

The Rockbridge County School Board held their regular meeting on Tuesday, February 10, 2026, at the County of Rockbridge Administration Building.

Present: Chairman Kathy Burant; Trustees Catie Brown, Lenna Ojure, Neil Whitmore; Superintendent Phillip Thompson and Clerk Rhonda Humphries. Absent: Trustee Corey Berkstresser.

## **CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Burant called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m.

**CHANGES TO THE AGENDA:** None

## **STUDENT / STAFF RECOGNITION:**

Ms. Kristyn Mazingo, Educational Diagnostician, provided information on the IMD “I’m Determined” [Self-Determination] program in Rockbridge County Public Schools. The program has been in the RCPS for one year. Rockbridge County is the only school division in Virginia that has two youth leaders from the same high school. She introduced Miss Emma Mazingo and Mr. Jude Braman, students, Rockbridge County High School, who are youth leaders in the Valley Region. Miss Mazingo and Mr. Braman both attended the Annual Youth and Family Summit in June 2025.

Ms. Mazingo, Miss Mazingo and Mr. Braman, provided information on the IMD program. IMD supports families, youth, and educators. The elements of self-determination are:

- Students using skills such as choice making, decision making, and problem solving;
- Students set goals and work towards achieving them by developing abilities such as goal setting and attainment, self-regulation, and self-advocacy;
- Students practice beliefs such as Internal Locus of Control, self-efficacy, and self-awareness at home, school, and in the community.

Ms. Mazingo stated that RCPS has implemented the One-Pager document for all students with disabilities to increase IEP participation. The purpose of the One-Pager document is for the student to help express what they feel they need and any other things that they want to talk about during the IEP meeting. It allows the student to feel empowered to be able to take control of their own education in that way. Some schools and grade levels have implemented the One-Pager for all students with or without disabilities. She stated that Miss Mazingo, as a youth leader, has provided multiple professional developments on the IMD Tool, the One-Pager.

Ms. Mazingo stated that the future goals for the Rockbridge County Public Schools division are:

- Student-led IEP which will build participation across all ages and grade levels;
- Integrate other IMD tools such as Good Day Plan and Goal Setting;
- Echo Event and Youth Panel

Ms. Mazingo provided the website for the program: [imdetermined.org](http://imdetermined.org)

- Trustee Whitmore inquired at what grade level students can participate in the program.
  - Ms. Mazingo stated that you must be fourteen years of age to attend the summit and that all students, K-12, can complete the one-pager. She stated that staff have been very supportive. She stated that Fairfield Elementary School had all students, disability or not, to complete a one-pager document.

Ms. Mazingo stated that in year two, the goal is for students to run their IEP meetings. The year three goal is for RCPS to host a mini event for families in Rockbridge County, and invite Lexington City and Buena Vista City.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

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

- Minutes: 1) January 7, 2026 [Discipline Committee Hearing]; 2) January 13, 2026 [Regular Meeting]; 3) January 15, 2026 [Joint Meeting with RC Board of Supervisors]
- Field Trip Requests
- Fundraiser Requests
- Application for Use of Facilities
- Appointments and Resignations

### **Appointments**

### **Support Staff**

Jennifer Bushnell, Teacher Intern, Maury River Middle School, effective January 21, 2026

Breanna Burden, Teacher Intern, Rockbridge County High School, effective February 5, 2026

**Substitute**  
Francis Benavente

**Food Service Substitute**  
Janet Niday

**Support Staff**  
**Resignation**  
Emily Lilley, Teacher Assistant, Mountain View Elementary School, resigning effective January 20, 2026  
Alexis Kessinger, Teacher Assistant, Mountain View Elementary School, resigning effective February 20, 2026

**Support Staff**  
**Retirement**  
Kelly Cox, School Nutrition Supervisor, Central Office, retiring effective end of the 2025-2026 school year  
Lisa Van Ravenswaay, Administrative Assistant, Rockbridge County High School, retiring effective end of the 2025-2026 school year

**Professional Staff**  
**Retirement**  
Jean Little, Speech-Language Pathologist, Fairfield Elementary School, retiring effective end of the 2025-2026 school year  
Sherry Higgins, Reading Specialist, Fairfield Elementary School, retiring effective end of the 2025-2026 school year  
David Miller, Teacher, Rockbridge County High School, retiring effective end of the 2025-2026 school year  
Jennifer Houck, Teacher, Division, retiring effective end of the 2025-2026 school year  
Wanda Schemehorn, School Counselor, Natural Bridge Elementary School, retiring effective end of the 2025-2026 school year  
Susan Mahood, Teacher, Central Elementary School, retiring effective end of the 2025-2026 school year

- Business Items
  - Approved appropriations to Fund 50 for news grants in the amount of \$605,830.00
  - Approved Monthly Financials in the amount of \$3,886,944.73.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None

