CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Rockford Board of Education was called to order by President Michael J. Williams at 5:15 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: President Michael J. Williams, Vice President Nancy Kalchbrenner, Mrs. Stephanie C. Caltagerone, Mr. Robert J. Evans, Mr. Jay A. Nellis, Mr. David L. Strommer

Absent: Secretary Michael S. Bliss

CLOSED SESSION

Motion by Mr. Nellis, seconded by Mrs. Kalchbrenner, that the Board hold a Closed Session in Room #403 to consider the appointment, compensation, discipline, performance or dismissal of employees; the discipline of students; pending or imminent litigation; or other matters provided for pursuant to §2 (c) of the Open Meetings Act.

Approved unanimously on roll call.

The Board was in closed session from 5:15 p.m. until 6:49 p.m.

OPEN SESSION

Motion by Mr. Nellis, seconded by Mrs. Caltagerone, that the Board reconvene in Open Session.

Approved on voice vote.

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Following the closed session, President Williams made the following statement:
The Board in closed session considered the appointment, compensation, discipline, performance or dismissal of employees; the discipline of students; pending or imminent litigation; or other matters provided for pursuant to §2 (c) of the Open Meetings Act. Action will be taken on three items in open session.

RECESS

Motion by Mr. Nellis, seconded by Mrs. Kalchbrenner, that the meeting be recessed at 6:50 p.m. until 7:05 p.m.

Approved on voice vote.

CALL TO ORDER

President Michael J. Williams called the regular meeting of the Rockford Board of Education to order at 7:05 p.m.
MOMENT OF SILENCE & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
Following a moment of silence, the Pledge of Allegiance was given.

ROLL CALL
Present: President Michael J. Williams, Vice President Nancy Kalchbrenner, Mrs. Stephanie C. Caltagerone, Mr. Robert J. Evans, Mr. Jay A. Nellis, Mr. David L. Strommer

Absent: Secretary Michael S. Bliss

PETITIONS & COMMUNICATIONS
No Petitions & Communications.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS
Mrs. Kalchbrenner expressed her appreciation to Jim Crow and everyone else involved in the production of “The Whiz” as well as to those involved in the production of the All City Musical.

Mrs. Kalchbrenner congratulated the Jefferson High School boys’ bowling team who took 1st in state. Also, both the Jefferson High School team and Guilford High School team received good sportsmanship awards.

Mrs. Kalchbrenner congratulated Heather Genrich, teacher at Eisenhower Middle School, who will be going to state in “Those Who Excel.”

Mrs. Kalchbrenner acknowledged Auburn High School for taking first place in a recent scholastic bowl.

Mr. Williams announced that a community forum on the recent federal legislation entitled No Child Left Behind Act would take place from 9:00 a.m. to Noon on Saturday, February 15, 2003, at Ellis Arts Academy. The featured speaker will be Phyllis C. Hunter, who served on President Bush’s Educational Transition Team.

Mr. Williams appointed Mr. Nellis, Mr. Strommer and Attorney Bush to an ad hoc committee to interview internal auditor candidates.

RECOGNITION OF GIFTS TO SCHOOLS
There being no objections, Mr. Williams accepted the following gifts on behalf of the Rockford School District:

The gift of 500 backpacks, discounts to district personnel for the purchase of school supplies as well as conducting the week-long “Fill the Bus School Supply Drive” from Office Depot.

Clothing, shoes, boots, baby equipment and toys to over five hundred Rockford School District families from the Once Upon A Child store.
Mr. Williams then asked Mrs. Johnson, Director of the Early Childhood Program, and Sue Kanthak, Homeless Advocate in the Social Work Department, to say a few words. Mrs. Johnson expressed her appreciation to Office Depot and the Once Upon a Child store for their generosity. She presented plaques that will be given to Mr. Ken Borzym, of Office Depot, and Ms. Rebecca Stacy, owner of Once Upon a Child.

Ms. Kanthak stated that Office Depot and Once Upon a Child have set an example for the community on how the community, private and public sectors, and the schools can work together to make going to school successful for our students.

