

The Rockbridge County School Board held their regular meeting on Tuesday, February 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 5:04 p.m.

CHANGES TO THE AGENDA: None

STUDENT / STAFF RECOGNITION:

Superintendent Thompson recognized the month of February as Virginia School Boards Association School Board Appreciation Month. He expressed his appreciation to each member for what they "bring to the table" personally with their individual backgrounds and perspectives, work life, and home life that are active at all times. The commitment of being a school board member involves more than one meeting a month. There may be formal and informal meetings, committee meetings, meetings with the community, answering emails and telephone calls, and meeting with our local Board of Supervisors, as well as state and federal level meetings, advocating for our schools. Our school board members participate with the Virginia School Board Association in continuing their education with respect to learning how to be a good school board member and continuing to update their skills. He expressed his appreciation to all the school board members as they work with our student's best interest at heart, always, for the betterment of the school division and for the community.

Chairman Whitmore expressed his appreciation to Ms. Rhonda Humphries, School Board Clerk, in honor of Virginia School Boards Association School Board Clerk Appreciation Week, February 13-17, 2023.

Ms. Melanie Camden, Principal, Mountain View Elementary School, provided information on the Mountain View Elementary School Student Council Association. The SCA currently has 17 members and they meet once monthly. She provided the following overview:

Community Service Projects: A Canned Food Drive for the Rockbridge Area Relief Association; Assisted in the MVE Veteran's Day Program on November 11, 2022; Assisted with the PK PBL "Happy for the Holidays" on December 13 and December 14, 2022 by completing the written portion of holiday cards for residents at Shenandoah Valley Health and Rehab.

School Community Projects: Recycling; Flag Duty; Morning Announcements; daily announcements; Bullying Prevention Month in which SCA Members made bully awareness announcements each morning throughout the month and handed out items to remind students of their pledge to be kind every day.

Community Participation: RCHS Football Ad; Participated in the Buena Vista and Lexington Parades 2022.

Future Endeavors: New Student Program; Socks for Seniors; SPCA Food Drive; School-wide Talent Show

- Chairman Whitmore asked for, and received, clarification that student pictures were used on the ballots for SCA since some of the students were not quite of reading age.
- Trustee Burant expressed her appreciation that students understand community services through the fun activities and are learning at the same time.
- Trustee Berkstresser stated that he listened to the student speeches and that the students spoke well and did an incredible job.

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) January 10, 2023 [Regular Meeting]; 2) January 11, 2023 [Discipline Committee Hearing]; 3) January 17, 2023 [Special Meeting]; 4) January 19, 2023 [Joint Meeting with Rockbridge County Board of Supervisors]; 5) January 25, 2023 [Discipline Committee Hearing]; 6) February 1, 2023 [Discipline Committee Hearing]
- Field Trip and Bus Use Requests
- Fundraiser Requests
- Applications for Use of Facilities
- Surplus Vehicles Declared

- **Appointments and Resignations**

- **Appointments**

- **Support Staff**

- Brigitte Staton, Teacher Assistant, Maury River Middle School, effective February 15, 2023

- Zeba Naz Zafar, Teacher Assistant, Rockbridge County High School, effective February 15, 2023

- Derrick Conner, Teacher Assistant, Rockbridge County High School, effective February 15, 2023

