

**Rockdale School District 84**

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**715 Meadow Avenue Rockdale, Illinois, Wednesday, October 19, 2022.**

**Closed Session Meeting in the Media Center at 5:30 p.m.**

**Regular Meeting in the Media Center at 6:00 p.m.**

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**Call to Order Regular Meeting:**

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of Rockdale School District 84 was held on Wednesday, October 19, 2022 beginning at 5:35PM.

**Members Present**

Angela Stadler  
Steve Chamblee  
Ahmed Aich-Sandino  
Geraldyn Wyke  
Jolene Chamblee  
Nick Macholz  
Gerry Phillips

**Members Absent**

**Also Present**

Dr. Michael Merritt  
Jeff Peterson  
Irene Las

**Approximately 11 Guests**

**Board President Angie Stadler called to order the regular open session at 5:35PM.**

Roll Call was taken and a quorum was established.

**Pledge of Allegiance:**

Mrs. Stadler asked all present to rise for the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

**Adopt Agenda:**

Member Wyke made a motion to adopt the agenda as presented.

Member J. Chamblee seconded the motion.

**The motion was carried with all members voting 'aye'.**

**Closed Session:**

Board President Ms. Angela Stadler called the closed meeting to order at 5:37 PM.

Motion to go into closed session at 5:37PM was made by Mrs. Wyke and seconded by

Mr. Macholz to discuss the following:

- 2.01 The purchase or lease of real property for the use of the District, including meetings held for the purpose of discussing whether a particular parcel should be acquired.  
5 ILCS 120/2(c)(5).
- 2.02 The appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees. ILCS 120/2(c)(1), amended by P.A. 101-459.

The motion carried with all of the members voting 'aye'.

Motion to return from closed session was made at 6:02PM by Mrs. Wyke and seconded by

Mrs. Aich. **The motion carried with all of the members voting 'aye'.**

**Report on Closed Session:**

Mrs. Stadler advised that items mentioned per the agenda were addressed during the closed session.

**Receive and Welcome Visitors:**

**Staff:** S. Blenck

**Students:** Approximately 10 students attended

**Parents:** Approximately 8 parents attended

**Guests:** John Michalesko, CPA and Mark Walters Prairie State Runners Club

## Recognitions:

### 4.01 Prairie State Road Runners Club - Shelli Blenck and Mark Walters

Dr. Merritt took a moment to welcome Shelli Blenck and Mark Walters from the Prairie State Road Runners Club to our meeting tonight. Diana Sorich, Treasurer of the Prairie State Road Runners Club, reached out to Rockdale School on Friday, September 23rd to indicate the club recently had a fundraiser that collected backpacks and some school supplies that was originally intended for an service organization in Lockport. They found that that organization had closed, so, to our benefit, The Road Runners reached out to indicate they would like to donate the supplies to Rockdale. In addition to the supplies, they collected \$400 that they also donated, which we used towards our Caring Closet to purchase various items of need for our learners.

The superintendent also advised the board that tomorrow is IL Principals Appreciation Day. This is a day that we recognize all the hard work and passion our students that Jeff Peterson has shown.

### 4.02 Rockdale Rockstars

Principal Peterson explained to the board how the Rockdale Rockstars work and how it replaced the student of the month. He then took a moment to present each student, share information on each of the winning students along with a letter from their nominating teacher.

## Public Comment: (See Board Policy 2:230)

### 5.01 FY22 Annual Audit - John Michalesko

Dr. Merritt introduced John Michalesko, CPA, who went over the process and findings of the audit.

## Consent Agenda:

Member Wyke made a motion to accept the consent agenda as presented

Member Phillips seconded the motion.

**The motion was carried with all members voting 'aye'.**

### 6.01 Approval of Regular and Closed Meeting Minutes for September 21, 2022, Finance Committee Meeting from September 14, 2022 and Special Meeting from September 7, 2022.

### 6.02 Approval of Financial Report: Treasurer's Report, List of Bills, Check Registry by Type, Funds Balance, and Imprest Account.

