

REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE COUNTY OF ROANE, HELD JANUARY 22, 2026, AT 6:00 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 (6:02 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.

Presentations

1. Superintendent Spotlight

a. EF European Tours Field Trip - Sati Maharaj-Boggs

Mrs. Maharaj-Boggs presented her international travel program and introduced students Chloe Shafer, Emma Sloan, and Braxton Nichols, who shared highlights from last year's educational trip to Italy. They described the cultural experiences and personal growth gained from visiting cities such as Milan, Venice, Florence, Assisi, and Rome. Mrs. Maharaj-Boggs also outlined plans for next year's trip to Amsterdam, Brussels, Paris, and London, which has already generated strong student interest. The board thanked them for their presentation and recognized the value of these opportunities.

2. Public Participation

Corrie Ota set the public participation sign-in sheet out at 5:45 pm and it was removed at 5:55 pm.

The following members of the public spoke:

Mark Pauley (SES Teacher and Faculty Senate Vice President)

Mark Pauley (Roane County Resident)

3. Policy 2322

a. BRIM Report - Jerry Garner

Mr. Garner presented the biennial BRIM report, noting that Roane County High School was cited for lacking observation windows in roughly 70 doors, a recommended replacement cost of about \$35,000, likely requiring an MIP request. Geary Elementary's old playground must either be removed or receive added fall material; the school is pursuing a no-cost sawdust solution. Spencer Elementary resolved a citation by labeling shades that cover emergency exit windows, and Spencer Middle must add cages to gym emergency lights and exit signs. Staff-caused violations-including propped doors and appliances plugged into power strips-will require formal write-ups per the superintendent's directive. The board also noted the required annual inspection of the alumni building chair lift and acknowledged the passing of former employee Jenny Lewis.

New Business for Consideration and Potential Action

1. Roane County Historical Society request

The board heard a request from Linda Liss of the Roane County Historical Society to place a visible memorial at the cemetery beside Spencer Elementary School, which lies within the 17.05 acres purchased by the Board in 1981 that contain the former Spencer State Hospital burial grounds. She noted that 265 individuals were buried there between 1893 and 1964, alleges

portions of the cemetery were disturbed during past school additions and paving, and the Society seeks permission to install a monument or engraved brick memorial listing all known names. Board members discussed possible locations that would avoid graves, the need for Mr. Garner and Ms. Stellato to review the deed requirements and site constraints, and agreed further evaluation is needed before action can be taken.

2. Update on Roane County Schools' State of Emergency

- a. West Virginia Board of Education approval to extend State of Emergency for Roane County Schools through July 2026

Ms. Stellato reported that the State Board, at its January 14 meeting, extended the Roane County Schools State of Emergency for six more months, praising the county's progress. Ms. Hardman presented updated financials showing year-to-date revenues still ahead of expenses, but a very tight cash flow: an expected \$560,000 balance at the end of January, a payroll of about \$615,000, and reliance on roughly \$100,000 in February tax receipts to make the first February payroll. The district is still awaiting federal reimbursements-\$256,000 (Special Ed), \$165,000 (Title I), and \$15,000 (SOAR)-which are essential to avoiding a projected -\$72,569 cash position by June 30. Ms. Hamrick also outlined a transition plan for Walton and Geary students, including a February 11 open house, joint events on February 26 and March 12, and grade-level visit days beginning March 20.

Motion by Jeffrey Mace and seconded by Dennis Carpenter to go into an executive session to discuss special education budgeting personnel issue. Motion carried. (7:43 pm)

Motion by James Minney and seconded by Eileen Richardson to return to open session. Motion carried. No action was taken in closed session. (8:08 pm)

3. 2026-27 School Calendar (public hearing 2)

The second public hearing on the 2026-27 school calendar showed 18 public comments, though no individuals signed up to speak at the hearing itself. Most online respondents were satisfied; two preferred a later August start, one objected to the two-week winter break, and one dissatisfied response came from a family leaving due to consolidation. No board members suggested changes, and the calendar moves forward under the consent agenda.

