

**BOARD OF EDUCATION, SCHOOL DISTRICT 3A  
ROCHESTER, SANGAMON COUNTY, ILLINOIS**

**REGULAR MEETING, February 21, 2024**

The Rochester Board of Education met for a regular meeting on February 21, 2024. Mrs. Reynolds called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

THOSE PRESENT: Amy Reynolds  
Bob Chiles  
Don Carley  
Chris Jewell  
Todd Hannah  
Aimee Johnson

ABSENT: Dr. Christie Magoulias

OTHERS PRESENT: Dan W. Cox, Superintendent  
Suzanne Keller, Director of Educational Services  
Jennifer Shaw, Director of Special Education  
Kris Kahler, Director of Business Services  
Jon Hansen, Director of Communication  
Jeff Reed, RHS, Principal  
Kim Poole, RJHS Principal  
Jamie Toland, RIS Principal  
Bethany Wellbaum, Elementary 2-3 Principal  
Adrienne VanFossan, Elementary EC-1 Principal  
Carey Seaton, Executive Secretary

**RECOGNITION OF VISITORS:**

Mr. Gegen presented the upcoming Central Illinois Stem Fair on Wednesday, April 10 from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. at the Rochester High School Athletic Complex. There will be 50+ exhibits on display.  
Dan Pietroburgo addressed the board regarding his concern on the upcoming construction project. His concern is specifically for the wall being built at the baseball field.  
Sarah Kerley noted she had two topics to discuss. The first was supporting teachers with challenging grade levels and secondly, concerns on the building projects.  
Nicole Moore addressed the board with concerns about losing the MPR and the board supporting the teachers.  
Kristin La Montagne has concerns on the action items 9.4 deny resignation of a certified teacher.  
Leah Brock addressed the board with concerns on the athletic and science constructions.  
Rebecca Schnurf had concerns about women's athletics and inequality of the construction projects that were chosen, specifically, why improvements are not being done for the softball field.

Matt Zeidler	Zach Stead	Dan Pietroburgo	Lauren Thomas	Juliette Tinder
Ty Milner	Kristin LaMontagne	Jenna Albaugh	Mackenzie Montgomery	Alan Howard
Mary Friday	Pete Gegen	Rebecca Schnurf	Sarah Kerley	Lindsey Capilano
Jennifer Frey	Nicole Moore	Lanette Cantrall	John Whitlock	Kristin LaMontage
Leah Brock				

## **Student Presentation**

Mr. Reed, RHS Principal, Mr. Jones and Mr Spear, fine arts educators, introduced the ILMEA Finalists who gave an amazing a cappella performance from their madrigal show. Mr. Cox congratulated the finalists for their accomplishment and praised our fine arts department staff for their continued dedication.

## **APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA**

A. The following items were approved on the consent agenda:

- a. Approval of minutes
- b. Acceptance of Donation  
The Board of Education accepts, with thanks, the donation of \$500 from Kathy Garst to be used for the Stem Fair.
- c. Notice of FOIA request
- d. Approval of Farm Lease Agreement
- e. Approval of Student Information System (SIS) Administrator Job Description
- f. Authorization to maintain confidentiality of Closed Session Minutes undergoing review
- g. Disposal of Verbatim Closed Session Recordings Older than 18 Months

Mr. Hannah made a motion to approve the consensus agenda. The motion was seconded by Mr. Chiles and carried unanimously.

## **FINANCIAL REPORTS**

### **Investment report**

Dr. Kahler presented the investment report to the board. There were no comments or questions from the Board.

### **Approval of Bills/Payroll/Treasurer's Report**

The Board did not present any questions regarding the bills.

Mrs. Johnson made a motion to approve the bills, payroll, and Treasurer's report. Mr. Hannah seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

### **Year to Date Fund Summary**

Dr. Kahler reviewed the Year to Date fund summary. There were no questions or comments from the Board.

## **ADMINISTRATOR REPORTS**

### **Directors and Assistant Principal Reports**

Building Principals gave the building reports highlighting a busy second semester.

Mrs. VanFossan's Elementary EC-1 celebrated the 100th day of school with events, and High-Five Friday remains popular. She also thanked the PTO for a very fun and successful bingo night.