**BUDGET PLANNING:** None

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:** None

**INSTRUCTIONAL REPORT:** None

**INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:** None

**ACTION ITEMS:**  
Chairman Burant stated that Dr. Thompson plans to retire on December 31, 2026. The Rockbridge County School Board has begun to determine the resources available for the Rockbridge County Public Schools Superintendent Search, including the services of the Virginia School Board Association. The Rockbridge County School Board are members of the VSBA and have kept in close contact with them over the years. Dr. Thompson is a product of the VSBA Superintendent Search. The VSBA has an extensive knowledge of the state laws affecting the hiring process and a vested interest in making sure we are able to choose the best superintendent for our community. VSBA will assist in helping to create our process, including developing a list of characteristics desired in our Superintendent. They will also help us create stakeholder surveys to learn what our community is also looking for. Because of VSBA’s national connection, the National Affiliation of Superintendent Searchers will also be a part of the process; the search will be nationwide. VSBA will also supervise the vetting process and screen our candidates, including background checks and

matching up the applicants' characteristics and experiences. While the VSBA does not participate in the interviews, they will continue to advise the Rockbridge County School members on procedures during the interview and screening process until we hire a new Superintendent. A hiring timeline has not yet been determined but the Rockbridge County School Board is hopeful to have a new Superintendent in place to work closely with Dr. Thompson and our staff to successfully transition to our community. Chairman Burant stated that the Rockbridge County School Board has experience in governance training with the VSBA every year, and that she is confident in their staff and process to be able to locate the very best candidates for Rockbridge County Public Schools.

- Trustee Whitmore stated that the VSBA has the skill set as they do this on a regular basis and their history has proven to be a structured framework for a national search.
- Trustee Brown stated that she trusts VSBA and that their experience and guidance will be beneficial.
- Trustee Ojure stated that she feels that VSBA is organized and will lead a clear and transparent process.

Upon recommendation by Chairman Burant, motion by Trustee Brown, seconded by Trustee Ojure, the board voted 4-0, to approve the utilization of the Virginia School Boards Association for the Superintendent Search.

Superintendent Thompson stated that the Rockbridge County Board of Supervisors has worked more with Davenport Public Finance than Rockbridge County Public Schools. He stated that with projects such as the proposed recreation center, the expertise of Davenport is relied upon to get through the resolutions and the bond process. He introduced Mr. Tyler Smith, Vice President, Davenport Public Finance, who provided an overview of the process and timeline. Mr. Smith stated that the resolution will authorize the county to submit an application to VPSA (Virginia Public School Authority) to participate in their pool bond program this spring. He noted that the application, when it is submitted, is not a binding agreement. If something were to come up, or the project needed to get pushed back, there is not an obligation to participate in this pool just by submitting an application.

Upon recommendation by Superintendent Thompson, and passed by a 4-0 roll call vote, the board to approved the "Resolution Requesting the Board of Supervisors to Issue General Obligation School Bonds for School Purposes and Consenting to the Issuance Thereof".

Upon recommendation by Chairman Burant, motion by Trustee Ojure, seconded by Trustee Brown, the board voted 4-0, to approve the Amendment to the 2025-2026 School Calendar to reflect the following: The Teacher Workday scheduled for Thursday, February 13, 2026 will now be a regular school day for all students. The two-hour early release day on Wednesday, February 19, 2026 will now be a full-length regular school day.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

Chairman Burant wished all of our RCPS athletes, students, and competitors best of luck as they finish their seasons with many going on the compete further in district, regional, and state competitions over the next few weeks.

Chairman Burant expressed her appreciation to Central Elementary School for the invitation to board members to be a part of their Career Fair next month.

Chairman Burant expressed her appreciation to the RCPS staff for efforts to keep in communication with students, maintaining parking lots, roads, and buildings during the recent weather events. She also expressed her appreciation to families for patience and support.

#### **SCHOOL BOARD**

The next regular meeting of the Rockbridge County School Board will be held on Tuesday, March 10, 2026 / 5:30 PM / Location: County of Rockbridge Administration Building, 150 South Main Street, Lexington, Virginia.

#### **CLOSED MEETING**

Under Section 2.2-3711.A (1) of the State Code, Chairman Burant recommended that the Board go into a ***Closed Meeting*** to discuss one personnel matter. Motion was made by Trustee Whitmore, seconded by Trustee Ojure, and passed by 4-0 vote.

The Board entered into the ***Closed Meeting*** at 5:55 p.m.

The Board returned to open session at 7:40 p.m.

Trustee Brown read the following motion to Certify the Closed Meeting:

WHEREAS, the Rockbridge County School Board has convened a closed meeting on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote and in accordance with the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and

WHEREAS, Section 2.2-3712.D of the Code of Virginia requires a certification by this School Board that such closed meeting was conducted in conformity with Virginia law;

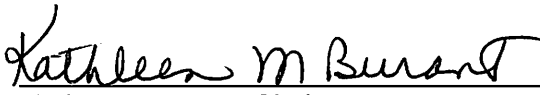
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rockbridge County School Board hereby certifies that, to the best of each member's knowledge, (i) only public business matters lawfully exempted by Virginia law were discussed in the closed meeting to which this certification applies, and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were heard, discussed or considered.

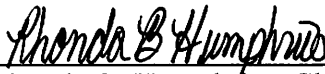
Upon initial motion of Certification of Closed Meeting by Trustee Brown, and seconded by Trustee Whitmore, the motion passed by the following roll call vote:

- Chairman Burant - Aye
- Trustee Ojure - Aye
- Trustee Whitmore - Aye
- Trustee Brown - Aye

**ADJOURNMENT**

Upon motion by Trustee Brown, seconded by Trustee Ojure, and passed by 4-0 vote, the meeting was adjourned at 7:41 p.m.

  
Kathy M. Burant, Chairman

  
Rhonda B. Humphries, Clerk of the Board