



Date | time Monday – December 14, 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: Kelley Freridge, Jake Himmelspace.

Student representative: Guin Waite.

Rockford Public Schools: Dr. Michael Shibley, Mike Ramm, Mike Cuneo, Korie Wilson-Crawford, Lisa Jacobs, Mindy Duba, Larry Watters, Adam Burkholder, Dr. Kelley Amshey, Matt Puett, Sharon Wells, Scott Beckman, Marlene Clark, Jason Springer (BTR videographer).

Adoption of Agenda

Motion was made by Laura Featherston, supported by Bobbi Jo Blanton, approving the agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Recognition

Retiring Board of Education Trustees

Laura Featherston and Lisa Kreager have served as Board of Education trustees since 2006 and 2012, respectively, and each has decided to complete their tenure as trustees at the expiration of their current terms in December. Dr. Shibley and President Postema summarized the highlights of their service and presented each with a lifetime activities pass and a gift of appreciation from the Rockford Public Schools.

Call of the Audience

None.

Correspondence

Secretary Reichenbach read correspondence from Sonia Andrews.

Consent Agenda

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

- Minutes of November 23, 2020 study and closed sessions; November 30, 2020 special meeting and closed session; and Regular Meeting #9
- Payment of bills in the amount of \$5,464,254.75

Reports

Student Representative

Student representative Guin Waite reported to the Board of Education on this week's remote spirit activities and last week's launch of suggested quarantine activities (photos will be posted on Instagram account @rock_stuco). Guin also reported that the granting of Winter Wishes will be delayed due to COVID and shared information about Student Council's "Twelve Days of Christmas" initiative to promote local small businesses this Friday.

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: Parkside Elementary Principal Larry Watters reported on how staff are meeting or exceeding the needs of students through remote instruction and interventions, remote classroom observations, upcoming CAT meetings, creative holiday celebrations, and several giving initiatives.

Secondary: East RMS Principal Adam Burkholder reported on how teachers are connecting with students and looks forward to the possible implementation of a hybrid model to get students back in the schools, how the schools and community are supporting families in need, and commended BTR for the pandemic video. Mr. Burkholder also commended staff, students and parents for their perseverance, thanked Laura Featherston and Lisa Kreager for their service, and welcomed Kelley Freridge and Jake Himmelspace to the Board of Education.

Rockford Virtual: Principal Dr. Kelley Amshey echoed Mr. Burkholder's appreciation for Trustee Featherston's and Trustee Kreager's service on the Board of Education. Approximately 940 students are participating in Rockford Virtual supported by 30 Rockford teachers. Dr. Amshey continues to observe the delivery of instruction through the growing RV program to ensure student needs are being met and connections are being made.

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 on a meeting with Dr. Bora from the Kent County Health Department last week in which Dr. Bora reported a high rate of COVID cases within the Rockford community. Dr. Shibler's priority is to have students back in the classroom as soon as it is permitted and safe to do so. Because information changes rapidly, he will communicate the district's post-holiday break educational plan with families and staff over holiday break via email.

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. Details of that plan can be found on the document presented to the Board of Education which is posted on the district website as referenced below.

President Postema noted that no members of the public registered to address the Board of Education regarding the district's learning plan.

Upon recommendation of Superintendent Shibler, motion was made by Bobbi Jo Blanton, supported by Geoff Downs, approving the December 2020 Reconfirmation Plan. Dr. Shibler stated he will continue to make recommendations based on data from the experts while respecting the needs of families. Ayes: 6. Nays: 1 (Reichenbach). Motion carried.

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

Bus Purchase Recommendation (2019 Bond Issue)

Assistant Superintendent of Finance Mike Cuneo presented to the Board of Education bids received for seven 71-passenger buses. Upon recommendation of Dr. Shibler, motion was made by Nick Reichenbach, supported by Timothy Lewis, approving the purchase from Hoekstra in the total amount of \$658,742, through the MSBO Cooperative Purchasing Program. The purchase will be paid through the 2019 bond issue with delivery of the buses expected in summer 2021. Motion carried unanimously.

Certified Staff Recommendation

Upon recommendation of Dr. Shibler, motion was made by Laura Featherston, supported by Lisa Kreager, to employ the following certified staff for the remainder of the 2020-21 school year:

Abby Mikita
Anna Palaske

Social Worker
5th Grade

Rockford Freshman Center
Crestwood Elementary

Motion carried unanimously.

Collective Bargaining Agreement (RESPA)

Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources Korie Wilson-Crawford presented to the Board of Education a tentative contract agreement negotiated between the Board of Education and the Rockford Educational Personnel Association (RESPA), for a 1.65% increase and \$65,000 towards incremental increases to provide more competitive compensation with peer districts. Ms. Wilson-Crawford thanked Bobbi Jo Blanton and the bargaining teams for their collaborative work. President Postema stated that Board trustees received a note from RESPA leadership in appreciation for the trusting and collaborative working relationship. Upon recommendation of Dr. Shibler, motion was made by Geoff Downs, supported by Timothy Lewis, approving the agreement with RESPA as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Board of Education Trustees Acceptance/Oath of Office

President Postema ceremoniously administered the Constitutional Oath of Office to incoming Board of Education trustees Kelley Freridge and Jake Himmelspace and re-elected incumbents Geoff Downs and Nick Reichenbach. All four were elected to terms which will run from January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2024. In compliance with MCL 168.308 and 309, all four trustees filed their Acceptance of Office with the Kent County Election Coordinator within 10 days of the certification of the election.

Superintendent's Performance Evaluation and Contract Extension

Board of Education Trustee and Human Resources Committee Chair Timothy Lewis reported on Dr. Shibler's recent performance evaluation, which was conducted on November 23, 2020. Motion was made by Timothy Lewis, supported by Laura Featherston, to extend Dr. Shibler's contract through December 31, 2025. Dr. Shibler thanked the Board of Education for the privilege to serve the district. Motion carried unanimously.

Adjournment

President Postema adjourned the meeting at 8:10 p.m. and encouraged everyone to safely enjoy time with friends and family over the holiday break.

Respectfully submitted,

Nick Reichenbach

Rockford Public Schools Board of Education

Minutes approved at January 11, 2021 meeting