

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

ISBVI Board Meeting Minutes
October 23, 2023
9:30 a.m.

Members Present:

Mr. James Michaels, Chair
Mrs. Kathy Botkin, Vice Chair
Mr. Michael Bridwell
Mr. John Kissling
Mr. Don Koors
Mr. Patrick Rhodes
Mrs. Jennifer Spencer

Members Not Present:

Mr. Tom Adams
Senator Liz Brown
Mr. Andy Cummings

Administration Present: Mr. Jim Durst, Superintendent; Mr. Raouf Estefanos, Assistant Superintendent of Business; Mr. Jay Wilson, Principal; Ms. Cara Burchett, Director of Outreach; Mr. Jason Askren, Director of Related Services; Mr. Dave Brown, Facilities Coordinator; Mr. Todd Malone, Physical Plant Director; Ms. Karen Keller, Secretary.

I. Call to Order

Board Chair, Mr. James Michaels, called the meeting to order at 9:38am and took roll.

II. Approval of Minutes (Attachment 1)

The minutes from the August 28, 2023 (Attachment 1) meeting were reviewed.

Motion: A motion was made by Mr. Koors and seconded by Mr. Bridwell to approve the minutes as presented; motion carried.

Mr. Durst thanked Mr. Rhodes for his service acting as a liaison for the Department of Education and introduced Jennifer Spencer as the new liaison. In addition to her current role in Special Education within the Department of Education, she has also had experience working within vocational rehabilitation and as a BVI counselor.

III. Superintendent's Report

A. School Update

Education Report – Mr. Wilson

Education welcomed three new staff members since the last meeting. Natalie Best was hired as a substitute teacher, Akira McGowan as a teaching assistant, and Mackenzie Colglazier as a Residential Mentor in the Elementary focusing on Braille instruction.

Middle and high school students are working on all areas of the ECC with data being tracked in Teams. Five students and three staff went to Washington, D.C. September 21 – 24. This trip was made possible by the TOCAF Arts for All grant through the Indiana Blind Children's Foundation.

Elementary students traveled to the Kentucky School for the Blind for the Bill Roby Track and Field Day on September 27.

Grades 3 – 5 attended Flat Rock Camp for an overnight education experience. Camp Allendale came to ISBVI for grades PK – 2 for an on-campus camp experience.

Grades 10 – 12 read Frankenstein in English class and had the opportunity to see the play at the IRT on October 3.

The first quarter ended on October 6. Grades and report cards will be going out next week.

Four new students have started since the last meeting. Case conferences for three potential new students have been scheduled.

ISBVI teamed up with Tactile Engineering to do a balloon launch on October 6. Earth Science classes participated.

Related Services – Mr. Askren

There are no new staff members at this time, but applications are actively being reviewed and interviews are being scheduled.

The Residential Department is planning for the upcoming transition of dormitories and is working with ISD on planning and implementation.

The school is at 100% compliance with immunizations. The mobile dentist will be on campus next week.

A student who has participated in the Big Brothers Big Sisters program will be recognized as Match of the Year.

The track team ended their season and placed 5th in Tennessee at the conference meet.

Students will trick or treat in the Wincombe neighborhood on October 31.

The Goalball team will be traveling to Illinois on October 25 for a match and the Goalball Conference will be held in Missouri the following weekend, November 3 – 5.

Outreach Report – Ms. Burchett

Outreach is continuing to support local school districts with direct BLV and O&M services for approximately 300 students around the state.

A monthly Outreach newsletter entitled *Outreach Reachout* informs Special Education Directors and Blind/Low Vision teachers across the state about Outreach Department services and BLV professional development opportunities. The newsletter features IERC products as well.

The first L.E.A.D.S. Course was held in September with nine students in attendance. The students kicked off the course with a trip to JA JobSparks, a Junior Achievement program that exposes students to a wide array of career possibilities with hands-on simulations. One of the most impactful experiences was extracting DNA from a strawberry. Other program highlights included an activity that simulated an

authentic job experience where students had to work in teams to complete a task while maintaining professionalism despite having obstacles and irritants arise. Students also learned about real world experiences by meeting with ISBVI staff members who are blind or have low vision. The LEAP into L.E.A.D.S. Course will take place October 26 – 27. Seven students will be attending. The course will focus on sensory efficiency, self-determination and recreation and leisure. Outreach is looking forward to the upcoming Vision Conference next month. The school will be collaboratively hosting a 2-day event at The Wellington in Fishers that will share information about providing blind and low vision services as well as “hot topics.”

