

The Rockbridge County School Board held their regular meeting on Tuesday, March 14, 2023, at 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 .m.

CHANGES TO THE AGENDA: None

STUDENT / STAFF RECOGNITION:

Mr. Paige Owens, Director of Technology and Career and Technical Education introduced Mr. Daniel Grimm, FCCLA State Officer (Family, Career and Community Leaders of America). He serves as the FCCLA Vice-President of Programs. Mr. Grimm is an eleventh grade student at Rockbridge County High School. He stated that FCCLA is the only student led organization and the only CTSO (Career and Technical Student Organization) that focuses on family. The organization provides opportunities including: scholarships, traveling, networking with people, leadership skills, and public speaking skills. He stated that in order to become a state officer, he had to complete a FCCLA Knowledge Test, give a speech at the state conference, and be interviewed for the position. He competed in a STAR Event (Students Taking Action With Recognition) in Leadership, winning first place and receiving a silver standing. He participated in the National Leadership Conference which was held in San Diego, California last year. He had many responsibilities to assist in leading the state of Virginia delegation meetings at the National Leadership Conference. He provided an overview of activities that he has participated in, and led, with FCCLA, in his role as a state officer, which included State Executive Meetings, Monthly Chapter Meetings, and other meetings. The 2023 State Leadership and Recognition Conference will be held April 14-16, 2023 in Virginia Beach, Virginia. He offered his appreciation to the school board for their support that has been given to FCCLA in the past few years.

Ms. Robin Parker, Principal, Central Elementary School, and Ms. Kelly Jones, Assistant Principal, Central Elementary School, provided information on "Central Celebrates Community". Ms. Parker introduced part of the School Improvement Team: Karen Duff, teacher, Jackie Gay-Milliken, physical education teacher, and Liz Schmidt, fourth grade teacher. The presentation included an overview of events held during the school year that focus on community involvement in their building. Ms. Liz Schmidt provided information on a project that collaborated with Columbia Gas in teaching students how to be safe with natural gas. This project provided a stipend for teachers to use with their science programs. Ms. Jackie Gay-Milliken provided information on programs and events being held within the physical education classes. The next event, "March Into Fitness Week", will be held the week of March 20-24, 2023; students will have five days of fitness in a row. Ms. Parker expressed her appreciation to Michael Loret for securing a grant for "Break Out Boxes", which was obtained through a grant from the Rockbridge County Public Schools Foundation. Students have to work together as a team to follow clues, utilizing reading and math, in order to unlock the boxes. Ms. Parker stated that they strive to include the community in Central Elementary School events. The philosophy at Central Elementary School is "We Are Family! Be the Best You Can Be!"

Chairman Whitmore expressed his appreciation to Mr. Grimm for his great work and to Ms. Parker for her presentation.

CONSENT AGENDA

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

- Minutes: 1) February 14, 2023 [Public Hearing]; 2) February 14, 2023 [Regular Meeting]; 3) February 22, 2023 [Discipline Committee Hearing]; 4) March 1, 2023 [Discipline Committee Hearing]; 5) March 7, 2023 [Discipline Committee Hearing].
- Field Trip and Bus Use Requests
- Fundraiser Requests
- Applications for Use of Facilities
- Appointments and Resignations

Appointments

Support Staff

Kerstin Shafer, Teacher Assistant, Rockbridge County High School, effective March 22, 2023

Substitute Teachers

Angela Burroughs
Jade Harris
Keeley Crews
Courtney Olsen
Lily Hays
Stacy McCoy

Food Service Substitute

Jennifer Williams
Sarah Manspile

Spring Coaches 2022-2023**Rockbridge County High School****Lacrosse**

Finnian Stewart, Boys' Volunteer Lacrosse Coach

Professional Staff**Resignation**

Taylor Allen, Occupational Therapist, Resigning effective end of the 2022-2023 school year

Support Staff**Resignation**

Paul Pelter, Teacher Assistant, Rockbridge County High School, Resigning effective March 24, 2023

Professional Staff**Retirement**

Cynthia Littleton, Assistant Principal, Rockbridge County High School, effective June 30, 2023

