

**Rockdale School District 84**  
**REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

715 Meadow Avenue Rockdale, Illinois, Wednesday, February 15, 2023.

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

Regular Meeting in the Gymnasium 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, February 15, 2023 beginning at 5:32PM.

**Members Present**

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

**Members Absent**

Gerry Phillips

**Also Present**

Dr. Michael Merritt  
Jeff Peterson- [Virtual](#)  
Irene Las

**Approximately 50 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 Aich made a motion to adopt the agenda as presented.

Member J. Chamblee seconded the motion.

**The motion was carried with all six (6) members voting 'aye'.**

**Mr. Phillips was absent**

**Closed Session:**

Board President Ms. Angela Stadler called the closed meeting to order at 5:33 PM.

Motion to go into closed session at 5:33PM 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 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).
- 2.03 The appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees. ILCS 120/2(c)(1), amended by P.A. 101-459.

**The motion was carried with all six (6) members voting 'aye'.**

**Mr. Phillips was absent**

Motion to return from closed session was made at 6:00PM by Mrs. Wyke and seconded by Mr. Macholz.

**The motion was carried with all six (6) members voting 'aye'.**

**Mr. Phillips was absent**

**Report on Closed Session:**

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

**Receive and Welcome Visitors:**

<b>Staff:</b>	S. Mooney, B. Kelch, L. Meister, S. Shear
<b>Students:</b>	Approximately 24 Students Attended
<b>Parents:</b>	Approximately 22 Parents Attended
<b>Guests:</b>	N/A

**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 ILMEA Choir Participants  
Beth Kelch shared with the board and parents the history of the ILMEA. We had 10 outstanding students who performed at this event. She then called up each of the participants and gave them their awards.
- 4.03 Beth Kelch  
Dr. Merritt also advised that he has had the great pleasure of getting to know her. She shows a tremendous amount of support to all of our students, Band and Choir. She plans all of our holiday musicals. The Veteran's Day presentation. On that day the board was so impressed with the choir when they sang for us. The song had two parts and all of the sudden they merged into one. This is not easy to do. She has also guided ten of our students are preparing for the ILMEA All-State Choir performance. Whom we recognized earlier today. We really appreciate all that she does for us.

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

- 5.01 Veregy, Inc. - Michele James - Brendan Kinzler

The Superintendent advised that Michelle James and the Veregy group would not be presenting tonight. They are still waiting on some prices. This should not slow down their work schedule and plan to present in March.

## **Consent Agenda:**

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

Member Aich seconded the motion.

**The motion was carried with all six (6) members voting 'aye'.**

**Mr. Phillips was absent**

- 6.01 Approval of Regular and Closed Meeting Minutes for January 18, 2023, Facilities Committee Meeting on January 26, 2023, and Special Meeting Minutes on Feb. 1, 2023.
- 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 Macholz seconded the motion.

**The motion was carried with all six (6) members voting 'aye'.**

**Mr. Phillips was absent**

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

### **7.01 Asbestos Abatement Contract**

On Feb. 2, shared the superintendent that Thad Daniels from Forensic Analytical Consulting Services (FACS) was present to partner with us while we opened the sealed bids for the asbestos abatement project. There were seven different bidders, the lowest bid at 46,600; the highest bid at 69,300. The lowest bid was submitted by Midway Contracting Group LLC (Midway). Thad was pleased to realize Midway was the lowest bidder as he has experience working with Midway and shared they have successfully completed various other projects for which he was involved in. The Notice to Occupant letter will be shared with Midway and posted throughout our building to give our staff and the general public official notice of the asbestos removal project.

### **7.02 Rockdale 84 2023-2024 Public School Calendar - Second Reading**

As a follow up from our January meeting, the Board had questions regarding the dates and hours of Parent/Teacher conferences as determined by the Calendar Committee advised Dr. Merritt. To gather feedback from the whole staff, we created a survey to gain insight about which dates and times they thought would more effectively maximize conferences. We provided the staff with three options; keep fall conference dates and times where they currently are (week of Thanksgiving, one evening and one morning); move fall conferences to the first week of October with one evening and one morning; and move fall conferences to the first week of October with two evenings of conferences with the Friday off for both learners and

educators. The results from that survey are included in your packet. The results of the staff survey are provided in your packet. The staff's first choice between the three options were 43% for option 3; 33% chose option 2. We also thought it best to also provide a survey to our families to gather their feedback. The results of that survey are provided in your supplemental documents. The families' first choice between the three options were 42% for option 1; 31% chose option 3. There were five families who provided a comment, the theme of which is focused on what is best for teachers, with one indicating the parent works in the evening and it is hard to get to an evening conference.

