

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

ISBVI Board Meeting Minutes  
October 21, 2024  
9:30 a.m.

**Members Present:**

Michael Bridwell, Chair  
Don Koors, Vice Chair  
Matt Butler  
Andy Cummings  
John Kissling  
Adam Rodenbeck  
Jennifer Spencer  
Julie Thacker

**Members Not Present:**

Senator Liz Brown

**Administration Present:** James Michaels, Superintendent; Raouf Estefanos, Assistant Superintendent of Business and Operations; Jay Wilson, Principal; Cara Burchett, Director of Outreach; Jason Askren, Director of Related Services; Todd Malone, Physical Plant Director; Karen Keller, Secretary.

**I. Call to Order**

Board Chair, Michael Bridwell, called the meeting to order at 9:33am and took roll.

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

The minutes from the August 26, 2024, meeting were reviewed and unanimously approved as presented.

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

#### **A. School Update**

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

New staff since the last board meeting include teaching assistants Vonne Schouten and Dylan Pope. Mikala Poe will be starting with ISBVI on November 12 as an occupational therapist.

Students and staff celebrated White Cane Safety Day on October 15 with an assembly and a walk through the neighborhood.

Middle School students enjoyed a day of learning at the history museum.

The Professional Development Day for teachers on October 14 was spent on assistive technology.

Administration is in the process of updating the school's math and science textbooks.

Administration and teachers are working on improving student reading skills.

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

Outreach continues to support local school districts with direct BLV and O&M services, serving around 300 plus students in 50 districts around the state.

The inaugural LEADS Liftoff course was held in September. Students learned about the 3 E's - Enroll, Employ and Experience and discussed different options available upon graduating high school. Students traveled to the Bosma Center for Visionary Solutions where they learned about the different programs offered, such as college prep, independent living, and employment training. Students also completed interesting surveys that will be used to set up tours, guest speakers and shadow job experiences.

The first LEADS session for middle and high school students was a success. Nine students participated, making it the largest group to date. Students toured Butler University where they learned about the courses of study available and met with staff from the office of disability services. Students also learned about different career clusters, work readiness skills, and were able to explore unique jobs.

Outreach has recently welcomed new consultant, Dayna Masih. Dayna was previously employed at ISBVI as an English teacher.

The 2025 Braille Challenge will be held January 25 at School 94 and Cane Quest will be held January 26 at ISD.

*\*\*NOTE: The 2025 Braille Challenge and Cane Quest events were postponed and will not take place on January 25-26.*

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

Residential recently welcomed Kyle Kennedy, to its staff. Kyle will be serving students on the 2<sup>nd</sup> shift. Maintenance has completed cosmetic repairs in the dorms and kitchen area at ISD.

Casey Miller has filled the food services supervisor position.

In September, the Marion County Public Health Department conducted an inspection. The two minor corrective actions were resolved.

Construction is continuing to connect restrooms to the Health Center.

All immunizations are up to date.

Track season has concluded. Travel to conference was cancelled due to high winds from hurricane Helene.

The Goalball season is going well. The team traveled to Tennessee October 18 – 19. The next meet will be held in Illinois. The team will travel to St. Louis for conference the first weekend in November.

## **Physical Plant – Mr. Malone**

Turner Construction has installed a perimeter fence with blue screening around the College Avenue campus. They have taken possession of the property and are requiring preauthorized visits. Brick and tuck-pointing work will be done on the powerhouse, laundry, and garage buildings.

Maintenance performed repairs to the kitchenettes in the dorms on the ISD campus.

The office work at School 94 is mostly completed. Work in the Health Center and Culinary Arts Kitchen is still in progress.

Other School 94 projects include:

- Four-car garage with a 12-foot door for an activity bus and 3 bays for mobility vans;
- Installation of a Greenhouse;
- The transfer of the horticulture shed.

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

Attachment 2A is the monthly financial statement for August 31, 2024. At that point, the year was 17% complete, Point One expenditures were at 16.72%, Points Two through Nine reflected 74.53% spent, and overall expenditures totaled 31.82%. In Preventative Maintenance (PM), 6.81% of the allotment had been spent. The remaining balance of the allotment was \$9,916,862.01.

