

RCPS' Fenn Set To Retire

Officially Retires June 30

By ERIN FLYNN

Daily News-Record **ELKTON** — Rockingham County Superintendent Carol Fenn received a standing ovation after announcing her plans to retire during Monday night's School Board meeting. "The past nine years have been outstanding ones," Fenn said before the meeting's 50 attendees rose to their feet and East Rockingham High School's auditorium was filled with applause. "I have always been humbled by

See **FENN**, Page **A5**



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Fenn FROM PAGE A1

what we've accomplished."

During the past decade, Fenn oversaw the opening of three schools: Cub Run and River Bend elementaries and East Rockingham High.

She also watched the division begin its five-year Digital Conversion initiative, which provides digital resources to students and staff.

"I think it's been tremendous," Fenn said. "I feel blessed to be a part of the service to this county and to the students and families."

Fenn, 59, will leave behind 38 years in education and 10 years with Rockingham County Public Schools when she retires on June 30.

At this time, she has no post-retirement plans and said she is open to any possibilities.

A 10-Year Commitment

Before leading RCPS' 11,300 students and 2,500 employees in 25 schools, Fenn served as interim superintendent for Shenandoah County Schools.

Prior to beginning her career, Fenn attended Bridgewater College, where she specialized in elementary education and graduated in 1979.

She later received her master's in reading from Virginia Commonwealth University. In 2002, she earned a doctorate of education from the University of Virginia.

In March 2007, Fenn was named Rockingham County Public Schools' first woman superintendent, a position she began on July 1 of that year.

She replaced John Kidd, who retired after 37 years in education.

In 2013, her contract was extended four years, expiring on June 30, 2017. At that time, she was expected to make in excess of \$119,000 a year.

School Board Chairwoman Renee Reed said in a statement that Fenn's commitment to the division's students is undeniable.

"Her tireless leadership and shared passion for providing an innovative, exceptional education for all students is evident in the many division accomplishments during her tenure," Reed said.

The board is taking the beginning steps to select a new superintendent.

According to a press release, community input is welcome and encouraged.

"In Virginia, School Boards are solely responsible for the hiring of division superintendent, but we will very much want input from all our stakeholders," Reed said in a statement.

A timeline for the selection process has not been set, according to a press release. However, the board would like to make a decision well before July 1, when the new superintendent begins his or her employment.

In the meantime, Fenn said it's full steam ahead for the division during her last nine months on the job.

"We will continue to work and lead together for the remainder of the school year,"

she said.

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