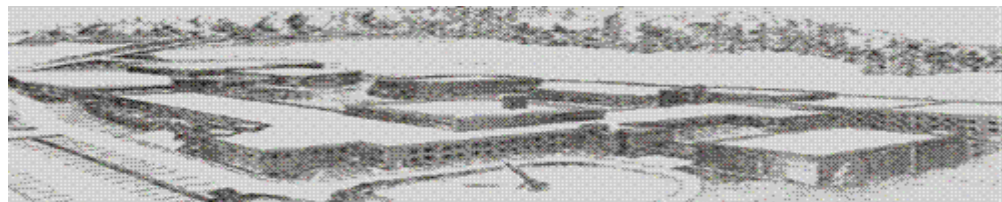


# Rockwood School News

*Published for the residents of the Rockwood School District*

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*The mission of the Rockwood Area School District is to empower students to reach their full potential as well-rounded, lifelong learners and responsible members of society.*

## **From the Superintendent's Desk**

Community Members of the Rockwood Area School District,

I am hopeful this edition of the Rockwood School News finds you well as the first signs of spring begin to emerge, following a notably active winter season. This school year, winter brought more interruptions than usual, with six of the seven built in traditional snow days already used, as of the writing of this article. After the traditional snow days are exhausted, the district will operate on Flexible Instruction Days (FIDs), which were added to the calendar to ensure continuity of learning in case of further cancellations.

As we look ahead, the District is entering one of the busiest and most exciting times of the year. The school community is eagerly anticipating the exciting events ahead, including class field trips, spring athletics, academic award ceremonies, music concerts, the Junior-Senior Prom, and, most notably, the graduation ceremony for the Class of 2025.

## **PARSS Educator of the Year**

We are excited to share that Mr. Joe Kush, the District's Engineering and Technology Teacher, has been named this year's Pennsylvania Association of Rural and Small

Schools (PARSS) Educator of the Year for grades 7-12. Each year, PARSS honors an exceptional educator, and it is both an honor and a privilege to announce that Mr. Kush has earned this well-deserved recognition. Mr. Kush's nomination stood out from a large pool of candidates and was carefully selected by an independent committee. He will be formally recognized at the PARSS Conference and Banquet on May 1st in State College. The PARSS membership includes 255 school districts from across Pennsylvania. PARSS is an advocacy and service organization dedicated to ensuring that the Commonwealth's rural school students have access to a quality education. Mr. Kush is a shining example of the dedication and excellence of Rockwood's faculty and staff. He represents the many individuals who make our school district such a special place for our students. Please join us in congratulating Mr. Kush on this remarkable honor, this is a truly significant achievement!



## **Social Media/Good News - Megan Snell**

We are thrilled to announce that Megan Snell, our talented sports and yearbook photographer for the past few years, is taking on an exciting new role at Rockwood! In addition to capturing memorable moments, Megan will now be working closely with the school to enhance our social media presence and share the incredible things happening across our district.



Her mission is to showcase the dedication of our exceptional faculty and staff while celebrating the outstanding achievements of our students as they learn and grow at Rockwood. We can't wait to highlight what makes our district so special! Stay connected and follow us on Facebook to keep up with all the latest news!

(Superintendent cont.)

### **Community Support for District Activities**

Students and staff are fortunate to receive continuous support from the community. A recent example of this generosity took place in January when students in Mr. Doug Spiri's music classroom returned from Christmas break to an exciting surprise - a Baby Grand Piano. This beautiful instrument was graciously donated by District residents Mr. and Mrs. Tom and Lorie Skelton. Mr. Spiri and his students are thrilled to incorporate the piano into their rehearsals as they prepare for their upcoming spring concert.

The District would, once again, like to thank and recognize the Rockwood Class of 1965 for their ongoing support. The class members donated \$950.00 to the District's Kids Come First Organization. Kids Come First supports students' needs throughout the year, especially during the holiday season. The Class of 1965 has a long history of giving back to its alma mater in support of student programs.

The District would also like to recognize and thank several businesses for their support of student activities. The District received PA Educational Improvement Tax Credits from Wheeler Brothers, Inc. of Somerset and BDH/Konhaus Agency of Meyersdale. The \$500.00 of EITC funding was used to support the "Engineering is Elementary" program, which offers students in grades 4-6 hands-on engineering/design and problem-solving experiences, as well as introducing them to possible careers in engineering. The \$12,500.00 of funding from Wheeler Brothers was used to offset tuition costs for students enrolled in "Dual Enrollment" college classes offered at Rockwood. In addition to the EITC funds, Somerset Trust generously provided funding to cover the cost of a Somerset County student's first college class taken in high school.

Additionally, the District would like to thank and recognize Rockwood ASSA ABLOY for donating a 3D printer to the District's Engineering and Technology classroom. The additional 3D printer will allow students to print more projects concurrently. The District is extremely grateful for the support of community organizations, businesses, and individuals.

### **Board Member Recognition**

School board directors are elected to govern and make informed decisions on behalf of our public schools, for the benefit of our students and communities. The work is challenging and complex, and directors dedicate hours each month to board business. In honor of their time and dedication all year long, January is designated as School Director Recognition Month.

In honor of the commitment and time school board members volunteer on behalf of our schools and communities, the school district observed and celebrated School Director Recognition Month in January. The work of these public servants is vital to the success of our students and schools. From voting on budgets to adopting policy to conducting strategic planning, school boards make key decisions that drive public education. The work is both complex and diverse. School directors devote, on average, 10 hours each month to board business. Board service is unpaid, and school directors are often motivated to pursue the role out of a desire to benefit their community.

The majority of school directors indicated their primary reason for serving is to give back or contribute to public education or to improve educational outcomes for students. Please take time to thank your elected school directors for their time and effort. Their efforts help ensure that each student has opportunities to thrive and to safeguard that our school district continues to have a bright future. The nine members of the RASD Board are:

President- Dr. Tyler Pritts, Vice President- Mr. Adam Sembower, Treasurer- Mr. Brad Pletcher, Mrs. Ashley Baker, Mr. Seth Foreman, Dr. Hailey Miller, Mrs. Melanie Monticue, Mr. Matthew Pritts, and Mr. Noah Wareham.

### **District Finances**

The District remains in strong financial health overall. We encourage you to review the financial charts and graphs included in this newsletter, which reflect the District's audited revenue, expenditures, and fund balance.

