

Rockdale School District 84

REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

715 Meadow Avenue Rockdale, Illinois, Wednesday, January 18, 2023.

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

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

Call to Order Regular Meeting:

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of Rockdale School District 84 was held on Wednesday, January 18, 2023 beginning at 5:32PM.

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 17 Guests

Board President Angie Stadler called to order the regular open session at 5:32PM.

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 Aich 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 5:34 PM.

Motion to go into closed session at 5:34PM was made by Mrs. Wyke and seconded by Mr. Phillips 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 Collective negotiating matters between the public body and its employees or their representatives, or deliberations concerning salary schedules for one or more classes of employees. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(2).

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

Motion to return from closed session was made at 6:12PM by Mrs. Wyke and seconded by Mr. Macholz.

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. Mooney, H. Kirk, L. Chojnicki
Students:	Approximately 5 Students Attended
Parents:	Approximately 6 Parents Attended
Guests:	Veregy, Inc. - Michele James - Brendan Kinzler

Recognitions:

- 4.01 Rockdale Rockstars
Dr. Merritt shared with the board and parents the process of how the students are each chosen. He then called each student up individual shared the letter from their teacher that explained why they were chosen.
- 4.02 Hannah Kirk
The Superintendent shared that Ms. Hannah Kirk is in her 8th year as Middle School (6th-8th Grade) Math Teacher at Rockdale School. Ms. Kirk sets high expectations for her middle school students not only in the area of Math, but also behaviorally throughout the building. Ms. Kirk wears many hats at Rockdale including, but not limited to: Co-Union President, NJHS sponsor, representative on the Superintendent Advisory Council, Summer Bridge Coordinator, and much much more. Dr. Merritt wanted to give a special shoutout to Ms. Kirk because when Mr. Peterson is out of the building, Ms. Kirk covers for him and I know the building is left in great hands. On Saturday, December 17th, Ms. Kirk walked the stage at the University of St. Francis as she received her Masters of Education in Educational Leadership: Elementary Administration and Supervision. This is a tremendous accomplishment to continue her education and build her experience within educational leadership. So, we wanted to formally recognize Ms. Kirk for her service to Rockdale School. We are blessed to have her as part of the Rockdale family. Way to go Mrs. Kirk, you ROCK.
- 4.03 Lindsay Chojnicki
Dr. Merritt also advised that Mrs. Lindsey Chojnicki is a first year teacher at Rockdale for the 2022-23 school year and services her 1st Grade students with a cheerful heart and smile each and every day. Mrs. Chojnicki is married to Mr. Chojnicki and has two children. Besides the effort she puts into her classroom, at the beginning of the school year, she provided professional development to our primary teachers as it relates to Foundations, a supplemental word study program that complements a core literacy program for our students in Kindergarten thru 3rd Grade. On Saturday, December 17th, Mrs. Chojnicki walked the stage at the University of St. Francis as she received her Masters in Elementary Education. This is a tremendous accomplishment to continue her education. So, we wanted to formally recognize Mrs. Chojnicki for her service to Rockdale School. We are blessed to have her as part of the Rockdale family. Way to go Mrs. Chojnicki, you ROCK.

Public Comment: (See Board Policy 2:230)

5.01 Veregy, Inc. - Michele James - Brendan Kinzler

Dr. Merritt introduced Veregy to the board. Michelle James advised that there would be no presentation as hoped due to all of the final numbers with the winter break had not come in yet. She continued to share that they hope to get everything back the end of the week. Then next Tuesday there could be a Facilities Meeting and a special board meeting for next Thursday to go over those final numbers.

Ms. James stated that next week there will be an updated drawing of the courtyard with changes that and to keep in mind that no flooring upgrades are in the contract.

She also shared that there was discussion of adding another ramp on the west side of the building. The railing on the ramp is pretty loose and may need to be replaced. They have added the possibility of getting a railing to match the railing at the back of the building.

At this time the board did not have any questions.

Consent Agenda:

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

Member Macholz seconded the motion.

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

6.01 Approval of Regular and Closed Meeting Minutes for December 19, 2022.

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

Superintendent Report:

Member Wyke made a motion to approve the Superintendent's Report as presented.

Member J. Chamblee seconded the motion.

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

Dr. Merritt shared with the board the following information:

7.01 Facilities Update

A. Verergy

Dr. Merritt advised again that we do not have a detailed price agreement from Verergy to approve this evening. However, he does not want to wait until the February meeting to approve the work to be done this summer, he suggested that they conduct a special meeting during the last week of January or the first week of February. Verergy indicates by then they should have the necessary information from contractors allowing them to provide us with detailed costs he continued. The only piece that they may be missing are specific costs to renovations in the classrooms surrounding the courtyard he stated. He finished by advising that Verergy should have those to us by the February meeting.

