



# Rocket Express

## November 19, 2024

The Rockwood Area Board of School Directors held its regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, November 19, 2024. The following directors were present: Ashley Baker, Seth Foreman, Melanie Monticue, Brad Pletcher, Matthew Pritts, Tyler Pritts, Adam Sembower, and Noah Wareham. The following director was absent: Hailey Miller.

The minutes of the committee meeting on 10/15/2024 and the regular meeting on 10/15/2024 were approved.

The agenda and 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:

Emily L. Hay  
Kaitlyn F. Latuch  
Paysli K. Lytle  
Isabelle I. Schmuck  
Pyper L. Lytle  
Ruth A. Mathias  
Emma G. Santillo

### **Public Comment:**

Martha Mitchell, a representative of PAX Academic Exchange, introduced herself to the Board and gave an overview of the Foreign Exchange Program. 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. In addition, they presented the district with a flag representing their country of origin.

Zach Gaskin, a district resident and the district's varsity boys' soccer coach, approached the Board to discuss the condition of the athletic/soccer field and the current field maintenance program. He expressed concerns about the field's upkeep, noting dissatisfaction with its maintenance since his last discussion with the Board several years ago. Mr. Gaskin also proposed several ideas for improving the field's overall condition. Following the discussion, the Board and administrative team recommended forming an athletic field committee to conduct a feasibility study and evaluate the practicality of a proposed project plan.

## **Old Business:**

The Board authorized payment to Expert Paving Co., LLC in the amount of \$149,672.00 for paving and line painting. Approval was granted with reservations, due to a number of concerns with the quality of work performed.

The Board approved the final annual financial report for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2024.

The Board approved the second and final readings of the following revisions to the Rockwood Area School District policy manual:

- 113.1 Discipline of Students with Disabilities
- 113.2 Behavior Support
- 202 Nonresident Students
- 236.1 Threat Assessment
- 254 Educational Opportunity for Military Children
- 607 Tuition Students
- 805.2 School Security Personnel

## **New Business:**

The Board established the date for the annual reorganization meeting as Tuesday, December 3, 2024, at 7:00 P.M.

The Board adopted the Act 1 Resolution electing not to increase the tax rate above the index for the 2025-2026 school year.

The Board approved the Rockwood Area School District Certification of Intent to Provide Pupil Transportation Services for the 2024-2025 school year.

The Board approved homebound instruction for a 7th grade student.

The Board authorized the Administration to plan the Staff Appreciation Dinner for May 2025, with a date to be determined.

The Board approved the Community Walking Program for registered walkers during the 2024-2025 school year.

The Board approved Daniel Adam Milcarzyk as a district van and bus driver and Jeremiah Daniels as a district substitute van and bus driver for Rockwood Transportation, Inc. for the 2024-2025 school year, pending completion of all paperwork.

The annual senior class trip to Lewes, DE, and Assateague Island, MD, with tentative dates of May 23 through May 26, 2025, was approved by the Board.

The Board approved the Somerset County Mobile Food Bank Student Volunteer Proposal for the 2024-2025 school year.

The Board approved the removal of select library books from the district's inventory, with the option to offer these books to students, rather than discarding them.

The Board approved the revisions to the Rockwood Area School District Course Selection Guide for the 2025-2026 school year.

The Board approved the Cooperative Sponsorship of Sport between the Meyersdale Area School District and Rockwood Area School District for Varsity Rifle for the 2024-2025 school year.

The Board approved the lending of district rifles, gear, and equipment to Meyersdale Area School District to support Rockwood students in the rifle co-op program.

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 2024-2025 school year, at the rate of \$55.00 per day, for Adolescent Partial Hospitalization students, if placement is needed throughout the year.

The Board approved the Memorandum of Understanding between Nulton Diagnostic & Treatment Center and Rockwood Area School District for the 2024-2025 school year, at the rate of \$65.00 per day, for participation in the Child/Adolescent Partial Hospitalization Program, if placement is needed throughout the year.

The Board approved the EITC funded "Engineering is Elementary" Proposal for the 2024-2025 school year.

The Board tabled the approval of the Rockwood Area School District Policy of Violation of the Fan/Guest Code of Conduct until the December 2024, Board meeting.

**Committee Reports:**

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

Jessica Singer	Tracie Pletcher	Suzette Shaffer
Heidi Lewis	Rebekah Lee	

The Board voted in favor to add Courtney Latuch to the substitute instructional aide list for the 2024-2025 school year, pending completion of all paperwork.

The consideration to employ Amanda Zimmerman as a Long-Term Substitute Elementary Teacher and add her to the substitute teacher list for the 2024-2025 school year was removed, as the candidate withdrew her application.