The District ended the 2023-2024 fiscal year with a surplus that was larger than usual, driven by higher-than-expected revenue from the State, earned income tax, and interest income. Additionally, several "one-time expenditures" were deferred to the following fiscal year. As a result, the District closed the year with a fund balance exceeding \$6.7 million. This increased fund balance will enable the District to complete much-needed infrastructure projects without taking on debt or borrowing funds.

(Superintendent cont. page 3)

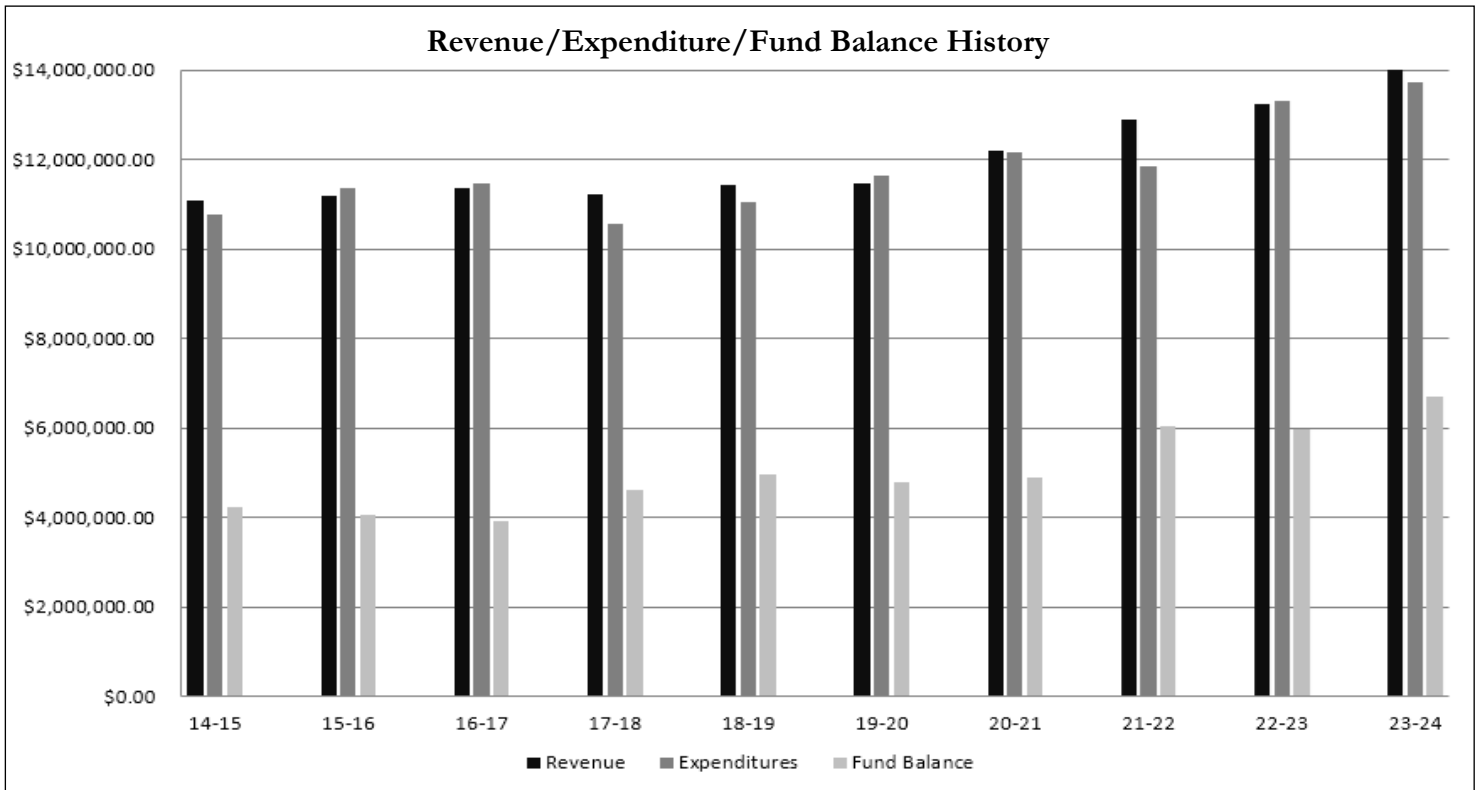
**(Superintendent cont.)**

In partnership with SiteLogIQ, a leading energy efficiency and facility solutions company, the District is actively working to improve energy efficiency, maintain our facilities, and secure long-term infrastructure upgrades. SiteLogIQ has structured the upgrades into three phases.

The first phase of work is scheduled for this summer and will focus on upgrading the District’s aging electrical system, where critical components and controls are nearly 70 years old. This phase is estimated to cost \$1,068,659.00 and will be carried out by Darr Construction, Inc. of Berlin. Work will begin after the last day of school and is set to be completed before the school year resumes in August. Please note that most of the District’s buildings will be closed and inaccessible during July, as power will be shut off to the buildings. To accommodate this closure, summer activities, work schedules, and vacation plans are being adjusted accordingly.

The future phases of the project will involve more extensive and costly upgrades, including the installation of new propane/natural gas condensing boilers, domestic water heating systems, hot water pumps and piping, select HVAC replacements, and updated building controls.

In the coming months, the School Board will meet to develop the operating budget for the 2025-2026 school year. The Board will prioritize and decide which "one-time expenditures" to include in next year’s budget, in addition to the infrastructure work planned for this summer.



Year	Revenue	Expenditure	Fund Balance
14-15	\$11,092,170.00	\$10,774,720.00	\$4,229,800.00
15-16	\$11,194,089.00	\$11,370,769.00	\$4,053,120.00
16-17	\$11,343,107.00	\$11,461,423.00	\$3,934,804.00
17-18	\$11,234,083.00	\$10,551,305.00	\$4,617,582.00
18-19	\$11,418,576.00	\$11,054,549.00	\$4,981,609.00
19-20	\$11,466,281.00	\$11,641,501.00	\$4,806,389.00
20-21	\$12,211,284.00	\$12,166,728.00	\$4,905,593.00
21-22	\$12,882,695.00	\$11,849,430.00	\$6,050,563.00
22-23	\$13,227,598.00	\$13,311,169.00	\$5,966,992.00
23-24	\$14,437,826.00	\$13,723,232.00	\$6,707,062.00

# RASD Events and Information



## Important Dates & Events

*(Dates are tentative and subject to change)*

### March

20 & 21 Kindergarten Registration

### April

17 Early Dismissal - 12:30 pm  
 18-21 Easter/Spring Break  
 24 H.S. Band Concert  
 26 Prom  
 29 Elem. Chorus Concert (grades 3-4)  
 30 Honor Society Induction Ceremony

### May

6 Spring Chorus Concert (grades 5-12)  
 23 - 26 Senior Trip  
 26 Memorial Day - No School  
 27 Elementary Track & Field

### June

5 Graduation (tentative)  
 5 Last Day of School (tentative)

## Kindergarten Registration



Children of the Rockwood Area School District, who are five years of age by September 1, 2025, are eligible to enroll in the Rockwood elementary full day kindergarten program.

