

REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE COUNTY OF ROANE, HELD MAY 28, 2026, AT 6:00 PM, AT ROANE COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL, SPENCER,

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

Absent: Dennis Carpenter

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.

Presentations

1. Superintendents Spotlight

a. 2025-26 Regional & State Academic Awards

The superintendent proudly recognized students for their outstanding achievements in representing the district across a wide range of academic and leadership opportunities, including the County Spelling Bee, Governor's School for Tourism, Mountaineer Boys State, Rhododendron Girls State, the Regional Social Studies Fair, the Regional and State Science and Engineering Fair, the Roane Arts and Humanities logo contest, and Regional Math Field Day. The Board joined in congratulating these students for their hard work, dedication, and accomplishments.

2. Public Participation

Corrie Ota set out the public participation sign-in sheet at 5:45 pm, and it was removed at 5:55pm in accordance with Roane County Schools Policy 020 - Meetings. The following individuals spoke: Crisheana Carey, Francis Fore, Cindy Brown and Dianna Baker.

New Business for Consideration and Potential Action

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

Motion by Daris Harper and seconded by James Minney to approve. Motion carried. (6:35 pm) go into an executive session to discuss property matters, as per WV Code 6-9A-4(b)(9).

Motion by Eileen Richardson and seconded by Daris Harper to return to open session. Motion carried. No action was taken in closed session. (7:28 pm)

2. 2026-27 Budget Hearing

Ann Hardman presented the proposed 2026-27 budget totaling \$22,396,794, including \$17.2 million in the general fund, \$4.36 million in special revenue, and \$820,650 in debt service. Key changes included a 3% PEIA premium increase (raising employer family coverage for PPB Plan A to \$19,224), fuel cost increases of 35% for gasoline and 41% for diesel (adding \$84,000), a 3% employee raise, and increased charter school payments of \$74,000. The district will resume using \$320,000 in bus replacement funds and allocate \$285,000 for technology upgrades. Revenue remains heavily dependent on state aid (76%) and local taxes (22%), with a projected \$1.2 million deficit carryover and a planned reduction of about \$408,981, leaving an estimated -\$791,019 contingency. Salaries and benefits account for 83% of expenditures, and staffing levels are below funded allocations to manage costs and to provide a cushion for positions that may need to be added during the year. Food service projections highlighted strong performance from

the supper program, with expectations of no required subsidy from the general fund. During public comment, concerns were raised about potential enrollment increases, with officials noting no additional state funding would be available mid-year, leaving staffing reductions as the primary contingency.

Motion by Daris Harper and seconded by James Minney to approve. Motion carried. (8:18 pm)

Continuing Business

1. State of Emergency

a. Move Plan Update

Motion by Daris Harper and seconded by Eileen Richardson to go into an executive session to discuss property matters, as per WV Code 6-9A-4(b)(9). Motion carried. (8:21 pm)

Motion by Daris Harper and seconded by James Minney to return to open session. Motion carried. No action was taken in closed session. (8:52 pm)

The superintendent outlined the school move plan, with NTI days Monday-Tuesday, classroom packing on Wednesday, and major moving on Thursday-Friday. Staff, bus drivers, and central office personnel will assist, while finance staff remain due to deadlines; volunteers are mostly unnecessary but limited help is welcome, and meals will be provided for staff.

2. Instructional Materials Adoption for 2026-31 Adoption Cycle

a. 9-12: Personal Finance - Cengage

Motion by Eileen Richardson and seconded by Daris Harper to approve. Motion carried. (8:54 pm)

3. Superintendent's Advisory Council report - Cari Ward

Cari Ward updated the board concerning the May 22 Superintendent's Advisory Council meeting, where discussions focused on student concerns such as vaping and behavior, the need for stronger student-staff connections, and improved use of resources. Staff shared mixed feelings about consolidation, though community support remains strong. Upcoming town hall meetings have been postponed until fall, and the June 26 meeting will address behavior strategies and rebranding.

4. Superintendent Evaluation process

The board discussed the superintendent's evaluation process, confirming that members have received the necessary materials and goal updates. Updated evaluation forms will be redistributed, and members were asked to complete and return them as soon as possible. Due to scheduling conflicts, including limited availability before the weekend of June 6 and concerns about having evaluations ready by the June 9 meeting, the item will likely remain on the agenda for later in June. The self-appraisal will also be sent out, though it is typically completed in June and not officially due until August.

Consent Agenda - (Action)

Motion by James Minney and seconded by Eileen Richardson to approve the following consent agenda as recommended by Michelle Stellato, Superintendent. Motion carried. (9:16 pm)

1. Approval of the minutes of the Regular Board Meeting held May 14, 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

c. Financial Reports

The treasurer reported current cash balances of \$248,636 in the Poco Valley Bank account and \$1,086,360 in the investment pool, for a total cash position of \$1,334,996. Based on the latest cash analysis, the district is projected to be approximately \$286,000 positive by June 30 if spending trends hold. This surplus is critical to help cover the July 14 payroll, when state aid has not yet been received and tax revenue is minimal (around \$60,000). The treasurer noted the goal is to avoid taking a state aid advance next year. However, July cash flow will remain tight due to factors including June 30 contract payouts for terminated employees (with about \$150,000 reserved for this purpose) and the obligation to continue paying employer PEIA insurance premiums for employees affected by the reduction for three months (July-September), which will begin impacting expenses at the end of July.

