



Rocket Express

March 19, 2024

The Rockwood Area Board of School Directors held its regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, March 19, 2024.

The minutes of the committee meeting on 2/20/2024, the regular meeting on 2/20/2024, 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:

Faith M. Millin
Kylie P. Cavanaugh
Haylie R. Snyder
Benjamin B. Barkman
Jeremiah R. Tomcanin
Rachel G. Lambert
Evan J. Wentz
Tristan O. Wright

Public Comment:

The Rockwood Area School District's independent swimmers, along with their Rockwood swimming coach Kelly Thompson, addressed the Board to thank them for their support of the swimming program. The two members of the team were recognized for their personal accomplishments and dedication to the program. Coach Thompson welcomed other students to participate in the swimming program.

Old Business:

The Board approved the Rockwood Area School District Health and Safety Plan.

New Business:

The Appalachia IU08 General Fund Operating Budget for the 2024-2025 fiscal year was approved by the Board.

Sherry Benford distributed and collected the ballots for the election of Appalachia IU08 Board of Directors.

The Board authorized the Business Office to advertise for the following bids for the 2024-2025 school year: Coal, Propane

The Board approved the Somerset County Technology Center Adult Budget for the 2024-2025 fiscal year.

The Board approved the Somerset County Technology Center Secondary Budget for the 2024-2025 fiscal year.

The Board approved the Site Based Extended School Year Program for eight days from 6/18/24 through 7/24/24, for a total of 32 hours, paid at per diem rate.

The Board approved the Site Based Speech and Language Extended School Year Program for eight days from 6/18/24 through 7/24/24, for a total of 10.5 hours, paid at per diem rate.

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

- 249 Bullying/Cyberbullying
- 903 Public Comment in Board Meetings

The Board approved Rockwood Transportation to travel the turnpike for athletic events, when feasible, and to include turnpike fees as a billable item on the monthly athletic transportation invoice.

The Board approved Cheryl Pritts as a district van driver and Ryan Schmuck as a substitute van driver for Rockwood Transportation, Inc. for the 2023-2024 school year, pending completion of all paperwork.

The Agreement for Educational Services with New Directions, Chestnut Ridge Counseling Services, Inc. for the 2024-2025 school year at a rate of \$150.00 per day, per student was approved by the Board.

The discussion and possible action to accept the quote from Visual Sound, Inc. (CoStars State Contract #034-E22-167) in the amount of \$55,184.91 for the purchase and installation of a projection system in the Rockwood High School Auditorium was tabled until the April 16, 2024, Board meeting.

The Board voted in favor to purchase playground equipment for the Playground Renovation Project through the COSTARS program.

The Board accepted the Rockwood Area School District Meritorious School Safety Grant in the amount of \$30,000.00 for the 2023-2024 school year.

The Board approved the Resolution for the Rockwood Area School District to request a 2024 Public School Facility Improvement Grant from the Commonwealth Financing Authority.

On the consideration to select an ESCO to perform an Investment Grade Audit, the Board voted in favor to table the item until the April 16, 2024, Board meeting.

Committee Reports:

The Board approved the following individuals as unpaid position volunteers, pending completion of all paperwork:

Katie Miller Courtney Podlesny Nicole Miller
Brittany Weimer

The Board accepted the retirement of Linda Carolus as elementary paraprofessional effective May 29, 2024, and to advertise for the position.

The Board voted in favor to add Jade Hetz to the substitute teacher list (Type 06) for the 2023-2024 school year, pending completion of all paperwork.

The Board voted in favor to add Mark Hicks to the substitute teacher list for the 2023-2024 school year, pending completion of all paperwork.

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

The Board voted in favor to employ Karen Miller as an elementary paraprofessional, pending completion of all paperwork.

On the consideration to employ an elementary school security receptionist, according to the support staff hourly wage scale, pending completion of all paperwork, the Board voted in favor to table the item until the April 16 Board meeting.

The Board approved the retirement of Sandra King as the High School/Athletic Office Administrative Assistant effective June 28, 2024, and to advertise for the position.

The Board voted in favor to employ Carter Atchison as a bona-fide volunteer varsity assistant baseball coach for the 2023-2024 school year, pending completion of all paperwork.

The Board approved Rob Harrold as an unpaid bona-fide volunteer varsity baseball coach, pending completion of all paperwork.

Conference Requests:

The Board approved the following conference request:

1. PAFPC Annual Conference – Pittsburgh, PA – 4/15/24, 4/16/24, 4/17/24 – Jon Hale

Field Trip Requests:

The Board approved the following field trip requests:

1. One Book, One Community Event – Rockwood, PA – 5/14/24 – Melissa Gindlesperger, Jenna Sembower, Faith Hemminger and 37 students
2. Job Corps – Pittsburgh, PA – 4/10/24 – PJ Opfar, Susan Clark, and 3 students

Use of School Facility Requests:

The Board approved the following use of school facility requests:

1. Rockwood Soccer Club – Rockwood high school gym lobby – 3/17/24; 5:00 P.M. – 7:00 P.M. – Monthly meeting
2. Rockwood Soccer Club – Rockwood high school auditorium – 3/17/24; 1:00 P.M. – 6:00 P.M. – Parent/player meeting
3. Rockwood Youth Football – Rockwood high school cafeteria – 3/20/24 – 6:00 P.M. – 7:30 P.M. – Youth football registration.