- **Substitute Teachers**

- Melissa Wallace

- Bailee Wright

- Madison Armstrong

- Kelby Bartley

- Daniel Taylor

- Kolby Kemp

- Rachel Morgan

- Christy Schucker

- **Substitute Car Driver(s)**

- Cameron Painter

- Joseph Oyler

- **Club Sponsor, RCHS**

- Courtney Diette-Forensics

- **Spring Coaches 2022-2023**

- **Rockbridge County High School**

- **Baseball**

- Travis Roadcap, Head Varsity Baseball Coach

- Nick Perlozzo, Assistant Varsity Baseball Coach

- Tom Dowdell, JV Baseball Coach

- Josh Campbell, Volunteer Baseball Coach

- Jamie Hostetter, Volunteer Baseball Coach

- Justin Wenger, Volunteer Baseball Coach

- Greg Shaw, Volunteer Baseball Coach

- **Softball**

- Keston Pelter, Head Varsity Softball Coach

- Delmas Beverley, Assistant Softball Coach

- Hannah Painter, JV Softball Coach

- Sarah Mast, Volunteer Softball Coach

- Jessica Walker, Volunteer Softball Coach

- Krista McDaniel, Volunteer Softball Coach

- **Boys' Soccer**

- Scott Youngdahl, Head Boys' Varsity Soccer Coach

- Paul Gregory, Boys' JV Soccer Coach

- Josh Elrod, Boys' Volunteer Soccer Coach

- Johnathan Cunha, Boys' Volunteer Soccer Coach

- Robert Humston, Boys' Volunteer Soccer Coach

- **Girls' Soccer**

- BJ Flack, Head Girls' Soccer Coach

- Kevin Kendall, JV Soccer Coach

- Jeffery Tomlin, Girls' Volunteer Soccer Coach

- Dirk VanAssendelft, Girls' Volunteer Soccer Coach

- **Boys' Lacrosse**

- Robert Hull, Head Boys' Lacrosse Coach

- Scott Winterton, Assistant Boys' Lacrosse Coach

- Ryan Larsen, Boys' Volunteer Lacrosse Coach

- David Jones, Boys' Volunteer Lacrosse Coach

- John Whitelock, Boys' Volunteer Lacrosse Coach

- Seth Goodhart, Boys' Volunteer Lacrosse Coach

- Pierson Hull, Boys' Volunteer Lacrosse Coach

Girls' Lacrosse

Susan Nye, Head Girls' Lacrosse Coach
 Natalie Rice, Assistant Girls' Lacrosse Coach
 Chloe Mitchell Assistant Girls' Lacrosse Coach
 Sammy Moore, Volunteer Girls' Lacrosse Coach

Outdoor Track

Jennifer Showalter, Head Outdoor Track Coach
 Julie Tisone, Assistant Outdoor Track Coach
 Eric Wilhelm, Assistant Outdoor Track

Boys' Tennis

Rebekah Butler, Head Coach
 Brian Barney, Boys' Tennis Volunteer

Girls's Tennis

Andrew Bellairs, Head Coach

Maury River Middle School**Outdoor Track**

Paul Spangler, Head Coach
 Cynthia Spangler, Assistant Coach

Professional Staff**Resignation**

Adam Doll-Hennis, Teacher, Maury River Middle School, resigning effective end of 2022-2023 school year

Support Staff**Resignation**

Anita Painter, Teacher Assistant, Rockbridge County High School, Resigning effective January 31, 2023
 Brittany Burke, Clerical Assistant, Central Elementary, Resigning effective end of 2022-2023 school year
 Amber Flint, Teacher Assistant, Natural Bridge Elementary, Resigning effective February 10, 2023

Professional Staff**Retirement**

Chris Wood, Teacher, Maury River Middle School, retiring effective end of 2022-2023 school year
 Angela Wilder, Director of Alternative Education, Rockbridge County High School, effective June 30, 2023

Support Staff**Retirement**

Daphne Stickley, School Nutrition Supervisor, retiring effective June 30, 2023
 Lonna Dudley, Bus Driver, retiring effective end of 2022-2023 school year
 William Kessinger, maintenance, retiring effective June 30, 2023

- **Business Items**

- Approved ECF (Emergency Connectivity Funds) to Fund 50 in the amount of \$188,969.00
- Approved appropriations to Fund 50 for new grants in the amount of \$40,000.00
- Approve Monthly Financials in the amount of \$4,143,656.58

PUBLIC COMMENT:

One patron addressed the board regarding CRT. Patron also inquired if there are litter boxes at RCHS for students. Superintendent Thompson replied that there are no litter boxes at any of our schools.

One patron addressed the board in regards to students with an IEP not being given the opportunity to participate in elective classes at Maury River Middle School.

One patron addressed the board in support of Superintendent Thompson and Mr. Jason Kirby in support of making it a budget priority to maintain competitive salaries.

BUDGET PLANNING:

Superintendent Thompson stated that this is the second year of the biennium. He stated that administration is waiting on information to come from Richmond as the House and the Senate have developed their versions of their FY24 budget, currently being about a billion dollars apart and negotiating in trying to figure out how to make it work. There is not yet a new calculation tool from the Department of Education for the House and the Senate version, which means the division cannot calculate that at this point. He is hoping it will be released within the next week or so, but that still leaves three budgets to be worked with and not yet a final budget. He is hopeful that the House and the Senate can do their work quickly and come to an agreement that is beneficial for school divisions, Rockbridge County Public Schools specifically. The House and the Senate versions looked better after they moved some items around to make it a little more appealing for teacher salaries for next year.

