



READING BOARD OF EDUCATION  
BOARD REGULAR MEETING  
October 18, 2023

The Board of Education of the Reading Community City School District met in Regular Session at Reading Community City School, 810 East Columbia Avenue on October 18, 2023, at 5:30 p.m.

The meeting was called to order by the President Beth Wernery at 5:31 p.m.

Roll Call: Present Five. Alycia Bemmes, Crystal Menner, Jim Perdue, Amy Thamann, Beth Wernery

**In Attendance:**

Mark Edwards, Becky Johnson, Susan Fraley, Michael Howton, Taryn Williams, Candy Colangelo

**Motion 267-23 Approve Agenda:**

It was moved by Jim Perdue, seconded by Crystal Menner to approve the agenda as written.

Roll Call: Ayes: Five. Alycia Bemmes, Crystal Menner, Jim Perdue, Amy Thamann, Beth Wernery  
Nays: None  
The President declared the motion carried.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

None

**PRESENTATIONS**

**Character Awards**

Our 1<sup>st</sup> quarter character award recipients were presented with their certificates. View our awardees [here](#).

**Blue Devil Hero Award**

The winners of our October Blue Devil Hero Award were recognized. The award recognizes individuals who consistently exemplify #TheBlueDevilWay, going above and beyond to support our students.

Our October Blue Devil Hero Award winners are Candy Colangelo - RJSI Intervention Specialist and Taryn Williams - RES Dean of Students. Candy and Taryn have been nominated by their colleagues, who have shared heartfelt testimonials highlighting their dedication and contributions to our school.

**RJSI Building Report Card Michael Howton - 30:14**

Mr. Howton, RJSI principal provided a summary of the school's report card and discussed various key points: You can find his presentation [here](#).

**Achievement:** The school achieved three stars in this category with an overall performance index of 73%, showing a 2.4% improvement from the previous year.

**Progress:** The school received two stars for progress, this measure indicates whether they met progress in subjects like English, mathematics, and science.

**Gap Closing:** Three stars were awarded for gap closing, demonstrating efforts to reduce educational gaps among different student subgroups.



**Graduation:** The school achieved three stars for graduation, boasting a weighted graduation rate of 90.8% this marked significant progress from the previous year's report card.

**Improvement Areas:**

Mr. Howton emphasized the need for improvement in several areas, including curriculum alignment, assessment practices, curriculum development, and instructional practices.

Ongoing efforts include data collection through classroom instructional visits to facilitate professional conversations among teachers.

**Gap Closing Challenges:**

Mr. Howton acknowledged existing gaps, particularly among special education and economically disadvantaged subgroups, and outlined strategies to address these disparities.

**Graduation Rate:**

Mr. Howton highlighted the improved graduation rate but pointed out that it might decrease in the next year due to factors like students who withdrew or turned 18 without enrolling in another school district.

In summary, Mr. Howton's presentation at the board meeting shed light on the school's report card, areas of success, and plans for improvement. The focus areas encompassed curriculum alignment, assessment practices, and initiatives to support student learning and bridge educational gaps. Additionally, early engagement, credit recovery, and professional development were discussed as integral components of the school's efforts to enhance education and graduation rates.

**RES Building Report Card Susan Fraley - [1:00:33](#)**

Ms. Fraley, RES Principal provided a summary of the school's report card and discussed various key points: You can find her presentation [here](#).

Ms Fraley, the RES principal also presented an overview of the school's report card and discussed their efforts to improve instruction and outcomes for students.

**Overall Rating:**

The school's overall rating was three stars, indicating areas of growth. They aim to increase the number of students in the proficient and advanced rankings while reducing the number below proficient.

**Achievement:** The performance index was at 72 the previous year and decreased to 69 this year, indicating a need for improvement in achievement.

**Early Literacy:** The school is focused on early literacy, especially for students on reading improvement plans. They aim to close gaps and ensure students are on track for grade-level reading skills by the end of third grade.