### Registration is scheduled for March 20 & 21, 2025

Parents/guardians must contact Cindy Miller at 814-926-4688 ext. 1117 ASAP to receive enrollment information and begin the registration process.

We are excited about serving your family!

**Note:** Parents/guardians are reminded to provide a list of each child's immunizations.



## Congratulations Class of 2025

Adams, Isaac	Manescu, Alexandru
Atchison, Skylar	Marko, Audrey
Barkman, Adeline	Mathias, Ruth
Barkman, Franklin	May, Jonathan
Barto, Julianne	Nedrow-Galway, Hannah
Beals, Sydney	Ohler, Kalynne
Beener, Amelia	Pletcher, Elika
Berkey, Hunter	Pletcher, Ethan
Bowlin, Emma	Ream, Elwood
Brown, Carson	Ritenour, Zander
Bruening, Davis	Ross, Samson
Fazenbaker, Riley	Salyer, Tanner
Gary, Logan	Sanner, Adam
Gary, Natalie	Santillo, Emma
Gerhard, Kaleb	Sembower, Paul
Gould, Delaney	Shaffer, Wyatt
Grimes, Kylee	Smith, Tessa
Gross, Jaden	Snyder, Nathan
Handwerk, Conner	Stahl, Tyler
Hay, Ace	Strait, Nicholas
Herwig, Kendle	Struckoff, Austin
Hetz, Lillian	Tomcanin, Jeremiah
Hostetler, Elizabeth	Trimpey, Max
Hunt, Noah	Wagner, Bryce
Jones, Lauryn	Weaver, Chloe
Lishia, Coreena	White, Ava
Lishia, Kaitlyn	

## Bedtime Tips for Children and Teenagers

A good night's sleep is about getting to sleep, staying asleep, and waking up feeling refreshed in the morning. Most children fall asleep within 20 minutes of going to bed.

How long it takes children to get to sleep can depend on how sleepy their bodies are. Also, daytime and bedtime routines can affect when children get to sleep. Bedtime routines help children wind down before bedtime.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set up a bedtime routine</li> <li>• Keep regular sleep and wake times</li> <li>• Check noise and light in your child's bedroom</li> <li>• Make sure your child feels safe at night</li> <li>• Eat the right amount at the right time</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relax before bedtime</li> <li>• Avoid caffeine</li> <li>• Avoid the clock</li> <li>• Get plenty of natural light in the day</li> <li>• Keep older children's naps early and short</li> </ul> |
|--|---|



Turn off devices at least one hour before bedtime. Pausing screen-related activities at least an hour before bedtime gives your brain a chance to wind down and signals to your body that it's time to sleep. Keep digital technology out of your child's room at night. Dim the lights an hour before bed for children of preschool age and younger. If your child uses a night-light, choose a dim, warm-colored globe, rather than a bright, white, cool-colored globe.

# RASD Welcomes New Faculty and Support Staff

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## Mrs. Lauren Svonavec - Elementary Special Education Teacher

Mrs. Svonavec joined the district at the beginning of the 2024-2025 school year with over ten years of teaching experience. After graduating high school, Lauren attended California University of Pennsylvania, where she obtained her Bachelors degree in elementary and special education. Shortly thereafter, she earned her Masters degree from Slippery Rock University. Lauren has proven to be a dedicated educator who is determined to provide students with meaningful learning opportunities at any grade level or ability. She is a valuable addition to the team.



## Mr. Matthew Blubaugh - High School Social Studies Teacher

Mr. Blubaugh is a graduate of the Meyersdale Area School District. Upon graduation, he continued his education at PennWest University in California, PA, where he earned a Bachelor's degree in education with a major in social studies. Last year, Matt completed his student teaching experience at Rockwood, and in January of this year, he joined the faculty as a full-time teacher. Additionally, Matt has a strong background in technology and computers. He is passionate about exploring innovative and effective ways to present information to students. We are delighted to have him on board!

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## Rockwood Area School District Employment Opportunities:

The Rockwood Area School District actively accepts applications for the following **positions**:

- ◆ **Substitute Teachers:** Qualification Requirements - Applicants must be certified and/or have a Bachelor's Degree - Information on how to become a substitute teacher can be found on the district's website: [www.rockwoodschoools.org](http://www.rockwoodschoools.org) under the Departments tab; Administration.
  - \* Pay rate for sub teachers is \$150/day
- ◆ **Substitute Nurses** - RN License Required:
  - \* Pay rate for certified school nurses, who provide coverage during the absence of the regular school nurse, is \$225/day
  - \* Pay rate for an RN, LPN, or CSN who provides coverage on a field trip or provides health assistance or coverage for the regular school nurse, under the direct supervision of the regular school nurse, is \$175/day
- ◆ **Substitute Instructional and Special Education Paraprofessionals**
- ◆ **Substitute Custodians** (various shifts)

Substitute teaching and nursing applicants should send a letter of interest and application information (standard PA application, letters of reference, transcripts, certificate, clearances, physical, Act 168 forms, etc.), to: Mark Bower, Superintendent, Rockwood Area School District, 439 Somerset Ave., Rockwood, PA 15557.

All other applicants should contact the Business Office at 814-926-4688 ext. 1107 for an application. EOE

Individuals interested in coaching for the district should visit the district's website to review the list of open positions. Coaching applications are accepted for each sport for a two-week window after completion of the final competition (regular and/or playoff game, whichever is later). Please contact the Athletic Director, Nicholas Buterbaugh, at 814-926-4688 or [nbuterbaugh@rockwoodschoools.org](mailto:nbuterbaugh@rockwoodschoools.org) for additional information.

Applications, as well as other required employment forms, documents, and clearances can be found on the Rockwood Area School District's website: [www.rockwoodschoools.org](http://www.rockwoodschoools.org)



"Investing in our children through love, education, and support, is the best investment we can make for a brighter tomorrow".