- Trustee Burant inquired if there is an update on the calculation error.
 - Superintendent Thompson stated that the state has worked hard to correct the error but that it does not mean that there is more money coming to the division; although he remains hopeful.
- Chairman Whitmore stated that the division is waiting on things that are out of their control.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Superintendent Thompson stated that the schematic design of Spectrum for the Floyd S. Kay renovations has been approved for the next phase of design. He stated that it is the hope that the renovations can be completed without phasing the project. He stated that Granville Grant of Spectrum Design has met with Dr. Mike Craft, Principal, Rockbridge County High School, and Mr. Paige Owens, Director of Technology and Career and Technical Education, and feels the project is in a good place with the schematics. Dr. Thompson expressed his sentiment that the project will be done well, rather than quickly.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

Superintendent Thompson provided information on School Safety Protocols in reaction to the recent shooting events in Texas and in Newport News, Virginia. He expressed his sentiment that society, as a whole, has become somewhat desensitized to the issue but feels it cannot be allowed to happen in Rockbridge County. From an infrastructure and procedural perspective, teachers, students, and parents may be helpful in that “if you see something, say something”. An assertive effort is being made with students to remind them of what is appropriate and allowed in school. Mr. Adam Haynes, Athletic Director, Rockbridge County High School, provided information to the Rockbridge County School Board meeting of January 10, 2023. He provided detailed information on the Emergency Action Plans that are in place across the division for interscholastic sports. Superintendent Thompson provided information on when other issues happen in schools. He referred to creating a welcoming environment versus a safe environment; a safe environment is the priority.

The following protocols are in place for each school in Rockbridge County:

- Crisis Plans: approved annually by the School Board;
- Annual Safety Audits: RCPS has a close relationship with the Rockbridge County Sheriff's Office
- Safety protocol:
 - Comments made by students are taken seriously, with protocol in place to be reported to administration.
 - The student is then removed from the situation.
 - School Resource Office is then called, or law enforcement, if needed.
 - The Superintendent or designee is then notified. School administrators are well versed but it is helpful to have the support of the central office administration.
 - Parents are usually notified as soon as possible. A letter or an alert sent via School Messenger will provide notification to all parents of the school involved.
 - Threat Assessment is completed.
 - The parents and student involved are informed of consequences and, if warranted, a referral to the School Board Discipline Committee.
 - There will be a re-entry meeting to define expectations before the student will be allowed back into school.
 - Superintendent Thompson provided a one-page draft document for “Recommended Disciplinary Action for Rockbridge County High School and Maury River Middle School”. Traditionally, this information has not been available on a one-page document. The document that will be developed for the elementary schools will be different because of variables.

- Trustee Burant expressed her appreciation for the one-page document and for the communication when a situation arises follows the chain of command. She also complimented the administration for the re-entry interview so that expectations can be clarified.
- Chairman Whitmore stated that it is good to see that the document is usable but not so complicated.
- Trustee Berkstresser stated that the document will help when dealing with parents and will provide clarification.
- Trustee Lovell stated that it will be helpful for teachers to make decisions.
- Mr. Timothy Martino, Assistant Superintendent, stated that people often want to know what happened when an event takes place. An investigation can often take a couple of days and answers are not immediately known as administration wants to ensure a thorough and accurate investigation.
- Trustee Lovell expressed her sentiment that social media can make the job of administration more difficult but offered support that administration is doing their job and must complete investigations.

Mr. Paige Owens, Director of Technology and Career and Technical Education, provided a Career and Technical Education Update.

Highlights of his presentation are as follows:

- CTE Appreciation Month is February
- RCPS CTE Data for 2021-2022
 - CTE served 713 out of 962 unduplicated students in grades 9-12.
 - CTE served 530 out of 566 (94%) unduplicated students in grade 6-8.
 - Total CTE enrollment of just over 2,000 students, which includes duplicated students.
 - 125 out of 211 (59%) RCHS graduates were CTE completers. There may be more after the initial data was released.
 - 769 total credential exams were administered at RCHS. (There could be duplicated students.)
 - 380 out of 460 (83%) unduplicated students passed a credential exam.
 - 197 out of 211 (93%) RCHS graduates passed at least one CTE credential exam, with a goal of 100%.
 - 111 out of 125 (89%) graduating CTE completers passed at least one CTE credential exam.
- CTE Program Highlights
 - Business and Information Technology
 - WISE Financial Literacy Blue Star School award (80% pass rate)
 - WISE Financial Literacy Gold Start School award (93% pass rate on 1st attempt)
 - Jennifer Balkey and Mike Lenoir
 - Third place team in Stock Market competition.
 - VMI Cybersecurity Internship students.
 - Starting a school store.
 - Business and Information Technology
 - Virginia Teachers for Tomorrow: observations; teaching lessons; Educators Rising state competition.
 - Nutrition and Wellness: Treats for Teachers; Rethink your Drink PBL
 - Hospitality: Cat Crew Cupcakes; Cookies, pastries, etc.; Logo development
 - Family and Consumer Science
 - Culinary: Teacher salad bar hot lunches
 - FCCLA: State Conference; attended other Virginia FCCLA leadership opportunities at JMU, Virginia Tech, and State Fair in Richmond, VA.
 - Health and Medical Sciences
 - 100% pass rate on CNA exam
 - Clinicals
 - HOSA(Health Occupations Students of America) student competitions at state leadership conference
 - Student certifications: Stop The Bleed; Narcan administration; BLS CPR (infant, child, and adult)
 - Technology Education
 - Engineering and Architectural Design: 92% pass rate on NOCTI credential exams; Working with mentors to design and develop engineering prototype
 - Aerospace Technology: Dynamic Aviation field trip to fly in a real airplane; Drone flying competitions.