**Progress:** The school has seen progress in math, attributed to the implementation of the Bridges program, which focuses on foundational knowledge and higher-level thinking in mathematics.

**Improvement Areas:**

**Professional Development:** Teachers are receiving professional development and training in various areas, including dyslexia training modules, which will benefit students in early literacy.

**Assessment Tools:** The school has adopted new diagnostic assessment tools to monitor student progress more effectively, provide targeted interventions, and track growth throughout the school year.





**Literacy Initiatives:** The school is working on literacy initiatives to improve foundational skills, phonics, and word recognition. They are also emphasizing vocabulary development.

**Data Analysis:** The school is using data analysis tools like Branching Minds to track student data, behavior, intervention plans, and more in one place, providing a holistic view of each student's progress.

**Focus on Core Instruction:** The school is concentrating on best practices and instructional techniques within their classrooms to enhance student learning experiences.

**Addressing Learning Loss:** The school recognizes the impact of learning loss, especially for certain grade levels, and is implementing strategies to address this issue.

**Transitions:** The school is mindful of students moving in and out of the district and works to provide appropriate support for those transitioning to ensure they catch up with their peers.

Ms. Fraley concluded by discussing how Reading Elementary is committed to improving student outcomes and is implementing a range of strategies, professional development, and assessment tools to achieve that goal.

#### BOARD COMMITTEE UPDATES

**Building & Grounds** – The next meeting will be scheduled in October before the board meeting.

##### Bolser Hillside

The district has issues with the grass cutting on the Bolser hillside due to elevation. Mowers can't be used. The district is working to get a plan in place to return the hillside to a nature state. The district when final plans are ready will communicate to the neighbors.

##### Rooted In Community Tree Planting:

Gary Kurtz presented a plan to reforest the hillside behind the building with trees. Ohio Valley Forestry Fellowship may provide assistance with 15,000 saplings in March 2024. Rooted in Community seeks direction from the school and a lead to organize volunteers and long-term tree care. The committee requested Mr. Kurtz to gather more information from Ohio Valley Forestry and present it at the next meeting.

##### Andy Ramsey/Amber Reed Memorial:

The memorial returned to the campus in August and is awaiting proper placement. Mr. Ramsey suggested placing it at the entrance area to the main gym grass area. Omnia provided ideas for secure placement and landscaping. The district will work with Omnia to get the memorial placed, including the installation of a concrete slab, and install a landscape garden.

##### Class of 1974 Reunion Tree Planting:

Janice Johnson from the Class of 1974 is planning a reunion for Fall 2024. They wish to plant a tree on campus with a plaque in memory of deceased classmates. More information on their proposal will be provided by email.

##### Bolser Avenue Repave:

A resident filed a complaint about the road conditions at Hilltop Athletic Complex. Adleta Construction's equipment had further degraded the road during the Thurnridge Drive upgrade.

Despite considering closing the road, the City Safety Service Director, Fire Chief, and Police Chief requested it to remain open. The district is considering a partnership with the city to repave Bolser Avenue, including road surface and parking improvements.

##### Chad Richmond Memorial Court Update:

Gamechanger Athletics has completed phase 1 of the project. Phase 2, which involves an acrylic topcoat, is scheduled for the spring, if the additional funds are raised. The cost is approximately \$20,000.

The district and the Richmond family are working on a donor wall at the court, which includes recognition



plaques based on donation levels, as well as PTSD recognition. The board approved to replace the sidewalk outside the court.

City/School Relation – Next meeting will be held February 21, 2024 at 4:30 p.m. in the Media Center.

Finance Committee – Next meeting will be held on November 15, 2023 at 4:30 p.m. in the Media Center.

Policy Committee – Next meeting will be held on November 1, 2023 at 4:30 p.m. in the Media Center.

Great Oaks Board & Student Highlights –

Chase Fraley - student spotlight - Reading student who is the president industrial diesel leadership team at Great Oaks.

