



Rocket Express

August 15, 2023

The Rockwood Area Board of School Directors held its regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, August 15, 2023.

The minutes of the committee meeting on 6/20/2023 and the regular meeting on 6/20/2023 were approved.

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

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

Board Recognition:

On behalf of PSBA, Mark Bower presented a certificate of appreciation to Adam Sembower for eight years of service as a school board member. He thanked him for his dedication, time, and service.

New Business:

The Board approved the agreement between the Rockwood Area School District and Ignite Education Solutions to provide long term, contracted, and substitute staff on an as needed basis for the 2023-2024 school year.

The Board voted in favor to accept the letters of agreement from Somerset Area Ambulance Association, Inc. to provide emergency services for Rockwood Area School District Jr. High and Varsity home soccer games and Jr. High, JV, and Varsity home basketball games during the 2023-2024 school year, at a rate of \$60.00 per hour.

The Board approved the Addendum to the Contractual Agreement between Pressley Ridge Johnstown and Rockwood Area School District for the 2023-2024 school year.

The Board approved the 2023-2024 insurance renewal proposal through BDH/Konhaus Insurance Agency in the amount of \$88,062.00.

The Board gave authorization for a Rockwood student to swim and compete independently with the Somerset Area School District at no cost to the District.

The Board approved the agreement between Clapper Educational Consulting and the Rockwood Area School District to provide community resource consultation and career activities for the 2023-2024 school year at a rate of \$65.00 per hour, not to exceed 200 hours. Approval is also granted for student participation in all such career related activities.

The Board approved the Conceptual Agreement between the Rockwood Area School District and Appalachia Intermediate Unit 8 for Extended Campus Virtual Learning Opportunities for the 2023-2024 school year.

The Board voted in favor to accept the quote from AIU8 World of Learning Institute for virtual instruction in online courses during the 2023-2024 school year, to be billed based upon student enrollment.

The Board approved updates to the Outside Services Handbook.

The Board approved the school photography contract with Megan Snell – Bean Tree Studio Photography for extra-curricular, special events, and yearbook photos for the 2023-2024 school year.

The Board approved activities related to the Community Based Instruction (CBI) Program for the 2023-2024 school year.

The Board approved the Public Officials Liability policy through Sechler Insurance Group LLC for the policy period 8/9/2023 through 8/9/2024, in the amount of \$10,141.00.

The Board approved the Memorandum of Understanding between Rockwood Area School District and Frostburg State University for a counselor internship effective May 24, 2023 through August 2024.

The Board voted in favor to accept the Grants for Growing grant from the National FFA Organization, written by Leanna Weimer, in the amount of \$3,850.00 and award Mrs. Weimer the one percent grant writing stipend for writing the successful grant.

The Board approved the tentative bus and van driver list for the 2023-2024 school year, pending completion of all required paperwork.

The Board approved the tentative transportation rates and routes for the 2023-2024 school year.

On the discussion and voting on PSBA Officer candidates, the Board authorized Sherry Benford to cast the votes on behalf of the Rockwood Area School District.

The Board approved the agreement between Rockwood Area School District and Intermediate Unit 1 for Title I Services at Champion Christian School for the 2023-2024 school year, in the amount of \$819.00.

The Board approved the Memorandum of Understanding/Transitional Agreement between Rockwood Area School District and Ignite Learning Solutions for the 2023-2024 school year, as required by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

On the discussion and possible action to contract with Ignite Learning Solutions to employ two full-time elementary paraprofessionals, at a rate of \$10.30 each per hour, pending completion of all paperwork, the Board voted in favor to table this agenda item until the September board meeting.

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

006 Meetings

216.1 Supplemental Discipline Records

251 Students Experiencing Homelessness, Foster Care and Other Educational Instability

The Board approved the agreement between Somerset Area School District and Rockwood Area School District for emotional support classroom services at a rate of \$115.00 per day for a maximum of \$20,240.00 per student for the 2023-2024 school year.

The Board approved Tableland Services, Inc. to operate a pre-k program within the district during the 2023-2024 school year and approve the use of one elementary classroom.