Superintendent's Report:

Mark Bower distributed copies of the Collective Bargaining Agreement to Board members. The agreement covers the period of July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2029.

Mark Bower recognized the musical cast for their recent performances. The students and advisors did a nice job. He thanked the Board for their continued support of the program as well as other district programs.

Mark Bower held a discussion with the Board regarding the upcoming solar eclipse. Administrators are considering ways to make the event fun, educational, and safe for students.

Mark Bower congratulated the Berlin boys' basketball team for their great success. The team will be playing for state gold in the PIAA Class A boys basketball championship game on March 21.

Mark Bower addressed the Board about the semiannual publication of the district's newsletter. Discussion was held, and the Board agreed that the district should continue to publish the newsletter in the same way it has been done over the past several years.

Mark Bower approached the Board in regards to summer hours for staff members. He made a request to allow summer staff to adjust their work week beginning the week of June 10 through August 9. The Board consented to the request.

Mark Bower requested confirmation from all Board members present on ways they prefer to receive Board related information and announcements. The consensus of the Board requested information be sent to both their personal email as well as their school email accounts.

Mark Bower reviewed the Needs Assessment with Board members.

Jon Hale congratulated everyone that was involved with the district musical. Everyone did a great job. He thanked faculty, staff, administrators, families, and community members for supporting the cast and the event.

Jon Hale informed the Board that kindergarten registration will take place on March 21 and 22. At this time there are 42 incoming kindergarten students.

Jon Hale advised the Board that a parent engagement session related to drug trends in Somerset County will be held on March 26. He invited Board members to attend. This event is part of the "Parenting in

Today's World" series. The session will feature guest speaker, Rebecca Mull, Director of Somerset County Drug-Free Communities.

Jon Hale gave an update on the Leaders of Tomorrow Incentive Program. Elementary Student Council is sponsoring a dance for 5th and 6th grade students. Students in kindergarten through 4th grade will participate in a game in the gym and receive a snack and extra recess time.

Jon Hale informed the Board that Read Across America Day was held on March 1 and was a great event. A vocabulary parade was held with students dressing up. The participation level was spectacular.

Nicholas Buterbaugh updated the Board on district sports schedule changes due to inclement weather conditions.

Nicholas Buterbaugh updated the Board on the number of athletes participating in various sports.

Nicholas Buterbaugh informed the Board that the transportation arrangements for the Meyersdale track co-op program have been going well.

Misty Demchak congratulated the musical cast and directors. The students and advisors did a great job.

Misty Demchak informed the Board that Mrs. Opfar has been working hard to launch the first digital SAT School Day, which will be held on March 20. She thanked Dan Younkin and Rob Yench for assisting with all the behind-the-scenes preparation work.

Misty Demchak advised the Board that the end of quarter 3 will end on March 25. Report cards will be distributed after the Easter/spring break.

Misty Demchak informed the Board that the NHS, FHS, and SHS induction ceremony will be held on April 17.

Misty Demchak recognized and thanked Woodman of the World for sponsoring a staff luncheon last week. Faculty and staff appreciated the thoughtful gesture.

Misty Demchak announced that the Easter/spring break will begin next week. Students will be dismissed early on March 27.

Misty Demchak recognized and congratulated a student for her participation in Regional Band. The student placed 9th overall.

Misty Demchak informed the Board that Rockwood's FBLA will be attending the State Leadership Conference in Hershey on April 7-9.

Megan Hetrick thanked the Board for supporting the End of Year School programs that will be held during the summer months.

Jordan Svonavec advised the Board that the new chair lift will be installed next week. A training will be scheduled for individuals who will be operating the lift.

Jordan Svonavec thanked the Board for approving and supporting his attendance at the PASBO Conference. The event was extremely beneficial.

Jordan Svonavec informed the Board that the district will be accepting bids for cafeteria services. A small committee was formed to assist with reviewing bid proposals.

Jordan Svonavec updated the Board regarding P-EBT services. All district residents with students enrolled at the Rockwood Area School District through May of 2023, were eligible to receive P-EBT cards as a result of the district's participation in the Community Eligibility Provision during the 2022-2023 school year. The State notified the district that the P-EBT cards will no longer be offered to everyone, only those who qualify and apply.

Jordan Svonavec informed the Board that he will be presenting for the Chamber of Commerce Leadership Somerset County Panel at Penn Highlands – Somerset on March 20.

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