Dr. Merritt brought to the attention of the board that on the eighth page of the Board Bills, there were three separate payments to SOWIC. He advised that the reason you see three payments is due to an oversight of payment of the summer and September bill. Therefore, the payment for all three months (summer, September, and October) are included in this month's Board bills. You may have noticed a 3300 payment to SOWIC in the September bills for OT/PT services. That bill should have been made out to Stepping Stones, the organization SOWIC uses it for OT/PT

services. SOWIC did send that 3300 check back to us and that payment has been submitted to Stepping Stones.

### **Superintendent Report:**

Member Wyke made a motion to approve the Communication Report as presented.

Member Macholz seconded the motion.

**The motion was carried with all seven (7) members voting 'aye'.**

### **Dr. Merritt shared with the board the following information:**

#### **7.01 Illinois School Report Card - October 31**

The state is scheduled to release the annual Illinois School Report Card on October 27, which will include our summative designation.

#### **7.02 Annual Budget Update - Q1**

Since July 1, we have realized revenue of \$1,774,356.57 and expenditures of \$854,056.28; resulting in a surplus of \$920,300.29. As of Oct 7, we have received three payments totaling \$1,499,116.40. Therefore, at the end of Q1, we have received 83% of our budgeted revenue. We will certainly continue to closely monitor our revenues and expenditures, but are pleased with our current status of operating in a fiscally responsible manner advised the superintendent.

#### **7.03 Cafeteria Heating and Air Rooftop Unit (RTU)**

Dr. Merritt shared with the board that he is looking for approval to purchase the HVAC Rooftop unit that provides air and heat to the cafeteria. The quote from J & A came in at 38,995.00. A reminder that the funds for this purchase are covered through ESSER III funding as the Board approved the ESSER III expenditure plan last spring. We allocated 49,301.00 for this expense. He would like the Board's thoughts on timing and placement of this HVAC unit. The current unit with which this new unit would replace is located on the ground on the northeast side of the building/cafeteria. Ideally, he would like to see the unit placed on the roof. Originally, he thought this could be placed on the expanded cafeteria as part of our Facilities Plan. However, we could also consider placing the unit on the existing roof. He realizes this potential placement would add to the cost of this project as ductwork would need to be modified and placed down the side of the building coming down from the roof. Additionally, we would need to have an engineer determine if the roof above the district office would handle the load of this additional unit.

The Superintendent is recommending the Board approve the purchase of this unit, while allowing him to work further with our Facilities Committee and partner contractor to determine if the new unit will be installed in the summer of 2023.

Board Member Steve Chamblee wanted to know if we are looking for approval to purchase the unit in the existing spot or to place it on the roof. Dr. Merritt advised it would be looking to approve purchase as it takes months to come in and continue working on the decision of placement as we get additional information.

#### 7.04 Facilities Update

The superintendent explained that although he placed a recommendation for a preferred performance contractor in the Executive Summary. Upon further reflection, he believes it is in the Board's best interest to allow the Facilities Committee to come back together to further evaluate the proposals provided by both Engie and Veregy to ensure all committee members are on the same page and we have a solid recommendation to bring before the Board. We have a meeting scheduled next Tuesday at 5:00 he shared and continued by advising that the goal of the meeting is to determine a recommendation to bring to the Board possibly as soon as the next day when we meet with Lori Grant for the IASB Workshop. He further advised that he did attend the Village Board meeting last night. Their engineer, Dan Malinowski continues to express his support and represent the Village in any way we need.

#### 7.05 Rockdale 84 Health Dental Insurance Renewal

Bill Van Asdlen, our health insurance broker through Employee Benefits Group, Incorporated, has been working to move forward with our health insurance renewal, shared Dr. Merritt. He continued to remind the board that our health insurance renewal is on a December to December annual cycle, with our renewal beginning on Thursday, Dec. 15. When reviewing the proposed renewal, he advised an overall increase between all four plans (+2.5, +4.0, +4.6, -1.0) we offer to be at +3.8%. He also shared that he was pleased to learn this as the last time he was involved in approving a health insurance renewal (Gardner CCSD 72C in May), they were realizing a 7.2% increase. The Insurance Committee and Bill Van Asdlen on Tuesday, October 11th. The collective committee understood the increases and was in support of moving forward with the approval. Should the Board approve the renewal, we will provide an open enrollment period to our staff from Nov. 1 to Nov. 15.