Mrs. Wellbaum highlighted Kindness Week, a successful PTO book fair, and 3rd graders attending the UIS Symphony. She noted that the Big Buddies from the high school have begun to come over and meet their little buddies at the Elementary 2-3 building and how much her students really enjoy their big buddy visits.

Mr. Toland's school engaged in Finn's Mission/Kids Heart Challenge with the American Heart Association and praised Intermediate students in the spelling bee. He also said that 5th grade classes are preparing their Rube Goldberg models for an upcoming competition.

Mrs. Poole discussed the RJHS Student Council serving as big buddies to kindergarten classes. Junior High student leaders planned class activities to provide academic support and to build relationships with the younger students. She also discussed hosting sports regionals and commended the 8th-grade boys' success in the state tournament.

Mr. Reed congratulated the Robotics Team on reaching the state finals, recognized Scholastics Art Award winners, and mentioned the State Capital honor for the Rocket football team. Mr. Reed also congratulated the RHS students that participated in The Academic Challenge Regionals at LLCC. The whole team placed 2nd overall and will be going to Sectionals in March.

Mrs. Keller announced that the Illinois State Board of Educations' 5Essentials survey will remain open until March 29, 2024. She also noted that the District Curriculum and Instruction Council will meet on February 29, 2024.

Mrs. Shaw discussed the restructuring of the preschool screenings for earlier enrollment, aiming for early intervention. Moving forward instead of having two screenings, there will now be 7 spread throughout the year with more flexible entry into the early childhood program.

Mr. Hansen highlighted the district's growing social media presence and notable events like visits from Lincoln Land basketball teams to EC-1.

Dr. Kayler gave an update on the transportation department and commended the maintenance department for their efforts during the recent snow and ice storm.

### **Superintendent's Report**

Mr. Cox continued to inform the board of a new initiative to conduct stay interviews. We will be conducting stay interviews with our staff to understand what makes working at Rochester exceptional. This endeavor aims to identify areas for improvement, ensuring our school remains a fulfilling and supportive workplace. Progress updates will be shared as we continue this valuable initiative. We are set to initiate our pilot group in the coming day.

Superintendent Cox also highlighted that we will be initiating Strategic Planning. This prepares students to be effective lifelong learners and contributors by not only rigorous academic content but also critical thinking skills.

He discussed the design process for the Rochester High School athletic complex, science wing and student services construction project. Upon approval, the schematic design will undergo the design development phase. A final plan will be developed and brought before the Board for approval, ensuring transparency and collaboration in the decision-making process.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

#### **Board of Education Committee Reports**

##### **Building Committee**

Mr. Hannah, Mrs. Johnson and the rest of the building committee members convened with representatives from BLDD Architects and SM Wilson Construction Management to assess the schematic design for the science wing, student services construction project and secure entrance remodel. Upon obtaining approval by the Board, the schematic design will undergo the design development phase, incorporating feedback from staff members before receiving final approval from the Board. A tentative construction phase timeline was also presented. Building committee members took questions from the rest of the board. Mr. Jewell asked why the current J wing was not considered for remodel. Mr. Hannah noted that it was considered but age and project

cost put it out of reach. The building committee noted that they have been receiving input for over a year and the design decisions are based on input from staff and coaches.

John Whitlock, BLDD architects, presented the designs highlighting the Schematic designs for the new science wing, student services and the secure entrance remodel. He gave a detailed overview of the proposed student service, nursing area and administrative center.

Kerry Lorts, SM Wilson presented a high level overview of the cost of this portion of the construction project broken down by area. He also touched on the current timeline outlining key milestones and project phases.

Mr. Hannah made a motion to approve the Schematic Designs for the RHS Athletic Complex, Science Wing, Student Services Construction Project. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Johnson and carried unanimously.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **Consideration and Action to begin Rochester CUSD #3A Daycare Program: Blastoff Kids Academy**

Mrs. Shaw presented to the board an initiative that would provide accessible and reliable childcare services in our community. The program is for ages 3-12 and is set to start with an upcoming summer session. The proposed location of the program is at Rochester Elementary School EC-1 or the 2-3 building. The program would provide enrichment activities, coordinated events and Friday field trips.

Mr. Cox described the new program and how it would align with the early intervention program striving to achieve the goal of all students reading by third grade with the extra after school support. He noted that the creation of the Rochester CUSD #3A Daycare Program is not just a response to the childcare needs of our community but also a proactive investment in the well-being and development of our students.