Anyone opposed to having a special board meeting next week or the following week he asked the board. First choice would be January 26th at 5:30Pm or February 1,2023 as a second choice.

The board was not opposed to this idea.

B. BMI Cleaning Services

The superintendent is recommending the Board approve the updated agreement between Unicare Building Maintenance, Inc. (BMI) and Rockdale SD 84. Per the agreement, which goes into effect on Wednesday, Feb 15 and continues through May 26, he advised BMI will provide two (2) individuals to clean and sanitize classroom and office areas. As a reminder, he continued we have engaged in three-month contracts based on language with the non-certified collective bargaining agreement (CBA). I have reached out to the non-certified union leadership who have provided written agreement to move forward with the additional ten days within the adjusted BMI contract.

C. Asbestos Mitigation

The superintendent advised that there are three different documents related to the asbestos abatement project we are planning to take place during Spring Break. The first document was created by our asbestos abatement partner, Thad Daniels with Forensic Analytical Consulting Services (FACS,) and provided to the IL Dept of Public Health (IDPH). The second document provides the estimated cost for FACS to complete their portion of the work. The third document is a response from IDPH indicating approval of the variance request as documented by FACS. You will notice he shared that the cost to FACS is \$18,950. The plan includes a timeline for the work to be completed over Spring Break, which means all staff will not be allowed access to the building during that time.

D. Building Walkthrough

Dr. Merritt explained that as a result of conversation during our December meeting, as well as continued requests from Board members, we will engage in a walkthrough of the building. This will allow each board member to capture a better understanding of the scope of work we have planned for this summer and the need for additional classroom/instructional space.

Upon return of the walkthrough the board advised that something needed to be done with the stage area. They felt that many of the items if no longer needed could be cleared out of that area.

7.02

Rockdale 84 2023-2024 Public School Calendar - First Reading

Superintendent Merritt shared that a draft of the proposed Rockdale 84 2023-2024 Public School Calendar for a first read had been provided for them. The Calendar Committee met (Hicks, Kelch, Kirk, Las, Lorenc, Olino) on Thursday, Jan. 12 to review the JTHS Approved 2023-2024 Calendar, review the draft of our proposed calendar that was already created, ensure we were meeting the calendar requirements based on school code, and discuss optional items such as placement of Teacher Institute Days (TI) and Parent Teacher Conferences (PT Con). A few items to note as you review the calendar:

- We created a calendar that closely aligns with JTHS' approved calendar due to JTHS being our current transportation provider.
- We will begin our school year with two TI days (Aug 14 and 15). We considered placing the TI Days on Aug 10 and 11, but decided against that to provide Veregy as much time as possible to complete the summer renovation projects.
- Our first semester will end on Friday, Dec. 22 with an early dismissal of 12:30.
- The placement of our PT Con has been adjusted with fall conferences taking place earlier in the year (first week of October). The purpose of the change is to allow educators, learners, and families an opportunity to collaborate on the establishment learning goals for the school year. This will also allow for families to be provided a face-to-face update of progress through the first quarter prior to the end of the first quarter and distribution of first quarter report cards. Additionally, we would host conferences on two evenings leading up to Friday, October 6 (ie. October 4 & 5) for a total of seven hours of afternoon/evenings conferences to better accommodate families schedules and increase participation in conferences. This will result in no school or conferences on Friday, October 6. The same will happen during spring conferences on Feb. 16.

The board showed concern for these changes as staff originally did not like having so many breaks.. Another concern would be about parents who work midnights and can't come in the evening. Board President Stadler asked

that they talk more staff regarding this and is this what they would all like to see happen.

- Dr. Merritt continued to advise that they plan to end the school year with a 12:30 early release SIP Day on Friday, May 24 prior to Memorial Day should we not need to observe any Emergency Days.

7.03 IASB PRESS Issue 110 Policy Updates

There have been no changes to my recommendations since the first reading in December. My recommendations for each policy are to approve shared Dr. Merritt.

There are two policies that require a response:

5:250, Leaves of Absence -

Recommended Response: No, Approve (pg 29 of 94),

Question: Does the board require fully vaccinated employees to participate in a district COVID-19 testing program?

7:285, Anaphylaxis Prevention, Response, and Management Program (Rewritten) (pg 90 of 94)

Recommended Response: Yes Approve

Question: Has the Board adopted the School District Supply of Undesignated Epinephrine Injectors subhead in 7:270, Administering Medicine to Students?