Additionally, Dr. Merritt did ask Mr. Van Asdlen if there were any other plans he could offer that included richer benefits with a lower premium. He did find a PPO Blue Choice Preferred Plan, which does limit our employees to certain providers in the surrounding Joliet area. The benefits are better, with premiums very similar to our current premiums. The superintendent advised that he will meet again with the insurance committee next Thursday to review that plan and determine if we want to move forward with offering that as a fifth plan or replace that plan with one of the four we already provide.

Dr. Merritt also asked Mr. Van Asdlen to determine if there was an avenue for Rockdale SD84 to be able to partner with other local small school districts to enter into an insurance cooperative that would allow us access to better benefits at lower rates. If there is, we do not anticipate the timing to allow us to enter into a cooperative this year, but would allow us to before the next renewal in December 2023.

Therefore, Superintendent Merritt is recommending the Board approve the health insurance renewal.

#### 7.06 ISBE School Maintenance Project Grant Application - Round 1

The ISBE offers a School Maintenance Project Grant. The purpose of the grant is to take advantage of the state's dollar-for dollar matching grant to complete needed improvement or updates relative to school maintenance, up to \$50,000 (a total of \$100,000) shared Dr. Merritt. Our grant has been written with the idea that we would put the state's \$50,000 towards our storm sewer/drainage project that we are planning to have done next summer with a start date of Tuesday, May 30 the Superintendent explained. He continued by advising the due date for the application is Friday, Nov. 18th.

He is recommending the Board approve the application for the grant now in October, as our November meeting date is November 16, which does not give much turn around time to get the application submitted, especially with some of us attending the Triple I Board Conference at the end of that week.

#### 7.07 Tax Levy - Truth in Taxation

Dr. Merritt is in the process of developing this year's tax levy, which is required by law to be presented in draft form to the Board during the November meeting. The official final proposed levy will be presented for approval to the Board in December. One important element to developing the tax levy is to determine how much of an increase we as a Board want to ask of our taxpayers, he explained. By state law he continued, if you increase your levy by 5% or more in comparison to the previous year's extension, we are required to facilitate a Truth in Taxation hearing. Based on his understanding, the district has not exceeded the 5% increase in many years. So, historically speaking, it would not be in our best interest to reach the 5% threshold. However, it is important to note, for the first time in many years (at least since 1991) the percent change in CPI is 7.0%. The average percentage increase over the last ten years is 1.75%, he stated.

After some discussion the board decided that Dr. Merritt should present the possible costs of both scenarios to the board at the next board meeting.

#### 7.08 Triple I Board Conference Update

Dr. Merritt shared with the board that the confirmation for the conference registration and hotel accommodations for those attending have been received. He continue to share that to help keep all attendees as organized as possible, Irene Las is working on creating binders for everyone who is attending. The badges and binders will be ready for distribution to you during the November Board meeting.

## Principal's Report:

Member Wyke made a motion to approve the Communication Report as presented.

Member Macholz seconded the motion.

**The motion was carried with all seven (7) members voting 'aye'.**

Principal Peterson shared the following information with the board:

### **Executive Summary**

#### **Agenda Point:**

- Celebrations
  - Rockdale Rockstars, formally Students of the Month
  - Highlights from STEM sessions, school activities, i.e., LPAC meeting led by Mrs. Ortiz
  - Rocktoberfest on Sam Wyke and the village October 8, 2022 with about 22 students attended. Some in costumes some were not. Wonderful for the first time.
  - Parade at 10 and the fest at 12N. Maybe change the parade next year to 11:30A or 11:45 and then move right in to
  - Fall Family Fun night slabaugh newman vangelesti dieter
  - 107 student attended
- IAR presentation
  - Historically taken in the Spring during the window of March 6-May 12
  - Students in 3rd-8th Grade
  - Online State assessment
  - Continue to work with Mrs. Beasley (Math consultant) and Ms. Bohnenstiehl (ELA/Reading consultant) to prepare for this assessment, but also address learning needs.
  - <https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1T60uE0ar6WNz206cArRR1hzbvTVNoa3c7cFMfNS-ehk/preview>
- Extra curricular update
  - Girls basketball started up Friday, September 16.
    - Have had several home and away games to begin the season
    - 7th Grade Girls Basketball Regionals is November 12
    - 8th Grade Girls Basketball Regionals is November 19