Board Member J. Chamblee felt that Option 2 offering an evening and morning would be best. Dr. Merritt will go back to the Calendar Committee to advise of this preference and then a final calendar will be on the agenda as an action item for the next board meeting.

#### **7.03 IASB PRESS Issue 110 - Third and Final Reading**

This is the third and final reading of IASB PRESS Policy Updates Issue 110 continued the superintendent. There were over thirty policy updates in this issue. The one that drew the most attention was Policy 4:140 Waiver of Student Fees. Essentially, what the change indicates is that any learner who is eligible for a free fee waiver through the state's direct certification program or is identified as homeless under the McKinney Vento law cannot be fined for any lost or damaged school property, including district-provided electronic devices.

#### **7.04 Student Services Coordinator Position**

Although this position will be considered part of the administrative team, this position will be a part of the Collective Bargaining Unit (Rockdale Council of the American Federation of Teachers, Local 604 (RCAFT) shared Superintendent Merritt. He continued to advise that he met with union leadership to review the job description and answer any questions they may have had. They are in support of the job description as it reads. As a reminder, I am recommending we create this position to support the disciplinary needs of our learners and aid Jeff Peterson in building leadership efforts. He also recommended the position be paid a stipend. The stipend would include two additional days worked beyond educators, as well as any other supervisory hours that are performed for extracurricular activities. I have presented the recommended stipend to RCAFT and am awaiting their response. Dr. Merritt recommended the Board approve the Student Services Coordinator Job Description and posting of vacancy.

#### **7.05 Brown and Brown Dearborn Life Insurance Renewal**

The superintendent advised that we partner with Brown and Brown Insurance to provide our staff with our Blue Cross Blue Shield Dearborn Life Insurance. We have received documents regarding the annual renewal of life insurance policies we offer. Brown and Brown informs us rates will remain the same should we choose to continue to partner with them. They also provided us with a breakdown of the benefit/cost analysis of the current plan versus the renewal plan; again, showing no change, and the Group Benefit Summary for all active full-time employees which details the benefits of both the life insurance and accidental death and dismemberment coverage. The annual renewal will take effect on April 1, 2023 and expire on April 1, 2024. Dr. Merritt recommended the Board approve the Brown and Brown Dearborn Life Insurance Renewal effective April 1, 2023.

**7.06 FOIA – Illinois Retired Teachers Association**

On Jan. 26 we received a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Records Request from the Illinois Retired Teachers Association (IRTA) shared Superintendent Merritt. Annually, the IRTA requests the names and email addresses of any certified staff who are retiring at the end of the school year. We do not have any staff who are on track to retire this year or in any of the upcoming years or have not indicated they plan to retire in the near future.

**7.07 School Branding Update**

Dr. Merritt shared with Justin Petrarca the two JPG images of our two mascots; the most recent Ram head and the older Ram logo that is painted on our gym floor. I have asked Justin to research the copyright status of these logos. If he is not able to find either to be copyrighted, we have the option to move forward with getting the image/logo copyrighted for our use.

One of the board members thought that the mascots would be assumed as copyrighted. However, Dr. Merritt shared that he checked with our lawyer and was advised that most stock photos on Google are not copyrighted. Another board member would like to see us move from four mascots designs to just one moving forward.

**7.08 Quest-Emergency Contract Amendment Request - SY 2022-23**

Quest's Food Service (provider of our lunch and breakfast meals) has requested an increase in meal costs through the remainder of FY2 shared the superintendent. The original cost of a lunch meal was \$3.90 and a breakfast meal was \$2.00. Quest's original request included an increase of \$0.24 for a breakfast meal and \$0.47 cents for a lunch meal. I am happy to share that through negotiations with Quest, we have agreed to an increase of \$0.12 for breakfast meals and \$0.24 for lunch meals, or 50% of their requested increase.

**7.09 JTHS Foundation Trivia Event - March 12**

Dr. Merritt has been asked to serve on the Joliet Township High School Foundation Board. At its regular monthly meeting this past Tuesday, the current Board approved his application to be a member of the Board. Part of his service on the Board is to support the fundraisers they facilitate to raise money for the Foundation Scholarships they offer each year. He continued by sharing information on the upcoming JTHS Foundation Trivia Night, which is one of two annual fundraisers. The Board expressed hope that local feeder school districts would be interested in participating in the Trivia Event by purchasing a table (\$200) for 10 team members. He then wanted to know if anyone on our board would be interested or had any questions. Dr. Merritt also would like to check with our staff to see what type of interest they had in it.

Board Member Nick Macholz indicated he would be interested in participating in that event.