Dear Rockwood Jr./Sr. High School Families and Community Members,

As spring arrives, we are excited to share the latest highlights and updates from our Jr./Sr. High School! This newsletter celebrates the achievements of our students and showcases the incredible opportunities that continue to enrich our school community. It is truly inspiring to see the dedication, hard work, and success of our students and staff, and we are pleased to recognize their accomplishments.

We are proud to celebrate the achievements of our students, with 130 earning High Honor Roll status (3.5 GPA or higher) and 59 achieving Honor Roll (3.0–3.4 GPA). Congratulations to each of these hardworking students. Your dedication and commitment to excellence are truly commendable! Keep up the great work!

Our College in High School program continues to thrive, offering students invaluable opportunities to earn college credits while still in high school. Through partnerships with St. Francis University, Allegany College of Maryland, and the University of Pittsburgh, students can accumulate up to 32 college credits - providing a significant head start as they prepare for their post-secondary education.

Additionally, our Somerset County Technology Center students continue to excel, earning certifications in their respective trades. We have three students participating in co-op programs and four students engaged in school-to-work experiences, where they split their day between classroom learning and real-world industry experience.

The Class of 2025 will showcase their talents and skills through their senior projects on March 14. Students will present to panels of teachers, business professionals, and community members; sharing their research on chosen career paths. As part of the process, they will create a presentation highlighting their interests and personal experiences, including: coursework, employment, job shadowing, and community service. During the presentations, students will engage in discussions and answering and asking questions about potential future careers in fields such as: healthcare, technical trades, veterinary sciences, wildlife management, applied sciences, real estate, missionary services, sports communication, science, government, business, and education. These projects provide valuable insights and networking opportunities; helping students prepare for their next steps. We are incredibly grateful to the 75 community members who will volunteer their time to support and guide our students during this event.

We are incredibly proud of our students' dedication to community service and the positive impact they make. A new opportunity for National Honor Society members is volunteering at the Somerset County Mobile Food Bank, held at the Rockwood Community Bible Church. Each month, students play a vital role in distributing essential items to families in need, demonstrating compassion, leadership, and a strong commitment to serving others.

Junior High Fun Night made a successful return this year, providing students with a fun and engaging opportunity to build positive peer relationships while making healthy choices. A total of 122 students in grades 7-9 participated in the event at Urban Air Adventure Park in Irwin, PA. Thanks to a grant from Bedford/Somerset DBHS and the Rockwood Area School District, students enjoyed an exciting and meaningful experience. Before leaving, the Rockwood SADD chapter led an interactive presentation covering important topics such as: social media awareness, drug and alcohol prevention, and the importance of making good decisions. Students also had the chance to win gift cards, adding to the excitement. The event's goal was to reinforce positive peer interactions while promoting a healthy, responsible lifestyle.

We recognize that students and families face many challenges, and we are committed to providing mental and emotional support through various resources. Our teachers offer daily support in the classroom, fostering a safe and supportive learning environment. Additionally, our Student Assistance Program (SAP) helps connect students with the resources they need. Our SAP team, guidance counselor, school social worker, and school-based therapist are all available to provide support as needed. If you believe your child could benefit from additional mental or emotional support, please don't hesitate to reach out for assistance. Thank you for your continued support in celebrating and encouraging our students' success! As always, please continue to visit our website for news and student information. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Mrs. Misty Demchak - Rockwood Jr./Sr. High School Principal

# **RASD Recognized by the U.S. Department of State as a Medallion School**

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## **U.S. Department of State-Sponsored Exchange Students**

Each year, almost 2,000 extraordinary young people from around the world receive a highly competitive, merit-based scholarship to study at a U.S. high school and live with volunteer host families. These future leaders are participants in the Department's Congress-Bundestag Youth Exchange (CBYX), Future Leaders Exchange (FLEX), and Youth Exchange and Study (YES) programs. Host schools help build diplomatic bridges with other nations by leaving positive, lasting impressions of the United States on their exchange students.

## **Become a Medallion Member School**

By enrolling a U.S. Department of State-sponsored exchange student, high schools become Medallion Member Schools. These schools set themselves apart by demonstrating a commitment to academic and cultural enrichment for their students through international exchange. Medallion Member Schools may pair the official medallion with their school name and advertise on banners, newsletters, websites, signage, clothing designs, and more.

## **Create Global Citizens**

The world is increasingly interconnected. By participating in the Medallion Program, you can prepare your students to become global citizens. Exchange students introduce your students to another culture and increase their international awareness without requiring them to travel. CBYX, FLEX and YES students also positively impact your school through sharing their countries and cultures, engaging in extracurricular activities, and volunteering in their communities.

Rockwood has the pleasure of welcoming three foreign exchange students this year. They are as follows:

- Tammo Leeferink - visiting from Germany and residing with Irvin and Lisa Kimmel.
- Alexandru (Alex) Manescu - visiting from Moldova and residing with Cheryl Henry.
- Adrian Facal Castro - visiting from Spain and residing with Noah and Danielle Wareham.

We would like to express our sincerest gratitude to Martha Mitchell - local PAX coordinator, the district's Board of Directors, host families, community members, and staff for continuously supporting this program. If you would like more information on how to become a host family, please contact Martha Mitchell at 571-437-9534.

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## **Spotlighting Student Activity**

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### **Rockwood FFA: Celebrating Achievements and Embracing Opportunities**

The Rockwood Future Farmers of America (FFA) chapter began with an eventful start this school year; filled with meaningful projects, student achievements, and engaging community activities. As we navigate through the academic year, it's heartwarming to reflect on the impactful initiatives that we have embarked upon, showcasing the dedication and hard work of our student members.

One of the standout projects undertaken by the Rockwood FFA this year was the construction of turtle habitats in collaboration with the Fish and Boat Commission. This initiative not only contributes to local wildlife conservation but also allows our students to learn about aquatic ecosystems and the importance of preserving our natural resources. Engaging in hands-on projects like these enhances students' understanding of agriculture, environmental stewardship, and community service.

A significant highlight of our chapter's achievements is the recognition of four exceptional students who earned the prestigious Keystone Degree this year: Kendle Herwig, Glenn Millin, Seth Kimmel, and Gage Upton. This honor is awarded to students who complete a Supervised Agriculture Experience (SAE) project, demonstrating not only a commitment of at least 300 hours to an agriculture-related activity but also a dedication to 25 or more hours of community service.



Additional eligibility requirements include maintaining a minimum 2.0 GPA and active involvement in FFA events for at least three years. Their hard work and determination serve as an inspiration to all members of our chapter.

( cont. page 8 )



(Spotlighting Student Activity cont.)