### **BOARD DISCUSSION**

Committee Discussion: [1:43:01](#)

The following items were discussed in regard to Board Committees -

- Length and Meeting Frequency: The length of committee meetings was discussed and it was noted that the meetings can vary in duration.
- The frequency of committee meetings was also discussed, with the acknowledgment that committees meet as needed.
- Managing Presentations: The challenge of managing presentations and discussions during committee meetings was highlighted. The idea of setting calendar dates for committee meetings well in advance to allow for more planning and presentations was suggested.
- Timing of Board Meetings: There was a suggestion to consider adjusting the start time of board meetings on days when committee meetings precede them. The idea of starting board meetings at 6:00 p.m. instead of 5:30 p.m. was discussed to allow for more time for committee presentations and discussions.
- Addressing Committee Goals: The importance of addressing the ultimate goals and functions of each committee was emphasized. The idea of streamlining committee functions and addressing administrative matters without a full committee was discussed.

### **DISTRICT REPORT**

Superintendent Dr. Damon Davis provided a district report; the presentation can be found [here](#). Key highlights are below: [1:49:49](#)

#### **College and Career Day**

The district recently conducted its second annual College and Career Day. The event aligns with the district's strategic plan to prepare students for life after high school. Apprenticeship opportunities have been introduced which focus mainly on construction. Collaborations with Sinclair College, ABC, the Health Collaborative, and IEC have been established. \$2,000 worth of tools were donated for a construction course for students. Six career clusters are being focused on.

Different grade levels participated in various activities:

- 7th graders had career conversations with professionals.
- 8th graders visited manufacturing companies.
- 9th graders visited Cincinnati State.
- 10th graders took the pre-AC.
- 11th graders took the ASVAB.
- 12th graders had a speed mentoring event.





#### Funding and Grants

The district received a \$30,000 grant last year and a \$20,000 grant this year from the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL).

A professional video has been produced to promote the district's College and Career Readiness initiatives.

#### Calamity Days

District needs to create a plan for potential calamity day make-up. One calamity day has been used due to a power outage in late August. The school calendar has more than the required 910 hours per year built-in. Remote learning is a fallback option for 7th-12th grade if calamity days exceed the balance. Some concerns exist about student attendance and internet access for remote learning.

#### Strategic Plan

The Strategic Plan, first adopted in 2021, acts as a roadmap for continuous improvement in four vision areas: student learning, communication, culture, and fiscal responsibility. Leadership is considering reevaluation and future planning. Three different companies have been consulted for the plan's development: Dynamics, Hamilton County ESC, and WeEmpower.

#### Legislation

Met with Senator Blessing to discuss new legislation, specifically House Bill 187 about property taxes. The legislation might impact the timing and delivery of tax settlement payments for the school district, leading to cash flow issues. Recent property valuations have led to increased taxes for homeowners but this does not directly benefit the school district's budget due to current laws (HB920).

#### Incident Weather Plans

No changes to the school district's weather policy; either closed or two-hour delays will be implemented. Communication will be through email, phone, text notification, district website, and social media. Due to the closure of a service that notified media outlets, the district is figuring out new ways to inform local news networks.

### **TREASURER'S RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### Motion 268-23 Approve Minutes – September 20, 2023 Regular Session Meeting and October 4, 2023 Work Session Minutes:

It was moved by Jim Perdue, seconded by Crystal Menner to approve the September 20,, 2023 Regular Session Meeting and October 3, 2023 Work Session Minutes.

Roll Call: Ayes: Five. Alycia Bemmes, Crystal Menner, Jim Perdue, Amy Thamann, Beth Wernery  
Nays: None  
The President declared the motion carried.

#### Motion 269-23 Approve Financial Reports / Bank Reconciliation / Investments for September 2023:

It was moved by Crystal Menner, seconded by Amy Thamann to approve the Financial Reports/Bank Reconciliation / Investments for September 2023.

Roll Call: Ayes: Five. Alycia Bemmes, Crystal Menner, Jim Perdue, Amy Thamann, Beth Wernery  
Nays: None  
The President declared the motion carried.