Committee Reports:

The Board accepted the resignation of Jeremy Grimes as the assistant boys' junior high basketball coach and advertise for the position.

The Board accepted the resignation of Eric Costea as the assistant varsity baseball coach effective immediately, and advertise for the position.

The Board approved Rhett Pletcher as an unpaid bona-fide volunteer junior high boys' soccer coach, pending completion of all paperwork.

The Board accepted the resignation of Greta Carroll as French teacher effective June 30, 2023, as per letter of resignation, and advertise for the position.

The Board accepted the resignation of Connor Pielmeier as secondary social studies teacher, and advertise for the position.

The Board accepted the resignation of Chasity Davis as elementary school security receptionist effective immediately, advertise for the position, and approved her as a substitute instructional aide and substitute secretary for the 2023-2024 school year, pending completion of all paperwork.

The Board accepted the resignation of Kelsey Pletcher as elementary teacher effective August 8, 2023, as per letter of resignation, and advertise for the position.

The Board voted in favor to employ Ashley King as an elementary school security receptionist beginning the 2023-2024 school year, pending completion of all paperwork.

The Board approved Shanda Pletcher as a high school student council co-advisor effective the 2023-2024 school year.

The Board approved Autumn Fraley as an unpaid position volunteer, pending completion of all paperwork.

The Board approved summer hours for Juliann Picklo for the completion of the 2022-2023 Rockwood Rocket yearbook.

The Board approved the substitute teacher, nurse, instructional aide, secretary, and custodian lists for the 2023-2024 school year, pending completion of all paperwork.

The Board voted in favor to employ Jessica Fazenbaker as a full-time elementary teacher beginning the 2023-2024 school year, pending completion of all paperwork.

The Board approved Jim Wagner as a mentor teacher for a secondary social studies teacher (Lauren Boczar) for the 2023-2024 school year.

The Board voted in favor to employ Lauren Boczar as a secondary social studies teacher beginning the 2023-2024 school year, pending completion of all paperwork.

The Board approved the job description and responsibilities for the School Police Officer.

The Board approved Linda Merschat as a bona-fide volunteer head junior varsity girls' basketball coach, pending completion of all paperwork.

The Board approved Christy Hay as the Act 48 Chairperson and Induction Chairperson for the 2023-2024 school year.

The Board voted in favor to employ Maria LaRotonda as the bona-fide junior high assistant soccer coach, pending completion of all paperwork.

The Board accepted the resignation of Samantha Smith as special education teacher effective immediately and advertise for the position.

The Board voted in favor to add Amanda Iorio to the substitute teacher list and approved her as a long-term substitute teacher during the 2023-2024 school year, pending completion of all paperwork and to continue to advertise for a world language teacher.

The Board approved custodians to be compensated at the rate of time and a half, based upon the employee's annual salary, for hours worked beyond the regular work week and to authorize the maintenance supervisor to manage the use of overtime hours.

Use of School Facility Requests:

The Board approved the following use of school facility requests:

1. Rockwood PTO – Rockwood elementary library – 9/7/23, 10/5/23, 11/2/23, 12/7/23, 1/4/24, 2/1/24, 3/7/24, 4/4/24, 5/2/24; 5:30 P.M. – 7:30 P.M. – PTO Meetings
2. Rockwood PTO – Rockwood elementary chorus room – 10/19/23, 10/20/23; 9:00 A.M. – 2:00 P.M.; 10/23/23 through 10/27/23; 8:00 A.M. – 3:00 P.M. – Fall Book Fair

3. Rockwood Youth Softball 10U – Rockwood elementary gymnasium – Sundays beginning 12/17/23 – 6/30/24; 6:00 P.M. – 8:00 P.M.; Tuesdays and Thursdays beginning 1/2/24 – 6/30/24; 7:00 P.M. – 9:00 P.M. – Youth softball open gyms.

