

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

REGULAR MEETING, December 11, 2024

The Rochester Board of Education met for a regular meeting on December 11, 2024. President Magoulias called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

THOSE PRESENT:	Christie Magoulias Bob Chiles Todd Hannah Amy Reynolds Don Carley Andrea Graff Kathryn Nelson Daniel Bailey
OTHERS PRESENT:	Dan W. Cox, Superintendent Suzanne Keller, Director of Educational Services Jennifer Shaw, Director of Special Education Kris Kahler, Director of Business Services Jamie Toland, RIS Principal Randy Krepel, RES 2-3 Principal Adrienne VanFossan, RES EC-1 Principal David Hawkins, RHS Assistant Principal Carey Seaton, Executive Secretary

Beginning the Board of Education meeting Dr. Christie Magoulias asked to read a statement. In her statement, she formally resigned from her position on the Rochester Schools Board citing personal reasons. It was with thanks and gratitude her resignation was accepted. Dr. Magoulias served on the Rochester Board of Education for nine years. Mrs. Reynolds thanked Dr. Magoulias for her dedication and hard work.

Amended Agenda

Due to the resignation the meeting agenda was amended. Mr. Carley motioned to approve an amended agenda, and the motion was seconded by Mr. Hannah.

Action to appoint new members to the Board of Education

The Rochester CUSD #3A Board of Education held special meetings on December 2 and December 4, 2024, to review applications and interview candidates for vacant seats on the Board of Education. Ten (10) applications were submitted, and five (5) candidates were interviewed.

The Board reviewed applications during a closed session on December 2, 2024, per Board of Education Policy 2:70. After reviewing the applications, the Board conducted interviews with selected candidates in a closed session on December 4, 2024.

Mr. Daniel Bailey, Mrs. Kathryn Nelson, and Dr. Andrea Graff were selected to fill the vacant seats on the Rochester School District Board of Education. They were sworn in and took the oath of office. Items reviewed

with the new board members were the acknowledgment of mandated reporter status, mandatory board member training, and the Board Member Code of Conduct.

Election of Board of Education Officers

Amy Reynolds, per policy 2:70, will now fulfill the Rochester Board of Education President role. A motion to elect Todd Hannah as Board of Education Vice President was made by Amy Reynolds and seconded by Don Carley. A motion was made by Todd Hannah to elect Don Carley as Board of Education Secretary and the motion was seconded by Daniel Bailey.

RECOGNITION OF VISITORS:

Aaron Taft	Dave Jostes	Pat Anderson	Sarah Kerley
Sue Tucker	Stacy Estes	Ben Clark	Patti Tweryon
Missy Behl	Len Shull	Becky Cousin	Lauren Thomas
Kristin laMontagne	Kip Reiss	Krissy Dennison	Shannon Swaney
Amelia Cheek	Rebecca Schnorf	John Geyston	
Lydia Hicks	Mike Anderson	Raina Kolba	

Kristin LaMontagne thanked the new board members. She would like to see a strategic plan in place and it prioritized moving forward.

Rebecca Schroff thanked Mrs. Shaw and Mrs. Gumble for their dedication to her children. She went on to note that there have been issues with special education accommodation allegedly not being followed.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approval of [Minutes](#)
2. Acceptance of donations
3. Review of FOIA requests
4. Authorization to maintain confidentiality of closed session minutes undergoing review
5. Approval to temporarily designate hiring authority to the Superintendent 12/12/24-1/6/25
6. Disposal of verbatim closed session recordings older than 18 months.

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

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Investment Report, Approval of Bills/Payroll/Treasurer's Report

Dr. Kahler noted that the bills were printed out of order and a hard copy was provided at the board meeting. There were no additional comments or questions from the Board.

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

Director and Principal Reports

Mr. Toland celebrated the Intermediate building receiving the Reaching Out and Building Bridges Award. This award was received from the Illinois Principals Association for the Abe Lincoln Region. The award recognizes a school that has done outstanding collaborative work with an organization or local community entity. He also congratulated Nurse Laci on passing, with excellent marks, the Illinois Department of Public Health Vision and Hearing Screening Certification examinations and skills assessments. She can now complete all mandatory

screenings for students at RIS and assist in other buildings as needed. Upcoming events include the RIS Medieval Production and the Big Buddy program.