Technology Education

- o Manufacturing: Welding; Metal working
- o Communication Systems: Adobe Photoshop; Tinkercad
- o Electronics: Plant the Moon and Plant Mars Challenge

Agriculture

- o Dog treats bakery PBL; Corsages and boutonnieres for homecoming; Christmas tree and wreath sales; Candy bouquets for Valentine’s Day; Raising chickens and selling eggs; FFA Competitions and leadership training

Trade and Industry

- o Building Trades
- o Automotive Technology
- o Auto Body
- o Welding (working with Byers Welding School)

▪ Middle School CTE Programs:

Business: Financial literacy skills

Technology Education

Family and Consumer Science: Lots of work in the kitchen

Agriculture Business: Active FFA; Many hands-on activities

▪ Introduction of new CTE Teachers:

Colter Bennett: Manufacturing and Communications Systems

McKenze Robinson: Hospitality, Tourism, and Recreation I, II, & III

Michael Spencer Walters: Automotive Technology

- Chairman Whitmore stated that it is good to have RCHS alumni on the faculty. He also stated that the data provided reflects great participation in the programs.
- Trustee Burant expressed her appreciation for the outstanding update on the CTE programs. She further made a recommendation of Floyd S. Kay Career and Technical Center name change. Her statement is as follows:

Mr. Chairman,

As we continue to be in awe of all that has been accomplished over the years with our Career & Technical Education program at Rockbridge County High School, we are entering a new era with the renovations of F.S. Kay scheduled for groundbreaking later this Spring.

Under Former Superintendent Floyd S. Kay’s 20 years of leadership (from 1949-1969), many changes took place in our educational community, leading to the opening of the vocational center in 1976. Over nearly 50 years, thousands of students have benefitted from the outstanding program offerings and learned the skills required for so many careers.

Now as the times have changed and the world demands even more skills from our 21st Century learners, I believe we need to adopt a new name for the Center intended to inspire our future generations even as we continue to honor the vision of Floyd S. Kay. As we update not only our programs but the facility itself, the term “innovation” comes to mind as we look to fulfill our needs.

Innovation sparks insights and provides a creative jolt of new ideas. Innovative classrooms incorporate engagement, creativity, collaboration, and increased understanding of working through real-world problems. We’re getting better at what we already do, applying what we’re already good at in a new context, and at finding completely new problems to solve utilizing new technology. This is innovation at its finest!

As a fully comprehensive high school, and with exciting programs integrated throughout the curriculum -- from Project Based Learning to STEM and STEAM concepts to community-based learning opportunities -- the innovative nature of Rockbridge County High School’s initiatives warrants an inspirational name which reflects the new vision of the Center.

With us in the final design stages, I propose the F.S. Kay Vocational-Technical Center be renamed the “Rockbridge Innovation Center” to celebrate the emphasis on innovative learning while still paying homage to the Center’s rich history.

Mr. Chairman, at your direction, I propose we consider this name change during the next month and list it as an Action Item at the March 14 Board meeting.

- Trustee Lovell expressed her agreement of the name change.
- Chairman Whitmore concurred with the name change. He also reflected his excitement of the upcoming renovations after the presentation from Spectrum Design at the Rockbridge County School Board meeting of January 19, 2023.

- Superintendent Thompson expressed his appreciation to the board for their efforts in thinking forward to choose a different name, with no disrespect to Mr. Kay.
 - Trustee Burant stated that as she has learned more about Mr. Kay, she felt that he would be the first one to say it is time to move forward.

