

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

ISBVI Board Meeting Minutes  
January 22, 2024  
9:30 a.m.

**Members Present:**

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

**Members Not Present:**

Senator Liz Brown

**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. Mark Costlow, Maintenance Supervisor; Ms. Karen Keller, Secretary.

**I. Call to Order**

Board Chair, Mr. James Michaels, called the meeting to order at 9:36am and took roll.

**II. Approval of Minutes** (Attachment 1)

The minutes from the October 23, 2023, meeting were reviewed. Mr. Bridwell requested a change to page 4, noting that the visits to School 83 and School 94 had been cancelled and would be rescheduled.

**Motion:** A motion was made by Mrs. Kathy Botkin and seconded by Mr. Bridwell to approve the minutes with the proposed change; motion carried.

### **III. Superintendent's Report**

#### A. School Update

##### **Education Report – Mr. Wilson**

Four new students started the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester and two students returned to their home school. Two new staff also started this month. Eddie Mathews will be teaching English and Ashley McWhirter will be serving as a Residential Mentor.

A group of students participated in a panel for the IBCF donor luncheon.

This year's Holiday Program was a huge success with a standing-room only audience.

Staff and students continue to work with Tactile Engineering and the Cadence Tablet.

##### **Related Services – Mr. Askren**

Mark Butler has been hired as a Residential Mentor for the 3<sup>rd</sup> shift.

Residential is continuing to work with ISD to plan for the upcoming transition of dormitories.

Health Center staff have been preparing as well for the upcoming school transition and have been uploading documents into a software program that will allow for continuous access of student records regardless of where hard files are stored.

The Health Center is working with the IU school of Optometry to provide a low vision assessment at no cost to the students. Assessments will take place in February, March, and April. Additionally, glasses and low-tech assistive technology will be provided to students at no cost. The school will be working with families should further high-tech assistive technology be identified as beneficial. Administration is hopeful that the program will be able to follow the school through its transitions to School 94 and back to College Avenue after the completion of the new school.

Marian University students from the school of nursing will be onsite Wednesdays and Fridays through February completing clinical hours and will provide an educational presentation at the end of their class. Goalball teams fought through a tough season against strong opposition this year. The girls placed 8<sup>th</sup> out of 10 and the boys placed 7<sup>th</sup> out of 11 teams.

The Wrestling team will head to Illinois for Conference the weekend of January 26 – 27.

##### **Outreach Report – Ms. Burchett**

Two new consultants, Robin Murphy and Haley Yost, started in Outreach this month. Robin has an abundance of classroom experience and previously served as a resource teacher in a district. Haley has previous experience teaching at ISBVI in an Elementary classroom.

Outreach consultants continue to provide blind/low vision services to over 300 students from around the state.

The second middle & high school L.E.A.D.S. course of the year was held in December. Students focused on becoming Accomplished AT Administrators. Participants were engaged while learning and applying new assistive technology skills to various activities. The group traveled to Bosma Enterprises and EasterSeals Crossroads to meet with staff in their technology labs. Students also enjoyed a visit to Tactile Engineering in Lafayette, where they learned about the use and development of the Cadence Tablet, which the company describes as “the first tactile device able to display tactile graphics that move and change beneath your fingers.” This semester there will be two L.E.A.D.S. Courses, Confident with Compensatory and Imagining Independence and one elementary-level Leap into L.E.A.D.S. course, Widened Horizons.

Preparations for the annual Braille Challenge and Cane Quest Regional Competitions are underway and are being held in person on Saturday, January 27 and Sunday, January 28. The literature-inspired theme

for this year is *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*. There will be 24 Braille Challenge participants and 20 Cane Quest participants.

### **Facilities Use – Mr. Brown**

12 Stars Media was on campus on December 20 to use the Auditorium.

The National Charity League of Carmel used the Auditorium on January 21.

The RHI Wheelchair Basketball League will be meeting in the main gym for practice on February 3.

The school is accepting requests for the use of the track this spring.

#### **B. Monthly Financial Statements (Attachments 2A, 2B & 2C)**

Attachment 2A is the monthly financial statement for October 31, 2023. At that point, the year was 34% over, Point One expenditures were at 30.38%, Points Two through Nine reflected 81.29% spent, and overall expenditures totaled 43.68%. In Preventative Maintenance (PM), 14.04% of the allotment had been spent. The remaining balance of the allotment was \$8,192,234.22.