Support Staff**Retirement**

Herman Snyder, Bus Driver, Retiring effective end of the 2022-2023 school year

• Business Items

- Approved appropriations to Fund 50 for new grants in the amount of \$654,145.00
- Approve Monthly Financials in the amount of \$4,189,633.27

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

BUDGET PLANNING:

Superintendent Thompson provided an update on the budget planning process. He stated that the division is still in a holding pattern; although there was a bit of a reprieve from the General Assembly in that the division has received what is commonly known as the "skinny budget" out of Richmond. Essentially it changed very little as to what is already known other than the calc tool error was corrected for this current fiscal year, which makes FY23 whole; with no mention of next fiscal year. He stated that the division is still waiting for Richmond to finish all of their work in order to know what type of funding to expect for FY24.

- Chairman Whitmore stated that with Richmond's slow pace, there are a lot of school divisions who are waiting.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Trustee Brown stated that the Rockbridge County Public Schools Foundation will hold a Corn Hole Tournament fundraising event on September 23, 2023, which will be held at the Virginia Horse Center.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

Mr. Paige Owens, Director of Technology and Career and Technical Education, provided information on the application for the Carl Perkins Career and Technical Education Funds Grant. The Board will be requested to approve the submission of the Carl Perkins Career and Technical Education Funds Grant at the April meeting.

- Trustee Lovell inquired if the funding source will continue on the path as in the past.
 - Mr. Owens stated that it will increase a little each year. He also stated that it is likely that he will still not have the actual amount of funds at the April meeting.

In the absence of Dr. Matthew Crossman, Director of School Services, Superintendent Thompson provided information on Policy JHCD-R, Management of Naloxone Administration in the School Setting. This will be presented as an action item at the April meeting of the Rockbridge County School Board.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Upon recommendation by Chairman Whitmore, motion by Trustee Burant, seconded by Trustee Lovell, the board voted 5-0, to rename the F.S. Kay Vocational Technical Center to the “Rockbridge Innovation Center”.
- Superintendent Thompson stated that Superintendent Floyd S. Kay will be honored in the renovated building. Superintendent Kay served as Superintendent for Rockbridge County Public Schools for twenty years and did many wonderful things. Vocational is a term that is no longer used, to some degree, and CTE is much more than a vocational setting in education. The focus has been to revive the name and look to the future.
 - Trustee Lovell stated that the new name focuses on students and that is why we are here.

Superintendent Thompson stated that school divisions are required by the Code of Virginia to provide our locality, Rockbridge County Board of Supervisors, with a Categorical Estimate of Needs every year prior to the end of March. He stated that it is extremely challenging in that the Code of Virginia, the General Assembly, and the locality ask school divisions to create a budget for the next school year before there is a budget out of Richmond, often before there is a budget from the locality, not knowing how many students will show up next year, and how many teachers will be needed as a result of that. There are so many unknown questions and, as a school division, we are tasked with creating a budget five, six, or seven months in advance. This Categorical Estimate of Needs that will be presented to the Board of Supervisors is based on the information that is available right now. These figures will certainly change. The Categorical Estimate of Needs are based on several priorities as established by the School Board.

He stated that this includes the following:

- Health care increase of 13.5% with Aetna. (Point of record – Anthem last year was projecting an increase of 30%.)
- Small increase in Worker’s Compensation and Property and Casualty Insurance
- Seven percent raise of all employees across the school division.
- Two teaching positions for an expanded alternative education classroom at Maury River Middle School. There has been great success with the program at RCHS and it is the intent to begin success sooner, which may lend help to issues early on.
- Labor savings through attrition. There is a decrease in ADM (Average Daily Membership) which reflects fewer students.
- Another benefit by moving to Aetna Insurance last year was a \$250,000 one-time credit.

This budget is built primarily on the Governor’s budget; working with three budgets – the House budget, the Senate budget, and the Governor’s budget. The seven percent raise is not in the Governor’s budget; this was built in as teachers and staff deserve the raise and administration is hopeful that this will be included in the end budget.

