SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE COUNTY OF ROANE, HELD JULY 31, 2025, AT 5:00 PM, AT ROANE COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL, SPENCER,

Present: Dennis Carpenter, Daris Harper, Jeffrey Mace, James Minney, Eileen Richardson

Absent: (none)

Meeting called to order by Jeffrey Mace (6:03 pm)

This meeting could be joined remotely. The public could join by calling 1-304-553-7794 and entering the provided conference ID or on Microsoft Teams using the provided link.

Work Session

1. Presentation and Information related to the WVBE State of Emergency for Roane County Schools; Presenters may include:
    a. Ann Hardman, Treasurer
    b. Jerry Garner, Director of Facilities and Transportation
    c. Michelle Ash, Director of Student Support Services
    d. Amy Cole, Director of Federal Programs & Compliance
    e. Lorra Tanner, Director of Instructional Programs & Personnel
    f. Lori Hamric (Cottrell), Jennifer Hunt, Annette Claypool & Megan Starcher, Principals

In the School Finance Review, the concerns presented were as follows:

1) building utilization
2) failure to create and present a consolidation and school closures plan
3) reduction in personnel that need to be made over the funding formula
4) improper budgeting in special education
5) concerns with the budget and spending connected to the building of SMS
6) a projected 2.9 million for this current 25/26 school year
7) cash flow concerns that have existed previously
8) failure to follow some guidance that was provided by the department prior to the state of emergency.

The goal is to make progress on the concerns and to keep the school district from being taken over with an intervention. Our plan would allow us to retain the decision making on behalf of the students and families of Roane County.

Options to reduce the deficit considered by the Roane County Schools Leadership Team were as follows:

1) relocate the Central Office to RCHS; turn the central office into a PreK Center
2) generate revenue by adding childcare center to Walton building
3) move all 6-8 students to SMS, now or next year
4) close 1 school, either WEMS or GEMS; students will be transferred to SES and SMS
5) close 1 school, SES; reconfigure SMS to become SES offering PK-5 and reconfigure RCHS building to house SMS 6-8 and RCHS 9-12

6) close 2 schools, both WEMS and GEMS; students will be transferred to Spencer Area Schools. Spencer Area School reconfiguration options include:

a) SES becomes a PreK-2 school, SMS becomes a 3-5 school, and RCHS becomes a 7-12 school

b) SES becomes a PreK-4 school, SMS becomes 5-8 school, and RCHS remains a 9-12 high school;

c) SES becomes a K-5 school, SMS remains 6-8, RCHS remains 9-12 high school with Early Education Center created in the Student Support Services Area (originally a childcare center).

Other cost saving measures discussed:
1) focused effort to reduce building utilities
2) homeschool outreach
3) centralized kitchen with food transport
4) abolish the full-time principal at WEMS due to current vacancy
5) increase the utilization of county vehicles for travel purposes
6) increase utilization of RCHS for office spaces

Mr. Carpenter proposed the following option:
1) close 2 schools, both WEMS and GEMS; students will be transferred to Spencer Area Schools. SES becomes a PreK-3 school, SMS becomes a 4-6 school, and RCHS becomes a 7-12 school. In addition, Student Support Services office will be moved to the caretakerâ€™s house located on the campus of the current RCHS. The central office will remain where it is currently. In addition, investigate the possibility of an excess levy in Spring 2026.

The proposal recommended by Superintendent, Michelle Stellato and the Roane County Schools Leadership Team is option 6c.

New Business for Consideration and Potential Action

1. Create Teacher / Kindergarten, Spencer Elementary School, effective August 1, 2025

Motion by Daris Harper and seconded by James Minney to approve. Motion carried. (7:15 pm)

2. Create Aide / ECCAT, Spencer Elementary School, effective August 1, 2025

Motion by Eileen Richardson and seconded by Dennis Carpenter to approve. Motion carried. (7:16 pm)

3. Abolish Technology Systems Specialist, Roane County Schools, effective August 1, 2025

Motion by James Minney and seconded by Daris Harper to approve. Motion carried. (7:16 pm)

4. Restore Baylee O'Brien to Teacher / 4th grade, Walton Elementary Middle School, effective for the 2025-2026 school year (reason for transfer is no longer necessary)

Motion by Daris Harper and seconded by James Minney to approve. Motion carried. (7:19 pm)

Personnel Consent Agenda - (Action)

Motion by Daris Harper and seconded by Eileen Richardson to approve the following personnel items as recommended by Michelle Stellato, Superintendent. Motion carried. (7:23 pm)

1. Abolish Position(s)
    a. Technology Systems Specialist (CO), effective August 1, 2025,
2. Create New Position(s)
    a. Teacher / Kindergarten (SES), 200 days, effective August 1, 2025
    b. Aide / ECCAT (SES), 200 days, effective August 1, 2025
3. Resignation(s)
    a. Keaton, Rebecca - Teacher / English (Roane County High School), effective July 25, 2025
    b. Burdette, Angela - Senior Sponsor (Roane County High School), effective July 28, 2025
    c. Stockner, Shannon - Transportation Aide (morning, Bus #28) (RCS - Operations), effective July 28, 2025
    d. Moore, Brian - Substitute cook (RCS - Substitutes), effective July 31, 2025
4. New Employment(s)
    a. _____ - Principal (Walton Elementary / Middle School), effective August 1, 2025

Item 4.a. was not filled.

    b. _____ - Communities in Schools Coordinator (Walton Elementary / Middle School), effective August 12, 2025

Item 4.5. was not filled.

    c. Hurd, Brianne - Teacher / Art (Spencer Middle School), effective August 12, 2025, pending CIB clearance
5. Transfer(s)
    a. Stump-Cohen, Kourtney - Teacher / Special Education (Roane County High School) to Teacher / Special Education (Spencer Elementary School), effective August 1, 2025
    b. Tolley, Kaleena - Teacher / 4th Grade (Walton Elementary / Middle School) to Teacher / Math (Roane County High School), effective August 1, 2025
    c. Penfold, JuliAnna - Teacher / Special Education (Roane County High School) to Teacher / Special Education (Spencer Middle School), effective August 1, 2025
6. Extracurricular(s)
    a. Ford, Toby - Athletic Director, Roane County High School / Spencer Middle School (Roane County High (51%), Spencer Middle (49%)), effective August 1, 2025
7. Rescind action(s)
    a. Create New Position of Aide / ECCAT (multi-classified with Bus Operator) (GEMS), 200 days, effective July 1, 2025 [from March 20, 2025]

Adjournment

1. Adjourn until the next regular meeting, Tuesday, August 5, 2025, at 6:00 pm at Roane

County High School

Motion by Daris Harper and seconded by James Minney to approve. Motion carried. (7:35 pm)