

The Rockbridge County School Board held their regular meeting on Tuesday, January 10, 2023, at Maury River Middle School.

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

CALL TO ORDER

Superintendent Thompson called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. and requested that everyone rise for the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Superintendent Thompson stated that the first order of business would be the Board's re-organization for the year 2023 and asked for nominations for Board Chairman. Trustee Brown nominated Trustee Whitmore for Chairman and passed by a 5-0 roll call vote, with Trustee Whitmore being elected as Chairman.

Trustee Berkstresser	– Yes
Trustee Brown	– Yes
Trustee Burant	– Yes
Trustee Lovell	– Yes
Trustee Whitmore	– Yes

Chairman Whitmore asked for nominations for Vice-Chairman. Trustee Lovell nominated Trustee Burant for Vice-Chairman, and passed by a following 5-0 vote roll call vote with Trustee Burant being elected as Vice-Chairman:

Trustee Berkstresser	– Yes
Trustee Brown	– Yes
Trustee Burant	– Yes
Trustee Lovell	– Yes
Trustee Whitmore	– Yes

Upon recommendation by Superintendent Thompson, motion by Chairman Whitmore, seconded by Trustee Lovell, and passed by a 5-0 vote, the Board appointed Rhonda Humphries as Clerk for the calendar year 2023.

Upon recommendation by Superintendent Thompson, motion by Chairman Whitmore, seconded by Trustee Brown, and passed by a 5-0 vote, the Board appointed Timothy Martino as Deputy Clerk for the calendar year 2023.

Upon recommendation by Superintendent Thompson, motion by Trustee Berkstresser, seconded by Chairman Whitmore, and passed by a 5-0 vote, the Board named Timothy Martino as Superintendent's Designee through January 31, 2024.

Upon recommendation by Superintendent Thompson, motion by Trustee Burant, seconded by Trustee Berkstresser, and passed by a 5-0 vote, Phillip Thompson, Superintendent; Timothy Martino, Assistant Superintendent; Jason Kirby, Chief Business Officer; and David Daniels, Director of Financial Services were appointed as School Board Fiscal Agents with the authority to approve the payment of bills if the School Board is unable to meet.

Chairman Whitmore asked for discussion of committee assignments and the following committee members were designated:

- Discipline Committee: Trustee Berkstresser, Trustee Brown, Trustee Lovell
- Ad Hoc Committee: Trustee Whitmore, Trustee Burant
- Rockbridge County Public Schools Foundation: Trustee Brown

Chairman Whitmore announced that the Board will continue to conduct their regular meetings on the second Tuesday of each month beginning at 5:30 p.m.

Superintendent Thompson read the School Board Member Code of Conduct and requested that all School Board Members sign the document in agreement with the code of conduct.

CHANGES TO THE AGENDA: None

STUDENT / STAFF RECOGNITION:

Mr. Adam Haynes, Athletic Director, Rockbridge County High School, provided information on Rockbridge County High School Athletics Safety. He provided detailed information on the Emergency Action Plans that are in place across the division for interscholastic sports involving emergency equipment, emergencies requiring Emergency Medical Services, heat illness emergencies, and weather emergencies.

- Trustee Lovell expressed her appreciation, as a parent of former students that the safety precautions continue to be in place for students.
- Chairman Whitmore inquired if there is still a CPR requirement.
 - Superintendent Thompson stated that Ms. Penni Allen, Rockbridge County Public Schools Division Nurse, will conduct CPR workshops for license renewal. He stated that she often holds these workshops after school or on teacher workdays so that staff can participate.
 - Mr. Haynes stated that employees renew their certification for CPR and diabetes each time it runs out.

CONSENT AGENDA

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

- Minutes: 1) December 13, 2022 [Regular Meeting]; 2) January 4, 2023 [Discipline Committee Hearing]
- Field Trip and Bus Use Requests
- Fundraiser Requests
- Applications for Use of Facilities
- Appointments and Resignations

Appointments

Support Staff

William LeMert, Teacher Assistant, Rockbridge County High School,
effective January 11, 2023

Car Driver

Harry Moore

Food Service Substitutes

Belinda Tomlin

Lori Williams

Support Staff

Resignation

Amy Price, Cafeteria Manager, Fairfield Elementary School, resigned effective
December 12, 2022

Jessica Irvine, Custodian, Maury River Middle School, resigned effective December 31, 2022

Support Staff

Retirement

Monica Rexrode, Personnel Specialist, Central Office, retiring effective June 30, 2023

- **Business Items**
 - Approved appropriations to Fund 50 for new grants in the amount of \$2,845,613.00
 - Approve Monthly Financials in the amount of \$3,290,829.78

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

BUDGET PLANNING:

Superintendent Thompson stated that the division is in the full budget season for the second year of the biennium. He stated that administration has some idea of state funding for FY24 but there are some changes forthcoming. The calculation tool from the Virginia Department of Education has now been received but cautioned that numbers will change. He expressed his sentiment that the school division is in a good place with a little more state funding to be coming to Rockbridge County Public Schools. There will be a special meeting of the Rockbridge County School Board on January 17, 2023 to conduct a budget work session.