Club & Class Activity Requests:

The Board approved the following club & class activity requests:

1. Elementary Student Council – Clothing Sale – September 2023 – Raise funds to support elementary activities.
2. Playground Renovation Committee – Apparel and Blanket Sale – September - October 2023 – Raise funds for playground renovations.
3. Playground Renovation Committee – Homecoming Booth Apparel and Food Sale – 9/23/23 – Raise funds for playground renovation project.
4. Playground Renovation Committee – Playground Change Drive – 9/11/23 – 9/14/23; 9/18/23 – 9/21/23 – Raise funds for playground renovation project.
5. Playground Renovation Committee – Spirit \$1 Hat Days – 9/22/23, 9/29/23, 10/13/23, 10/20/23 – Raise funds for playground renovation project.

Superintendent's Report:

Mark Bower updated the Board on the restroom and locker room alterations project. Construction is nearing completion, and the cost of recent change orders has been minimal.

Mark Bower congratulated Jim Wagner, secondary social studies teacher, and students for their efforts and participation in the voter registration process. With Mr. Wagner's involvement, the District was presented with the Governor's Civic Engagement Award due to a high rate of voter registration among Rockwood students.

Mark Bower thanked the Board for their support of the Summer Mindfulness Camps. The camps were well attended by many students.

Mark Bower advised the Board he was contacted about partnering with the University of Pittsburgh at Greensburg (UPG) to participate in a bus grant. The funding from the grant would be used to place a staff member on a school bus to ride along during the route, when or wherever needed. The consensus of the Board was to allow the district to partner with UPG.

Mark Bower updated the Board of the ongoing challenges regarding attracting and retaining faculty and staff members in area schools. He also expressed his appreciation for the current faculty and staff members serving the students in the Rockwood Area School District.

Mark Bower congratulated Megan Hetrick on the birth of her new baby.

Jon Hale informed the Board of discussion held with a teacher panel of volunteers to identify concerns, address needs, and develop a starting point for behavior management in the elementary.

Jon Hale updated the Board about the playground renovation project. He has been working with various groups and individuals to review the plan and develop bid specs for the project. Mr. Hale continues to look into grant funding that may be available. The Playground Renovation Committee has planned several fundraisers to assist with the cost.

Jon Hale advised the Board that schedules are being finalized and the organizing of classrooms are taking shape.

Jon Hale informed the Board that school-wide planning is currently taking place. The focus is on academic improvement and supporting the development of critical thinking and problem solving.

Jon Hale advised the Board that summer programs are finishing up.

Nicholas Buterbaugh reviewed sports schedules with the Board and advised them of the vacant coaching positions that need to be filled.

Nicholas Buterbaugh informed the Board he has received many compliments about the appearance and usability of the athletic fields.

Nicholas Buterbaugh discussed the ICC conference. He reviewed differences between how the ICC conference operates versus how the WestPAC ran things. Everyone is working to create fair schedules for the teams.

Mark Bower recognized Nicholas Buterbaugh, as well as Misty Demchak, for their efforts in representing the district throughout the changes related to athletic programs and for participating in all of the necessary meetings to make the transition as smooth as possible.

Misty Demchak reminded the Board that Homecoming festivities will be held on Saturday, September 23rd and invited Board members and their families to attend, as well as all community members.

Misty Demchak recognized and thanked faculty and staff for supporting all of the students throughout the year.

Jordan Svonavec thanked the Board for supporting his position as the assistant coach for boys' soccer, as the team prepares to begin the season.

Jordan Svonavec updated the Board in regards to the old weight room equipment. The equipment has been sold and removed. New equipment will be delivered within a few weeks.

Jordan Svonavec informed the Board that the State approved free breakfast and lunches for all district students.

Jordan Svonavec advised the Board of a breakfast that will be held for van and bus drivers. The district appreciates the tremendous efforts and supports each driver gives to make certain students are being transported in a safe manner.

Jordan Svonavec discussed the procedure for transporting the district's golf team to Seven Springs for practices and matches.

Nick Buterbaugh recognized and thanked Seven Springs Golf Course (Highlands Golf Club at Seven Springs) and Coach Nichols for supplying Seven Springs with a plaque to display in their clubhouse, which will be the new home course for Rockwood's golf team.

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