



Rocket Express

November 14, 2023

The Rockwood Area Board of School Directors held its regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, November 14, 2023.

The minutes of the committee meeting on 10/17/2023 and the regular meeting on 10/17/2023 were approved.

The agenda, agenda items, and additional agenda items were approved.

The Board approved the financial and treasurer reports, bills, and budgetary transfers as presented.

Board Recognition:

The following students of the month were recognized by the Board:

Mason Z. Foreman
Havyn S. Wareham
Annah M. Sechler
Pyper L. Lytle
Amelia R. Beener
Jordan F. Pyle

Public Comment:

Martha Mitchell, a representative of PAX Academic Exchange, introduced herself to the Board and gave an overview of the Foreign Exchange Program in recognition of International Education Month. She expressed her gratitude towards the Board, staff, host families, and community members for their continued support of the program over the past years. The exchange students introduced themselves and conveyed their appreciation for the opportunity to attend Rockwood as part of the exchange program and for the great experiences.

The public comment from Debra Conn was postponed until executive session.

During public comment, Kari Haer, Rebecca Wagner, and Jennifer Wheatley (district residents) addressed the Board regarding the use of the gymnasiums for varsity, junior varsity, junior high, and youth athletic practices. Rebecca Wagner expressed concerns in regards to the times and spaces available for varsity teams to practice and requested the Board consider allowing varsity teams and district sponsored in-season sports the opportunity to select practice schedules prior to the scheduling of outside organizations and out of season sports. Upon discussion, the consensus of the Board was to authorize the Athletic Director to schedule varsity, in-season, and district sponsored athletic practices first. Outside organizations will then be offered available times and locations.

Old Business:

The Board approved the final annual financial report for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2023.

New Business:

The Board established the date for the annual reorganization meeting as Monday, December 4, 2023, at 7:00 P.M.

The Board voted in favor to adopt the Act 1 Resolution electing not to increase the tax rate above the index for the 2024-2025 fiscal year.

The Board authorized the Administration to plan the Staff Appreciation Dinner for May 2024, with a date to be determined.

The Board approved Ms. Picklo, the art department, and learning support students to create paintings on the walls of the Functional Life Support (FLS) classroom.

The sale or transfer of Rockwood Transportation, Inc. from Georgia Harrold to Robert Scott Harrold was approved by the Board.

The Board approved the Cooperative Sponsorship of Sport between the Meyersdale Area School District, the Rockwood Area School District, and the Salisbury Elk Lick School District for varsity and junior high boys' and girls' track.

The Cooperative Agreement between Allegany College of Maryland and Rockwood Area School District for the 2023-2024 school year was approved.

The Board approved the Letter of Agreement between Rockwood Area School District and The Children's Aid Home Programs of Somerset County, Inc. for the 2023-2024 school year at the rate of \$55.00 per day for Adolescent Partial Hospitalization students if placement is needed throughout the year.

The Cooperative Agreement between Saint Francis University and Rockwood Area School District for the College in High School Program for the 2023-2024 school year was approved.

The Board approved the annual senior class trip to Lewes, DE, and Assateague Island, MD, with tentative dates of May 24, 2024, through May 27, 2024.

The Board approved the first reading of the following revisions to the Rockwood Area School District policy manual:

- 815 Acceptable Use of Internet, Computers and Network Resources
- 819 Suicide Awareness, Prevention and Response

Committee Reports:

The Board accepted the resignation of Beth Miller as the assistant varsity girls' soccer coach and to advertise for the position.

The Board accepted the resignation of Jeremy Romesberg as the head junior high softball coach and to advertise for the position.

The Board approved the resignation of Jason Sechler as the assistant junior high softball coach and to advertise for the position.

The Board approved Nathan Formica as the assistant junior high boys' basketball coach.

The Board voted in favor to employ Amelia Gross as the head cheerleading coach, pending completion of all paperwork.

The Board voted in favor to add Jamie France to the substitute custodian list for the 2023-2024 school year, pending completion of all paperwork.

The Board approved a modified leave of absence for the following employee (referenced by employee identification number) from 10/6/23 through 1/2/24 using sick days and FMLA leave. Employee ID #197.

