

The Rockbridge County School Board held their regular meeting on Tuesday, May 12, 2026, at the County of Rockbridge Administration Building.

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

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Burant called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

CHANGES TO THE AGENDA: None

ORGANIZATION:

Chairman Burant announced that Ms. Rhonda Humphries, Clerk of the School Board, will be retiring at the end of this school year. Upon recommendation by Superintendent Thompson, motion by Trustee Brown, seconded by Trustee Berkstresser, and passed by a 5-0 vote, the Board appointed Ms. Heather Bennington as Clerk, through January 31, 2027.

STUDENT / STAFF RECOGNITION:

Superintendent Thompson read the VSBA Business Honor Roll Resolution honoring:

- The Rockbridge Regional Library which serves thousands of children annually with programs for all age groups, including literacy and STEM activities.
- The Rockbridge County Public Schools Foundation has raised close to \$600,000 to support school programs and resources.

Mr. Shaun Sparks, Principal, Rockbridge County High School, recognized Samuel Eastwood, National Merit Scholarship qualifier. Mr. Eastwood is in the top 50,000 highest scoring participants and will be notified in September 2026 about potential next steps.

Mr. Timothy Martino, Assistant Superintendent, acknowledged that, under the direction of Superintendent Thompson, Rockbridge County Public Schools has focused on the fine arts to really expand them, which included having art teachers in the elementary schools. He expressed his sentiment that RCPS was fortunate that Ms. Erin Ellen, Art Teacher, Rockbridge County High School, was willing to take on a the RCHS theater program and the fine arts program and has helped it to grow stronger. Mr. Martino stated that this achievement has impacted overall student achievements.

Ms. Courtney Jarvis, Art Teacher, Natural Bridge Elementary School, introduced Mr. Colin Thompson, student, Natural Bridge Elementary School. Mr. Thompson was the first-place elementary school winner for the region in the 2026 Valley Spring Regional Forum Student Art Contest. As a first-place winner, his winning entry will be prominently displayed alongside twenty-six other winning selections at the VSBA Office in Charlottesville, Virginia, for the next year.

Ms. Allen also recognized the artwork of Mr. Bennett Brown, student, Maury River Middle School. Mr. Bennett received the VSBA Recognition Award for participation in the 2026 Valley Spring Regional Forum Student Art Contest. Mr. Martino stated that Mr. Brown's artwork will be displayed at the Rockbridge County School Board Office for the next year.

Ms. Allen recognized Ms. Kelly Fu, student, Rockbridge County High School. Ms. Fu was the first-place winner for the region in the 2026 Valley Spring Regional Forum Student Art Contest. As a first-place winner, her winning entry will be prominently displayed alongside twenty-six other winning selections at the VSBA Office in Charlottesville, Virginia, for the next year.

Mr. Rick Bain, Supervisor of Human Resources, introduced employees who received the REDOT Award, [Rockbridge Employees Doing Outstanding Things]. This is an award designed to highlight the great things our employees are doing. This award is given quarterly, with nominations by a co-worker or an administrator. There were seventy-two nominations with fourteen employees who were recognized during the third quarter:

Kristie Higgins	- RCHS
Mike Patterson	- RCHS
Gabriella Richards	- RCHS
Ashley Rudine	- RCHS
Atlanta Watts	- RCHS
Donna Chism	- MRMS
Bethany Rhodenizer	- MRMS

Annie Holland	- CES
Charlie Smith	- FES
Blake Ramsey	- NBES
Sonya Cauley	- NBES
Brandon Smith	- MVES
Kathryn Harris	- ECO

