board member received a personal hand-written invitation from a fourth grade student for this event to be held on May 22, 2023.

Trustee Burant stated that she stayed connected to the Stafford County Public School division, where she previously served as the Supervisor of CTE Ms. Susan Caldwell, Teacher, North Stafford High School, contacted Trustee Burant regarding a wide-format laminator machine that had been donated to their school. Ms. Caldwell offered their "used" machine to Rockbridge County Public Schools. Trustee Burant expressed her appreciation to Ms. Caldwell, and their community for their contribution to Rockbridge County High School.

Chairman Whitmore reflected that it is National Teacher Appreciation Week. He elaborated that teacher appreciation is only officially publicly recognized once during the year but wants teachers to know that they are thought of every day and their dedication to our students is the basis for all of our students every day.

Trustee Berkstresser acknowledged that Rockbridge County High School graduation will take place before the next school board meeting and he expressed his congratulations to all Rockbridge County High School graduates and wishes them well, as he will not be able to attend the graduation ceremony this year. He further expressed his hope that students feel that the school board members have been good stewards for all students.

Chairman Whitmore reflected that it is also Nurse Appreciation Week and he expressed his appreciation to the nurses of Rockbridge County Public Schools.

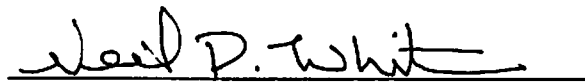
Chairman Whitmore stated that there are only twelve days of school left with graduation on May 25, 2023.

SCHOOL BOARD

The next regular meeting of the Rockbridge County School Board will be held on Tuesday, June 13, 2023 / 5:30 PM / Location: County of Rockbridge Administration Building, 150 South Main Street, Lexington, Virginia.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon motion by Trustee Berkstresser, seconded by Trustee Lovell, and passed by 5-0 vote, the meeting was adjourned at 6:17 p.m.



Neil D. Whitmore, Chairman



Rhonda B. Humphries, Clerk of the Board