Tenure status for Kathleen Lambert was approved by the Board.

The Board accepted the resignation of Elyse Cordaro as the head junior high girls' basketball coach and to advertise for the position.

The Board approved Ronald Horner as an unpaid position volunteer, pending completion of all paperwork.

Conference Requests:

The Board approved the following conference requests:

1. PaTTAN Structure Literacy Leadership Training – Pittsburgh, PA – 10/26/23, 1/4/24, 3/7/24 – Jon Hale.
2. Science of Reading Leadership Symposium – Harrisburg, PA – 12/5/23, 12/6/23 – Jessica Miller, Beth Mapes.
3. PASBO Conference – Hershey, PA – 3/5/24 through 3/8/24 – Jordan Svonavec.

Field Trip Requests:

The Board approved the following field trip request:

1. Ski Club – Seven Springs, PA – 1/11/24, 1/18/24, 1/25/24, 2/1/24, 2/8/24 – Lauren Boczar, Carissa Shipley, and 21 students.

Use of School Facility Requests:

The Board approved the following use of school facility requests:

1. Rockwood Youth Football – Rockwood athletic field – 10/29/23; 1:30 P.M. – 4:30 P.M. – Youth football practice for All-Star game.

2. Rockwood Youth Football – Rockwood elementary cafeteria – 11/7/23; 6:00 P.M. – 7:00 P.M. – Turn in uniforms.
3. Rockwood Alumni Basketball – Rockwood high school gymnasium – Sundays beginning 12/3/23 through 4/14/24; 7:00 P.M. – 9:00 P.M. – Alumni basketball.
4. Rockwood Soccer Club – Rockwood elementary cafeteria – 11/1/23, 11/2/23; 6:00 P.M. – 8:00 P.M. – Indoor soccer signups.
5. Rockwood Soccer Club – Rockwood elementary gymnasium – Sundays beginning 11/12/23 through 3/31/24; 4:00 P.M. – 6:00 P.M. – Soccer strength and conditioning.
6. Child Evangelism Fellowship of Fayette-Somerset Counties – Rockwood elementary classrooms – Thursdays beginning 1/11/24 through 3/21/24; 2:30 P.M. – 4:45 P.M. – Good News Club.
7. Rockwood Soccer Club – Rockwood high school lobby – 11/14/23, 11/15/23; 6:00 P.M. – 7:00 P.M. – Collect fundraiser money and information.

Club & Class Activity Requests:

The Board approved the following club & class activity requests:

1. Manufacturing Class – Sale of products made by manufacturing class – May 2024 – Raise funds for supplies, materials, and field trips.
2. Class of 2025 – 59-minute sale of popcorn – 11/16/23 – Raise funds for senior class trip, graduation, senior picnic, etc.
3. Elementary Student Council – Candy cane sale – 12/4/23 through 12/8/23 – Raise funds for author day, dance, and other activities.

Superintendent's Report:

Mark Bower congratulated newly elected and re-elected Board members.

Mark Bower congratulated Irvin Kimmel on being elected as one of Somerset County's Commissioners and thanked him for serving on the District's Board of Directors for over ten years.

Mark Bower recognized and thanked all staff members for their involvement in the Veterans Day programs. A special thanks to Mr. James Wagner and Mr. Ben Baker for organizing the events. Both programs were well attended and received positive feedback from the veterans.

Mark Bower thanked staff for sponsoring and donating items towards Thanksgiving dinners that will be distributed to eight families within the district.

Mark Bower presented a children's book that was donated to the district's library by PSBA.

Mark Bower recognized and congratulated a former Rockwood student, Andrea (Pritts) Smith, for publishing her first children's book. A copy of the book has been purchased to add to the district's elementary library.

Mark Bower provided the Board with an update on the playground renovation project. The district received engineering estimates from two firms. The Board will be presented with a quote to consider at the December reorganization meeting.

Mark Bower shared a copy of the Rohistat, a publication created by Rockwood's journalism class. The students did a very nice job.

Mark Bower recognized Mrs. Leanna Weimer and her FFA students who were successful in producing two different types of lettuce using the hydroponics technique.