Ms. Elise Sheffield, Program Director, Boxerwood, and Ms. Ginny Johnston, Educator and Sustainability Coordinator, of Boxerwood, provided an overview of the twenty-five-year partnership that Boxerwood has had with Rockbridge County Public Schools, which is now referred to as Project Nest. She stated that she attended a high-level multi-state meeting related to agencies who make decisions about care for the Chesapeake Bay, as well as developing educational strategies and priorities. The meeting takes place every other year. There were five states and the District of Columbia represented at the meeting. Each state had one entity as part of the shared presentation which was presented as a bright spot. Boxerwood was selected as the bright spot for the Commonwealth of Virginia. She stated that the multi-district partnership with Rockbridge, Buena Vista, Lexington, and Boxerwood, developed into figuring out how to do something amazing from nothing, for twenty-five years. The model of Rockbridge County developed a vision of curricular, integrated, field learning and is not just for one grade band in elementary or middle or high, but all grade levels and for more than once a year. Ms. Sheffield stated that a lot of districts have a hard time figuring out how to model a program such as Rockbridge. She accredited the success of the Boxerwood program to the likes of the story of "Stone Soup". The story reflects that when you have nothing but a vision of a tasty soup, a rock, and a potato; someone else may have a carrot, someone else has celery, and someone else adds seasoning, and suddenly you have a great stew. This theory has allowed the Boxerwood Program to flourish for twenty-five years. This theory allowed Boxerwood to have a vision that co-aligned with the three school divisions to achieve systemic implementation of green schools, STEM learning, and more. There are many resources in Rockbridge County and Ms. Sheffield expressed her appreciation for the cooperation of the transportation department.

Ms. Sheffield stated that Ms. Sheffield then provided an overview of the following programs:

- Boxerwood has had a two-year program with the National Science Foundation called "Recipes", which was an investigation about food waste. The project picked four districts to participate and Rockbridge County was selected. This project led to a document generated by the World Wildlife Fund about Rockbridge County, which was mentioned as an inspiration for other school divisions. The two-year study led the elementary schools to divert nearly one hundred percent of uneaten and leftover entrees, fruits, and vegetables.
- "Waste Busters" program for the 2025-2026 school year in which elementary schools were able to divert more than seven thousand pounds from the landfill; this equates to three tons. The program is student-led.
- A tree planting in fourth grade tied to the science standards about plants, native trees, and watersheds. She stated that the planting of native trees put one hundred sixty-one trees into the Boxerwood nurseries.
- Sponsored meaningful watershed studies including Woods Creek and Jordan's Point. The seventh grade did a fall project which included planting more than three thousand flower bulbs at Jordan's Point, which will be a gift to that memorial for years to come.
- Boxerwood functions as a part of a catalyst and facilitator but there remains a lot that Boxerwood cannot do. NOAA honored the division and Boxerwood with a three-year planning grant for a more deeply integrating environmental learning program through the division. The grant funding is on hold in DC but Boxerwood was able to have begun working with eighteen teachers on a project. The teachers were able to work on cross-pollination and sharing between schools which led to learning about stream ecology and how it could be incorporated for the first time into the forestry ag curriculum at Rockbridge County High School.
- Tree planting at a local farm which allowed for career mentors from the Chesapeake Bay Foundation to attend so that students could connect with people beyond Boxerwood.
- Rockbridge County High School also hosted a program to raise trout, for the first time; Trout Unlimited supplied the eggs.

Ms. Sheffield concluded her presentation stating that unlike most school divisions, because this district is small, Boxerwood has been able to track students over the many years. A slide in her presentation reflected students who are now young productive adults who were active with the Boxerwood program when they attended Rockbridge County Schools. She presented gifts to a representative from each school for their participation and support of the Boxerwood Programs.

Ms. Robin Talley, Early Intervention Manager, Rockbridge Area Community Services Board (RACS), provided information on the RAISE early intervention program. RAISE is part of the infant and toddler connection of Virginia. The program is averaging around eighty children in the Rockbridge and Bath area. This represents people who are referring children who have delays or concerns with disabilities. Ms. Talley stated that RACS has great relationships with the Rockbridge Area Health Center and that parents are reaching out for assistance. She stated that they are

identifying more children between the ages of 18 months and 3 years with autism. There is a parent support group which is focused on helping parents to understand that they are not alone and to meet people within the county and our area. She emphasized that the RAISE program is a collaboration with the school system and that the staff is available to help support parents in any way. The program services children up to age three. She stated that there is a gap in services between age three and when a child can go to school. The hope is to help bridge to help parents get the right resources.