The Board approved Allison Shultz as an assistant musical coach effective the 2024-2025 school year.

The Board voted in favor to employ Lindsay Latuch as a bona-fide volunteer junior high girls' assistant basketball coach, pending completion of all paperwork.

The Board approved the following individuals as unpaid bona-fide volunteer girls' basketball coaches, pending completion of all paperwork:

Morgan Beckner  
Carissa Pletcher  
Elyse Cordaro

The Board approved Kendahl Stutzman as an unpaid bona-fide volunteer varsity softball coach, pending completion of all paperwork.

The Board approved tenure status for the following individuals:

Megan Berkebile  
Olivia Eller  
Nathan Formica  
Jeremy Romesberg

The Board approved the Business Manager Contract between the Rockwood Area School District and Jordan Svonavec for the term July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2030.

The Board approved district summer support staff employees to carry over their unused vacation days from the 2024-2025 fiscal year into the 2025-2026 fiscal year.

### **Conference Requests:**

The Board approved the following conference request:

1. PAFPC Improving Schools Conference – Pittsburgh, PA – 1/26/25 through 1/29/25 – Jon Hale

### **Use of School Facility Requests:**

The Board approved the following use of school facility requests:

1. Rockwood Soccer Boosters – Rockwood high school gymnasium lobby – 10/30/24; 5:30 P.M. – 7:30 P.M. – Booster meeting.
2. Rockwood Youth Baseball League – Rockwood elementary gymnasium – Saturdays and available weeknights beginning January 2025 through May 2025; 3:00 P.M. – 6:00 P.M. \* will coordinate with Athletic Director – Pre-season practices.
3. Rockwood Soccer Club – Rockwood high school gymnasium, weight room – 11/17/24 through end of school year; 2:00 P.M. – 4:30 P.M. – Practices and weight training.
4. Rockwood Basketball Boosters – Rockwood high school gymnasium lobby- 1st Monday of each month November 2024 through April 2025; 6:00 P.M. – 7:00 P.M. – Monthly booster meetings.

### **Club & Class Activity Requests:**

The Board approved the following club & class activity requests:

1. Class of 2026 – 59-minute popcorn sale – 11/15/24 through 11/26/24 – Raise funds for senior class trip and end of year graduation expenses.
2. Elementary Student Council – Candy cane sale – 12/10/24 through 12/12/24 – Raise fund for elementary student council sponsored events.

### **Superintendent's Report:**

Mark Bower informed the Board that the contract with SitelogIQ for Phase 1 of the energy efficiency and facility solutions project, which focuses on electrical work, has been signed.

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

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 provided the Board with information regarding the Bedford-Somerset Healthcare Consortium. A meeting is held annually for the purpose of giving member districts the opportunity to include healthcare premium increases in their Act 1 budgets. Inflation in the healthcare system is expected to impact districts with an increase in healthcare premiums.

Mark Bower informed the Board that a meeting is scheduled to explore potential cooperative options for athletic programs. This meeting will include a committee comprised of administrators and board members from Berlin Brothersvalley School District, Meyersdale Area School District, and Rockwood Area School District, and will be held on December 9, 2024.

Misty Demchak advised the Board that the fall-formal and soph-senior dances were held this month and were well attended by students. She recognized and thanked the committees who organized both events.

Misty Demchak thanked faculty and staff for sponsoring and donating items towards Thanksgiving dinners that will be distributed to eleven families within the district.

Misty Demchak informed the Board that County Chorus will be held on November 25 and 26, 2024.

Misty Demchak recognized Mr. Nathan Formica for organizing a committee of student volunteers who will participate in the wreath laying ceremony as part of the Wreaths Across America program. The ceremony will be held on December 14, 2024, at the Rockwood IOOF cemetery.

Nicholas Buterbaugh updated the Board on winter sports in regards to schedules, officials, transportation, etc.

Mark Bower provided the Board with elementary updates on behalf of Jon Hale, who was unable to attend the meeting. Updates included:

- The Veteran's Day assembly was a huge success. He recognized the students, staff and faculty for their presentations and thanked Mr. Ben Baker for organizing the event.
- Trunk or Treat was a great parent engagement event. Almost 300 children attended. He thanked Mrs. Jenna Sembower for her outreach to have organizations and individuals participate with trunks/treats.
- Behavior in the elementary building is being addressed. Parent meetings are being held to address behavior concerns.
- The Christmas Store will be held on December 16, 17, and 18, 2024.

Jordan Svonavec updated the Board on additional healthy breakfast choices being offered in the cafeterias. Student participation has increased in both breakfast and lunch purchases.

Noah Wareham provided the Board with an update on the Somerset County Technology Center. Several resignations have been submitted; however, those vacant positions are being filled and the programs are running well.

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