**Motion 270-23 Approve the Following Invoices under the Then and Now Certificate:**

It was moved by Crystal Menner, seconded by Amy Thamann to approve the following invoices under the Then and Now Certificate.

Vendor	PO Date	Invoice Date	PO #	Amount	Item
Medical Staffing	9/1/2023	8/27/2023	20240574	\$1,234.10	Nursing Staff
Terrace Metrics	10/1/2023	7/1/2023	20240724	\$3,878.00	Behavior Health Reports
Payschools	10/2/2023	7/31/2023	20240711	\$5925.00	Annual Agreement
Rick Ellison	9/1/2023	12/28/2022	20240655	\$135.00	Police Coverage
Aloft Hotel	10/2/2023	9/14/2023	20240720	\$488.00	Hotel for N. Wilson

Roll Call: Ayes: Five. Alycia Bemmes, Crystal Menner, Jim Perdue, Amy Thamann, Beth Wernery  
 Nays: None  
 The President declared the motion carried.

**Motion 271-23 Approval of the Following Donations:**

It was moved by Jim Perdue, seconded by Crystal Menner to approve the following donations.

Donation From	Type	Donation To	Amount
Linda Puthoff	In Memory of Richard Morgan	Athletics	\$75.00
Lori Stroehlein	In Memory of Richard Morgan	Athletics	\$250.00
Beverly Kahle	In Memory of Richard Morgan	Athletics	\$50.00
Barbara & Jeff Klare	In Memory of Richard Morgan	Athletics	\$50.00
Elementary PTO	Laminating Supplies	Elementary	\$612.50
Elementary PTO	Camp Kern Buses	Elementary	\$2000.00

Roll Call: Ayes: Five. Alycia Bemmes, Crystal Menner, Jim Perdue, Amy Thamann, Beth Wernery  
 Nays: None  
 The President declared the motion carried.

**Motion 272-23 Approval of the Following New Fund:**

It was moved by Jim Perdue, seconded by Crystal Menner to approve the following new fund.

Fund	Description
200-9226	Class of 2026

Roll Call: Ayes: Five. Alycia Bemmes, Crystal Menner, Jim Perdue, Amy Thamann, Beth Wernery  
 Nays: None  
 The President declared the motion carried.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Motion 273-23 Approval to Rescind the Following Staff Supplemental for 2023-2024 School Year:**

It was moved by Crystal Menner, seconded by Amy Thamann to approve to rescind the following staff supplemental for 2023-2024 School Year.

Name of Staff	Position
James Singleton	Baseball, JV Head Coach
Evan Marsh	Baseball, Varsity Assistant
Nick Lunsford	Baseball, Volunteer
Mandy Franklin	Softball, Varsity Head Coach
Caden Conner	Wrestling, MS

Roll Call: Ayes: Five. Alycia Bemmes, Crystal Menner, Jim Perdue, Amy Thamann, Beth Wernery  
 Nays: None  
 The President declared the motion carried.





Motion 274-23 Approval to Rescind the Following Staff Supplemental for 2023-2024 School Year:

It was moved by Jim Perdue, seconded by Amy Thamann to approve to rescind the following staff supplemental for 2023-2024 School Year.

Name of Staff	Position
Brian Bemmes	Wrestling (MS)

Roll Call: Ayes: Four. Crystal Menner, Jim Perdue, Amy Thamann, Beth Wernery  
Nays: None  
Abstain: Alycia Bemmes  
The President declared the motion carried.

Motion 275-23 Approval to Approve the Following Staff Supplemental for 2023-2024 School Year:

It was moved by Crystal Menner, seconded by Amy Thamann to approve the following staff supplemental for 2023-2024 School Year.

Name of Staff	Position
Mandy Franklin	Softball, Varsity Head Coach (50%)
Mike Denney	Softball, Varsity Head Coach (50%)
Mandy Franklin	Softball, JV Head Coach (50%)
Mike Denney	Softball, JV Head Coach (50%)
James Singleton	Baseball, Varsity Assistant

Roll Call: Ayes: Five. Alycia Bemmes, Crystal Menner, Jim Perdue, Amy Thamann, Beth Wernery  
Nays: None  
The President declared the motion carried.