CONSENT AGENDA

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

- Minutes: 1) April 14, 2026 [Regular Meeting]
- Field Trip Requests
- Application for Use of Facilities
- Surplus Vehicle
- Appointments and Resignations

Appointments

Professional Staff

Brock Barnes, Assistant Principal, CES, effective 2026-2027 school year
Kiara Salvador, Teacher, site to be determined, effective 2026-2027 school year
Breanna Burden, Teacher, Rockbridge County High School, effective 2026-2027 school year
Dylan Hostetter, Teacher, Rockbridge County High School, effective 2026-2027 school year
Jennifer Bushnell, Teacher, Maury River Middle School, effective 2026-2027 school year

Appointments

Support Staff

Substitute

Grace Fleshman
Caleb Palmer
Leah Johnson
Angelica Saunders
Mike Craft
Emmaline Wilbur

Support Staff

Resignation

Cheryl Noble, Food Service, Maury River Middle School, resigning effective end of the 2025-2026 school year
Luann Dongilli, Teacher Assistant, Rockbridge County High School, resigning effective end of the 2025-2026 school year

Professional Staff

Resignation

Emilee Booze, Teacher, Central Elementary School, resigning effective end of the 2025-2026 school year
Hayley Gomez, Teacher, Central Elementary School, resigning effective end of the 2025-2026 school year

Professional Staff

Retirement

Andrea Harris, Teacher, Mountain View Elementary School, retiring effective end of the 2025-2026 school year

Support Staff Recommendations for Employment 2026-2027 School Year

Teacher Assistants

Ashcraft, Sherita	Teacher Assistant
Bane, Amelia	Teacher Assistant
Bhandari Pandey, Jyoti	Teacher Assistant
Bolen, Deborah	Teacher Assistant
Bowen-Sweet, Sydney	Teacher Assistant
Branch, Loretta	Teacher Assistant
Burch, Clayton	Teacher Assistant
Bushnell, Isabelle	Teacher Assistant
Byers, Elizabeth	Teacher Assistant

Teacher Assistants - continued

Byrd, Zachery	Teacher Assistant
Camden, Tracey	Teacher Assistant
Carter, Ruth	Teacher Assistant
Coffey, Stephanie	Teacher Assistant
Conner, Derrick	Teacher Assistant
Crookshanks, Tiffany	Teacher Assistant
Cunningham, Crystal	Teacher Assistant
Early, Mary	Teacher Assistant
Eichelberger, Rebecca	Teacher Assistant
George, Annika	Teacher Assistant
George, Catherine	Teacher Assistant
Harris, Amy	Teacher Assistant
Harris, Joyce	Teacher Assistant
Harris, Theresa	Teacher Assistant
Heim, Diane	Teacher Assistant
Hostetter, Kari	Teacher Assistant
Hostetter, Kimberly	Teacher Assistant
Jarvis, Tricia	Teacher Assistant
Lawrence, Lisa	Teacher Assistant
McKnight, Reneda	Teacher Assistant
Moore, Molly	Teacher Assistant
Murphy, Heather	Teacher Assistant
Nicely, Brooke	Teacher Assistant
Oswald, Lynnsey	Teacher Assistant
Pufahl, Maria	Teacher Assistant
Ramsey, Carolyn	Teacher Assistant
Rattigan, Jennifer	Teacher Assistant
Schindler, Brittany	Teacher Assistant
Snyder, Angela	Teacher Assistant
Staton, Brigitte	Full-Time Substitute
Staton, Rebecca	Teacher Assistant
Taylor, Thomas	Full-Time Substitute
Teague, Deborah	Teacher Assistant
Thomas, Destiny	Teacher Assistant
Tomlin, Chasity	Teacher Assistant
Tyler, Kimberly	Teacher Assistant
Youngblood, Kristan	Teacher Assistant
Ziegler, Christy	Teacher Assistant

Custodians

Ashcraft, Thomas	Custodian
Chittum, Chelsea	Custodian
Cramer, Samantha	Custodian
Dinges, Bruce	Custodian
Eagle, David	Custodian
Eagle, William	Custodian
Garrison, Garfield	Custodian
Hartless, Rebecca	Custodian
Higgins, Kristie	Custodian
Hostetter, Jamie	Custodian
Hostetter, Michael	Custodian
Jenkins, Joseph	Custodian
Reed, Melissa	Custodian
Richards, Carson	Custodian
Riley, Jack	Custodian
Shanks, Gregory	Custodian
Staton, Karla	Custodian
Tomlin, Belinda	Custodian
Tomlin, Dalton	Custodian
Tomlin, Steve	Custodian
Wade, Cynthia	Custodian
Whitesell, Timothy	Custodian
Williams, Jennifer	Custodian