**CONSENT ITEMS**

Motion by Mr. Nellis, seconded by Mrs. Caltagerone, that the Board approve the following consent items (Mr. Williams noted that Consent Item K. Closed Session Items: Student Discipline – AT#2 has been withdrawn by administration):

A. Approval of Minutes – January 27 & 28, 2003
B. Personnel
C. Payroll
D. Accounts Payable Checks
E. Purchase Orders
F. Contracts $10,000 & Under
G. Airfare
H. Recurring Contracts:
   SBC Ameritech
   US Cellular
I. Acceptance of Grants:
   System of Support Grant Award
J. Closed Session Items:
   Student Discipline
   TJ#1
   That the student whose case was heard in Closed Session be expelled for the remainder of the 2002-2003 school year and all of the 2003-2004 school year with a recommendation for alternative placement, and the ten-day suspension be affirmed.
K. Closed Session Items:
   Student Discipline
   AT#2
L. Closed Session Items:
   Student Discipline
   SC#3
   That the student whose case was heard in Closed Session be expelled for the remainder of the 2002-2003 school year with a recommendation for alternative placement, and the ten-day suspension be affirmed.
M. **Closed Session Items:**
Student Discipline
TF#4
That the student whose case was heard in Closed Session be expelled for the remainder of the 2002-2003 school year and all of the 2003-2004 school year with recommendation for alternative placement, and the ten-day suspension be affirmed.

N. **Other Consent Items:**
Amendments to Health Care Plan Document
Administrative Salaries – FY-03

*Items pulled for further clarification:*

I. **Acceptance of Grants: System of Support Grant Award**
by Mrs. Caltagerone

Approved unanimously on roll call.

**ITEM I. Acceptance of Grants: System of Support Grant Award**

Motion by Mrs. Kalchbrenner, seconded by Mr. Nellis, to approve Item I.

Acceptance of Grants: System of Support Grant Award.

Mrs. Caltagerone asked for more detailed financial information such as the budget.

Motion by Mrs. Caltagerone, seconded by Mr. Nellis, to table Acceptance of Grants: System of Support Grant Award to the next Board meeting, pending further information.

Mrs. Caltagerone and Mr. Nellis withdrew their motion and second in order to allow comments from administration.

Mrs. Dimke stated that they would provide detailed budgets for the four schools that are to receive the grant money. The grant is to support the initiatives included in each school's school improvement plan (SIP). The SIP plan teams worked with the Illinois State Board of Education to develop each school’s budget. Mrs. Caltagerone stated that she would like to see the breakdown on how the money would be spent.

Motion by Mrs. Caltagerone, seconded by Mr. Nellis, to table Acceptance of Grants: System of Support Grant Award to the next Board meeting, pending further information.

Ayes: Mrs. Caltagerone, Mr. Evans, Mr. Nellis, Mr. Strommer, Mr. Williams
Nays: Mrs. Kalchbrenner
Approved 5-1.

**SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT**

A. **Superintendent’s Comments**
Dr. Brown congratulated the 260 students across the district who performed in “The Whiz” at the Coronado Theatre on February 8 and 9. Special showings for students
took place today and will again tomorrow at 9:15 a.m. and 11:45 a.m. He expressed his appreciation to Director Jim Crowe, Assistant Director Charles Matlock, Fine Arts Coordinator LuAnn Widergren and everyone else associated with this production. The All City Theater production is funded through an approximate $1 million, three-year federal grant.

Dr. Brown stated that he attended the Illinois Kids Count 2003: The Window of Opportunity news conference with Mayor Doug Scott, Early Childhood Director Judy Johnson, Head Start Director George Davis and many other community and state early childhood development advocates. More information about Illinois Kids Count can be found at the Voice for Children website at www.voices4kids.org.

Dr. Brown reminded everyone that the Walker School Pancake Day is coming up this Saturday, February 15.

Dr. Brown congratulated Heather Genrich for being selected as one of the finalists for Illinois Teacher of the Year and the Golden Apple teachers who will be recognized this evening.

