



# **Rocket Express**

## **June 18, 2024**

The Rockwood Area Board of School Directors held its regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, June 18, 2024.

The minutes of the committee meeting on 5/21/2024, the regular meeting on 5/21/2024, and the special meeting on 5/29/2024, were approved.

The agenda and agenda items were approved.

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

### **Old Business:**

The Board approved the 2024-2025 Homestead and Farmstead Resolution as a result of accepting the property tax reduction allocation in the amount of \$353,205.74.

The Board voted in favor to adopt a final general fund budget for the 2024-2025 fiscal year in the amount of \$14,515,346.00 and a millage rate of 24.798 mills on real estate, a beginning committed fund balance of \$500,000.00, a beginning unassigned fund balance of \$1,506,297.00, a beginning assigned fund balance of \$2,650,000.00, a budgetary reserve of \$1,000,000.00, and earned income and real estate transfer taxes of ½%.

The Board approved one-time expenditures for the 2024-2025 fiscal year in the allotted amount of \$701,500.00.

### **New Business:**

The Board authorized the business office to make budgetary transfers for the 2023-2024 fiscal year in order to avoid line item and categorical over-expenditures resulting from audit re-classifications and to present those transfers for final approval with the acceptance of the annual financial report.

The Board authorized the business office to pay the necessary bills in July to avoid penalties and to present those bills for final approval in August.

The Eastern Alliance Insurance Group Workers' Compensation Proposal through Reschini Insurance Agency for the 2024-2025 fiscal year in the amount of \$15,398.00 was approved by the Board.

The Dual Credit Agreement between Rockwood Area School District and the University of Pittsburgh from August 2024 through June 2025 was approved by the Board.

The quote from World of Learning Institute for virtual instruction in online courses during the 2024-2025 school year, to be billed based upon student enrollment, was accepted by the Board.

The Board approved membership in PA Association School Business Officials (PASBO) for the 2024-2025 school year in the amount of \$400.00.

The Board approved the Agreement for School-Age Education Services between the Appalachia Intermediate Unit 8 and the Rockwood Area School District effective August 1, 2024, and annually thereafter, according to the terms of the agreement.

The Board approved changes to the elementary and secondary student handbooks for the 2024-2025 school year.

The Board approved changes to the elementary and secondary faculty handbooks for the 2024-2025 school year.

The Board approved the removal of old textbooks from the district inventory and authorized the administration to contact companies for the purchase of the old textbooks.

The athletic schedules for the 2024-2025 school year were approved by the Board.

The Board authorized Sherry Benford to cast the votes on behalf of the Rockwood Area School District in regards to delegates to the PSBA Legislative Platform.

The Board approved modified schedules for four (4) 12<sup>th</sup> grade students to participate in the school-to-work program during the 2024-2025 school year.

The Board approved a modified half day schedule for a 12<sup>th</sup> grade student to participate in college courses offered outside the Rockwood Area School District.

The Board met in executive session to review the School Safety and Security Coordinator's annual report as required by Section 1309-B of the PA Public School Code.

The Board selected SitelogIQ to perform an Investment Grade Audit.

On the discussion and possible action concerning paving for the maintenance building parking area and elementary playground pavement, the Board authorized the administration to advertise bid specifications for the project.

The Memorandum of Understanding/Transitional Agreement between Rockwood Area School District and Tableland Services for the 2024-2025 school year, as required by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and Federal Programs, was approved by the Board.

### **Committee Reports:**

The Board approved the following mentor teachers for the 2024-2025 school year:

Elyse Cordaro for Heather Hay  
Josh Bowlin for Mindy Singo

The Board approved the following curriculum coordinators for the 2024-2025 school year:

Jessica Miller                      Elementary ELA  
Elyse Cordaro                      Elementary Math

Ben Baker	Elementary Science
Shanna Wilson	Elementary Social Studies
Jenna Wintersteen	Elementary Special Education
Roni Langley-Burkardt	Secondary ELA
Greg King	Secondary Math
Joe Kush	Secondary Science
Jim Wagner	Secondary Social Studies
Amber Walker	Secondary Fine Arts/Practical Arts
Cassie Wright	Secondary Special Education

The Board voted in favor to employ a health room aide/L.P.N. through the Learning Lamp for the 2024-2025 school year.

The Board approved Finnleigh Gould as an unpaid bona-fide volunteer varsity girls' soccer coach, pending completion of all paperwork.

The Board approved Bruce Gould as an unpaid bona-fide volunteer varsity girls' soccer coach, pending completion of all paperwork.

The Board accepted the resignation of Karen Miller as elementary instructional paraprofessional effective June 1, 2024.

The Board accepted the resignation of Rich Stoner as rifle coach and to advertise for the position.

The Board accepted the resignation of Steve Barto as varsity baseball head coach and to advertise for the position.

The Board voted in favor to employ Karey Vough on an English Intern Certificate beginning the 2024-2025 school year, pending completion of all paperwork.