4. Property matters involving Walton Elementary Middle and Geary Elementary Middle Schools

Motion by Daris Harper and seconded by James Minney to go into an executive session to discuss property matters, as per WV Code 6-9A-4(b)(9). Motion carried. (8:11 pm)

Motion by Eileen Richardson and seconded by Dennis Carpenter to return to open session. Motion carried. No action was taken in closed session. (8:26 pm)

5. Spencer Elementary and Spencer Middle Schools - Renaming / Rebranding

The board reviewed the potential renaming and rebranding of Spencer Elementary and Spencer Middle School, noting that a comparable Kanawha County rebrand cost about \$100,000. Spencer Middle's current blue and gold design is extensive-covering flooring, lockers, furniture, signage, restrooms, and the gym floor-and Thrasher estimated up to a \$10,000 labor fee just to identify replacement components. Given the district's financial situation and the need to rebuild a 5% contingency, Ms. Stellato said the district cannot fund rebranding now and suggested gathering student and community input and considering donor-supported or long-term phased changes.

Consent Agenda - (Action)

Motion by Daris Harper and seconded by Eileen Richardson to approve the following consent

agenda as recommended by Michelle Stellato, Superintendent. Motion carried. (8:44 pm)

1. Approval of minutes of regular board meeting on January 8, 2026
2. Finance
 - a. Transfers/supplements to the budget
 - b. Payments of bills as submitted; pre-approval to release checks not to exceed \$20,000 prior to the next board meeting
3. Policies
 - a. Third Reading and Adoption
 - i. Policy 524 Transfers and Reductions-in-Force
 - ii. Policy 154 - Termination of Administrative Contracts and Other Contracts
4. Contract(s) / Bid(s) / Agreement(s)
 - a. MOU with Family Resource Network of Roane County, INC.
 - b. MOU with WVU Extension Service for SOAR Afterschool
5. Field Trips
 - a. RCHS European Tour with EF Tours (June 10-18, 2026)
6. Student Transfers
7. 2026-27 School Calendar
8. Clinical Experience
 - a. Carly Harper, Glenville State University (Change of Practicum courses with placement from SES to SMS and SES)

Personnel Consent Agenda - (Action)

Motion by James Minney and seconded by Eileen Richardson to approve the following personnel items as recommended by Michelle Stellato, Superintendent, except for item 3.1., which will be voted on separately. Motion carried. (8:59 pm)

1. Reconfigure position(s)
 - a. Cook II (SES) to Cook III (SES), effective January 23, 2026
2. Resignation(s)
 - a. Halcomb, David - Substitute teacher (RCS - Substitutes), effective August 20, 2025
 - b. Holcomb, Adam - Substitute teacher (RCS - Substitutes), effective January 22, 2026
 - c. Schoolcraft, Shyrick - General Maintenance / Sanitation Plant Operator (RCS - Operations), effective February 15, 2026
3. Transfer(s)
 - a. Sherry, Thomas - Substitute bus operator (RCS - Substitutes) to Bus Operator (Bus #43) (RCS - Operations), effective January 23, 2026

The above item 3.a. is a new employment.

- b. Ellis, Heather - Substitute aide (RCS - Substitutes) to Aide V One-to-One (Spencer Middle School), effective January 23, 2026, 200 day Contract

The above item 3.b. is a new employment.

- c. Tawney, Elizabeth - Teacher / 3rd Grade (Geary Elementary / Middle School) to Teacher / Interventionist (Spencer Elementary School), effective July 1, 2026, Position created due to closure/consolidation and influx of students.
- d. O'Brien, Baylee - Teacher / 4th Grade (Walton Elementary / Middle School) to Teacher / 3rd Grade (Spencer Elementary School), effective July 1, 2026, Position created due to consolidation/closure & influx of students.
- e. Raynor-Sears, Dawn - Teacher / Title I (Walton Elementary / Middle School) to Teacher / Special Education (Spencer Middle School), effective July 1, 2026, Position created due to the closure/consolidation & influx to students.
- f. Mills, Ashley - Teacher / Special Education (Walton Elementary / Middle School) to Teacher / Special Education (Self-Contained) (Spencer Middle School), effective July 1, 2026, Position created due to consolidation/closure & influx of students.
- g. Runnion, Lea - Teacher / English & Social Studies (Geary Elementary / Middle School) to Teacher / Social Studies (Spencer Middle School), effective July 1, 2026, Position created due to the closure/consolidation & influx of students.
- h. Underwood, Lana - Teacher / 2nd Grade (Geary Elementary / Middle School) to Teacher / 2nd Grade (Spencer Elementary School), effective July 1, 2026, Position created due to the consolidation/closure & influx of students.
- i. Boggs, Rebecca - Teacher / Title I (Geary Elementary / Middle School) to Teacher / Interventionist (Spencer Elementary School), effective July 1, 2026, Position is due to the closure/consolidation & influx of students.
- j. Higginbotham, Jacqueline - Teacher / 1st Grade (Geary Elementary / Middle School) to Teacher / 1st Grade (Spencer Elementary School), effective July 1, 2026, Position is created due to the closure/consolidation & influx of students.
- k. Vaughan, Brittney - Teacher / Kindergarten (Geary Elementary / Middle School) to Teacher / 1st Grade (Spencer Elementary School), effective July 1, 2026, Position created due to closure/consolidation & influx of students.
- l. Mace, Valerie - Teacher / 4th Grade (Geary Elementary / Middle School) to Teacher / 4th Grade (Spencer Elementary School), effective July 1, 2026, Position created due to closure/consolidation & influx of students.

