



*Date | time* Monday – October 12, 2020 | 6:30 p.m.  
*Location* Administration Office (by invitation only)  
Remote for all others

As permitted by [MDHHS Emergency Order under MCL 333.2253](#) relative to gathering limitations and to allow for safe distancing, physical attendance is by invitation only. In order to preserve the public’s right to address the Board of Education or observe the meeting, remote access options described below are provided.

**TO OBSERVE THE MEETING VIA LIVESTREAM:**  
Go to <https://www.youtube.com/user/beyondtherock/live>

**TO ADDRESS THE BOARD OF EDUCATION:**  
No later than 3:30 the day of the meeting, please contact the Superintendent’s Executive Assistant at [mclark@rockfordschools.org](mailto:mclark@rockfordschools.org) to request access and register to speak.

Questions or need technical assistance?  
Please contact Director of Technology Bob Stull at [rstull@rockfordschools.org](mailto:rstull@rockfordschools.org)

*Meeting called to order with a moment of silence by* President Postema

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### In Attendance

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Board of Education: Bobbi Jo Blanton, Geoffrey L. Downs, Laura L. Featherston, Lisa M. Kreager, Timothy J. Lewis, Miles J. Postema, Nick Reichenbach.

Student representative: Guin Waite.

Rockford Public Schools: Dr. Michael Shibler, Mike Cuneo, Mike Ramm, Korie Wilson-Crawford, Lisa Jacobs, Mindy Duba, Dr. Kelly Amshey, Larry Watters, Sharon Wells, Jeremy Karel, Scott. Beckman, Dan Zang, Marlene Clark, Jason Springer (BTR videographer), Bob Stull and Stephen Provost (technology support).

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### Adoption of Agenda

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Motion was made by Geoff Downs, supported by Nick Reichenbach, approving the agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

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### Call of the Audience

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None.

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### Correspondence

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Secretary Reichenbach read correspondence from Kim Van Dorp and Christine Lyon.

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### Consent Agenda

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Motion was made by Laura Featherston, supported by Timothy Lewis, approving the following consent agenda items. Motion carried unanimously.

- Minutes of Regular Meeting #5
- Payment of bills in the amount of \$2,996,032.88  
Certified Staff Resignation. Accept resignation of Erin Carpenter (effective October 10, 2020)

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## Reports

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### Student Representative

President Postema welcomed RHS senior Guin Waite. Guin introduced herself, stating she has been involved in student government since 8<sup>th</sup> grade and looks forward to serving as this year's student representative to the Board.

Guin reported that despite the challenges created by the pandemic, the school year is off to a good start. Student Council is working to develop creative ideas to keep students engaged, such as holding an outdoor homecoming assembly and livestreaming it to the student body and public, using Schoology for Winter Wishes nominations, and utilizing social media to network other activities.

### Collaborative Team Reports

The Board of Education will receive information about events occurring in our schools in the form of monthly collaborative team reports.

Elementary: Valley View Principal Jeremy Karel reported that staff and students are happy to be back at school. Staff's primary focus is to monitor the social-emotional health of students, which is supported through the use of a social-emotional screening tool. The first NWEA assessments have wrapped up and data will be used to identify and address academic gaps and needs. Students are doing well with the safety and mitigation protocols, and Mr. Karel described how students are carefully and systematically cohorted to minimize contact with others. The substitute teacher shortage has necessitated principals and staff working together to cover classes.

Secondary: RHS Principal Dan Zang reported that remote middle school parent/teacher conferences recently took place, and middle school NWEA testing will wrap up this week. Engagement in cocurricular activities has been important to students' overall wellbeing, and Principal Zang thanked student representative Guin Waite and her colleagues for checking on the wellbeing of staff and collaborating to positively manage the school environment. Principal Zang reported students are respecting the safety and mitigation protocols at school and today's transition to remote learning went well. Principal Zang confirmed that SAT testing will take place this Wednesday at RHS for seniors who were scheduled to take the exam last spring; and a make-up date of October 27 has been established for those in quarantine or who cannot participate this Wednesday. Stringent physical distancing and safety protocols will be in place. Sophomore and junior students will participate in enhanced learning opportunities via Schoology on Wednesday to allow necessary staffing for administration of the SAT.