B. Site-Based Management Update

Dr. Brown stated that the Site-Based Management team has had several meetings and has asked that an additional Board member join them. President Williams appointed Board Member Evans to the team along with Board Member Kalchbrenner who has also been attending the meetings. Discussions are going forward with enthusiasm about what this program will bring to the district and progress is being made.

C. Golden Apple Grant Awards

Mrs. Berkes-Nelson, Golden Apple Executive Director, and Jan Blatchford, Grant Committee Chairperson, announced that they were pleased to present the following thirteen teachers who are the recipients of the twelve Golden Apple Grant Awards in the total amount of $7,386.20:

- Jeanie Lang - Fairview Center
- Adriana Villagomez - Rockford Environmental Science Academy
- Fred Zuroske - Lincoln Middle School
- Deborah Dunnavan-Moreau - West Middle School
- Stella Bryant - East High School
- Mark Wallace - Guilford High School
- Laura Jernigan - Eisenhower Middle School
- Nancy Otwell - Bloom School
- Jane Hayes - Eisenhower Middle School
- Lori Drummond-Cherniwchan - Auburn High School
- Debbie Reppen-Lucas - West Middle School
- Kathryn Bridges - King Gifted School/Brookview School
Mrs. Berkes-Nelson stated that Dr. Brown is going to be one of their celebrity readers at Wonderland Books who will be sponsoring the Celebrity-Read-A-Thon. The ten Golden Apple teachers of distinction will be presented their golden apples in the classroom on March 12, and the Golden Apple banquet will be held on April 3 at the Ramada Convention Center.

D. Rockford Public Schools 205 SOS Performance Agreement

Mrs. Rundall informed the Board that administrators have been meeting with representatives from the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) and KIDS to develop a 2003-2004 district performance agreement. The representatives performed a district analysis and are making recommendations in the areas of academic interventions, educator quality and resource intervention. The district is also negotiating with the ISBE for financial support for these initiatives.

Mr. Nellis inquired whether the financial support would fully fund the cost of the programs. Mrs. Rundall reiterated that they are in the negotiating stage at this time, but stated that administration is being very candid about the district’s lack of resources.

Dr. Brown added that administration was asked to prioritize and cost out the recommendation in the report submitted by ISBE. The district’s request for funds from ISBE was $3.4 million.

Mr. Nellis stated that, although this sounds very worthwhile, with the cuts the district will be facing shortly to balance the budget, administration should plan to fund everything with the ISBE money.

Mr. Williams questioned who would be held accountable for the recommendations made by the ISBE. Mrs. Rundall stated that the state has an accountability system whereby schools are put on a watch list. Dr. Brown added that under the No Child Left Behind Act ultimately the school and staff are held accountable, and there are consequences for a school not meeting the state standards. Mrs. Rundall clarified that the state is not dictating the programs; administration and the ISBE are negotiating. If the Board felt there was something in the agreement that would not be appropriate, administration would appreciate their input. Mrs. Halton added that the initiatives came from the community through conversations with schools and Board members. The Board members who participated asked to have a line for Board signature. Mr. Williams stated that he wanted to be a part of the process. Mrs. Halton stated that she would provide a packet of information on this proposed agreement to each of the Board members. In response to Mr. Williams, Mrs. Halton stated that a general summary report has been drafted and will be available within two weeks.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

EDUCATION COMMITTEE:

Mrs. Kalchbrenner reported that the Education Committee had not met since the last Board meeting. The next Education Committee meeting will be held at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, February 18 in Room 207.
OPERATIONS COMMITTEE:
Mr. Nellis reported that the Operations Committee last met on Wednesday, February 5 wherein they reviewed the notes of the January 21st Committee meeting, heard presentations on the two items to be presented tonight as Committee Reports, and reviewed and developed timelines on the FY04 budget. The next Operations Committee meeting will be held next week at a time and date yet to be determined.