### **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 six (6) members voting 'aye'.**

**Mr. Phillips was absent**

Mr. Peterson shared the following information with the board:

### **Executive Summary**

#### **Agenda Point:**

- Celebrations
  - Rockdale Rockstars-February
  - ILMEA Choir Participants who performed downstate January 28th
  - Mrs. Kelch for her leadership and vision as she facilitated our K-2 and 3-5 Holiday programs, along with the Band and Choir concert on December 6th. This past week, 20-25 of our band and choir students participated in the Solo and Ensemble contest where they performed either solo or duets with specific instruments and/or vocally.
- Extra curricular update
  - Hiring Memo-Ms. Carissa Contreras
    - [https://docs.google.com/document/d/1SyVtTH1Ph\\_xQQ6LgaKZJF94jF3ZO2S\\_WXAACmZIXchTs/preview](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1SyVtTH1Ph_xQQ6LgaKZJF94jF3ZO2S_WXAACmZIXchTs/preview)
  - Boys Basketball finished up their season on January 21st and January 28th respectively. The Varsity Boys Basketball team won their first Regional Game, but lost to the host Taft team.
  - Girls Volleyball is in full swing of their season that wraps up at the end of February.
  - Boys Volleyball started on Monday, February 6th.
  - Track and Field is slated to begin late February, early March.
  - Potential donation of a batting cage for CB Diamond field by Mayor and Mrs. Wyke. Dr. Merritt and Mr. Puckett is beginning the process so it is set up by the end of the school year.
- Summer Bridge update
  - Due to the major projects being completed in the school over the summer causing it to be closed for remodeling, Summer Bridge is being postponed for the Summer 2023.

This will be reviewed in January 2024 on the possibility of reinstituting it for Summer 2024 to be held in person at Rockdale School.

- SC - Has there been any look at other location. How about the Village Hall. How many days and how many students?
- JP - 11 days and 25 students with a grade level range from K to grade 7 and five teachers. We did not reach out to the Village Hall. Not sure that they would have enough rooms. But we did discuss the Fire Station, but decided against it in case there was an emergency. Could hav parents that would decide not to do it if it does not take place at the school.
- SC - Suggest that we take a look at the Village Hall. They have a board room and a cafeteria. Did we canvas everywhere.
- MM - We know the benefit of Summer Bridge. We do not like to see the Summer Slide. I have been to the Village Hall, I do not believe there would be enough space. You could maybe get three groups there comfortably. We have toured St. Joseph School. There is enough space but there were other concerns. We could not think of another space in Rockdale that would hold the groups.
- SC - Can we postpone this decision for another meeting.
- MM - We could do that but we need enough time to set it up and notify parents.
- JP - We have talked to the staff to provide the students with some type of learning packet to reinforce some of those skills.
- 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, April 26th
- Parent/Student Handbook update
  - <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1kYI1zL01na8ctlehqJOxnMoqusNVf9KqEzojxjBg4Ls/preview>
  - Handbook committee met on Monday, February 6 to review current handbook and to make recommendations for revisions to the 2023-24 Parent/Student Handbook
    - Mr. Domenico, Ms. Holt, Miss Nordstrom served on the committee



- Minor revisions made due to grammatical errors, updating new information, more targeted, specific language, i.e., page 34, under Level III offense, Examples are a toy gun, i.e., Orbeez, Nerf gun, etc. with or without bullets, which is difficult to distinguish from an actual gun. See Weapons below for additional information, etc.
- February BOE meeting is for a 1st viewing, March for a second and final view so that school registration can begin at/or on April 1st.

### **Upcoming Events/Meetings**

- January 11-February 28-ACCESS testing window (schedule is above)
- February 13-IEP meetings, AM, conference room
- February 15-IAR extended response modeling with Ms. Beasley
- February 15-PBIS team meeting, 3:45 pm, Ms. Willis' room
- February 16-Elementary team meeting
- February 16-12:30 pm student dismissal day
- February 16-Spring Parent Teacher conferences, 3:30-7:30 pm
- February 17-No Student attendance day
- February 17-Spring Parent Teacher conferences, 8:30 am-12:30 pm
- February 20-No School, President's Day
- February 24-No Student attendance day, Teacher Institute
- March 3-PTO Donuts with Grown-ups, 8:00-8:40 am, Rockdale gym
- April 28-ExxonMobil Secrets in Science Event (Kindergarten thru 8th Grade)

### **Superintendent Report - Amended:**

Dr. Merritt advised the board that item 7.04 of his report was missed in his initial report. He took a moment to go over it. Once completed Member S. Chamblee made a motion to approve the Superintendent's Amended Report as presented.

Member Macholz seconded the motion.