- Boys basketball set to begin starting October 24th
- Soccer as an option at Rockdale?
  - Currently is in the fall, which will coincide with baseball/softball for IESA sporting seasons. Several current student athletes are on traveling teams outside of Rockdale.
  - Where would the team practice?
  - IHSA soccer season is in the fall, but baseball and softball is in the spring.
  - Mr. Whalen to survey students interest
  - Continued research other local school districts that offer soccer, Little 7, etc. for November BOE meeting
- Update-Spirit wear for BOE members
  - Special thanks to Ms. Nurczyk, Chasing T's Inkcooperated, for creating and processing the orders through the Rockdale Online Spirit Store.
  - Spirit store was reopened for the BOE after the August BOE meeting.
  - Next opportunity to purchase will be in November. More information to come.
  - Thanks to everyone who ordered.

**Upcoming events:**

- October 13-Fall Picture Day
- October 14-End of 1st Quarter
- October 18-PTO Fall Family Fun Night
- November 7-Grades 3-5 ELA PD with Ms. Bohnenstiehl
- November 8-NO SCHOOL (Election Day)
- November 9-Kindergarten-2nd Grade ELA PD with Ms. Bohnenstiehl
- November 11-Veterans Day assembly, 2 pm
- November 17-Rockdale Family Reading Night, 6:00-7:15 pm
- November 21-Fall PT Conferences, 3:30-7:30 pm
- November 22-Fall PT Conferences, 8:30-12:30
- November 23-27-Thanksgiving Break

**Closed Session: N/A**

**Board Discussion Items:**



**Board/Action Items:**

**Action item: A motion to Approve the purchase of Carrier Rooftop Unit through Johansen & Anderson at a cost of \$38,995.00**

Member Phillips made a motion to Approve the purchase of Carrier Rooftop Unit through Johansen & Anderson at a cost of \$38,995.00

Member J Chamblee seconded the motion.  
The motion was carried with all seven (7) members voting 'aye'.

**Comments:**

**Action item: A motion to Approve the proposed Blue Cross Blue Shield Health and Dental Insurance Renewal beginning Dec. 15, 2022**

Member Macholz made a motion to Approve the proposed Blue Cross Blue Shield Health and Dental Insurance Renewal beginning Dec. 15, 2022

Member Aich seconded the motion.  
The motion was carried with all seven (7) members voting 'aye'.

**Comments:**

**Action item: A motion to Approve the ISBE School Maintenance Project Grant Application - Round 1 as presented**

Member Phillips made a motion to Approve the ISBE School Maintenance Project Grant Application - Round 1 as presented

Member Macholz seconded the motion.  
The motion was carried with all seven (7) members voting 'aye'.

**Comments:**

**Board Comments:**

**Board Member Aich - N/A**

Enjoyed the Rockdale Rockstars in Person and last night

**Board Member J. Chamblee:** Enjoyed the Rockdale Rockstars in Person

**Board Vice President S. Chamblee:** **N/A**

**Board Member Macholz:** **N/A**

**Board Member Phillips:** Enjoyed the Rockdale Rockstars in Person

**Board Treasurer Wyke:** Great job

**Board President Stadler:**

Happy Birthday to Nich Macholz

Happy Principal's Day to Mr. Peterson.

The holidays are coming very quickly.

The last few years, we did gift cards due to COVID.

Maybe it is time to bring back our past traditions. How does everyone feel?

They asked that we offer Dinner - Appetizers - Something after school - a dollar amount to go towards the classroom - spirit wear and survey the staff about their preferences. As for the meal options to include spouses as well.

**Adjournment:**

Member Wyke made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Member Aich seconded the motion.

**The motion was carried on a voice vote.**

**Meeting was adjourned at 7:50PM**

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**Angela Stadler**  
**President, Board of Education**

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**Ahmed Aich-Sandino**  
**Secretary, Board of Education**

**Next Board Meeting:**

**5:00 p.m., Wednesday, October 26, 2022 - Special Board Meeting, Media Center**

**6:00 p.m., Wednesday, November 16, 2022, Media Center**

