

The Rockbridge County School Board held a Public Hearing on Tuesday, May 12, 2026 at the County of Rockbridge Administrative Building.

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

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Burant called the Public Hearing to order at 5:01 p.m.

The purpose of the meeting was to hold a Public Hearing to receive the views of citizens on the Superintendent Search.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Five citizens addressed the Board.

Chairman Burant stated that there were one hundred seventy-seven responses to the survey, plus those who attended the Public Hearing. She stated that she had tasked each board member to review the responses to the survey choose and to focus on a couple of items that stood out to them from the survey.

Trustee Whitmore stated that the survey respondents represented 28% parents, 26% teachers, 23% employees and the remaining were citizens. He stated that the 2017 Superintendent Search reflected 210 responses representing 33% parents, 36% teachers, and 20% employees.

Trustee Whitmore stated that the Rockbridge County School Board is fortunate to be able to utilize the VSBA search services, which essentially does make it a national search. He stated that he feels that the expertise of VSBA ensures that the process will go smoothly.

Trustee Ojure stated that VSBA organized the responses in groups with results from teachers, parents, employees, and others. She stated that she felt there was a lot of agreement among the different groups. One quality that stood out to her was that the person who will be selected should have administrative experience such as principal, assistant superintendent, or some other administrative position within the school system. The other quality that stood out to her was that the person who will be selected have had some significant experience in the classroom. She felt that there was a lot of emphasis placed on quality collaboration and communication. Teachers placed a lot of value on personal relationships and relationships with staff. Another common qualification that came up was student achievement.

Trustee Brown stated that respondents emphasized visibility in schools, open communication, and collaboration with teachers, parents, community members, and all stakeholders was a common qualification desired by all, including the school board members.

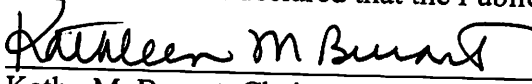
Chairman Burant stated that she feels a successful candidate will establish consistent, open communication with the school board, effectively mediate and accommodate different perspectives. She shared the importance of the open dialogue that the school board shares with the superintendent helps to share what the vision is and to make that vision become a reality. School fiancé is also a very important quality and lobbying for school funding on behalf of the school division. She feels that the superintendent must be a great communicator, be willing to give when things need to be given, be willing to share, have open, and honest, strong relationships with all stakeholders.

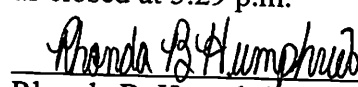
Chairman Burant provided the timeline as follows:

- The survey was conducted from April 13-17, 2026.
- The Public Hearing has now taken place at this meeting.
- Applications will be accepted beginning June 1 through June 30, 2026.
- The Rockbridge County School Board will review the applications during the month of July, 2026.
- Interviews are anticipated to be conducted during the first week of September, 2026.
- The selection announcement is anticipated to be made sometime during September, 2026.
- Superintendent Thompson will retire as of December 31, 2026.
- The goal begin date for the new superintendent is January 1, 2027.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Burant declared that the Public Hearing was closed at 5:29 p.m.


Kathy M. Burant, Chairman


Rhonda B. Humphries, Clerk of the Board