School Secretaries/Bookkeepers/Clerical Assistants

Cash, Phyllis	Bookkeeper
Chism, Donna	School Secretary
Coffey, Joan	School Secretary
Emrey, Karen	School Secretary
Hamilton, Jessica	School Secretary
Jones, Elizabeth	School Secretary
McCaleb, Bonnie	School Secretary
Miller, Lisa	Bookkeeper
Montgomery, Brandy	School Secretary
Ramsey, Bridget	Attendance Secretary
Rogers, Travis	School Secretary
Shafer, Tracy	School Secretary
Staton, Michele	School Secretary
Vest, Morgan	Clerical Assistant
Watterson, Carlie	School Secretary
Wilhelm, Lorin	School Secretary

Maintenance

Beard, Kenneth	Maintenance
Bennett, Kurt	Maintenance
Byram, Dylan	Maintenance
Cash, Gary	Maintenance
Floyd, Edward	Maintenance
Hogge, Jeffrey	Maintenance
Lilly, David	Maintenance
Mahood, Todd	Maintenance
Runkle, David	Maintenance
Staton, Roy	Maintenance

Central Office

Bane, Mallory
Cantrell, Abreena
Church, Ana
Crossman, Tracy
Hamilton, Kim
Harris, Kathryn
Loope, Dana
Ferguson, Holly

Support Staff

Receptionist/Records
Personnel Specialist
School Nutrition Services Secretary/Finance Assistant
Transportation Clerk
Secretary for Special Education
Payroll Specialist
Accounts Payable Specialist
Family and Community Liaison

School Nurses

Brooks, Casey	School Nurse
Dameron, Stephanie	School Nurse
Marcum, Katina	School Nurse
Martin, Dawn	School Nurse
Staton, Meagan	School Nurse

Technology

Coleman, Mark	Technology Specialist
Kerr, J.D.	Technology Specialist
Patterson, Mike	Technology Specialist
Staton, Cole	Technology Specialist

Food Service

Campbell, Gwen	Food Service
Clements, Shilla	Food Service
Coffey, Marlene	Food Service
Crawford, Diane	(Time Sheet) Food Service
Cruz, Becky	Food Service
Flaherty, Patrick	(Time Sheet) Food Service
Gladfelter, Patty	(Time Sheet) Food Service
Hawkins, Deborah	(Time Sheet) Food Service
Hedrick, Dawn	Food Service
Hill, Carolyn	Food Service

Food Service - continued

Kerr, Brenda	Food Service
Lotts, Dana	Food Service
Manspile, Catherine	(Time Sheet) Food Service
Manspile, Sarah	Food Service
Martin, Teresa	Food Service
Painter, Kendall	Food Service
Pence, Melissa	Food Service
Ramsey, Danielle	(Time Sheet) Food Service
Rudine, Ashley	Food Service
Skipper, Amber	Food Service
Skipper, Kathryn	Food Service
Smith, Charlie	(Time Sheet) Food Service
Smith, Kathryn	Food Service
Smith, Sharon	(Time Sheet) Food Service
Steger, Allison	(Time Sheet) Food Service
Steger, Betsy	(Time Sheet) Food Service
Troxell, Angela	Food Service
Wilhelm, Melissa	(Time Sheet) Food Service
Williams, Jennifer	Food Service

21st Century Grant Coordinator

Seaman, Brandy 21st Century Grant

Superintendent Thompson made the following announcements, beginning with the 2026-2027 school year:

- Ms. Vicki Stevens, Director of Secondary Instruction and Alternative Education
- Mr. Daniel Fallon, Principal, Maury River Middle School
- Ms. Haley Roberts, Principal, Natural Bridge Elementary School

- Business Items
 - Approved authorization to the Treasurer of Rockbridge County to pay debt service in the amount of \$159,375.00 for duly appropriated debt service funds.
 - Approved appropriation for the RCHS Turf Field Reconstruction in the amount of \$500,000.00
 - Approved Monthly Financials in the amount of \$4,010,332.08

PUBLIC COMMENT:

One patron addressed the board regarding the issues of psychological readiness and safety of the children of Rockbridge County, especially K through 5, regarding certain books and other educational materials that the patron feels are age-inappropriate. The patron expressed appreciation to the board for the ongoing interest and attention to parental rights, especially regarding such materials, and for diligently protecting the youngest children from age-inappropriate material.

