

The Rockbridge County School Board held a Public Hearing on Tuesday, February 18, 2025 at the County of Rockbridge Administrative Building.

Present: Chairman Kathy Burant; Trustees Corey Berkstresser, Catie Brown, Lenna Ojure, Neil Whitmore; Superintendent Phillip Thompson and Deputy Clerk Timothy Martino.

### CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Burant called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. and requested that everyone rise for the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

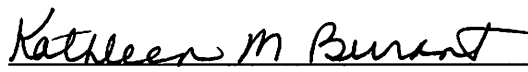
Superintendent Thompson provided an overview of the budget development process, which began in October with discussions on division priorities. He explained that while the *Categorical Estimate of Needs* document reflects projected financial requirements, the final budget remains uncertain due to pending state funding decisions. He reiterated that the division's key priorities are the following:

- Competitive Salaries for all employees
- Adjustments for inflation on essential services and materials
- Maintaining affordable healthcare options for all staff.
- Chairman Burant inquired about the state's progress on budget negotiations.
  - Superintendent Thompson reported that while the Senate and House have reached broad agreement, their proposals differ from the Governor's plan. He acknowledged the challenge of making budgetary projections without final figures but assured the board that the finance team has refined this process over the years.
- Trustee Whitmore inquired about expected healthcare cost increases.
  - Dr. Thompson confirmed that initial estimates indicate a 19% increase from last year. He further stated that Local Choice had offered the most competitive rate last year, and the division anticipates continuing with them.

There were no persons to address the Board.

### ADJOURNMENT

Upon motion by Trustee Berkstresser, seconded by Trustee Ojure, and passed by 5-0 vote, the Public Hearing was closed and adjourned at 5:06 p.m.



Kathy M. Burant, Chairman



Timothy J. Martino, Deputy Clerk of the Board

The Rockbridge County School Board held their regular meeting on Tuesday, February 18, 2025, at the County of Rockbridge Administration Building.

Present: Chairman Kathy Burant; Trustees Corey Berkstresser, Catie Brown, Lenna Ojure, Neil Whitmore; Superintendent Phillip Thompson and Deputy Clerk Timothy Martino.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Burant called the meeting to order at 5:07 p.m.

**CHANGES TO THE AGENDA:** None

**STUDENT / STAFF RECOGNITION:**

Superintendent Thompson took a moment to express gratitude to the board members in recognition of School Board Appreciation Month, highlighting their countless hours spent attending meetings, engaging with the community, and addressing citizen concerns. He emphasized that their work is critical to the success of the division, despite the minimal compensation they receive for their service. Board members were presented with certificates in honor of their service.

Superintendent Thompson recognized the week of February 17-21 Clerk Appreciation Week, expressing deep appreciation for the dedication of Mrs. Rhonda Humphries and her instrumental role in ensuring the board operates efficiently.

Superintendent Thompson recognized the Rockbridge County High School Trivium Staff and Mr. Brian Hamelman for their outstanding accomplishments in student journalism. This year, the Rockbridge County High School yearbook, Worlds Collide, earned several prestigious accolades:

- Virginia High School League (VHSL) – First Class Evaluation
- American Scholastic Press Association (ASPA) – First Place with Special Merit (One of only four yearbooks nationwide to receive this distinction.)
- ASPA – Most Outstanding High School Yearbook for 2024 (One of just five awarded in the country.)

Superintendent Thompson commended Mr. Hammelman’s leadership and his ability to foster students’ strengths, noting that the Trivium program embodies Gold Standard Project-Based Learning. He emphasized that the students' work is not only a creative and academic endeavor, but also a competitive, nationally recognized achievement.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Upon recommendation by Chairman Burant, motion by Trustee Whitmore, seconded by Trustee Berkstresser, the board approved the following items on the Consent Agenda:

- Minutes: 1) December 17, 2024 [Discipline Committee Hearing]; 2) January 14, 2025 [Regular Meeting]; 3) January 16, 2025 [Joint Meeting with Rockbridge County Board of Supervisors]; 4) January 30, 2025 [Discipline Committee Hearing]
- Field Trip Requests
- Fundraiser Requests
- Application for Use of Facilities
- Appointments and Resignations

**Appointments**

**Support Staff**

Ruth Carter, Teacher Assistant, Rockbridge County High School, effective February 12, 2025

**Car Driver**

Emily Staton

**Food Service**

Danielle Ramsey

Dana Lotts

**Substitute**

Stephanie Haraway

**Food Service Substitutes**

Robin Brown