Furthermore, we celebrate former Rockwood FFA student, Cameron Goodyear, who received the American Degree at the National FFA Convention held in October. This is the highest degree of the National FFA grants. Cameron was recognized for her outstanding involvement and achievements in agricultural education. She is currently pursuing her degree in agriculture education at Penn State; paving the way for her to inspire the next generation of agricultural leaders.

In October, our chapter was thrilled to have three students: Audrey Marko, Tyler Stahl, and Kourtney Ansell awarded with \$500.00 grants to support their SAE projects. These competitive grants were distributed to 20 county FFA members by a generous, anonymous donor who believes in fostering agricultural education within our community. We are immensely grateful for this support, which empowers our students to continue their learning and growth.



Looking ahead, we are excited about the spring semester and the activities it promises. We will be raising rainbow trout from eggs to be released in Little Piney Creek. Additionally, we are caring for 400-500 channel catfish in the agricultural room. The catfish will ultimately be released into Somerset Lake. These projects offer our students valuable experiences in aquaculture.

In February, we celebrated FFA week with Ag Olympics, a day filled with fun and friendly competition featuring ag-related games that bring together our students and the larger high school community. This event fosters camaraderie and uplifts the spirit of the FFA.

With a host of upcoming competitions, field trips, and our annual FFA banquet in May to honor our members and their families, the Rockwood FFA remains committed to "learning by doing." These experiences not only enhance our students' knowledge but also prepare them to become leaders in the field of agriculture. As always, we look forward to building upon our successes and continuing to advocate for agriculture within our community.



### Rockwood FBLA

Rockwood FBLA continues to demonstrate great success in the 2024-2025 school year, starting just as strong as they left off last year. On December 10, 2024, the Rockwood Chapter attended the annual Region 17 Leadership Conference to receive awards and placements. This conference determines which members advance to the State Leadership Conference in Hershey, Pennsylvania. Within the Rockwood chapter, there were numerous placements for testing events and competitive performances. The testing event members include: Julianne Barto, Kalyne Ohler, Ruthie Mathias, Hunter Berkey, Chloe Weaver, Sydney Beals, Jaden Gross, Lillian Hetz, Adeline Barkman, Nellie Keller, Autumn Mowry, Taylor Demchak, Avri Wareham, Faith Foy, Addison Barto, Mckenzie Bowers, Jayna Burke, Leah Foreman, Allie Jones, Maxwell Kemp, Izabella Livengood, Abram Minor, Miley Pletcher, Isabelle Schmuck, Teagan Ulderich, Annah Sechler, Paul Sembower, Haylie Snyder, Chloe Tressler, and Samantha Phillippi.

The competitive performance members include: Elika Pletcher - Sales Presentation and Fredricka Sutton - Data Analysis. Congratulations to these individuals for the hard work they have shown in FBLA, and best of luck as they compete at the State Leadership Conference this April!



## PUBLIC ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL EVENTS

The Board welcomes the public at activities and events sponsored by the school district, but the Board also acknowledges its duty to maintain order and preserve school facilities and health and safety during such events. Conditions, restrictions, and procedures to regulate public attendance and conduct at school and school-sponsored activities have been established. The Board has the authority to prohibit, at a school event, the attendance of any individual whose conduct may constitute a disruption. The district may limit attendance to designated areas or may limit the number of attendees to school events when necessary to protect the health and safety of students, staff, and the public, in accordance with Board-approved health and safety plans and guidance from state and local officials. The district expects mutual respect, civility and orderly conduct by all individuals attending school events on district property. Let's come together to create events that are fun, engaging, and positive for our students!

**SPORTS PHYSICALS** will be given at the school by the school physician in the spring. Details will be provided when the date and cost are confirmed.

### 2025 ROCKWOOD AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT ATHLETIC SCHEDULES

(all schedules are tentative and subject to change)



#### **Jr. High Baseball**

##### **Mar.**

18	Ferndale	4:30pm
25	@ Windber	4:30pm

##### **Apr.**

3	Meyersdale	4:30pm
8	North Star	4:30pm
9	@ Somerset	4:30pm
14	Everett	4:30pm
15	@ Berlin	4:30pm
24	Windber	4:00pm
29	@ Meyersdale	4:30pm

##### **May**

1	@ North Star	4:30pm
6	Berlin	4:30pm
12	Claysburg-Kimmel	4:30pm

Student athletes that participate in varsity and junior high boys' and girls' track are part of a cooperative sponsorship of sport between the Meyersdale Area School District, Rockwood Area School District, Salisbury Elk Lick School District, and Turkeyfoot Valley Area School District. These schedules, along with other athletic events, can be found on the athletic calendar of our district website: [rockwoodschoools.org](http://rockwoodschoools.org). Please visit our website during each season to confirm official game times.

Please remember, for everyone's safety, pets are **NOT** permitted on school property (except for service animals). *Thank You!*

#### **Varsity Baseball**

##### **Mar.**

18	@ Ferndale	4:15pm
24	@ Greater J-town	4:30pm
25	Windber	4:30pm
27	Tussey Mt.	4:30pm

##### **Apr.**

2	Shanksville	4:30pm
3	@ Meyersdale	4:30pm
5	@ Moshannon Valley	2:00pm
10	Blacklick Valley	4:30pm
11	@ North Star	4:00pm
14	@ Everett	4:30pm
15	Berlin	4:30pm
17	@ Fannett-Metal	4:30pm
22	@ McConnellsburg	4:30pm
24	@ Windber	4:30pm
28	@ Shanksville	4:30pm
29	Meyersdale	4:30pm

##### **May**

1	North Star	4:30pm
6	@ Berlin	4:30pm

#### **Varsity Softball**

##### **Mar.**

18	@ Ferndale	4:15pm
20	Everett	4:30pm
24	Greater J-town	4:30pm
25	Windber	4:30pm
27	Tussey Mt.	4:30pm

##### **Apr.**

1	@ Shade	4:30pm
3	@ Meyersdale	4:30pm
10	Blacklick Valley	4:30pm
11	@ North Star	4:30pm
14	@ Everett	4:30pm
15	Berlin	4:30pm
17	@ Fannett-Metal	4:30pm
21	Shade	4:30pm
22	@ McConnellsburg	4:30pm
24	@ Windber	4:30pm
25	@ Forbes Road	4:00pm
29	Meyersdale	4:30pm