**The motion was carried with all six (6) members voting 'aye'.**

**Mr. Phillips was absent**

### **Board Discussion Items:**

#### **9.01 Class Size**

During our building walk through last month, the topic of class size was discussed advised Dr. Merritt. He continued to share that currently, our average class size K-8 is 14.5; K-5 is 13.8; 6-8 is 17. Largest class size is 8th grade with 25. Lowest class size is 7A with 10 (separate from Meister SPED with 6). Currently, our largest grade level is 1st grade with 39. Based on ESSA and the EBF formula, class sizes for low income schools would set a target class size of 15 for K-3 and 20 for 4-8th (see IASA slide in packet). Additionally, he shared that he learned that one of the publicized reasons compelling our families to pass the referendum was the idea of smaller class sizes, especially in the primary and intermediate grades.

Member Chamblee wondered what would happen if you do not comply with the small class sizes as he felt that surrounding schools did not offer those class sizes.

**Closed Session:**

Motion to go into closed session at 7:24PM was made by Mrs. Wyke and seconded by Mrs. J. Chamblee 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).
- 2.03 The appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees. ILCS 120/2(c)(1), amended by P.A. 101-459.

**The motion was carried with all six (6) members voting 'aye'.  
Mr. Phillips was absent**

Motion to return from closed session was made at 7:30 PM by Mrs. Wyke and seconded by Mrs. J. Chamblee.

**The motion was carried with all six (6) members voting 'aye'.  
Mr. Phillips was absent**

**Report on Closed Session:**

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

**Board/Action Items:**

**Action item: Motion to approve the Carissa Contreras as Assistant Coach - Track and Field for the 2022-2023 season**

Member Macholz made a Motion to approve Carissa Contreras as Assistant Coach - Track and Field for the 2022-2023 season

Member J. Chamblee seconded the motion.  
**The motion was carried with all six (6) members voting 'aye'.  
Mr. Phillips was absent**

**Comments:**

**Action item: Motion to approve Midway Contracting Group,LLC to complete the asbestos abatement response action services project - Spring 2023**

Member Aich made a Motion to Midway Contracting Group,LLC to complete the asbestos abatement response action services project - Spring 2023

Member Macholz seconded the motion.  
**The motion was carried with all six (6) members voting 'aye'.  
Mr. Phillips was absent**

**Comments:**

**Action item: Motion to approve the Rockdale 84 2023-2024 Public School Calendar a Second Reading**

Member Aich made a Motion to approve the Rockdale 84 2023-2024 Public School Calendar a Second Reading

Member Wyke seconded the motion.  
**The motion was carried with all six (6) members voting 'aye'.  
Mr. Phillips was absent**

**Comments:**

**Action item: Motion to approve the IASB PRESS Issue 110 - Third and Final Reading**

Member Macholz made a Motion to approve the IASB PRESS Issue 110 - Third and Final Reading

Member S. Chamblee seconded the motion.

**The motion was carried with all six (6) members voting 'aye'.**

**Mr. Phillips was absent**

**Comments:**

**Action item: Motion to approve the Student Services Coordinator Job Description and posting of vacancy**

Member Aich made a Motion to approve the Student Services Coordinator Job Description and posting of vacancy

Member Macholz seconded the motion.

**The motion was carried with all six (6) members voting 'aye'.**

**Mr. Phillips was absent**

**Comments:**

**Action item: Motion to approve the Brown and Brown Dearborn Life Insurance Renewal effective April 1, 2023**

Member Aich made a Motion to approve the Brown and Brown Dearborn Life Insurance Renewal effective april 1, 2023

Member Macholz seconded the motion.

**The motion was carried with all four (4) members voting 'aye'.**

**Two Members Abstained**

**Mr. Phillips was absent**

**Comments:**

## **Board Comments:**

### **Board Member Aich:**

It was unbelievable how well four students did at the concert. Praying and support you Mr. Peterson.

### **Board Member J. Chamblee:**

Great to see all of the students here and all of the recognition they have been receiving.

They are all so excited.

It is a great Choir Program that Beth Kelch runs.

Mr. Peterson, we are thinking of you. It is most important that you be there with your family.

Family is only once.

### **Board Vice President S. Chamblee:**

Need to check asbestos in the gym and insulation on the pipes.

The top of the marquee is dark. May need to change lights.

I wish I could have a personal conversation with you, Mr. Peterson family first.

We are here to support you

If you need more time than take it

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

### **Board Member Phillips: N/A**

### **Board Treasurer Wyke:**

Our thoughts and prayers are with you.

Remember to take care of yourself too.

### **Board President Stadler:**

You are In our thoughts and prayers and are in the right spot.

If six weeks are not enough let us know

You are where you should be.

### **Dr. Merritt:**

**Adjournment:**

Member Macholz made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Member Aich seconded the motion.

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

**Mr. Phillips was absent**

**Meeting was adjourned at 8:12PM**

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

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

**Next Board Meeting:**

**6:00PM, Wednesday, March 15, 2022, Media Center**