COMMITTEE REPORTS: None

INSTRUCTIONAL REPORT:

Mr. Timothy Martino, Assistant Superintendent, provided the presentation "Closing the Learning Gap". The information reflected how staff are working to assist students who are still struggling. The following provides highlights of his presentation:

- Relationships: relationships are the backbone of work with students; acknowledging some learners are behind, acknowledging learners' mental health; and providing a safe environment for learners to express feelings and concerns.
- Ready to Learn: continually rebuilding a sense of community; ensuring social, emotional, and mentally safe environments are created; focusing on "Big Rock" concepts – English curriculum; attendance monitoring and meetings.
- Family and Community Engagement: family nights, conference (in-person), programs (music), sporting events.
- College and Career Readiness: college and career planning, focus on the 5 C's [Citizenship Skills, Creative Thinking Skills, Communication Skills, Collaboration Skills, and Critical Thinking Skills].
- Access to Rigor: focus on quality not quantity, PBL experiences, opportunities beyond the regular classroom, carefully planned and paced classes.
- Academic Support: small class size, after school programs, response to Intervention Blocks, remediation classes, individual teacher office hours, meeting learners where they are (not where you want them to be).

Mr. Martino commended building leaders and teachers for working forward with students and providing motivation.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

Ms. Cynthia Littleton, Assistant Principal, Rockbridge County High School, provided information on the changes to the Program of Studies for Rockbridge County High School for the 2023-2024 school year. This will be presented as an Action Item at the Rockbridge County School Board meeting of February 14, 2023.

Ms. Vicki Stevens, Principal, Maury River Middle School, provided information on the changes to the Program of Studies for Maury River Middle School for the 2023-2024 school year. This will be presented as an Action Item at the Rockbridge County School Board meeting of February 14, 2023.

ACTION ITEMS:

Upon recommendation by Chairman Whitmore, motion by Trustee Lovell, seconded by Trustee Berkstresser, the board voted 5-0, to approve the 2023-2024 School Calendar as presented.

- Trustee Burant inquired as to the graduation date for 2024.
 - Superintendent Thompson stated that in years past it was held on a Friday, but has now been moved to the Thursday, contingent on events by VMI and W & L. This allows for families who wish to travel following graduation, to leave on that Friday. The anticipated date will be May 23, 2024.

Upon recommendation by Chairman Whitmore, motion by Trustee Berkstresser, seconded by Trustee Brown, the board voted 5-0, to approve Policy EFB – Food Services as presented.

Superintendent Thompson stated that it is an exciting time to be drawing closer to the renovation of the Floyd S. Kay Vocational Center at Rockbridge County High School. The first goal is to provide a center that the students deserve and the second goal is to make sure it can be funded in a way that is fiscally responsible to taxpayers. He stated that the Rockbridge County Public Schools administration has been working closely with County of Rockbridge administration to find a mechanism to get the building that is needed in addition to being responsible with the taxpayer's dollar. He stated that this application for the Literary Loan is one of several loans that may be applied for; it does not mean the funding will be approved. He anticipates coming back to the board next month with a Virginia Public School Authority, which may be another funding opportunity. In order for the Board of Supervisors to reach out and apply for this funding, the approval must come from the School Board to do so. Superintendent Thompson recommended approval of this request in order to get the first funding application completed.

- Trustee Berkstresser stated that he is committed to remaining an advocate for the CTE program and moving forward.

Upon recommendation by Chairman Whitmore and passed by a following 5-0 vote roll call vote, the School Board provided authorization to submit an application to the Commonwealth of Virginia’s Department of Education for the Loan, to borrow from the Literary Fund. Included in this resolution, the School Board requested the Board of Supervisors of Rockbridge County, Virginia to approve, by resolution, the School Board’s application to the Literary Fund for the Loan and to take all such actions required by law regulating loans from the Literary Fund.

NEW BUSINESS:

Vice-Chair Burant expressed her appreciation to employees who have communicated with board members in response to receiving a bonus. She expressed her appreciation for all the hard work that has been, and is being done for the students of Rockbridge County.

Vice-Chair Burant stated that she and Superintendent Thompson attended the Chamber of Commerce Breakfast. She stated that there were speeches and good information shared that showed interest and priorities placed on education within Rockbridge County.

SCHOOL BOARD

There will be a special meeting of the Rockbridge County School Board for purpose of a budget work session / Tuesday, January 17, 2023 / 5:00 PM / Location: Rockbridge County School Board Office, 2893 Collierstown Road, Lexington, Virginia.

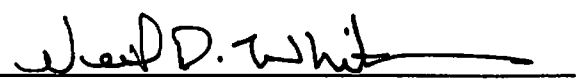
There will be a Joint Meeting with Rockbridge County Board of Supervisors / Thursday, January 19, 2023 / 5:00 PM / Location: Rockbridge County School Board Office, 2893 Collierstown Road, Lexington, Virginia.

There will be a Public Hearing on Budget / Date: Tuesday, February 14, 2023 / 5:00 PM / Location: County of Rockbridge Administration Building, 150 South Main Street, Lexington, Virginia.

The next regular meeting of the Rockbridge County School Board will be held on Tuesday, February 14, 2023 / immediately following public hearing / 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 6:27 p.m.


Neil D. Whitmore, Chairman


Rhonda B. Humphries, Clerk of the Board