Motion 276-23 Approval to the Following Staff Supplemental for 2023-2024 School Year:

It was moved by Jim Perdue, seconded by Crystal to approve the following staff supplemental for 2023-2024 School Year.

Name of Staff	Position
Brian Bemmes	Wrestling, Varsity Assistant

Roll Call: Ayes: Four. Crystal Menner, Jim Perdue, Amy Thamann, Beth Wernery  
Nays: None  
Abstain: Alycia Bemmes  
The President declared the motion carried.

Motion 277-23 Approval of the Following Non-Staff Supplemental for 2023-2024 School Year:

It was moved by Crystal Menner, seconded by Amy Thamann to approve the following Non-Staff supplemental for 2023-2024 School Year.

Name of Staff	Position
Peter Kroeger	Basketball, Boys JV Head Coach
Mike Shierloh	Wrestling, MS
Tim Kelly	Wrestling, JV Head Coach
Dick Engel	Wrestling, Varsity Head Coach

Roll Call: Ayes: Five. Alycia Bemmes, Crystal Menner, Jim Perdue, Amy Thamann, Beth Wernery  
Nays: None  
The President declared the motion carried.



Motion 278-23 Approve the Following Staff for FMLA Leave of Absence:

It was moved by Jim Perdue, seconded by Crystal Menner to approve the following staff for FMLA Leave of Absence.

Name of Staff	Position	Effective Dates	Reason
Misty Cook	IS - Grade 10	9/5/2023 - 01/02/2024 Return date 01/03/2024	Paid FMLA
Stacey Riedmiller	5th Grade ELA	12/5/2023 - 12/18/2023 Return date 12/19/2023	Paid FMLA

Roll Call: Ayes: Five. Alycia Bemmes, Crystal Menner, Jim Perdue, Amy Thamann, Beth Wernery  
Nayes: None  
The President declared the motion carried.

Motion 279-23 Approve Lizzy Jacques for Home Instruction for SY2023-2024:

It was moved by Crystal Menner, seconded by Amy Thamann to approve Lizzy Jacques for Home Instruction effective 10/18/23-12/19/23, up to 5 hours per week at \$30.00/hour.

Roll Call: Ayes: Five. Alycia Bemmes, Crystal Menner, Jim Perdue, Amy Thamann, Beth Wernery  
Nayes: None  
The President declared the motion carried.

Motion 280-23 Approve Kris Bartel for Itinerant Services SY2023-2024:

It was moved by Crystal Menner, seconded by Alycia Bemmes to approve Kris Bartel for Itinerant Services effective 10/30/23-5/30/24 up to 6 hours a day (not to exceed 200 hours) at \$50.00/hour.

Roll Call: Ayes: Five. Alycia Bemmes, Crystal Menner, Jim Perdue, Amy Thamann, Beth Wernery  
Nayes: None  
The President declared the motion carried.

Motion 281-23 Approval of Hamilton County ESC Linked Up Business Advisory SY2023-2024:

It was moved by Jim Perdue, seconded by Amy Thamann to approve the agreement to join the Hamilton County ESC LinkedUp Business Advisory Council.


Roll Call: Ayes: Five. Alycia Bemmes, Crystal Menner, Jim Perdue, Amy Thamann, Beth Wernery  
Nayes: None  
The President declared the motion carried.

Motion 282-23 Adjournment:

It was moved by Crystal Menner, seconded by Amy Thamann to adjourn at 7:53 p.m.

Roll Call: Ayes: Five. Alycia Bemmes, Crystal Menner, Jim Perdue, Amy Thamann, Beth Wernery  
Nayes: None  
The President declared the motion carried.

  
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President, Reading Board of Education

  
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Attest: Treasurer, Reading Board of Education