##### **May**

1	North Star	4:30pm
6	@ Berlin	4:30pm
12	@ Claysburg-Kimmel	4:30pm



#### **Jr. High Softball**

##### **Mar.**

18	Ferndale	4:30pm
25	@ Windber	4:30pm

##### **Apr.**

1	Shanksville	4:30pm
3	Meyersdale	4:30pm
8	North Star	4:30pm
9	@ Somerset	4:30pm
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15	@ Berlin	4:30pm
24	Windber	4:30pm
29	@ Meyersdale	4:30pm

##### **May**

1	@ North Star	4:30pm
6	Berlin	4:30pm
8	@ Shanksville	4:00pm
12	Claysburg-Kimmel	4:30pm

## The Importance of School Bus Safety

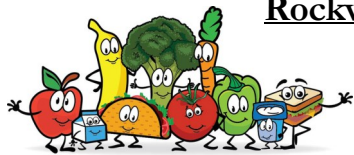
As we look towards the end of the school year, it's important to keep bus safety in our minds. With our schedules filling up and the weather getting nice, it's common for safety practices to go by the wayside when we're in a hurry. These 10 rules from the PA Department of Transportation are a reminder to all students when riding the bus:



1. Never run after the school bus if it has already left the bus stop.
2. Be aware - cross with care! Wait until the school bus has stopped all traffic before stepping onto the road.
3. Talk quietly; do not distract your school bus driver.
4. When waiting for the bus, stay away from traffic. Line up at least five giant steps away from the curb or the roadway to wait for the bus.
5. Get to the school bus stop five minutes early so you won't have to run across the road to catch the bus.
6. When the school bus is moving, always stay in your seat. Never put your head, arms, or hands out the window.
7. Never cross the street behind the school bus.
8. If you leave something on the bus or drop something outside of the bus, never go back for it. The driver may not see you and begin moving the bus.
9. If your school bus crosses railroad tracks, be calm and quiet so that your driver can listen for a train. Always obey your school bus driver's instructions so that he or she can make safe decisions.
10. Never push when getting on or off of the school bus.

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## Rockwood Area School District - Student Lunch Policy



The district permits students to incur reasonable charges for school meals. In an effort to ensure the effective operation of the district's food service program, the district establishes the following procedures for student payment of school meals.

- ◆ When a student reaches a balance of \$2.50 in their account, the cashier will notify the student of their current positive balance.
- ◆ When a student reaches a debt of five or more meals in their lunch account, the parents will receive a courtesy letter from the School Food Service Liaison to inform the parents of their child's status. The School Food Service Liaison will attach a copy of these procedures and the District's Food Services Policy to the letter.
- ◆ When a student reaches a debt of five or more meals in their lunch account, students will only be able to purchase a school food program meal (reimbursable meal). Additional individual items (extras) and a la carte items will not be available for purchase. However, students may purchase a meal from the a la carte line if the meal qualifies as a school program meal.
- ◆ When a student reaches a negative \$25.00 balance, a formal letter will be sent home by the School Food Service Liaison. This letter will inform the parents that unless the balance is corrected, a meeting with the building principal and the School Food Service Liaison will be requested. Additionally, further action may result with the local magistrate.

If a student is not eligible for free or reduced-price school meals under federal school meal programs and the student's school meal account reaches a negative balance of more than \$50.00 in a school year, the district may provide the student with alternative meals instead of school food program meals until the unpaid balance in the student's school meal account is paid or a payment plan has been established with the district to reduce the unpaid balance.

- \* **NOTE:** STUDENT LUNCH ACCOUNT BALANCES CANNOT BE ACCESSED THROUGH POWERSCHOOL. TO ACCURATELY TRACK YOUR CHILD'S LUNCH TRANSACTIONS, YOU MUST USE THE PAYFORIT SYSTEM. THANK YOU

# Guidance Information & Student Services

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## High School Guidance Information

**PSSA:** PSSA spring testing dates are as follows: (note: elementary and high school testing dates may differ)

\* English Language Arts: **April 21 - 25** - Grades 3 through 8

\* Math: **April 28 - May 2** - Grades 3 through 8

\* Science: **April 28 - May 2** - Grades 5 and 8



**Keystone Testing:** The testing window for the Keystone exams is **May 12 - 23**. The exams are in the areas of: Biology, Literature and Algebra I. Testing is for students who are currently enrolled in those classes and for students who did not score proficient or above during previous Keystone testing.

**Parent cooperation throughout the state assessments is greatly appreciated. It is important that all students who are required to take the PSSA and Keystone exams are present during testing dates. Please keep these dates in mind when scheduling appointments and vacations. Detailed information regarding state assessments will be sent home closer to the testing dates.**

**Seniors:** Please view the Student Services webpage (under the “Departments” tab) on the Rockwood Area School District website, rockwoodschoools.org, for college and scholarship information. Scholarships can also be found in the Guidance Office. Students planning to attend post-secondary education should have completed the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid). If you have not done this, please complete the application as soon as possible. Please direct all transcript requests to Shanda Pletcher at sjletcher@rockwoodschoools.org or by calling 814-926-4688 ext. 1127. Transcripts can take several business days to complete. Please stop in the Guidance Office regularly for scholarship opportunities or if you have any questions.

**Juniors:** College bound students should be looking into colleges and admissions criteria. This is also the time to be preparing if you plan to participate in the School to Work Program during your senior year. This program is for students who are on track to graduate but are requesting to report to their job during the school day. Students report to school in the morning for their credit courses, required for graduation. They are then able to sign out to report to their place of employment. Information regarding this program will be discussed in detail during an upcoming meeting with juniors. Questions can be directed to the Guidance Office.

**Sophomores & Freshmen:** All 9th grade students will be given the opportunity to tour the programs offered at the Somerset County Technology Center (SCTC) during the fall of their 9th grade year. In December of the same year, students who are interested in SCTC may choose two programs of interest to visit again. Interested students can then apply to SCTC for enrollment their 10th grade year. Once enrolled in SCTC, students must successfully complete their four core courses to remain in the program. This is a good time to be exploring career interests and post-graduation plans. Please be sure to stay on track with credits and continue to explore career paths of interest. Current freshmen who applied to SCTC should soon be advised about acceptance into the program. An open house at SCTC will be held in the spring for 9th grade students and parents to attend.

**7th & 8th Grade:** Students should check their grades on a regular basis, and reach out to their teachers if they need assistance or tutoring. Students who fail two or more core subjects will repeat the grade level the following year.