Attachment 2B, the statement as of September 30, 2024, reflects 25% of the year completed, 24.86% spent from Point One, 76.94% spent from Points Two through Nine, and overall expenditures totaling 38.46%. In PM, 7.08% had been spent. The remaining balance of the allotment was \$8,950,922.21.

The budget for FY26-27 has been submitted. The request accounted for an additional payroll cycle in FY27, the increase in the HR Seat charge, and the increase in the IOT monthly charge.

The school is not contractually obligated to maintain the buildings. IPS performs maintenance and ISBVI pays for any structures built on the grounds. ISBVI also pays for IPS custodial staff.

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

Attachment 3A reflects the status of positions as of August 31, 2024, with 136 filled regular positions, 48 vacant regular positions, 12 filled intermittent positions and 23 vacant intermittent positions.

Attachment 3B, the report for September 30, 2024, reflects 129 filled regular positions, 55 vacant regular positions, 11 filled intermittent positions and 24 vacant intermittent positions.

## **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, 2024, to September 30, 2024, totaling \$10.00. This donation was restricted.

Attachments 5A and 5B reflect \$0.00 in Donations and Contributions over \$499 from August 1, 2024, to September 30, 2024.

B. Emergency Preparedness Plan (Attachment 6)

**Motion:** A motion was made by Mr. Koors and seconded by Mr. Rodenbeck to approve the Emergency Preparedness Plan; motion carried.

C. Food Services/Side Street Contract

The contract with Side Street for catering the school lunches has been signed. The services have been running smoothly.

D. MOU for ISBVI and ISD

The MOU with ISD has been signed. ISBVI powerhouse staff, along with funding, were transferred to ISD as well as some of ISBVI's dietary staff. ISD is providing ISBVI with a school resource officer that ISBVI is funding.

E. Culinary Arts Kitchen Construction

Construction for this project is on target to be completed by the end of December. A Family and Consumer Science teaching position has been posted.

F. Other School 94 Renovations

Over fall break, the remaining six offices under construction were completed with the exception of some door windows. The Student Center is also complete. The school is very pleased with the new ISBVI signage on buildings and the lawns.

The school experienced an outage of the core server on October 2 that resulted in the replacement of two backup switches.

A new statement of work is being developed for 170 new phones. Once this is complete, a quote can be presented. The Lions have donated \$28,000 to go towards this expense. Mr. Wilson has been able to use the existing IPS intercom system. This will hopefully counter some of the inflationary costs expected since the last quote.

**V. Public Comments:**

No public comments.

**VI. Board Comments:**

Mr. Koors asked about the status of transporting students. Mr. Askren commented that Miller Transportation has been working well.

Mr. Koors also inquired about the length of time to receive the new math and science books that will be ordered. Mr. Wilson commented that the school is in the beginning stages of finding out which Braille books are available to determine next steps.

Mr. Estefanos highlighted Point Three funds for the Cadence project. For each year of biennium 24-25, \$2,000,000 was granted towards this project with Tactile Engineering as they develop the Cadence.

The new board members introduced themselves:

Julie Thacker serves as the Executive Director of Student Services for Noblesville Schools. She is currently in her 29<sup>th</sup> year of Education. She has previously served as an English teacher, a school counselor, a middle school administrator, and an elementary school administrator.

Adam Rodenbeck is a former alum of ISBVI and works for Salesforce as a Digital Accessibility Engineer on their product accessibility team.

Matt Butler is currently working in the Governor's office and will be moving to the Commission for Higher Education in November.

## **VII. Next Meeting**

The next scheduled meeting of the Indiana School for the Blind and Visually Impaired School Board will be Monday, January 27, 2025, at 9:30am at School 83.

## **VIII. Adjournment**

**Motion:** A motion was made by Mr. Butler and seconded by Mr. Koors to adjourn the meeting at 10:17am; motion carried.