The athletic fees for officials for the 2024-2025 school year were approved by the Board.

The Board voted in favor to table the following agenda items until the August 20, 2024, Board meeting:

- Consideration to approve coaches' salaries for the 2024-2025 school year.
- Consideration to approve coaches' starting salaries for the 2024-2025 school year.

The Board approved a 3% salary increase for the following employee groups, plus the results of their yearly evaluation: Administrative Assistants, Administrative Services, and Custodial/Maintenance Staff; and approved an hourly rate increase of \$3.70, plus the results of their yearly evaluation for Paraprofessionals and Hourly Employees.

On the discussion and possible action to increase the substitute teacher rate beginning the 2024-2025 school year, the Board voted in favor to increase the rate to \$150.00 per day. The rate for a substitute that will be utilized in the same position for a period of more than 10 days will remain at \$175.00 per day.

On the discussion and possible action to increase the substitute nurse rate beginning the 2024-2025 school year, the Board voted in favor to increase the rate to \$225.00 per day for a certified school nurse

who provides coverage during the absence of the regular school nurse and increase the rate to \$175.00 per day for an RN, LPN, or CSN who provides coverage on a field trip or provides health assistance or coverage for the regular school nurse, under the direct supervision of the regular school nurse.

The Board voted in favor to increase the paraprofessional starting hourly rate to \$14.00 per hour.

On the discussion and possible action to adjust the support staff starting salary, the Board voted in favor to increase the support staff starting salary as follows:

- Minimum starting salary for full-time support staff employees adjusted from \$27,270.00 to \$28,088.00.
- Salary for full-time support staff employees with three (3) or more years of service in the district adjusted from \$32,320.00 to \$33,000.00.

The Board voted in favor to employ Jillian Halverson as an elementary instructional paraprofessional beginning the 2024-2025 school year, pending completion of all paperwork.

### **Conference Requests:**

The Board approved the following conference requests:

1. IU8 Math Networking Meetings – Johnstown, PA – 9/1/24, 11/21/24, 1/30/25, 4/2/25 – Alana Letizia, Katie Lambert.
2. WRS Wilson Introductory Course Training – Virtual – 3 days in summer 2024 – Brooke Kroon, Hanna Goller.

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

Mark Bower thanked Board members for attending the graduation ceremony for the class of 2024.

Mark Bower informed the Board that he, along with Sharon Clapper, Joe Kush, Ben Baker, Ashley Baker, and Irvin Kimmel, Jr., Somerset County Commissioner will be participating in a tour of Lockheed Martin and the Johnstown Airport on Monday, June 24. He invited Board members to take part in the tour.

Mark Bower provided the Board with an update on the playground renovation project. The old playground equipment has been removed and work on the new playground will begin this week.

Mark Bower informed the Board about drains backing up within the facilities. Due to the unexpected circumstances that call for immediate action, a decision was made to complete the emergency project immediately to make necessary repairs to the drainage system and to potentially avoid any future issues and delays to the start of the 2024-2025 school year.

Mark Bower advised the Board that summer programs and summer camps are well underway. The students, along with teachers and support staff, seem to be enjoying their experiences.

Mark Bower shared with the Board a list of projects that the administrative team has been working on over the summer.

Mark Bower informed the Board of several policy updates he is working on and will present the Board with the updates at a later meeting; most likely in August.

Jon Hale reported that elementary summer programs are going well, and he reviewed upcoming summer camps that will be available to elementary students.

Jon Hale advised the Board that he is working administratively on several elementary programs.

Nicholas Buterbaugh informed the Board that fall sports schedules are almost complete, with the exception of a few adjustments with games and scrimmages.

Nicholas Buterbaugh reported that he is keeping track of the number of student athletes who will be participating in fall sports. Currently, the rosters are looking good.

Nicholas Buterbaugh advised the Board that new uniforms for golf and cheerleading will be purchased this year. Uniform orders are being processed.

Nicholas Buterbaugh updated the Board regarding school safety and security. The Safety Committee is in the process of acquiring teacher and room number identification plaques to hang from the ceiling to identify classrooms in the high school.

Misty Demchak informed the Board that a few high school students are enrolled in summer credit recovery programs.

Misty Demchak advised the Board that class schedules for high school students are being finalized.

Misty Demchak shared with the Board that several high school teachers are assisting with elementary camps and recognized and thanked Josie Knopsnyder and Carissa Shipley for planning the summer camps. The students, teachers, and support staff are having a great time.

Misty Demchak announced that trail booklets for the Trail Passport Program have been printed and are available at several Somerset County locations, including the Rockwood Visitors Center.

Jordan Svonavec held a discussion with the Board regarding the distribution/purchase of chocolate and white milk during elementary snack breaks. After discussion, the consensus of the Board agreed to omit the distribution/purchase of chocolate milk during snack breaks, affecting students in grades kindergarten through second grade, and to continue to offer white milk and water as options.

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