A. **Pearson Digital Learning – Waterford Early Reading Program**

B. **Ventures Education Systems Corporation**

In regard to the list of schools that failed to make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for a two-year period as identified by the Illinois State Board of Education under the No Child Left Behind Act, Mrs. Price advised that letters were sent to 1600 families of the students enrolled in those schools giving them the opportunity to transfer to schools not on the list. Those students who transferred essentially waived Title I services. However, Title I services will be provided to those students who transferred through a Voluntary Public School Choice grant. Also, if the same schools on that list fail to make AYP for a third year, the district will be forced to use money from the Title I allocations to provide educational vouchers to their students to attend certified service providers. Pearson Digital Learning – Waterford Early Reading Program and Ventures Education Systems Corporation are certified service providers.

**Pearson Digital Learning – Waterford Early Reading Program:** This is a comprehensive early intervention program with a curriculum to develop literacy for kindergarten – 3rd grade. The five essential components of this program include 1) phonemic awareness, 2) phonics, 3) vocabulary, 4) fluency, and 5) comprehension. Research regarding this program where it has been implemented is available.

**Ventures Education Systems Corporation:** The goal of this program is to raise academic achievement of students so they can perform at or above grade level through a professional development program. Ventures works with the schools to create a customized strategic plan and timeline. Approximately 190 schools in the U.S. use this program, including Hazelcrest, Waukegan and Decatur, Illinois. Research regarding this program where it has been implemented is also available.

**Motion** by Mrs. Kalchbrenner, **seconded** by Mrs. Caltagerone, to suspend the rules to consider approval of the Pearson Digital Learning – Waterford Early Reading Program and Ventures Education Systems Corporation.

**Approved** unanimously on roll call.

**Motion** by Mrs. Kalchbrenner, **seconded** by Mr. Evans, to approve the Pearson Digital Learning – Waterford Early Reading Program and Ventures Education Systems Corporation.

**Approved** unanimously on roll call.
Although not yet identified, Mrs. Price advised that an outside evaluator would be hired this year for the purpose of evaluating these programs for the next four years.

**ACTION ITEMS**

*No Action Items.*

**OTHER BUSINESS/NEW BUSINESS/AGENDA RECOMMENDATIONS**

In regard to the budget cuts, Mrs. Caltagerone asked whether the Board had set any parameters as to the dollar amount to be cut. Mr. Nellis stated that this was discussed in Operations Committee meetings. It was his thought that cuts between $15 million to $17 million were needed to balance the budget plus additional cuts equaling a quarter of the accumulated deficit. Mrs. Caltagerone suggested that a directive be made to Dr. Brown and Mr. Hoffman that all recommendations by individuals at all levels, staff and Board members be given to the Board rather than one list of recommended cuts. Mr. Nellis stated that the first list of proposed budget cuts are to be presented to the Operations Committee next week and suggested that the Board wait to see that list first. Mr. Evans stated that he would prefer to use the committee structure with all recommendations filtered through the Operations Committee, with priorities and guidelines set at that time, and then a final list presented to the Board, adding that it is always risky for a body to legislate on the floor of a group and the filtration process of a committee system can work well.

**Motion** by Mrs. Caltagerone, **seconded** by Mr. Nellis, that the Superintendent bring to the Operations Committee cuts in the amount needed to balance Funds 10 and 17 and to reduce the deficit by 25%.

*The Board encouraged public input on any and all budget cuts be directed to the Operations Committee at their earliest convenience.*

**Approved** on voice vote.

Mrs. Caltagerone asked that the Board be provided information regarding how the Pouring Rights Contract funds have been distributed and used since the district has started receiving them. Mr. Nellis noted that he would ask that this be on the next Operations Committee agenda and a report brought to the next Board meeting.

**Board Committee reports will be submitted in writing.**
ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Mrs. Kalchbrenner, seconded by Mr. Strommer, that the meeting be adjourned at 8:15 p.m.
Approved on voice vote.

PRESIDENT

Michael J. Williams

SECRETARY

Michael S. Bliss

APPROVED  2-25-03

/dm