Mrs. Johnson made a motion for the approval to begin the Rochester CUSD #3A daycare program: Blastoff Kids Academy. The motion was seconded by Mr. Jewell and carried unanimously.

### **Action Items**

The Board of Education took action and approved the following items:

- Approved the vehicle fuel bid awarded to Praireland FS, Inc.
- Approved the photography services awarded to Interstate Studio
- Resolution Abate the Taxes Levied to Pay Principal and Interest on Certain Alternative Revenue Bond Series 2023

### **CLOSED SESSION**

Mr. Jewell made a motion to go into closed session for purposes defined in: 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1) - The appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the public body or legal counsel for the public body; 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(2) Collective Negotiating Matters Between the Public Body and Its Employees or Their Representatives; 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(11) Litigation; and 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(21) Discussion of Meetings Lawfully Closed Under the Open Meetings Act. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hannah and passed unanimously.

The Board entered into closed session at 8:37 p.m.

The Board came out of closed session at 9:46 p.m.

Motion to arise from closed session was made by Mr. Hannah and seconded by Mr. Carley and passed unanimously.

### **9.1: Approve Personnel Report**

Mrs. Johnson made a motion to approve the personnel report, which was seconded by Mr. Carley and passed unanimously.

### **9.1: Approval of District Office Secretary Wage Adjustment**

Because of recent restructuring of the district office staff it was proposed that there be a wage adjustment. Motion to approve district office secretary wage adjustment was made by Mr. Jewell and seconded by Mrs. Johnson and passed unanimously.

### **EMPLOYMENT:**

#### ***Licensed Staff:***

Adams, Garrick Social Work Intern (24-25) District  
Cooper, Olivia English Teacher (24-25), RHS  
Root, Morgan Permanent Substitute Teacher (23-24), District

#### ***Extra-Curricular Staff:***

Buckley, Timothy Head Scholastic Bowl Coach (23-24)

#### **Volunteer Extracurricular Staff:**

Butcher, Maddie RHS Girls Soccer

### **RESIGNATIONS/RETIREMENTS:**

#### ***Licensed Staff:***

Ashbaugh, Brent System Administrator, District effective June 30, 2024  
Bailey, Elizabeth Art Teacher, RIS effective May 29, 2024  
Drewes, Kimberly Third Grade Teacher, RES 2-3 Effective May 29, 2024  
Mitchelle, Laura Kindergarten Teacher RES EC-1, Effective February 15, 2024

#### **Support Staff:**

Clemens, Erin Pre-K Aide, RES EC-1, Effective May 29, 2024  
Curtin, Emma Special Education Aide, RES EC-1, Effective February 12, 2024  
Ellis, Doug School Bus Driver, Transportation, Effective February 2, 2024  
Nation, Hayley Special Education Aide, RJHS, Effective February 6, 2024  
Rice, Pamela Special Education Aide, RHS, Effective February 6, 2024

#### **Extra-Curricular Staff:**

Miller, Adam Assistant Baseball Coach, RJHS, Effective January 25, 2024

### **LEAVES OF ABSENCE**

Puccetti, Kristen Pre-K Teacher, RES EC-1, Effective February 16, 2024 to unknown

### **9.2: Approval of Interim Principal at the RES 2-3**

Motion to approve Carrie Ross as the Interim Principal at the RES 2-3 building for a leave of absence was made by Mr. Jewell. Mr. Chiles seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

### **9.3: Adoption of Resolution to Dismiss and Authorize Notice of Dismissal and Charges to Educational Support Staff.**

Motion to adopt resolution to dismiss and authorize notice of dismissal and charges to Kimberly Bridges was made by Mrs. Reynolds. Mr. Jewell seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

**9.4: Motion to Deny the Resignation of a Certified Teacher**

Motion to deny the resignation of Erica Peak-Nordstrom was made by Mrs. Reynolds and seconded by Mr. Carley and passed unanimously.

**ADJOURN**

Mr. Hannah made a motion to adjourn at 9:48 p.m. that was seconded by Mrs. Johnson and carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

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Amy Reynolds , Vice President  
Board of Education

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Todd Hannah, Member  
Board of Education