ACTION ITEMS:

Upon recommendation by Chairman Whitmore, motion by Trustee Berkstresser, seconded by Trustee Burant, the board voted 5-0, to approve the Rockbridge High School Program of Studies, as presented.

Upon recommendation by Chairman Whitmore, motion by Trustee Berkstresser, seconded by Trustee Burant, the board voted 5-0, to approve the Maury River Middle School Program of Studies, as presented.

Upon recommendation by Superintendent Thompson, motion by Chairman Whitmore and passed by a 5-0 roll call vote:

1. The School Board hereby (a) requests, pursuant to Section 15.2-2640 of the Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended (the "Virginia Code"), that the Board of Supervisors of the County cause the County to issue its general obligation school bonds (the "Bonds") in an aggregate principal amount not to exceed \$9,000,000, but with the objective of providing up to \$9,000,000 in net proceeds to finance the Project, which constitutes a capital project for public school purposes, and (b) consents to the issuance of the Bonds, pursuant to Section 15.2-2638.B(iii) of the Virginia Code and Article VII, Section 10(b) of the Constitution of Virginia.
2. Further, the School Board consents to and authorizes an application to VPSA for the purchase of the Bonds by the VPSA as part of its 2023 Spring Pooled Bond Sale. The Chair of the School Board, the Division Superintendent of the Schools, and such other officer or officers of the School Board or the Schools as either may designate (the "Authorized Officers") are hereby authorized to decrease the amount of proceeds requested to the extent the County and such Authorized Officers deem it necessary to issue the Bonds in an amount less than provided in paragraph 1 above.
3. The Authorized Officers are hereby authorized and directed to execute and deliver on behalf of the School Board a Use of Proceeds Certificate and Tax Compliance Agreement (the "Tax Compliance Agreement") setting forth the expected use and investment of the proceeds of the Bonds and containing such covenants as may be necessary for the bonds issued by VPSA in the spring of 2023 (the "VPSA Bonds") to show compliance with the provisions of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (the "Tax Code"), and the applicable regulations. The School Board covenants on behalf of itself and the Schools under its governance that the School Board and the Schools shall comply with the provisions of the Tax Compliance Agreement and the Tax Code so that the interest on the VPSA Bonds is excludable from gross income under the Tax Code.
4. Further, the Authorized Officers are authorized and directed to do and perform all such things and acts and to execute and deliver all such additional instruments in connection with the Bonds, all as may be necessary or convenient or otherwise advised by legal counsel (collectively, the "Additional Instruments"), with any changes, insertions, and omissions to such instruments as may be approved by the Authorized Officers. Approval of the Additional Instruments shall be conclusively evidenced by the execution and due delivery of the Additional Instruments by the Authorized Officers. The Clerk of the School Board (and any Deputy Clerk or designee of the School Board) is authorized to affix or to cause to be affixed the seal to the Tax Compliance Agreement and any Additional Instruments, if requested, and to attest such seal.
5. This Resolution shall take effect immediately.

Upon recommendation by Chairman Whitmore, motion by Trustee Lovell, seconded by Trustee Brown, the board voted 5-0, to approve the RCPS Vision Statement and the RCPS Mission Statement as presented.

- RCPS Vision Statement Rockbridge County Public Schools, in collaboration with families and community stakeholders, will challenge and empower students to think, learn, and meet their full potential to become lifelong learners, and productive and responsible members of society.
- RCPS Mission Statement Rockbridge County Public Schools provides a safe, inclusive, equitable, and student-centered environment where our diverse community of learners grows intellectually, physically and emotionally, and students are inspired to achieve their full potential.

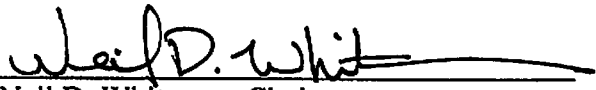
NEW BUSINESS: None

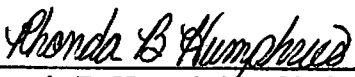
SCHOOL BOARD

The next regular meeting of the Rockbridge County School Board will be held on Tuesday, March 14, 2023 / 5:30 PM / Location: County of Rockbridge Administration Building, 150 South Main Street, Lexington, Virginia.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon motion by Trustee Lovell, seconded by Trustee Brown, and passed by 5-0 vote, the meeting was adjourned at 6:37 p.m.


Neil D. Whitmore, Chairman


Rhonda B. Humphries, Clerk of the Board