Mr. Hawkins congratulated the 21 RHS Illinois State Scholars and the RHS Girls Cross Country Team on their 5th place finish at STATE. He also congratulated the RHS Concert and Marching Band on their performance on November 21 and the RHS Madrigals performances on December 6, 7, and 8. Derek Leonard and Alex Gunter were named RHS staff of the month.

Mrs. VanFossen read the update for the Rochester Junior High administrators since they were hosting a tournament. She highlighted the Day of Service where Junior High Students helped at Beginning Steps and Caridge Crossing. She spoke about the upcoming "Fun Friday" and "Rocket Rally" that will be held on Friday, December 20.

Mrs. VanFossen praised the partnership with the JH Leader in Me students. This program continues to foster leadership within the classroom. This month the junior high students read a book to Elementary students and completed a craft project. She also noted that EC-1 will host a Kindergarten family event called "Holiday in the Halls". Mrs. VanFossen extended an invitation to the Board of Education to attend.

Mr. Krepel was excited about their successful launch of the Leader in Me morning meetings and student leadership roles around the building (morning greeters, organizers, lost and found facilitators, and pledge leaders). He also highlighted the upcoming Polar Express event.

Mrs. Reynolds presented Mr. Krepel with a certificate and congratulations to students and staff for recognition by the US World and News Report, placing us in the top 40% of Illinois schools based on our reading test scores.

Mrs. Shaw explained that Hope Schools has two residential-based facilities in Rochester CUSD 3A boundaries. Recently, they have had several students who are in foster care move into the facilities. While the state provides the residential portion, Rochester CUSD 3A is responsible for the tuition. Their tuition is reimbursed by ISBE during the next fiscal year.

Mrs. Keller discussed that during the Spring Semester, there will be five student teachers at Rochester. They are from the University of Illinois at Springfield and Illinois State University. Rochester School District partners with local colleges and universities to have their students complete their student teaching experiences at Rochester School District.

Dr. Kahler updated the board that a roof inspector came to the District and examined each building's roof to assist with a 10-year plan of preventative maintenance, and immediately needed repairs. This will be part of the Facility and Finance section of the Strategic Plan. The work on the RIS HVAC leak will be happening over Winter Break or within the next couple of weeks. This work won't disturb the educational process.

Mr. Hansen launched a new campaign called "Around Rochester" which gives families and the community insight into our schools. This initiative will focus on our student experience as well as how our staff are helping them be prepared for the future.

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Cox updated the Board of Education on the District's annual audit which is nearing completion and is expected to be finalized by the end of December, with a presentation to the Board planned for the next regular meeting in January. He highlighted that on December 2, the school district hosted its first Partners in Education (PIE) focus group, an initiative designed to strengthen collaboration between families and schools.

PIE seeks to create opportunities for parents, guardians, educators, and administrators to engage in meaningful dialogue and develop shared strategies to support student success.

OLD BUSINESS

Discussion of Joint Annual Conference

School board members recently participated in the Annual Illinois Association of School Boards Joint Annual Conference, underscoring our commitment to continuous professional learning. This conference is a vital platform for Board members to stay informed of the latest educational trends, policies, and innovations.

Approval of Resolution Providing for the Tax Levy 2024

In addition to maintaining necessary funding, the Board of Education remains committed to being fiscally responsive to our community. Once again, the Board of Education will abate \$300,000 in property taxes through funds generated by the 1% countywide sales tax. This "Resolution Abating a Portion of Taxes Heretofore Levied" will apply directly to reduce property taxes previously allocated for the construction of the Rocket Athletic Center (RAC), utilizing General Obligation School Refunding Bonds issued in 2016. This abatement represents a significant, community-focused decision by the Board, resulting in direct savings for property taxpayers.

Approval of Resolution abating a portion of the taxes heretofore levied for the year 2024 to pay debt service on the District's General Obligation School Refunding Bonds, Series 2019:

Dr. Graff made a motion to approve a Resolution abating a portion of the taxes heretofore levied for the year 2024 to pay debt service on the District's General Obligation School Refunding Bonds, Series 2019. Mr. Carley seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Approval of Resolution abating the taxes heretofore levied for the year 2024 to pay debt service on the District's General Obligation School Bonds (Alternate Revenue Source), Series 2023:

Mr. Bailey made a motion to approve a Resolution abating the taxes heretofore levied for the year 2024 to pay debt service on the District's General Obligation School Bonds (Alternate Revenue Source), Series 2023. Dr. Graff seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Approval of Contracted Paraprofessional Services:

Over the past several years, the school district has faced a consistent shortage of qualified paraprofessional candidates, making it increasingly difficult to meet the needs of our students. Contracting with these providers will broaden our candidate pool and enable the school district to hire the most qualified individuals. The district will continue to place a priority on hiring individuals through the district with contracted candidates being used when the district pool has been exhausted. Mr. Hannah made a motion to approve contracted paraprofessional services. Mr. Carley seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

Discussion and Approval of Curriculum and Instruction Council Recommendations:

The Curriculum and Instruction Council approved three curriculum proposals on October 24, 2024. One proposal was to implement the MC3 Pre-Apprenticeship course opportunities for students. The English proposals were to adopt the following novels; Midnight Driver, written by Jordan Sonnenblick and The Crossover (in verse and graphic novel), written by Kwame Alexander.

Mr. Hannah made a motion to approve the upgrades to District Telecommunication Systems as presented. Mr. Jewell seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

First Reading of Updates and Revisions to Board of Education Policies:

The Board of Education Policy updates and revisions are placed on the first reading and are up for review.

Presentation of Cardiac Emergency Response Plan:

In compliance with Public Act 103-0608, effective January 1, 2025, the school district has developed a Cardiac Emergency Response Plan (CERP) to address incidents of sudden cardiac arrest or similar life-threatening emergencies occurring at school or school-sponsored events. This agenda item is presented for informational purposes only, as the plan is pending final legal review.

CLOSED SESSION

Mr. Hannah 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; and 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(11) Litigation. The motion was seconded by Dr. Graff and passed unanimously.

The Board entered into closed session at 7:55 p.m.

The Board came out of closed session at 8:38 p.m.

Approve Personnel Report

Mr. Bailey made a motion to approve the personnel report, which was seconded by Mr. Hannah and passed unanimously.

Action on Items Following Closed Session

The following action items were approved following the closed session of the Board of Education:

- The following individuals were approved for employment:
 - Walker, Clarissa Permanent Substitute Teacher, District
 - Hunter, Tiffany Recess Supervisor, RES,
 - Jarmakas, Charity Special Education Aide, District,
 - McAllister, Brett Bus Monitor, Transportation,
 - Newton, Jessica Special Education Aide, District,
 - Batten, Lindsey Mathcounts Sponsor, RJHS,
 - Heberling, Josh 7th Grade Boys Basketball Coach, RJHS
 - Peters, Cole Assistant Wrestling Coach, RJHS
- The following individuals were approved as volunteer staff:
 - Alexander, Evan Boys Track, RHS
 - Boudouris, J.R. Basketball, RJHS
 - Christman, Manny Basketball, RJHS
 - Colantino, Steve Girls Track, RHS
 - Gavin, Tony Basketball, RJHS
 - Gripper, Christian Basketball, RJHS
 - Lauber, Matt Basketball, RJHS
 - Leonard, Derek Basketball, RJHS
 - Mitchell, Rachel Girls Track, RJHS
 - Nelson, Derrick Basketball, RJHS
 - Sampson, Nathaniel Wrestling, RHS
 - Sweeney, Connor Wrestling, RJHS
 - Webb, Buck Robotics Coach, RHS
- The following individuals submitted resignations with thanks for service:
 - Olson, Andrea Blastoff Kids Academy Site Coordinator, District, Effective December 12, 2024
 - Olson, Andrea Special Education Aide, District, Effective December 31, 2024

- Mayer, Alison Assistant Girls Golf Coach, RHS, Effective October 29, 2024
- The following individuals were approved for leaves of absence:
 - Bliss, Michael First Grade Teacher, RES EC-1, Effective November 6, 2024 through November 15, 2024
 - Bliss, Michael First Grade Teacher, RES EC-1, Effective December 16, 2024 through March 31, 2025
 - Friday, Mary School Bus Driver, Transportation, Effective January 27, 2025 through March 31, 2025
 - Ruyle, Stephanie Special Education Teacher, RES, Effective January 6, 2025 through January 7, 2025

Action to Retain Lawful Closed Meeting Minutes as Confidential Following Semi-Annual Review:

Dr. Graff made a motion to retain lawful closed meeting minutes as confidential following the semi-annual review. Mr. Bailey seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

ADJOURN:

Mr. Hannah made a motion to adjourn at 8:40 p.m., which was seconded by Mr. Carley and carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Reynolds, President
Board of Education

Don Carley, Recording Secretary
Board of Education