Superintendent Thompson provided the following Fund 50 – Categorical Estimate of Needs – FY24:

FUND 50 – CATEGORICAL ESTIMATE OF NEEDS – FY24

<u>Category</u>	<u>FY24 Projected</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Instruction -61	\$26,167,171	71.12
Administration & Health – 62	\$2,421,360	6.6%
Pupil Transportation – 63	\$2,981,946	8.1%
Operations & Maintenance – 64	\$3,484,310	9.5%
Facilities – 66	\$20,000	0.1%
Technology – 68	\$1,683,346	4.6%
Fund 50 Site Operating Budget	\$36,758,134	100.0%

Fund 50 – Expected Revenue Sources – FY24

Category	FY22 Projected	Percent
Estimated State Revenue Funding (FY24)	\$17,616,018	47.9%
Estimated Local Revenue Funding (FY24)	\$17,233,567	46.9%
Estimated Tuition Revenue Funding (FY24)	\$1,497,907	4.1%
Estimated Other Revenue Funding (FY24)	\$410,642	1.1%
Fund 50 Site Operating Budget	\$36,758,134	100%

- Chairman Whitmore inquired if there is a candidate pool available that will support the two alternative education positions, Superintendent Thompson stated that he remains positive, while noting that they will not be easy positions to fill. The positions require the right type of person with a special skills set to be able to work with students who have certain types of needs and do it well and be successful. The candidate pool is thin because other school divisions are also looking for similar type positions across our area.

Upon recommendation by Chairman Whitmore, motion by Trustee Lovell, seconded by Trustee Berkstresser, the board voted 5-0, to approve the Categorical Estimate of Needs – FY24 in the amount of \$36,758,134.

NEW BUSINESS:

Trustee Burant provided information on a visit that she, Trustee Brown, and Mr. Paige Owens made to Shihadeh Innovation Center in Winchester, Virginia. Shihadeh Innovation Center is an old elementary school that has been renovated. This center was chosen to visit because it has some of the same type of designs that have been discussed for renovations for the newly named Rockbridge Innovation Center. The highlights of their visit is as follows:

- Flexible spacing and furniture that would accommodate a variety of programs, improved lighting, open classrooms that are visible, and community meeting rooms.
- Extremely innovative equipment and designs that correlated very well with real-world work experience, not just as seen in a classroom.
- Career and skill programs that matched the needs of their business community and used data to improve on the programs that they had in place to match the community needs.
- The display pf community support in halls and display cases within the building and classrooms throughout the school, which serve as reminders to students of the commitments from the community to their education.

Trustee Burant stated that their visit has led them to be more inspired to seek additional resources and other possible grant opportunities to support Rockbridge Innovation Center with exciting programs and equipment and even innovative furnishings. She expressed appreciation to Shihadeh Innovation Center for their hospitality and for the great job that they have done to make the community an actual part of their school building.

Trustee Burant expressed her appreciation for a letter received from Ms. Stephanie Tuttle, teacher, Fairfield Elementary School, and fourth and fifth grade students expressing their appreciation and excitement to have water filing-stations at their school. They also thanked the school board for their efforts to make their student’s PBL efforts a reality to keep track of how many plastic water bottles are being saved.

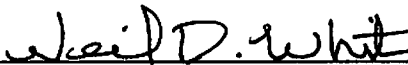
- Superintendent Thompson stated that all schools, with the exception of Central Elementary School, now have water-filing stations. Central Elementary School should have them installed soon. Maury River Middle School has a couple that need to be replaced. There are now eighteen water-filing stations across the school division.

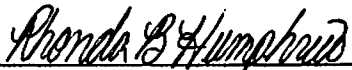
SCHOOL BOARD

The next regular meeting of the Rockbridge County School Board will be held on Tuesday, April 11, 2023 / 5:30 PM / Location: County of Rockbridge Administration Building, 150 South Main Street, Lexington, Virginia.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon motion by Trustee Brown, seconded by Trustee Berkstresser, and passed by 5-0 vote, the meeting was adjourned at 6:31 p.m.


Neil D. Whitmore, Chairman


Rhonda B. Humphries, Clerk of the Board