7.04 2nd Quarterly Fund Revenue/Expenditure Report

Overall our current revenue is \$3,227,057 compared to our expenditures at \$2,061,696 explained the superintendent. To break it down by fund, we are at the current percentage of originally estimated expenditures:

Fund 10 - 1,639,790.57 (43% of 3,829,462.00)

Fund 20 - 255,777.71 (61% of 420,447.00)

Fund 30 - 0 (0% of 100,016.00)

Fund 40 - 43,607.55 (18% of 245,000.00)

Fund 50 - 50,420.88 (40% of 125,005.00)

Fund 60 - 0 (0% of 0)

Fund 70 - 0 (0% of 0)

Fund 80 - 72,099.75 (60% of 121,000)

Fund 90 - 0 (0% of 0)

7.05 School Branding

Dr. Merritt wanted to make sure the board was aware of the following, from a legal aspect regarding the branding we have been using the last few years. During a recent conversation with a former colleague, David Pohlmeier, he reminded him of the importance of using an original brand for our school. Essentially, if we do not have the copyright for our brand/logo/font, we could potentially put ourselves in a position to be litigated against. The superintendent shared that he is aware of, and David gave him other examples, of districts who have been sued for using a mascot or symbol that was original and copyrighted by another

organization. Of course, we have used this current logo for approximately three or four years at this point without an issue.

David does branding work for districts on the side, continued Dr. Merritt and he asked him to provide him with examples and a quote to use his services. His cost to support us in developing our own copyrighted brand is \$16,300, which includes generating two different branding designs that our learners could choose from. Although the cost seems high, Dr. Merritt advised that he realized what the potential cost of litigation could be.

Although he is not looking for approval to move forward with this project, the superintendent is interested in feedback from the Board with the possibility of approval in February.

He continued to share that he did speak with Justin Petrarca also. He indicated we would run into a problem if an organization has copyrighted our logo, which we do not know. He also knows there is a fee through the copyright agency to copyright or take ownership of a brand or image. This cost would be included in David's quote.

Board suggested going back to the original logo. Maybe getting students involved to design a new one. Once the brand has been decided make sure we are using it on everything.

7.06 Quest - Emergency Contract Amendment Request - SY 2022-2023

Nick Saccaro, President of Quest Food Services provided the district documents to explain the need for an additional increase in the cost of meals shared Dr. Merritt. Quest is requesting an increase of \$0.24 for breakfast meal rates and \$0.47 for lunch meal rates for January – June 2023. These requested changes are due to the extreme inflationary pressures putting an unreasonable burden on their organization to keep pace with. Based on information from other districts who have also received this request, the superintendent has learned other districts are not approving Quest's request, but realizing Quest's need to increase costs and, therefore, entering into negotiations to agree to a lower increase taken on by the district. At this time, Dr. Merritt is recommending, that like other local districts who have indicated they would agree to an increase somewhere in the middle of their request (ie. \$0.12 for breakfast and \$0.23 for lunch). He also advised the board that he does anticipate that when we agree to an adjusted cost, that cost will be retroed back to Jan. 5; our first day back from winter break.

The board liked the recommendation to negotiate the rate.

7.07 Administrative Support Person

Discipline data reports from this school year were shared with the board. There were 41 incidents documented in the first quarter; 23 in the second quarter; and 2 at the time this report was created for the third quarter. This totals 66 incidences for the year. Principal Peterson is still working to generate a report from last year to compare the two years. It is important to note, not all incidents that require some level of attention are recorded in the TeacherEase database shared Dr. Merritt. He then compared his previous two schools, 64 incidents or more in the first semester is considerably higher than those two buildings. A draft for a job description for a Student Services Coordinator position to provide additional support in the area of discipline and social emotional competencies for our learners has also been provided to the board.. The intent of this position is to allow Mr. Peterson the opportunity to increase his focus and attention on teaching and learning shared the superintendent.

Principal's Report:

Member G. Wyke made a motion to approve the Principal's Report as presented.
Member Aich seconded the motion.

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

Mr. Peterson shared the following information with the board:

Executive Summary

Agenda Point:

- Celebrations
 - Rockdale Rockstars-January
 - Ms. Hannah Kirk for her recent graduation on Saturday, December 17th from St. Francis with a Masters in Administrative Leadership, being nominated for the Joliet Chamber Great Teacher Award representing Rockdale, and for filling in for me, Mr. Peterson when he is out of the building.
 - Mrs. Lindsey Chojnicki for her recent graduation on Saturday, December 17th from St. Francis with a Masters in Elementary Education.
- Extra curricular update
 - Boys basketball is starting to wind down for the season as Regionals start January 21st for JV and January 28th for Varsity.
 - Girls Volleyball had their first game of the season on Wednesday, January 11th away versus Monge. They look to defend home court against Taft on Friday, January 13th.
 - Potential donation of a batting cage for CB Diamond field by Mayor and Mrs. Wyke. Will revisit in the early spring so it is set up by the end of the school year.
 - Student Council, led by Mrs. Vallera and Mr. Domenico, hold meetings on the 2nd Friday of the month.
 - A Student Council dance is tentatively scheduled for Friday, January 20th from 6-8 pm with concessions being served.
 - As a reminder, (2) student representatives for Grades 5, 6, and 7, and 4 student representatives for Grade 8, plus (4) Leadership positions (Secretary, Treasurer, Vice President, President).
 - National Junior Honor Society, under the sponsorship of Ms. Kirk, is slated to officially kick off with a ceremony on Thursday, January 26th at 5 pm. We have 9 students being inducted, (3) 8th Graders and (6) 7th Graders.

- Building update
 - Due to asbestos abatement in anticipation of the summer scope of work to be completed, the building will be closed from 2:30 pm on Friday, March 24-the morning of Monday, April 3rd.
 - April 1, invitations will be sent out to the community for the annual Science Expo, sponsored by ExxonMobil, and held at Minooka Intermediate School.
 - Last year, Rockdale was representing with the most club teams (6)
 - Event is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, May 3rd

Upcoming Events/Meetings

- January 9-20-Winter iReady diagnostic window
- January 10-Rockdale PTO meeting at 3:45 pm, cafeteria, Google Meet option
- January 11-February 28-ACCESS testing window (schedule is being developed)
- January 13-Grades go live at 4 pm on Teacherease for parents
- January 16-MLK day, no school
- January 18-January Rockdale Board of Education meeting, 5:30 pm, library
- January 20-SIP day, 12:30 pm student dismissal
- January 24-Tentative PTO Event (Mr. Freeze) at 6:30 pm, gym
- January 26-NJHS Induction, 5 pm
- January 28-Rockdale Choral and Band students at ILMEA downstate
- January 30-Tentative 100th day of school
- February 1-Math Assessment writing PD with Ms. Beasley
- March 25-April 2-Spring Break

Closed Session:

Motion to go into closed session at 8:45PM was made by Mrs. Wyke and seconded by Mr. Phillips 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 Collective negotiating matters between the public body and its employees or their representatives, or deliberations concerning salary schedules for one or more classes of employees. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(2).

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

Motion to return from closed session was made at 9:08 PM by Mrs. Wyke and seconded by Mr. Phillips..

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.

Board Discussion Items:

N/A - The Board decided to hold off the Triple I Joint Conference Review until the next board meeting

Board/Action Items:

Action item: Motion to approve BMI Cleaning Services to provide evening cleaning from Feb. 15 through and including May 26

Member Wyke made a Motion to approve BMI Cleaning Services to provide evening cleaning from Feb. 15 through and including May 26

Member Macholz seconded the motion.

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

Comments:

Action item: Motion to approve the Rockdale 84 2023-2024 Public School Calendar for a first reading to include a survey of teacher's for their preference for the Parent Teacher Conferences.

Member Macholz made a Motion to approve the Rockdale 84 2023-2024 Public School Calendar for a first reading to include a survey of teacher's for their preference for the Parent Teacher Conferences.

Member Phillips seconded the motion.

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

Comments:

Action item: Motion to approve the PRESS Policy Issue 110 for a second reading

Member Aich made a Motion to approve the PRESS Policy Issue 110 for a second reading

Member Macholz seconded the motion.

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

Comments:

Action item: Motion to approve the Quest-Emergency Contract Amendment Request for the remainder SY 2022-23 at the agreed upon negotiated cost

Member Aich made a Motion to approve the Quest-Emergency Contract Amendment Request for the remainder SY 2022-23 at the agreed upon negotiated cost.

Member Phillips seconded the motion.

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

Comments:

Board Comments:

Board Member Aich:

Board Member J. Chamblee:

Board Vice President S. Chamblee:

Mr. Peterson my thoughts are with you and your father.

Board Member Macholz:

Good meeting and thanks for tour of the school.

Board Member Phillips:

Let's agree to move the special board meeting to the first of February. Allowing for the National Honor Society to meet as planned on January 26th. The board agreed that it sounded good to them.

Board Treasurer Wyke:

Board President Stadler:

Dr. Merritt:

Adjournment:

Member J. Chamblee made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Member Macholz seconded the motion.

The motion was carried on a voice vote.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:15PM

Angela Stadler
President, Board of Education

Ahmed Aich-Sandino
Secretary, Board of Education

Next Board Meeting:

6:00PM, Wednesday, February 15, 2022, Media Center