BUDGET PLANNING:

COMMITTEE REPORTS: None

INSTRUCTIONAL REPORT:

Ms. Vicki Stevens, Principal, Maury River Middle School, and Mr. Shaun Sparks, Principal, Rockbridge County High School, provided an overview of the proposed Rockbridge Pathways Program.

- The proposed program will offer an alternative for education focusing on behavioral, mental health, medication, and transitioning back into the traditional school setting. The program need is guided by discipline data and program needs.
- Program Research: Administrators examined three nearby localities that had alternative programs-Staunton City, Lynchburg City, and Augusta/Waynesboro. Administrators conducted two site visits and researched several other alternative programs to determine the development of a program for Rockbridge’s needs.
- Program Purpose: To create an alternative educational environment that provides a unique environment that is responsive to our students’ needs while allowing us to address the importance of maintaining and meeting educational and behavioral goals through restorative and reflective practices. The Rockbridge Pathways Program includes both alternate education programs and an alternative to suspension program. The Suspension Center is designed to assist

students with their school work during short-term out-of-school suspensions (3–10-day lengths) while the Rockbridge Pathways Academy is designed to provide an educational environment to students that either need an alternative education environment to be successful or for those whose behaviors result in code of conduct offenses that require 11 days or more of out-of-school suspension.

▪ Program Goals:

1. Develop skills to be successful in the regular school setting.
2. Maintain and improve academic skills.
3. Provide a safe, structured, respectful, supportive, and distraction-free environment for learning.
4. Assist students in identifying barriers that inhibit their educational and social development through restorative practices.

▪ Program Overview:

Location: Fairfield Elementary School Annex Building (Door 20)

Hours: 8:30 AM-1:00/TBD PM

Maximum Enrollment: 24

- Tentative Daily Staff Responsibilities: Assist with check-in and morning meals; Direct instruction; Planning; Tutoring; Restorative practices; Attendance reporting to base school; Monitor online activity; Coordination with base schools, administration, and transportation for current and pending students; Daily academic reports; and Virtual Check-ins with homebound/based students.

- Enrollment: Enrollment in the program is based on a maximum of 24 students. The enrollment for each program may shift in order to maximize the utilization of staff and space

▪ Program Academic Program:

Suspension Center

- Work coordination takes place with program staff and school staff
- Work is monitored and instructional assistance is provided by staff
- Report of work progress is sent to base school administrator and parent at completion of duration

Academy

- Students have enrollment change to reflect where services are being provided
- Students will receive direct, virtual, or hybrid instruction based on coursework
- Students will be enrolled in core classes (MRMS & RCHS) and electives (RCHS only)
- Students will have a transition plan created to assist into re-entry into base school

▪ Academy Administrative Referral Process

Students may also attend the Academy Program through a referral process. Referrals from the student's base school include the following information: Student demographics; Student IEP or 504 plan (if applicable); Student attendance; Student assessment history; Student current class schedule; Student transcript; Student discipline history; Student interventions provided by school and/or community; Administrative narrative on request of student placement.

▪ Program Behavior Expectations:

- Rockbridge Pathways is a highly structured, supportive environment, where students are expected to:
- Treat themselves, peers, staff, and property with respect.
 - Follow staff instructions promptly and respectfully.
 - Contribute to a learning environment that is safe, orderly, and focused on academic progress.
 - Participate in social, emotional, and behavioral support as needed.

Practices and Policies

- Students must adhere to all RCPS policies and procedures and school-based Codes of Conduct
- Students will be subjected to search by wand upon program entry
- Students are not allowed any bookbags
- Students personal cell phones and electronic devices are secured upon entry and returned at departure
- Student will participate in restorative and reflective practices

Transition Plan and Support:

- Ensuring that we are providing an opportunity for success in the student's base school, each student that exits the Academy Program will have a transition plan created for them identifying individuals and supports needed for student success.
- The Program Coordinator will meet with the student and school stakeholders to develop this plan and coordinate an in-person visit upon re-entry.
- The plan will be shared with the student, family, school counselor, and administration.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

Mr. Jason Kirby, Chief Business Officer, presented the Early Retirement Incentive Program and stated that the program continues to retain great staff and utilizes veteran knowledge. He stated that the plan remains the same as was adopted on May 13, 2025 and will be presented as an Action Item at the June meeting.