Facilities Use – Mr. Brown

RHI Sports continues to hold wheelchair basketball practice in the main gym once a month. Their next practice date will be December 2.

A local boy scout troop will camp on the lower 40 the weekend of November 17.

Physical Plant – Mr. Malone

The only remaining capital project is the Phase 4 brick and tuck-pointing project. The waterproofing of the Apple Tunnel was completed in August.

The Aquatic Center project will be complete once the ornamental brick work is delivered.

The fuel tank replacement and HVAC replacement have been put on hold.

The school just had boiler, fire, sprinkler, and extinguisher inspections completed.

The boilers have been started in preparation for winter.

Preparations for the move are taking place.

The school’s long-term mechanic of 30 years recently retired. This position will not be filled. Simple maintenance will be completed by a local dealership/entity and more significant repairs will be sent to the State Motor Pool.

B. Monthly Financial Statements (Attachments 2A & 2B)

The Business Office welcomed new staff member, Alison Keller, as a clerical assistant earlier in the month.

Attachment 2A is the monthly financial statement for August 31, 2023. At that point, the year was 17% over, Point One expenditures were at 15.62%, Points Two through Nine reflected 75.44% spent, and overall expenditures totaled 31.24%. In Preventative Maintenance (PM), 9.59% of the allotment had been spent. The remaining balance of the allotment was \$10,000,710.06.

Attachment 2B, the statement for September 30, 2023, reflects the year being 25% over, 22.94% spent from Point One, 78.87% spent from Points Two through Nine, and overall expenditures totaling 37.55%. In Preventative Maintenance, 11.53% had been spent. The remaining balance of the allotment was \$9,083,219.69.

The school is significantly over-budget at this time due to contracts for services for security, housekeeping, and Tactile Engineering. The school front-loads these contracts at the beginning of each school year.

C. Staff Metrics (Attachment 3A & 3B)

Attachment 3A reflects the status of positions as of August 31, 2023, with 146 filled regular positions, 40 vacant regular positions, 10 filled intermittent positions and 23 vacant intermittent positions. Attachment 3B, the report for September 30, 2023, reflects 143 filled regular positions, 42 vacant regular positions, 10 filled intermittent positions and 24 vacant intermittent positions. The school is actively seeking Teachers and Residential Mentors.

IV. New Business

A. Donations and Contributions (Attachments 4A, 4B & 5A, 5B)

Attachments 4A and 4B reflect Donations and Contributions under \$499 from August 1, 2023, to September 30, 2023, totaling \$28.00. Two donations were restricted, and one was unrestricted.

Attachments 5A and 5B reflect Donations and Contributions over \$499 from August 1, 2023, to September 30, 2023, totaling \$16,000. One donation was restricted, and three were unrestricted.

Motion: A motion was made by Mr. Koors and seconded by Mr. Kissling to approve donations over \$500; motion carried.

B. New Phone System

AT&T has been acquired as the carrier for the new phone system. Discussions are being held with the Indiana Office of Technology (IOT) and AT&T on how to proceed with the procurement process to ensure it is processed in a timely manner.

C. Co-location of Schools

Administration is actively engaged with the designers. Multiple meetings are taking place in the next few months. The design team is continuing to “block and stack” where they identify the buildings, the configuration of the buildings, and interior configurations to determine how they will sit on the campus grounds.

Jason has spent time at ISD looking at the dorm space for ISBVI students. ISBVI will be providing staff for the students and will also provide nursing services in the same building. ISBVI students will have a separate dining hall for the evening meal. Discussions are taking place on how and where breakfast will be provided for students. Transportation and athletics are also being discussed.

D. School 83 & School 94 Visits

Administration will be looking at both schools again this week to determine what spaces will be used by the IERC, Outreach, Business Office and the IBCF in School 83. School 94 will be reviewed to determine where individual classrooms and support services will be.

On Monday, November 20, Education staff will have an opportunity to see School 94. Groups of 10 - 15 staff members will sign up for one-hour slots starting at 9:00am and ending at 1:00pm. Board members may visit from 1:00pm to 2:00pm.

NOTE: The visits to School 83 & School 94 were cancelled and will be rescheduled in the future.

V. Public Comments:

No public comments.

VI. Board Comments:

Patrick Rhodes gave his best wishes to the Board and thanked members for sharing their knowledge and expertise.

VII. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Indiana School for the Blind and Visually Impaired School Board will be Monday, January 22, 2024, at 9:30am.

VIII. Adjournment

Motion: A motion was made by Mr. Koors and seconded by Mr. Bridwell to adjourn the meeting at 10:14am; motion carried.