Attachment 2B, the statement for November 30, 2023, reflects the year being 42% over, 37.73% spent from Point One, 82.77% spent from Points Two through Nine, and overall expenditures totaling 49.49%. In PM, 14.88% had been spent. The remaining balance of the allotment was \$7,346,268.99.

Attachment 2C is the monthly financial statement for December 31, 2023. At that point, the year was 50% over, Point One expenditures were at 44.36%, Points Two through Nine reflected 84.12% spent, and overall expenditures totaled 54.74%. In PM, 15.47% of the allotment had been spent. The remaining balance of the allotment was \$6,583,036.31.

#### **C. Staff Metrics (Attachment 3A, 3B & 3C)**

Attachment 3A reflects the status of positions as of October 31, 2023, with 141 filled regular positions, 44 vacant regular positions, 10 filled intermittent positions and 24 vacant intermittent positions.

Attachment 3B, the report for November 30, 2023, reflects 141 filled regular positions, 43 vacant regular positions, 12 filled intermittent positions and 23 vacant intermittent positions.

The report as of December 31, 2023, Attachment 3C, reflects 138 filled regular positions, 46 vacant regular positions, 12 filled intermittent positions and 23 vacant intermittent positions.

The school is finding it challenging to attract and maintain Residential Mentors. Teacher positions are down by three currently. The school's assistant principal/guidance counselor is on contract with ISBVI until the end of the school year. Positions are being advertised through the DOE, the state system, Indeed and teacher fairs.

## **IV. New Business**

### **A. Tom Adams**

ISBVI was saddened to hear of the passing of Board member, Tom Adams. Tom had served on the ISBVI Board since 2015. He was the former Director of Special Education at the Logansport Area Joint Special Services Cooperative and helped ISBVI develop its Outreach program by being the first district to contract with the school for services.

Tom was also highly active in ICASE at the local and state level and was a longtime volunteer with the Special Olympics.

He was a champion of children with disabilities and passionate about making the world a better place for them. He will be greatly missed.

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

Attachments 4A, 4B and 4C reflect Donations and Contributions under \$499 from October 1, 2023, to December 31, 2023, totaling \$380. Five donations were restricted, and five were unrestricted.

Attachments 5A, 5B and 5C reflect Donations and Contributions over \$499 from October 1, 2023, to December 31, 2023, totaling \$1,950. All donations were restricted.

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

C. 2024 – 2025 ISBVI School Calendar (Attachment 6)

The proposed calendar for the 2024 -2025 school year is closely in line with the Washington Township to accommodate students attending JEL. There are 180 instructional days and 190 contract days.

**Motion:** A motion was made by Mr. Bridwell and seconded by Mr. Koors to approve the proposed calendar for the 2024 – 2025 school year; motion carried.

D. New Phone System

The new phone system will include the intercom and bell systems. The switchboard will be located at School 83 and have the capability of transferring calls to School 94 and ISD as well. AT&T has been secured as the carrier.

E. Co-location of Schools

The leases have been signed for both School 83 and 94. Veridus Group, the owner representative for the State, will be hiring a moving facilitator to assist with the moves and will help develop a timetable with deadlines for each area to be prepped and ready to move.

F. School 83 & School 94 Visits

ISBVI Administrative staff are in the process of securing ID badges for the schools. Teachers will visit School 94 on Monday, February 19, to see their areas and plan what they will need to move to accommodate their new space.

G. MAPT Rebranding Contract

The school will be entering into a contract with MAPT Solutions to rebrand Schools 83 and 94 from IPS to ISBVI. The firm will be redesigning everything from the website to school letterhead. Mr. Durst requested approval for \$46,000 to fund the contract. The school could either move funds from Point Three or request to move funds from a special project to cover the expense of the contract.

**Motion:** A motion was made by Mr. Bridwell and seconded by Mr. Koors to approve the expenditure of \$46,000 for the MAPT Solutions contract; motion carried.

## **V. Public Comments:**

No public comments.

## **VI. Board Comments:**

Mr. Michaels requested a Town Hall meeting to be scheduled in the next month to answer questions about the new campus. Mr. Koors agreed and stated it is important to keep the public informed.

## **VII. Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Indiana School for the Blind and Visually Impaired School Board will be Monday, March 18, 2024, at 9:30am.

## **VIII. Adjournment**

**Motion:** A motion was made by Mr. Bridwell and seconded by Mr. Koors to adjourn the meeting at 10:23am; motion carried.