Mr. Jason Kirby presented proposed changes to policies GCBD-R and GCBEA. The proposed changes reflect new paid time off and leave without pay policy changes. This is a way to reward staff when they are working and to give more options with their leave time. The following are highlights of his presentation:

PTO reasoning:

- There are currently many leave types and can be confusing to employee when taking leave.
- This is an added incentive as employees are valued as they strive to show up for our students and community.
- This will provide clear options for employees to use and save their earned time.
- This will provide competition amongst surrounding counties. This will allow RCPS to remain competitive to prospective employees while retaining current employees.

Current Policy Overview:

- 10-, 11-, and 12-month employees receive one sick day per month of their contract and two personal days.
- 12-month employees receive annual leave days based on their tenure at RCPS.
- Upon retirement, employees are paid \$15/per sick day.
- 12-month employees are paid at their daily rate for vacation leave.
- Employees can request to convert two sick days into two additional personal days with Superintendent approval.
- VRS Hybrid Employees can accumulate up to 45 days in their sick leave bank • Accumulated sick time is forfeited or transferred to another division by the employee upon resignation from RCPS.

Proposed PTO Policy:

- 10-month employees receive twelve (12) PTO days per year
- 11-month employees receive thirteen (13) PTO days per year
- 12-month employees receive fourteen (14) PTO days per year
- 12-month employees continue to receive annual leave days based on their tenure at RCPS
- VRS Hybrid members can accumulate up to 90 days in their sick leave bank

PTO Accrual Based on Start Base:182, 185, 200, and 210 day contracts:

- Twelve (12) PTO Days, July 1 – September 30
- Nine (9) PTO Days, October 1 – December 31
- Six (6) PTO Days, January 1 – March 31
- Three (3) PTO Days, April 1 – May 30

220 and 240 day contracts:

- Thirteen (13) PTO Days, July 1 – September 30
- Ten (10) PTO Days, October 1 – December 31
- Seven (7) PTO Days, January 1 – March 31
- Four (4) PTO Days, April 1 – May 30 PTO

255 day contracts:

- Fourteen (14) PTO Days, July 1 – September 30
- Ten (10) PTO Days, October 1 – December 31
- Eight (8) PTO Days, January 1 – March 31
- Six (6) PTO Days, April 1 – June 30

Earned PTO Incentives

Employees on a 240-day contract or fewer ear 1 additional day of PTO for the following occurrences:

- Present on every Monday and Friday in the month of August, September and October
- Present on every Monday and Friday and the day before Thanksgiving Holiday in the month of November and Winter Break in the month of December.
- Present on every Monday and Friday in the month of March, April and May

Payout OptionsFull-Time and Part-Time Contracted Employees

- Cash Out Yearly Option will be paid on the last paycheck in June for all contracted employees at 20% of the employee's daily rate with a minimum of \$45 per day based on your May 30 leave balance.

Resignation Option

- When an employee resigns after five (5) consecutive years of service to Rockbridge County Schools, any unused portion up to fifty (50) days of PTO/Sick Leave are paid, upon written request, at the rate of 10% of the employee's daily rate with a minimum of \$10 per day.
- Employee may elect to transfer any unused accrued leave to the new employer based on their policy but cannot take payment and transfer the time.

Retirement Option

- When an employee resigns after five (5) consecutive years of service to Rockbridge County Schools, and meets the VRS requirements, any unused portion up to 200 days of sick leave/ PTO are paid to the employee at a rate of 10% of the employees' daily rate with a minimum amount of \$25 per day

Death

- If an active employee dies, any unused portion up to 200 days of PTO/Sick leave shall be paid to the employee's VRS beneficiary at the rate of 10% of the employee's daily rate with a minimum of \$25 per day.

Holidays

- All full-time 12-month employees of the Rockbridge County School Board shall be granted Five (5) floating holiday leave days to be used during Thanksgiving Break, Winter Break, or Spring Break.
- These days will NOT rollover from calendar year to calendar year.

