



Date | time Monday – November 23, 2020 | 6:30 p.m.

Location via Zoom

As required by MDHHS Emergency Order under MCL 333.2253, this meeting was held remotely for all participants. In order to preserve the public’s right to observe the meeting or address the Board of Education, remote access options described below were provided in compliance with Senate Bill 1108 and Rockford Public Schools Board of Education Bylaw 0167.3.

TO OBSERVE THE MEETING VIA LIVESTREAM:

Go to <https://www.youtube.com/user/beyondtherock/live>

TO ADDRESS THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Two-way communication):

No later than 3:30 the day of the meeting, please contact the Superintendent’s Executive Assistant at mclark@rockfordschools.org to request access and register to speak.

TO CONTACT THE BOARD OF EDUCATION IN ADVANCE OF THE MEETING:

<http://www.rockfordschools.org/email-the-board-of-education/>

ACCESSIBILITY:

Upon request to the Superintendent, the district shall make reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities to be able to participate in this meeting. Please call 616.863.6557 or email mclark@rockfordschools.org.

Technical assistance at zoom@rockfordschools.org

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

Attendance

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

Board of Education trustee-elects (via livestream): Kelley Freridge, Jake Himmelspach.

Student representative: Guin Waite.

Rockford Public Schools: Dr. Michael Shibler, Mike Ramm, Mike Cuneo, Korie Wilson-Crawford, Lisa Jacobs, Mindy Duba, Maggie Thelen, Tom Hosford, Kelly Theaker, Mindy McGinn, Marlene Clark, Jason Springer (BTR videographer).

Adoption of Agenda

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

Recognition

Because in-person recognitions are not possible at this time, a video produced by Beyond the Rock was provided as a way to recognize the following middle school outstanding students of the month:

East RMS

Lauren Blystone & Ethan Hart (6th), Journey Viau & Logan Hammingh (7th), Emily Jackson & Isaac Poot (8th)

North RMS

Amelia Bozek & Armando Roque (6th), Meera Raghunandan & Parker Wray (7th), Brooklynn Schmuker & Richard Contreras (8th)

Call of the Audience

President Postema acknowledged that Board of Education trustees have received several emails over the past several days regarding elementary delivery of instruction.

Correspondence

None.

Consent Agenda

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

- Minutes of November 9, 2020 study session, closed sessions (two); November 16, 2020 study session; and Regular Meeting #8
- Payment of bills in the amount of \$3,456,617.49
- 2020-21 Revised High School Extra-Duty Winter Coaching Recommendation.
Competitive Cheerleading: Rachel Rosario (JV Coach)
Boys' and Girls' Skiing: Richard Wilson (Head Coach)
- Certified Staff Resignation. Holly Osbeck effective December 17, 2020.

Reports

Student Representative

Student representative Guin Waite reported to the Board of Education on several safe activity suggestions student council is providing for students to partake in from home, including family, community service, and holiday activities, as well as how to support local businesses.

2020-21 Snow Days

Assistant Superintendent of Instruction Mike Ramm reported to the Board of Education guidelines for 2020-21 school year snow days. During in-person instruction, snow days will mirror past practice with cancellations applying to all certified staff and students. Mr. Ramm described the mental and emotional benefits snow days can provide, especially given the added stress of the pandemic. A link to optional academic enrichment activities will be included on the website pop-up announcing any closures. In the event we are to exceed the maximum forgiven six days, the district will review the calendar for potential changes as would be done in any other school year.

COVID-19 Testing Partnership

Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources Korie Wilson-Crawford reported to the Board of Education on a partnership RPS has established with Mercy Health and Arctic Medical Laboratories to

provide expedited COVID testing for students and staff. Testing will be available for symptomatic staff and students starting Monday, November 30, at Mercy Health Outpatient Center (Northland Drive and Seven Mile) from 8AM-12PM Monday through Friday. RPS COVID staff will be onsite to accept patient-collected saliva specimens. The test is FDA approved and is not considered a quick test. Results turn around within 48 hours and are securely communicated to the Human Resources Department for communication to staff.

Old Business

Extended COVID-19 Learning Plan Reconfirmation Hearing

In compliance with Public Act 149, the Board of Education approved the Rockford Public Schools Extended COVID-19 Learning Plan in September. The Act requires that the Board of Education reconfirm the district's Extended CLP every 30 days, therefore, Superintendent Shibler will present this for Board consideration on a monthly basis.

Dr. Shibler reported to the Board of Education rationale for maintaining in-person instruction for elementary students as long as possible while moving the middle and high school schools to remote teaching and learning. Given the current COVID data, instruction will be delivered remotely as follows:

Elementary (DK-5th): November 30 through December 8

Middle (6th-8th): November 19 through December 8

High school (9th-12th): November 17 through December 8

Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources Korie Wilson-Crawford presented to the Board of Education a proposed policy in compliance with MIOSHA Emergency Rule 5(8), which requires districts to establish "a policy prohibiting in-person work for employees to the extent that their work activities can feasibly be completed remotely," which would be an addendum to the district's Extended COVID-19 Learning Plan. In essence, employees must opt-in to work from the school setting during periods of remote instruction. Mr. Ramm reported that despite the location from which teachers are teaching, consistent schedules are established for the elementary, middle, and high school levels. In the event a staff member is sick or otherwise unable to provide live instruction, asynchronous learning can be provided with administrative approval.

As part of the reconfirmation process, Assistant Superintendent of Instruction Mike Ramm affirmed the district's delivery of instruction options under the Plan, whether or not the district is offering higher levels of in-person instruction for special populations, and weekly attendance rates which include logged interaction time between teachers and students. Over the past month, teachers on average have been instructing students at a ratio of about 75% in-person/25% remotely.

President Postema welcomed comments from the public regarding the instructional delivery method, of which there were none, but he acknowledged that Board of Education trustees have received several emails over the past several days regarding elementary delivery of instruction. The public has the opportunity to address the Board of Education in this regard each month during the reconfirmation hearing.

Upon recommendation of Superintendent Shibler, motion was made by Geoff Downs, supported by Lisa Kreager, approving the November 2020 Reconfirmation Plan, including the emergency MIOSHA policy. Trustee Reichenbach commented on the importance of teachers to their students and challenged

comments circulating about teachers being “babysitters.” President Postema stated that decisions to transition to remote teaching are not made lightly and that the district is cognizant of the importance of consistency and reliability schools provide for families. Motion carried unanimously.

Approved Reconfirmation Meeting Summaries will be made available on the district website [transparency reporting page](#) under the Extended COVID-19 Learning Plan section.

New Business

None.

Adjournment

President Postema adjourned the meeting at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nick Reichenbach

Rockford Public Schools Board of Education

Minutes approved at December 14, 2020 meeting