

Jun 2, 2025

Special Rockwell School Board Meeting

Invited Julie Young lpinkham@rockwellhigh.net Dale Erling Ryan Dubois
Michelle Colburn it@rockwellhigh.net Just ME evcaldwell@rockwellhigh.net
dpersinger@rockwellhigh.net Evan Caldwell Lisa Pinkham Dale Erling

Attachments 📎 Special Rockwell School Board Meeting

🔴 Special Rockwell School Board Meeting - 2025/06/02 15:01 HST - Recording 3

📄 Notes - Special Rockwell School Board Meeting

Meeting records 📄 Transcript 🔴 Recording 3 🔴 Recording 🔴 Recording 2

Summary

The Rockwell Charter High School governing board convened to discuss teacher and non-teacher raises, increased health benefit premiums, and a budget overview presented by Ryan Dubois, highlighting a sufficient debt service coverage ratio but concerns regarding foreign exchange student costs and enrollment numbers. Cindy Phelps provided context on special education "maintenance of effort," and the board discussed CTE pathways, staffing adjustments, increased ELL student needs, and initial thoughts on the fees schedule and spend plan, including adjustments to foods and graduation ceremony fees. Following these discussions, Teen Center announced board elections were needed and shared personal health news, leading to nominations and confirmations for Julie Young as chair, Evan Caldwell as vice chair, and Lisa Pinkham as secretary, along with discussions on the treasurer and audit committee positions and a pending lawsuit impacting the school and Ryan Dubois, which led to an executive session.

Details

- **Meeting Commencement and Attendance** The special board meeting of Rockwell Charter High School's governing board was called to order by Dale Erling. Attendees present in person included Julie Young, Lisa Pinkham, Ryan Dubois, and Dale Erling, while Evan Caldwell joined via Zoom. Cindy Phillips, the board's consultant, was also in attendance ([00:05:48](#)).
- **Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes** Chair asked for any changes to the minutes from the May 21st meeting, and upon hearing none, a motion to approve was made and seconded. The minutes were then approved via a voice vote with affirmations from Julie Young, Lisa Pinkham, Dale Erling, and Evan Caldwell ([00:07:20](#)).
- **Teacher and Non-Teacher Raises & Health Benefits** Ryan reported that teachers received a legislative raise plus a 3% additional raise, while full-time non-teachers received a \$1,000 raise for the year. Regarding health benefits, Ryan stated that premiums increased by 12% with EMI as the provider for health, dental, and vision, and no mid-year increases are anticipated as competitive bids were sent out and faculty had the opportunity to renew during end-of-year meetings ([00:08:23](#)).
- **Budget Overview and Debt Service Coverage** Ryan Dubois presented the budget, noting a 1.451% debt service coverage ratio, which is above the 1.3% minimum, providing a \$131,000 cushion. The budget includes \$28,000 for foreign exchange students, a figure that concerns Ryan Deoce due to potential visa issues, which could reduce the cushion to \$102,000 ([00:10:27](#)).
- **Enrollment Concerns and Budgeted Figures** Enrollment remains a primary budget concern, currently at roughly 260 students, with a barebones budget based on 252 students ([00:13:12](#)). The October 1st student count will be crucial. Cindy confirmed that finalized WPU numbers from the state post-legislative session have been input, providing more certainty than estimates used earlier in the budget process ([00:14:18](#)).
- **CTE Pathway and Staffing Changes** Ryan mentioned that the CTE program will have a full extra pathway, adding \$40,000 to the budget. They also noted that Mr. Prinz' position was not replaced, a full-time sub is no longer employed, and a pair professional in special education was not replaced, as the department feels it can manage with existing staff, especially with potentially reduced student numbers ([00:15:22](#)).