3. Policies

4. Contract(s) / Bid(s) / Agreement(s)

- a. Items to be declared surplus for auction

5. Field Trips

6. Volunteers

- a. Spencer Elementary School
i. David Bowen

7. Student Transfers

8. Clinical Experience

- a. Carly Harper, Glenville State University, Residency II placement at SES in Fall 2026

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. (9:33 pm)

1. Abolish Position(s)

- a. Teacher / Interventionist (SES), effective May 29, 2026
b. Teacher / Pre-K (SES), effective June 30, 2026

2. Create New Position(s)

- a. Coach, Cross Country Track (SMS), 0 days, effective May 29, 2026
b. Assistant Coach, Cross Country Track (SMS), 0 days, effective May 29, 2026

3. New Employment(s)

- a. Nester, Carrie - Substitute cook (RCS - Substitutes), effective May 29, 2026
b. Knopp, Jennifer - Director of Student Support Services (RCS - Student Support Services), effective June 17, 2026
c. Spencer, Drew - Substitute teacher (RCS - Substitutes), effective September 17, 2026

4. Transfer(s)

- a. VanDam, Olivia - Teacher / Kindergarten (Walton Elementary / Middle School) to Teacher / Special Education (Spencer Elementary School), effective July 1, 2026

- b. Legg, Victoria - Teacher / Interventionist (Walton Elementary / Middle School) to Teacher / Special Education (Spencer Elementary School), effective July 1, 2026
 - c. Smith, Jacklyn - Bus Operator (Bus #45) (RCS - Operations) to Bus Operator (Bus #05) (RCS - Operations), effective August 10, 2026
 - d. Elmore, Richard - Bus Operator (Bus #19) (RCS - Operations) to Bus Operator (Bus #45) (RCS - Operations), effective August 10, 2026
 - e. Strickland, Orville - Bus Operator (Bus #49) (RCS - Operations) to Bus Operator (Bus #13) (RCS - Operations), effective August 10, 2026
 - f. Strickland, Melissa - Cafeteria Manager / Cook III (Geary Elementary / Middle School) to Bus Operator (Bus #01) (RCS - Operations), effective August 10, 2026
 - g. Freeland, Lori - Cook III (Roane County High (60%), Spencer Middle (40%)) to Substitute cook (RCS - Substitutes), effective August 10, 2026
5. Leave of Absence(s)
- a. Seabolt, Anita - Teacher / Science (Roane County High School), effective June 5, 2026 to June 8, 2026, Without pay
 - b. Stump-Cohen, Kourtney - Teacher / Special Education (Spencer Elementary School), effective May 13, 2026 to May 14, 2026, Without pay
 - c. Patton, Cassie - Secretary I (Spencer Middle School), effective June 10, 2026 to June 15, 2026, Without pay
 - d. Patton, Cassie - Secretary I (Spencer Middle School), effective May 22, 2026 to May 22, 2026, 1/2 day, Without pay
 - e. Stump-Cohen, Kourtney - Teacher / Special Education (Spencer Elementary School), effective April 17, 2026 to April 17, 2026, Without pay
 - f. Patton, Cassie - Secretary I (Spencer Middle School), effective May 8, 2026 to May 8, 2026, Without pay
 - g. Huffman, Billie - Secretary I (Roane County High School), effective June 8, 2026 to June 12, 2026, Without pay
6. Extracurricular(s)
- a. Lowe, Eric - Coach, Boys Basketball (Roane County High School), effective May 29, 2026
7. Rescind action(s)
- a. Retirement of Hurtado, Manuel - Teacher / Foreign Language (Roane County High (75%), Spencer Middle (25%)), effective June 30, 2026 [from March 12, 2026]
8. Suspension(s)
- a. _____, Ratify Indefinite Suspension without pay for Service Personnel beginning May 14, 2026.

Motion by Daris Harper and seconded by Eileen Richardson to go into a closed session to discuss items 8.a. and 8.b., as per WV Code 6-9A-4(b)(2)(A). Motion carried. (9:34 pm)

Motion by Eileen Richardson and seconded by James Minney to ratify the immediate

suspension without pay for service personnel beginning May 14, 2026 of Jeremiah Hively. Motion carried. (9:59 pm)

Motion by Eileen Richardson and seconded by James Minney to return to open session. Motion carried. No action was taken in closed session. (9:59 pm)

Motion by James Minney and seconded by Daris Harper to ratify the immediate suspension without pay for service personnel beginning May 14, 2026 of Jeremiah Hively. Motion carried. (9:59 pm)

- b. _____, Ratify suspension with pay for Professional Personnel during investigation with no disciplinary action taken from April 28, 2026 to May 21, 2026.

Motion by James Minney and seconded by Eileen Richardson to accept the superintendent's recommendation to ratify the administrative leave with pay for professional personnel, Joseph Cottrell during investigation with no disciplinary action taken from April 28, 2026 to May 21, 2026, as amended by James Minney. Motion carried. Daris Harper opposed. (10:00 pm)

Reports of Committees

1. Roane Jackson Technical Center Administrative Council (5/19/26)

Ms. Stellato reported that students were recognized, adjustments were made to the technical center budget, and an update was provided on building progress. No major issues or actions were reported from the committee.

Superintendent's Remarks

The superintendent introduced Jenny Knopp as the newly approved Director of Student Support Services. Ms. Knopp shared that she brings 27 years of experience, including roles in special education, regular education, alternative education, assistant principal, and most recently 12 years as principal at Gilmore Elementary in Jackson County. She expressed excitement for the opportunity and her desire for professional growth. The superintendent also noted the close of the 2025-26 school year, highlighting positive school activities and asking for continued support as the district prepares for a challenging transition week, including the closure of two schools.

Adjournment

1. Adjournment until the next regular meeting on Tuesday, June 9, at 6:00 pm at Roane County High School.

Motion by Daris Harper and seconded by James Minney to approve. Motion carried. (10:04 pm)