



*Date | time* Monday – January 25, 2021 | 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](mailto: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](mailto:mclark@rockfordschools.org).

Technical assistance at [zoom@rockfordschools.org](mailto:zoom@rockfordschools.org)

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

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### Attendance

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Board of Education: Bobbi Jo Blanton, Geoffrey L. Downs, Kelley Freridge, Jake Himmelspach, Timothy J. Lewis, Miles J. Postema, Nick Reichenbach.

Student representative: Guin Waite.

Rockford Public Schools: Dr. Michael Shibler, Mike Ramm, Mike Cuneo, Korie Wilson-Crawford, Mindy Duba, Nicole Peterson, Maggie Thelen, Sharon Wells, Kelly Theaker, Jeremy Karel, Scott Beckman, Marlene Clark, Jason Springer (BTR videographer).

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### Adoption of Agenda

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

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### Recognition

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#### School Board Recognition Month

January is designated as School Board Recognition Month by the Michigan Association of School Boards in co-sponsorship with the National School Boards Association. Dr. Shibler recognized RPS Board of Education trustees for their valuable contributions to the district. RPS Board of Education trustees are elected and entitled to compensation for their time, but have historically waived any such compensation.

## Middle School Outstanding Students – January 2021

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

Shelby Fox & Avery Frankenberg (6<sup>th</sup>), Kaia Slanger & Elijah Johnson (7<sup>th</sup>), Paige Parker & Asa Jenkins (8<sup>th</sup>)

### North RMS

Aubrey Rosebery & Cayden Markin (6<sup>th</sup>), Ayano Clay & Carson Steffes (7<sup>th</sup>), Emma Walsh & Connor Whitehead (8<sup>th</sup>)

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## Recognition of Visitors and Hearing of People Present

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Tom Halmi (6987 Camelback Drive, Rockford) addressed the Board of Education regarding opening the high school pool for open swim as area districts have done. President Postema encouraged Mr. Halmi to speak with Dr. Shibler about his request.

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## Correspondence

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Secretary Reichenbach read correspondence from the family of Alan Bryant.

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## Consent Agenda

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

- Minutes of January 11, 2021 study session and Regular Meeting #11
- Payment of bills in the amount of \$2,596,783.34
- Certified Staff Resignation. Emily Dafoe effective January 11, 2021.

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## Reports

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### Student Representative

Student representative Guin Waite reported to the Board of Education on the Star for a Day initiative, upcoming Winter Wishes, and resuming student council meetings as soon as students return face to face full time.

### COVID-19 District Response

Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources Korie Wilson-Crawford, along with District Nurse Kelly Theaker and Director of Security Scott Beckman, reported to the Board of Education on the district's coordinated response to manage COVID-19 in our schools. The role of the COVID Response Team has been instrumental in managing the added workload created by the virus. It was reported there has been a marked decrease in close contacts/quarantines coinciding with the implementation of the hybrid model at the secondary level. The district has discontinued the testing site established at Mercy Health due to a decrease in use and an increase in other testing sites in the area. In terms of staff vaccinations for COVID-19, at this time, 450 staff members have received or are scheduled to receive their vaccine, with

an additional 85 employees awaiting an appointment. When an employee identifies symptoms on the daily screener, the school district nurse follows up with them to determine whether testing is needed in compliance with the Kent County Health Department guidelines. The district has a letter of understanding with the collective bargaining units addressing when staff may use COVID sick time for COVID-related absences.

Dr. Shibler commended Korie Wilson-Crawford, Scott Beckman, and Kelly Theaker for overseeing the substantial amount of work created by the pandemic in a professional and effective manner on behalf of the Rockford Public Schools.

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## Old Business

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### 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.

As part of the reconfirmation process, Assistant Superintendent of Instruction Mike Ramm reported on 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.

Dr. Shibler summarized his intent to prioritize full-time face-to-face instruction for all students by February 1, if the current downward trend of cases in our community and the impact of those cases on our schools continue, with the understanding that he will continue to monitor the data as decisions are made. The district will also monitor whether the variance of the virus appears in our community. It was noted that Trustee Reichenbach temporarily lost his connection to the meeting but returned in time for the vote.

Upon recommendation of Superintendent Shibler, motion was made by Timothy Lewis, supported by Bobbi Jo Blanton, approving the January 2021 Reconfirmation Plan. Dr. Shibler stated he will continue to make recommendations based on data from the experts while respecting the needs of families. Motion carried unanimously.

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

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## New Business

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### DTE Natural Gas Easement Resolution

Assistant Superintendent of Finance Mike Cuneo reported to the Board of Education on a recommendation to change the classification of an existing easement to allow for the extension of natural gas to the new team rooms at Carlson-Munger Stadium. There is no cost associated with the transaction

and it is unlikely that anyone other than the school district would hook into the line due to its location on district property.

Upon recommendation of Dr. Shibler, motion was made by Nick Reichenbach, supported by Timothy Lewis, adopting the resolution as presented. Roll call vote was taken. Ayes: 7. Nays: 0. Motion carried unanimously.

#### 2019-20 Financial Audit

Assistant Superintendent of Finance Mike Cuneo summarized the 2019-20 financial audit conducted by Hungerford Nichols CPAs + Advisors, in which the district received the highest opinion that can be given of an unqualified opinion of the financial audit and an unmodified opinion of the single audit, each with no significant findings. The Board of Education received a detailed presentation at an earlier study session. Upon recommendation of Dr. Shibler, motion was made by Geoff Downs, supported by Jake Himmelspace, accepting the 2019-20 financial audit as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

#### Certified Staff Recommendation

Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources Korie Wilson-Crawford introduced the following certified staff candidate to the Board of Education:

Thomas Griffith

Music

Meadow Ridge/Valley View

Upon recommendation of Dr. Shibler, motion was made by Geoff Downs, supported by Jake Himmelspace, approving the employment of the candidate for the remainder of the 2020-21 school year. Motion carried unanimously. Mr. Griffith thanked the Board of Education and Administration for the opportunity.

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### Adjournment

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President Postema adjourned the meeting at 7:55 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted,*

*Nick Reichenbach*

*Rockford Public Schools Board of Education*

**Minutes approved at February 8, 2021 meeting**