- **Special Education and ELL Considerations** The board discussed special education needs and the concept of "maintenance of effort," as explained by Cindy Phillips, which generally requires maintaining the same level of service unless changes in student needs justify a reduction ([00:16:51](#)). There was also discussion about the increase in ELL students, with Mr. Seondoff obtaining an ELL certificate and an actual ELL class being planned for next year, potentially funded through converted Title II-A funds ([00:20:18](#)).
- **Initial Discussion of Fees Schedule and Spend Plan** Chair introduced the fees schedule and spend plan, stating no immediate concerns were apparent ([00:22:41](#)). A correction was noted for credit recovery, which should be \$25 per quarter credit ([00:23:41](#)). Questions arose regarding a \$1.50 fee for choir equipment, with a possibility of it being for music copies, and Ryan agreed to follow up with Mrs. Bowen ([00:25:10](#)) ([00:29:20](#)).
- **Policy Review and Legislative Changes Impacting Fees** Ryan explained that the policy related to the fee schedule will be reviewed at the regular June meeting due to new legislation passed in the 2025 session, for which the state board of education has not yet issued new rules ([00:27:14](#)). The new policy will initially reference the law and may be updated again in the fall once board rules are finalized ([00:28:29](#)).
- **Foods and Nutrition and Graduation Ceremony Fees** Concerns were raised about the low \$35 budget for foods and nutrition classes. Following a suggestion, it was decided to change this to a range of \$35 to \$70 ([00:30:16](#)) ([00:47:05](#)). The \$10 graduation ceremony service fee was discussed in light of potentially holding graduation at Thanksgiving Point, which costs significantly more ([00:31:18](#)). The board considered increasing the graduation fee to \$30 per senior to help cover the venue costs, which would provide an estimated \$1,800 based on a graduating class of around 60 ([00:32:37](#)) ([00:36:46](#)). Alternative, less expensive venues were briefly discussed ([00:33:38](#)).
- **Adjustments to Other Class Fees** The board discussed the fees for drama and weights and conditioning, questioning why they didn't have ranges similar to art and foods ([00:37:47](#)). The complexities of charging fees for consumables and potential additional project costs in classes like art were debated, with the suggestion of charging a higher amount initially and issuing refunds if necessary ([00:40:44](#)). The board favored simplifying the fee structure by setting a higher fee with the possibility of refunds for unused funds, rather than trying to collect

additional fees later in the year ([00:41:53](#)) ([00:46:13](#)). Art class fees were set at \$50 and foods at a range of \$50 to \$70 ([00:47:05](#)).

- **Board Elections and Chair's Health Update** Chair announced that board elections needed to take place. The chair also shared personal health news, revealing a need for a heart valve replacement and the intention to remain on the board but step down from the leadership position of board chair ([00:48:01](#)). Chair expressed that it was time for others to lead and would become an unelected past chair ([00:49:07](#)).
- **Nominations for Board Chair and Vice Chair** Evan Caldwell nominated Julie Young for board chair, which was seconded by Chair. Julie Young accepted the nomination. Board then nominated Evan Caldwell for vice chair, which was seconded by Dale Erling ([00:53:01](#)) ([00:57:17](#)). Evan Caldwell expressed willingness to serve as vice chair despite potential time constraints ([00:53:56](#)).
- **Nomination for Board Secretary** Board nominated Lisa Pinkham for board secretary, which was seconded. Lisa Pinkham accepted, noting a lack of tech-savviness and requesting Evan Caldwell's assistance, to which Evan Caldwell agreed ([00:53:56](#)) ([00:58:20](#)).
- **Treasurer and Audit Committee Positions** The position of treasurer and the need for a second member on the audit committee were discussed ([00:51:58](#)) ([00:54:55](#)). Teen Center initially offered to serve on the audit committee but then decided to hold off on filling the second position until more board members are recruited, emphasizing the flexibility of changing committee members ([01:00:52](#)).
- **Charter School Building Officer Role** Evan Caldwell suggested that the role of charter school building officer be filled by a new board member, given the ongoing maintenance needs of the older building. Chair agreed that this was a good idea.
- **Formal Voting and Notifications** Voice votes were conducted, confirming Julie Young as the new chair, Evan Caldwell as the new vice chair, and Lisa Pinkham as the new board secretary ([00:57:17](#)). Ryan will contact Mountain America regarding the changes, and the state will also need to be notified, with Dale handling the website update ([00:58:20](#)). The process for updating the LLC ownership and the state charter school board about the leadership changes was discussed ([00:53:01](#)) ([00:59:39](#)).