Mark Bower informed the Board of a circulation pump within the heating system that went bad and needs to be replaced. The maintenance department will monitor the system and manage the replacement when needed.

Mark Bower advised the Board that board briefs will not be sent again until Friday, December 15th.

Jon Hale advised the Board that the elementary Veterans Day assembly was outstanding. Students in all grade levels participated. Approximately 85 veterans and/or parents were in attendance. He thanked Mr. Ben Baker for planning the event and for teachers supporting the students as they honored the veterans.

Jon Hale informed the Board that the parent/teacher conferences held on November 13th were successful. Parent feedback was positive.

Jon Hale reported that the first grading period has ended. Elementary students were awarded with an afternoon of fun activities to celebrate their behavioral and academic success. He thanked Mr. Buterbaugh, Mrs. Wedge, and Mrs. Clark for supporting the event.

Jon Hale informed the Board that the Elementary Student Council is planning several events for students for the holiday season. They are also planning a staff event the week prior to Christmas break. He thanked Ms. Friedline and Mrs. Sembower for organizing the events.

Jon Hale noted the elementary reading competition was being held the night of the Board meeting. He thanked Mrs. Mumau and Mrs. Christy Hay for preparing students for the competition and for encouraging students to read.

Nicholas Buterbaugh provided the Board with safety updates. Security alarms have been installed on exterior doors and new security cameras have been placed outside of the building. He thanked Seth Judy and the maintenance staff for installing the devices and Officer Doman and Dan Younkin for their insight.

Nicholas Buterbaugh updated the Board regarding athletics. All fall sports have concluded. Mandatory practices for winter sports will begin on November 17th.

Nicholas Buterbaugh informed the Board that the Volley for a Cure fundraiser, held to promote breast cancer awareness, was a success and the Rockwood team won! He thanked everyone involved for their support.

Nicholas Buterbaugh updated the Board regarding 9th grade athletes competing at the junior high level versus the junior varsity/varsity level. Coaches participated in a survey to share their thoughts and give feedback. Mr. Buterbaugh will continue to assess the level and condition at which athletes may participate.

Misty Demchak informed the Board that 80% of high school students were on the honor roll after the first grading period. She thanked Shanda Pletcher and the Guidance Office for printing and distributing report cards.

Misty Demchak advised the Board that Ms. Hostetter and band students attended the Johnstown Symphony Orchestra for the Young Peoples Concert. A district student participated in the concert.

Misty Demchak informed the Board that County Chorus will be held on November 20 and 21 at Conemaugh Township.

Misty Demchak reported that the high school Veterans Day assembly went very well. She thanked Mr. Wagner and Mr. Formica for coordinating a distinguished guest speaker, Mr. Michael Formica. She also recognized and thanked Betsy Smith and the cafeteria staff for preparing breakfast for all of the veterans and everyone who participated in making the assembly a memorial and special event for our veterans.

Misty Demchak recognized Mr. Kush and the committee that planned the soph-senior dance. The event included 88 students in attendance.

Misty Demchak advised the Board that Mrs. Opfar and Mrs. Clapper attended the "Teach the Future" event sponsored by Saint Francis. Six prospective teachers attended the event as well. The information provided was beneficial for all those in attendance.

Misty Demchak recognized Mr. Buterbaugh for the great job he did coordinating the pep rally for the District 5 football playoff game. The Athletic Department and district is committed to planning pep rallies for all District Championships.

Misty Demchak informed the Board that Mrs. Walker and her students produced two digital announcements for high school students and staff to watch in the morning in lieu of making announcements via the PA system. Both students and staff enjoyed watching the videos, and the students did a fantastic job.

Misty Demchak reported that the annual wellness/cafeteria advisory board meeting was held. Wellness activities were outlined. Cafeteria updates were also provided during the meeting.

Misty Demchak shared that the annual Turkey Trot Fun Run will occur on the morning of Thanksgiving Day. All proceeds from the race will benefit Rockwood's Kids Come First Program.

Megan Hetrick thanked the Board for supporting the CBI program and events.

Disclaimer: This document is only a summary of the above listed meeting and is not an official copy of the school board meeting minutes.