

Indiana School for the Blind and Visually Impaired
7725 North College Avenue
Indianapolis, IN 46240

ISBVI Board Meeting Minutes
December 14, 2021
Virtual Board Meeting
3:30 p.m.

Members Present Virtually:

Mr. James Michaels, Chair
Ms. Kathy Botkin, Vice Chair
Mr. Tom Adams
Mr. Patrick Rhodes

Members Not Present:

Mr. John Kissling
Mr. Don Koors
Senator Liz Brown

Administration Present Virtually: Mr. Jim Durst, Superintendent; Mr. Raouf Estefanos, Assistant Superintendent of Business; Ms. Tiffany Sanders, Interim Superintendent of Programs.

I. Call to Order

Board Vice Chair, Ms. Kathy Botkin, called the meeting to order at 3:36pm and took roll.

II. New Business

A. Virtual Instruction

The school is seeing a significant increase in Covid cases and Covid related absences. As of December 14, 2021, 24 staff and/or students tested positive, were exposed or contact traced. In addition, there are multiple cases where other illnesses (i.e. flu, colds, other viruses) are preventing staff/students from coming to school. The school has also experienced a number of resignations in the recent month with staff retiring or moving to the other jobs for higher salaries. ISBVI has been able to adequately supervise students, but realizes that at any given time, numbers can change drastically due to illness and/or contact tracing absences.

The safety of students and staff is of paramount importance to ISBVI, therefore due to the increased numbers of illnesses, Jim contacted the Department of Health and the Governor's Office to let them know that he would be reaching out to the ISBVI Board for support in moving to virtual instruction for the last week of school before Winter Break. If approved, the school would provide virtual instruction Monday through Thursday, December 20, 2021, through December 23, 2021. Students would return to school for in-person instruction at the normally scheduled time after Winter Break on Monday, January 10, 2022, with residential students returning on Sunday, January 9, 2022. Knowing that this is not the ideal format for teaching its student population, Administration feels it is necessary to ensure the safety of students and staff. Administrators also feel that staff and students are prepared to do so as all students have 1/1 computing.

Motion: A motion was made by Mr. Adams and seconded by Ms. Botkin for ISBVI to move to virtual instruction beginning Monday, December 20, 2021, and ending Thursday, December 23, 2021, with students returning to in-person instruction on Monday, January 10, 2022; motion carried.

III. Board Comments:

None

IV. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Indiana School for the Blind and Visually Impaired School Board will be Monday, January 24, 2022 at 9:30am.

V. Adjournment

Motion: A motion was made by Ms. Botkin and seconded by Mr. Adams to adjourn the meeting at 3:52pm; motion carried.