- **Audit Committee Structure** Chair discussed the need for an audit committee and stated that with five board members, only two members are required, though three will be needed once the board size increases to seven. Cindy Phillips suggested that until more board members are available, the executive committee could temporarily serve as the audit committee, which Evan Caldwell agreed to discuss further at the next meeting ([01:02:48](#)) ([01:12:19](#)).
- **Building Officer Appointment** Teen Center nominated Julie Young to become the charter school building organization (CSBO) representative ([01:03:44](#)). This nomination was seconded, and following a voice vote where Lisa Pinkham, Dale Erling, Evan Caldwell, and Julie Young all voted in favor, Julie Young was appointed as the CSBO ([01:04:31](#)).
- **Executive Committee as Audit Committee** Julie proposed a motion to approve the executive committee (Teen Center and Evan Caldwell) as the acting audit committee ([01:06:07](#)). Following a second and a voice vote where Lisa Pinkham, Dale Erling, Evan Caldwell, and Julie Young voted in favor, the motion was approved ([01:07:25](#)).
- **Audit Committee Training and Responsibilities** Teen Center announced that a board training on audit committees and their functions, led by Cindy, is required ([01:04:31](#)) ([01:09:46](#)). Teen Center explained that while a formal internal audit function isn't required for their small school, internal controls within the finance policy are crucial and should be annually reviewed with teachers ([01:07:25](#)). The purpose of the audit committee includes oversight of external audits, internal controls (including risk management), and compliance with laws and regulations ([01:09:46](#)).
- **Audit Committee Membership Guidelines** Cindy clarified that due to the board's size, the audit committee can have two members, increasing to three when the board reaches seven. Community members with relevant backgrounds (public policy, audit, finance, etc.) can be included but should not outnumber board members and must not have conflicts of interest ([01:12:19](#)). Administrators and employees of the LEA cannot be on the audit committee due to inherent conflicts of interest ([01:13:42](#)).
- **External Auditor Communication** Cindy emphasized that the audit committee chair serves as the point of contact for external auditors, who are engaged by and ultimately responsible to the board ([01:13:42](#)). The audit committee should

meet with external auditors upon completion of their audit and before the findings are presented to the full board ([01:16:04](#)).

- **Website Transparency for Committees** Cindy advised maintaining the names of all committee members, including board members and community members, and the committee chairs on the website for transparency. TCindy suggested this practice helps cultivate community participation and serves as a training ground for potential future board members ([01:17:12](#)).
- **Audit Committee Meeting Practices** Cindy stated that audit committee meetings should be held regularly but not frequently, and because of the confidential nature of discussions, a quorum of board members should not attend to avoid OPMA requirements. Staff can assist the audit committee with agenda preparation, materials distribution, and tracking actions, but care should be taken to ensure staff involvement does not impede the committee's ability to discuss sensitive issues openly ([01:18:22](#)).
- **External Audit Types and Scope** Cindy Phillips, described various types of external audits, including financial statement audits (part of the ACFR), single audits (federal compliance), and state compliance audits ([01:19:20](#)). These audits provide reasonable assurance on financial positions and compliance but do not offer opinions on internal controls or overall compliance beyond specific areas reviewed ([01:23:59](#)) ([01:27:06](#)). Teen Center also mentioned that the USPE may conduct other external audits, such as those related to school lunch or special education programs ([01:19:20](#)).
- **Importance of Monitoring and Internal Controls** Cindy Phillips, stressed the importance of ongoing monitoring of compliance, performance, and finances, which is primarily done by administrators but should also involve the audit committee through snapshots ([01:28:11](#)). While a formal internal audit is not required, Cindy Phillips, suggested improving internal monitoring of areas like school fee revenue, safety requirements, and internal control activities ([01:30:39](#)). This monitoring can align with board policies and inform the director's evaluation ([01:36:49](#)).
- **Hotline for Reporting Concerns** Cindy Phillips, informed the board that an LEA governing board must provide a hotline, independent of administration, for stakeholders to report concerns ([01:31:56](#)). This hotline can be provided by the LEA or by referring individuals to the Utah State Board of Education's public

education hotline. Dale Erling confirmed that a hotline link is present on the website ([01:32:54](#)).

- **Executive Session for Legal Matters** Board moved to enter executive session to discuss pending or potential litigation, which was seconded ([01:39:52](#)).
- **Executive Session and Adjournment** The group moved to end the executive session, which was seconded by Evan Caldwell ([02:21:56](#)). Following a return to regular session, Julie asked for a motion to execute anything discussed in executive session, but it was determined that there was nothing actionable. Dale then made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which concluded the board meeting ([02:22:49](#)).

Suggested next steps

No suggested next steps were found for this meeting.

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