**Grades 7 - 11:** In the coming weeks, Mrs. Opfar, High School Guidance Counselor, will be meeting with students in each grade level to discuss schedules. All students will be completing their scheduling forms for next year. Each student will bring home a scheduling sheet that needs to be signed by a parent/guardian. Please keep in mind, students are required to earn 26 credits between their 9th - 12th grade years. It is the responsibility of each student to ensure that their yearly credit requirements (at least seven per school year) are being met. If you have any questions regarding your child’s schedule for next year, please contact the Guidance Office at 814-926-4688.

## Elementary School Guidance Information

This year has been an exciting and enriching time for elementary students. In September, we conducted safety lessons for all grades, welcoming K-1st grade parents to participate. November brought our annual career fair, where professionals from various fields spoke with our 3rd-6th grade students about workplace success and their respective careers. At the end of February, K-4th grade students attended the Good Touch, Bad Touch presentation, promoting personal safety awareness. In early March, 5th grade students had the opportunity to tour the Somerset County Technology Center and explore potential career paths.

Alongside our many career-focused activities, guidance lessons have continued throughout the year, covering a wide range of important topics. In addition to lessons on social skills, friendship skills, responsibility, conflict resolution, I-messages, and teamwork, the Botvin LifeSkills program has been introduced in 3rd-5th grade classrooms. Many lessons also highlight a Character Trait of the Month, with our current focus on empathy.

This year marks the launch of our new positive behavior incentive program, PowerUps, and students have been working diligently to earn rewards. Both students and faculty have enjoyed collaborating to promote positive behavior and achieve incentives. We are excited about all the opportunities in the elementary school.

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## **“Notes” From The Nurse**

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### The Importance of Eating Breakfast Every Day

We’ve all heard that breakfast is the most important meal of the day. Beginning each day with a healthy and nutritious breakfast is a great habit that can help children and adults on the path towards a healthy weight. Breakfast may help children pay attention, perform problem solving tasks, and improve memory. Breakfast may also improve school performance such as improved test scores and a decrease in the number of visits to the school nurse. The Rockwood Area School District participates in the Community Eligibility Provision program through the Pennsylvania Department of Education. All students of the district receive breakfast at no charge.

For many of us, breakfast has to be a fast, portable meal; however, it should include a serving of the following:

- A protein-rich food such as: low-fat milk, yogurt, cheese, or peanut butter
- A whole-grain (complex carbohydrate) such as: a whole-grain bagel or whole-grain cereals
- A fruit or vegetable rich in vitamin C such as: an orange, apple, or strawberries.

Breakfast supplies important nutrients that are typically not made up during the day.

Did you know, an apple's primary nutritional benefit is in the pectin and fiber? Apples contain as much fiber as a whole bowl of cereal. Natural chemicals called flavonoids may play a role in prevention of certain cancers and heart disease. The average American eats about 120 apples each year. Add chopped apple to yogurt, oatmeal, or cereal. Top toasted whole-grain bread with peanut butter or spread peanut butter on apple slices.

These following tips may help ease the rush of breakfast in the mornings:

- Stock your kitchen/pantry with healthy breakfast options.
- Prepare as much as you can the night before. Let kids help plan and prepare breakfast.
- Wake up 10 minutes earlier in the morning.
- Eat breakfast prepared by the school cafeterias.

Here is a breakfast recipe the whole family can make together and enjoy.

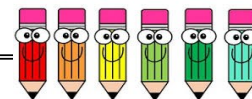
### Apple Pie Oats Recipe

6 cups water  
2 cups apples, cored and chopped  
½ cup honey or pure maple syrup  
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon  
½ teaspoon vanilla  
4 cups rolled quick oats

Bring water to a boil in a 4-quart pot. Add each ingredient in order. For a sweeter taste, add more honey or maple syrup. Simmer for 5 minutes. Turn off heat and let sit for 5 minutes with the lid on. Serves 6.  
Top with a spoonful of plain yogurt, if desired. Enjoy!







Dear Rockwood Community,

This year, our elementary school is dedicated to “Building Dreams Together”. We believe that every child has the potential to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally when supported in the right environment. Our dedicated faculty, staff, and administration are committed to nurturing each child's learning journey, and we hope you've witnessed meaningful growth and development in your child.

Our students have been actively engaged in learning through thoughtfully designed classroom activities aligned with Pennsylvania Core Standards. They have also taken part in exciting events such as our annual Science Fair, Scrabble Competition, and fall and spring reading competitions, along with many other enriching experiences. The projects created by students and their families were truly remarkable, showcasing a deep understanding of science, vocabulary, reading, and mathematics.

Each student has the POWER to achieve great things, and our school community has embraced this guiding principle. POWER stands for Pride, Ownership, Working Together, Empathy, and Respect/Responsibility. Throughout the year, students, teachers, staff, and administrators have explored the POWER of positive decision-making. Students are encouraged to take pride in their work and choices while also taking ownership of their actions and behaviors, fostering a supportive learning environment. By working together, our school community strengthens learning, reinforces positive behavior, and builds meaningful connections with community programs - all of which benefit our children. Empathy helps students understand how their actions affect others, while respect for themselves and those around them creates a positive and inclusive atmosphere. Finally, responsibility is demonstrated through completing tasks, homework, and classroom activities—essential habits for lifelong learning and success.

We deeply value the strong connection between Rockwood Elementary and our community. As the saying goes, it takes a village to raise a child, and we recognize that parents are a child's first and most influential teachers. We are grateful for the unwavering support that extends beyond our school walls - whether from family, neighbors, or friends - all working together to nurture our students' growth. At Rockwood, our Parent Involvement Initiatives are designed to strengthen family engagement and create meaningful opportunities for connection. Events such as Trunk or Treat, Moms and Muffins, and Parent Advisory/Title I Schoolwide Planning Committee meetings have played a key role in shaping our outreach efforts. We believe that classroom and school events help foster a strong sense of belonging and community. Research shows that parent engagement is the number one indicator of a child's academic success, and we encourage all families to take part in upcoming activities. Stay tuned for more opportunities to get involved. We look forward to partnering with you in your child's educational journey!

This spring, our students will have the opportunity to participate in a variety of exciting educational field trips and events. A highlight of the season will be Track and Field Day for 2nd to 6th graders, taking place on May 27th. Our field trips are thoughtfully selected to align with the curriculum, providing students with meaningful, real-world learning experiences. Thanks to the generous support of our PTO, we are able to make these trips affordable for all families. Each grade level enjoys a unique experience, from kindergarteners exploring Yogi Bear's Jellystone Park to 6th graders embarking on a day trip to Washington, D.C. Additionally, we are thrilled to announce the return of the Talent Extravaganza, hosted by Student Council, on March 12th. We look forward to celebrating our students' talents and providing them with enriching opportunities both inside and outside the classroom!

The Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) tests will soon be here for students in grades 3 through 6. These assessments help guide our school's educational approach and provide vital data to support students who need additional help. We encourage families to support their children by promoting healthy routines and encouraging them to do their best. Testing will take place the weeks of April 22 and April 28, 2025.

**(Elem. Principal cont.)**

The Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) program has been implemented to address individual student needs. Using data from assessments like DIBELS, Developmental Reading Assessments (DRAs), Link-It, and classroom tests, we can provide tailored instruction for students at different levels. Students who need extra support receive additional instructional time to ensure they continue to grow and succeed.

I warmly welcome parents and community members to reach out with any comments, concerns, or questions. My door is always open, and I am here to support you in ensuring the success of our children and our community. Education is a shared responsibility, and together, we can make a meaningful impact on our students' growth. Children learn through both observation and practice, and every day presents an opportunity to guide and encourage them toward achieving their goals. Please feel free to contact me with any needs related to Rockwood Area Elementary School. Thank you for your continued support and dedication to our children's success!

Jonathan Hale - Elementary Principal



## **PTO News & Information** .....

Getting closer to the end of the school year provides an opportune time to update the Rockwood community on everything your local PTO has accomplished and the events that are still to come.

The elementary school's Health-A-Thon was held in September. Due to the support from families and community members, the PTO raised funds for upcoming field trips and other fun activities planned for students.

PTO held its weeklong Fall Book Fair in October. In addition to fueling our children's desire to read books, we were pleased to be able to purchase some new books and new releases for the elementary school library.

Family Fun Night was also held in October in conjunction with the Trunk or Treat event and a "glow dance".

In November, the PTO supported the 6th grade Christmas Craft Store event. The community actively participates in this yearly event and supports our local vendors and craftspeople.

In February, the PTO held a Marianna's Sub and Pizza sale fundraiser. The PTO would sincerely like to thank the community and parents for their support by purchasing items from students. The funds raised are used to provide prizes to students throughout the school year and for activities such as the end-of-year snow cone truck.

Additional events are currently being scheduled for the remainder of the school year. PTO members enjoy supporting the elementary students and staff by assisting with the following events: provide an egg hunt for pre-k through 1st grade children, assist with track & field day, provide snacks for students during PSSA testing, and provide two scholarship stipends to two senior year students.

The PTO's success is largely based on the generosity of the community in supporting our fundraisers. We want to also recognize local businesses that continue to step forward to fund and help our mission - to fully support the children, staff, and faculty of the Rockwood Area School District through events, activities, recognition, and appreciation. Thank you ALL for your support!

For the most up to date information on PTO events, please reference our local Rockwood PTO Facebook page.

Keep in mind, the PTO is ALWAYS looking for new members or for those that just want to help with specific events throughout the year. Meetings are held the first Thursday of each month at 5:30 pm in the elementary library. Please join us in creating wonderful moments and memories for our children!

### Current PTO Officers:

President – Joanie Pritts

Vice President/Treasurer - Ashley Shrum

Secretary – Alyssa Thomas

# Rockwood Area School District

## Hall of Fame Nomination Form - 2024-2025



### Criteria:

- A Rockwood High School graduate of at least five years
- Achievement of excellence as recognized by peers and/or media
- Fields of excellence:
  - Letters and Humanities
  - Arts
  - Athletics
  - Science
  - A significant contribution to the health, welfare and/or freedom of the local, national or world community.

Awardees will be honored at the annual high school awards assembly in May/June, and their name will be added to a permanent plaque in the school. All nominations will remain on file for five years and can be reconsidered. If you would like to nominate someone, please complete the nomination form below and **return it no later than April 11, 2025** to:

Rockwood Area School District  
Attn: Sherry/Administration Office  
439 Somerset Avenue  
Rockwood, PA 15557

-----  
Name of Nominee: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone#: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

RAHS graduating class of (enter year): \_\_\_\_\_

Field(s) of excellence (please mark all that apply):

- Letters and Humanities
- Arts
- Athletics
- Science
- A significant contribution to the health, welfare and/or freedom of the local, national or world community.

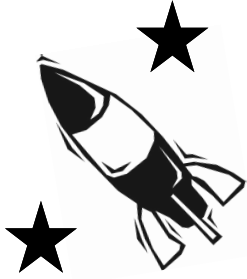
**\*Please include a brief summary of the above nominee's achievements on a separate page.**

Nominated by: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone#: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Rockwood Area School District  
439 Somerset Ave.  
Rockwood, PA 15557

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**RESIDENT**  
**ROCKWOOD, PA 15557**

**School Board**

Dr. Tyler Pritts

**President**

Mr. Adam Sembower

**Vice President**

Mr. Brad Pletcher

**Treasurer**

Mrs. Ashley Baker

Mr. Seth Foreman

Dr. Hailey Miller

Mrs. Melanie Monticue

Mr. Matthew Pritts

Mr. Noah Wareham

**Administrative Staff**

Mr. Mark Bower

**Superintendent**

Mrs. Misty Demchak

**H.S. Principal**

Mr. Jonathan Hale

**Elem. Principal**

Mr. Nicholas Buterbaugh  
**Asst. Principal K-12/A.D.**

Mr. Jordan Svonavec

**Business Manager**

**Student Services Staff**

Mrs. Patti Jo Opfar

**H.S. Guidance Counselor**

Mrs. Brandi Wedge

**Elem. Guidance Counselor**

Mrs. Rebekah Marietta

**School Nurse**

Mrs. Susan Clark

**School Social Worker**

**School Phone Numbers**

High School Office	814-926-4688 Opt. 3
Elementary Office	814-926-4688 Opt. 4
Administration Office	814-926-4688 Opt. 5
Guidance/Student Services	814-926-4688 Opt. 6
IT/Computer Dept.	814-352-4269
Metz—Food Service Dept.	814-926-4688 ext. 1111

**Visit us on the Web**

[www.rockwoodschoools.org](http://www.rockwoodschoools.org)

**Following is a partial listing of information and links that can be found on our website:**

- Cafeteria Menus
- Cafeteria Balances - **PayForIt Program**
- Contact Information
- Forms & Downloads
- Guidance Office Information
- Lesson Plans for Teachers
- Parent Notification System - **School Messenger**
- School Board Meeting Info.
- School Calendars
- Sports Scores and Schedules
- Student Grades & Attendance - **PowerSchool**

If you haven't visited our site yet,  
please take a few moments to check it out.