Leave Without Pay (LWOP) Reasoning

- Many current leave types can be confusing to employees when taking leave so they take Leave Without Pay.
- Employees using Leave Without Pay inconsistently: Some employees are using Leave Without Pay before exhausting their time in their leave balance and using long periods of time on Leave Without Pay without administrative approval.

Policy Changes

- Employees can only use Leave Without Pay when their leave balance is exhausted.
 - Leave Without Pay shall not exceed 2 (two) days per year must be approved by the employee's supervisor.
 - More than 2 (two) days of Leave Without Pay must have prior approval from the Office of Human resources.
- This will be presented as an Action Item at the June meeting.

Superintendent Thompson stated that it is common around the month of July for things to slow down just a bit. Twelve-month employees, and board members as well, it is the time for vacations around the Fourth of July holiday. It has worked out well for the past several years for the school board to forgo the regular meeting in July. This will be presented as an Action Item at the June meeting.

Ms. Tracy Hinty, Supervisor of Federal Programs, provided information on the Federal Grants. Annual approval is required from the school board to apply for the state and federal entitlement grants. Virginia Department of Education administers the federal funds to school divisions for specific groups of students. Ms. Hinty stated that she bases the grants on the current level of funding with final allocations to come out in August. At that point, she will have to amend the grants to reflect whether additional funds are received, or if some funds are taken away. She provided an overview on Title I, Part A; Title II, Part A – Title II; Title III, Part A; and Title IV A funds.

Ms. Hinty also provided an overview of the Title I Family Engagement Plan. These will be presented as Action Items at the June meeting.

ACTION ITEMS:

Upon recommendation by Chairman Burant, motion by Trustee Berkstresser, seconded by Trustee Ojure, the board voted 5-0, to approve Rockbridge County Public Schools moving forward with the Rockbridge Pathways Program for the fall of 2026. This will allow administration to reach out to the Virginia Department of Education and become official.

Upon recommendation by Chairman Burant, motion by Trustee Brown, seconded by Trustee Ojure, the board voted 5-0, to approve the Superintendent/Designee to process GRANT payment and other accounts payable as necessary at the end of May 2026. A final report summarizing these actions will be distributed during the month of June. All transactions will require signatures of two of the

following staff positions: Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Chief Business Officer, Chief Operations Officer, or Director of Financial Services. Approval was also included for the Superintendent/Designee to close out the current fiscal year. This authorization would include payment of remaining accounts payable and payroll expenses and the preparation of necessary expenditure transfers, budget adjustments, appropriations of additional revenues and requests for category transfers from the Board of Supervisors, if needed. A final report summarizing these actions will be distributed during the month of July. All transactions will require signatures of two of the following staff positions: Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Chief Business Officer, Chief Operations Officer, or Director of Financial Services.

Dr. Jason Kirby, Chief Business Officer, expressed his appreciation to administration who have assisted with the budget process. He stated that the budget includes the following:

- 3% increase for all staff;
- 7% increase in insurance rate was absorbed by RCPS so employees do not have an impact;
- Internal adjustments for items such as fuel lines and other operational items;
- Support Pathways Program and other items that will be instrumental moving forward.

Upon recommendation by Chairman Burant, motion by Trustee Whitmore, seconded by Trustee Berkstresser, the board voted 5-0, to approve the FY27 Line-Item Budget in the amount of \$39,180,690.

NEW BUSINESS:

Chairman Burant expressed congratulations and appreciation to staff and students who were recognized at this meeting, while noting that it truly does take a whole village to raise our children.

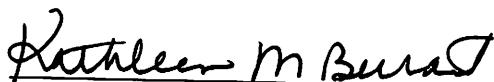
Chairman Burant expressed her appreciation to staff for another incredible year educating the children of this community.

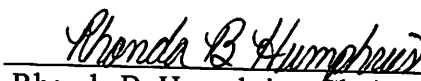
SCHOOL BOARD

The next regular meeting of the Rockbridge County School Board will be held on Tuesday, June 9, 2026 / 5:30 PM / Location: County of Rockbridge Administration Building, Lexington, Virginia.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon motion by Trustee Berkstresser, seconded by Trustee Brown, and passed by 5-0 vote, the meeting was adjourned at 8:13 p.m.


Kathy M. Burant, Chairman


Rhonda B. Humphries, Clerk of the Board