Rockford Virtual: Principal Dr. Kelley Amshey reported there are approximately 920 students enrolled in Rockford Virtual, supported by 26 RPS staff, who are engaged in providing interventions to support students. The orientation process for students has been refined and Dr. Amshey anticipates a smooth transition for students transferring between remote and in-person learning at the trimester. Dr. Amshey reported that RV staff have been trained to administer the NWEA through Google Meet. Dr. Amshey's office is located at Rockford High School.

Assistant Superintendent of Instruction Mike Ramm summarized for the Board of Education the evolution of remote learning from last spring to the current model, which has been and will continuously be improved to mirror the traditional school day as closely as possible. Teacher collaboration time has been critical to allow staff to network on the changing landscape as we move in and out of remote learning, as has time devoted to intervention for students needing social-emotional or academic support.

President Postema thanked the district administration and staff for their ongoing efforts regardless of the challenges and criticisms. President Postema also applauded Dr. Shibler's foresight to hold the first three weeks of school remotely given the situation at that time and to prepare for the current and future needs to pause in-person instruction. President Postema also commended the decision to appoint Dr. Amshey as Rockford Virtual Principal to ensure the district supports and connects with students engaged in third-party learning. President Postema encouraged staff to practice self-care considering the added responsibilities and stress being placed upon them.

#### RAMS X Progress and RAMS XI Development Updates

Dr. Shibler reported to the Board of Education that the pandemic has necessitated extending RAMS X as the district's strategic plan beyond its initial expiration of December 31, 2020. Focus groups and surveys for the development RAMS XI were conducted in January-March 2020, just prior to the onset of the pandemic. That data will be used when RAMS XI development resumes in about six months or longer, depending on what the coming months bring, so that proper resources can be committed to its development.

#### MASB Delegate Assembly

Board Secretary and MASB Liaison Nick Reichenbach reported to the Board of Education on the 2020 Michigan Association of School Boards (MASB) Delegate Assembly scheduled for Thursday, November 5. This year's event will be held virtually due to the pandemic. Because the Association's governing documents do not allow for virtual voting, there will be no voting element and, therefore, no need to identify delegates. As a matter of record, Mr. Reichenbach reminded trustees they may register for the online event by notifying the Superintendent's Office by October 30.

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#### Old Business

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None.

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#### New Business

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#### Ratification of Board of Education Action after April 30, 2020

The Michigan Supreme Court recently ruled that the Governor did not have the authority to issue COVID-19 Executive Orders beyond those permitted in the Emergency Powers of the Governor Act (EPGA) or the Emergency Management Act of 1975 (EMA) after April 30, 2020. This has created debate about the legal landscape for school operations during the ongoing pandemic, including decisions made by the Board of Education during remote meetings relative to the Open Meetings Act (OMA) after April 30, 2020. Therefore, out of an abundance of caution and upon recommendation of district legal counsel, Dr. Shibler recommended the Board of Education ratify all action taken after April 30, 2020. Upon recommendation of Dr. Shibler, motion was made by Geoff Downs, supported by Timothy Lewis, that

the Board of Education hereby ratifies all action taken at board meetings held remotely after April 30, 2020, in which a quorum of the Board was not convened in a physical location. Trustee Lewis stated he believes that wearing masks is the most important thing families can do to get ahead of the virus and not spread it to others. He stated that indications are that the majority of COVID-related cases in our schools are due to reckless choices made outside of the schools, and he implored people to act responsibly to minimize the impact within the school environment. Motion carried unanimously.

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## Adjournment

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President Postema adjourned the meeting at 7:25 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted,*

*Nick Reichenbach*

*Rockford Public Schools Board of Education*

**Minutes approved at October 26, 2020 meeting**