Under personnel consent agenda motion, the above item 3.l. was considered. Jeff Mace recused himself from the discussion and the vote and left the room. Motion carried. (8:59 pm)

- m. Smith, Daphne - Teacher / 5th Grade (Spencer Elementary School) to Teacher / STEAM (Spencer Elementary School), effective July 1, 2026, Position created due to closure/consolidation & influx of students.
- n. May, Lori - Teacher / 3rd Grade (Walton Elementary / Middle School) to Teacher / 3rd Grade (Spencer Elementary School), effective July 1, 2026, Position created due to the consolidation/closure & influx of students.
- o. Osborne, Kenneth - Teacher / Math & Science (Geary Elementary / Middle School) to Teacher / Science (Spencer Middle School), effective July 1, 2026, Position due to closure/consolidation & influx of students.

- p. McPherson, Michelle - Communities in Schools Coordinator (Geary Elementary / Middle School) to Teacher / Interventionist (Spencer Elementary School), effective July 1, 2026, Position created due to closure/consolidation and influx of students
4. Leave of Absence(s)
 - a. Skaggs, Joseph - Bus Operator (Bus #58) (RCS - Operations), effective January 19, 2026 to March 29, 2026, FMLA
 - b. Roberts, Sherri - Communities in Schools Coordinator (Spencer Middle School), effective January 20, 2026 to March 25, 2026, FMLA
 - c. May, Patricia - Bus Operator (Bus #50) (RCS - Operations), effective January 19, 2026 to June 30, 2026, Extension of FMLA
 - d. Metz, Alexis - Teacher / 2nd Grade (Spencer Elementary School), effective March 3, 2026 to June 3, 2026, Extend FMLA Leave until June 3, 2026
 5. Extracurricular(s)
 - a. Laxton, Rebecca - Assistant Coach, Boys Basketball (Auxiliary) (Walton Elementary / Middle School), effective January 23, 2026
 - b. Martin, Shawna - Assistant Coach, Girls Basketball (Auxiliary) (Roane County High School), effective January 23, 2026

Reports of Committees

1. Roane Jackson Technical Center Administrative Council

The meeting lasted for about 17-18 minutes, reviewing financials with no personnel issues, approving clinical sites, on-the-job training, co-op and job-shadowing placements, the program of study, and a school calendar aligned with Roane and Jackson counties (differing by one day in September and one in October). The council noted a delay in a Building E change order and is awaiting a finalized punch list, and also plans to bid a new roof for Building B. The refund policy for adult programs was revised, the practical nursing program was reduced from 1,350 to 1,300 hours, updates on adult programs and sophomore tours were given, and a brief legislative discussion concluded the meeting.

Superintendent's Remarks

The Superintendent reported progress on fixing high school Wi-Fi issues after system adjustments and help from Nicholas County, noting aging 5-year-old iPads also contribute to problems. The district recovered the final payment from the former technology vendor. She shared updates from legislative meetings on school funding, including a statewide \$200 million special education shortfall and a proposal to weight special-needs students at 1.5, which could provide nearly \$1 million for Roane County's 324 special-education students. A major issue was discovered: Roane County has no approved NTI plan, meaning only one accrued-time day remains and all other snow days must be made up until a plan is submitted and approved. She proposed changing April meetings to a budget work session on April 15, the statutory meeting on April 21, and canceling April 23.

Adjournment

Motion by Daris Harper and seconded by Dennis Carpenter to approve. Motion carried. (9:27 pm)

1. Adjourn until the next regular board meeting on Thursday, February 5, 2026, at 6:00 pm at Roane County High School.