



Indiana School for the Blind & Visually Impaired

ESTABLISHED 1847

ISBVI Board Meeting
Monday, October 27, 2025, at 3:30pm
School 83
5050 E 42nd Street
Indianapolis, IN 46226

MINUTES

Members Present:

Michael Bridwell, Chair
Don Koors, Vice Chair
Andy Cummings
Julie Thacker

Members Not Present:

Matt Butler
Nancy Holsapple
John Kissling
Adam Rodenbeck
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; Mark Costlow, Maintenance Supervisor; Karen Keller, Secretary.

I. Call to Order

Board Chair, Michael Bridwell, called the meeting to order at 3:30pm and took roll.

II. Approval of Minutes (Attachment 1)

The minutes from the August 25, 2025, meeting were reviewed.

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

III. Superintendent's Report

A. School Update

Mission Moment – Mr. Michaels

Mr. Michaels presented information regarding the school's Parent Engagement webinars and photos from Track and Field events as well as the White Cane Day Celebration.

Education Report – Mr. Wilson

- ISBVI recently welcomed two new staff members within Education. Daniel Belding has joined as an O & M Instructor and Chris Avila as an AT Assistant.
- The school has also welcomed three new students, bringing the total of new students for the school year to 21.
- Elementary students participated in the Bill Roby games in Kentucky on September 24.
- Seventeen 7th and 8th grade students attended JA Jobspark on September 25.
- Clubs have started strong, are running well and being held every other Friday.
- Elementary students enjoyed a trip to Tuttle's Orchard.
- Testing for SAT/PSAT will be held October 21-22.
- ILEARN checkpoint test runs are proving that testing is not accessible. A list of issues is being compiled to share with the DOE.

Outreach Report – Ms. Burchett

- The Outreach *Rocket Read Up* newsletter has been reimagined and transformed into an all-school newsletter that engages a broader audience.
- Members of Outreach participated and contributed to the Indiana Vision Conference, supporting professional development and collaboration with other Blind/Low Vision teachers from across the state.
- The year's first Leap into LEADS course had seven student participants, including five new students. The next session will be October 30-31.
- Seven students attended the first of this year's LEADS Course sessions, with three new students attending.
- To date, Outreach consultants have performed evaluations and provided direct and consultative services to more than 250 students across 45 districts.
- ISBVI Outreach hosted the Indiana Regional Cane Quest, a program of Braille Institute, on October 18 with ten students from around the state. This unique contest celebrates Orientation and Mobility skills.
- The Braille Challenge will be held January 31, 2026. The department is looking at bringing new features to this year's program including an alumni speaker.

Related Services – Mr. Askren

- ISBVI has welcomed Jennifer Errichiello as the new Receptionist.
- Food Services – The ISBVI Food Services team has now taken on the additional responsibility of serving Sunday dinner to students, helping ensure consistent meal coverage throughout the week.

The school also started a pilot program with the Indiana Department of Health to promote a different fruit or vegetable each month.

- Health Services – Health Services recently partnered with the Indiana Department of Health to host a flu and vaccine clinic for staff. The clinic had a positive outcome, with a little over 20% of staff participating.

In addition, the team continues to work with Indiana University Optometry to provide a Low Vision Clinic, with one being held on October 22. Plans are underway to expand access and include LEADS course students in future clinics starting in December.

The team also continues to monitor student health needs and maintain compliance with health regulations.

- Residential Life – Residential staff continue to support students and programming and have taken on additional responsibilities of assisting with transportation as daily chaperones on the school bus as well as assisting with evening transportation for Goalball athletes.
- Athletics – ISBVI hosted a successful track meet on September 17, 2025, at ISD with teams from Kentucky and Illinois. This was the school's first hosted athletic event since relocating from the College Avenue campus.

Track season concluded successfully with the conference meet on September 27. The boys team placed 5th overall, the girls placed 6th overall, and several students were individual event champions.

Goalball season is underway. The team participated in their first meet October 18–19 at the Kentucky School for the Blind.

B. IBCF Update

- Through the Looking Glass Gala: This sold-out event was held on September 6 at Embassy Suites and was a success. This was a new venue and allowed for growth. This year's gala included a presentation by a senior at ISBVI. The guest speakers, Bradford and Bryan Manning, donated 200 stuffed guide dogs. Each guide dog that was purchased included a self-portrait ornament made by the students. Funds raised from the event will go towards the reimagined preschool program. The next gala will be held October 24, 2026.
- Adaptive Kitchen: The adaptive kitchen is going well and was finalized in January 2025. A visiting chef came and worked with students through the end of last school year until Supriya Babbar was hired over the summer as the Family and Consumer Science Teacher.
- Consulting: Consulting with Taylor Advising wrapped up in September and they provided IBCF with a summary of task force work. Currently, preparations are being made to create the different task forces. The foundation will continue to focus on technology for students and \$22,000 will soon be received for 20 laptops. The foundation hopes to hire more staff to achieve the remaining goals outlined in the summary. A communications plan will be distributed through e-blasts. Additional petitioning of funds will be needed for consulting to help create a more substantial development plan.

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

Attachment 2A: Monthly financial statement for August 31, 2025

- 17% of year was completed, Point One expenditures were at 16.62%, Points Two through Nine reflected 69.78% spent, and overall expenditures totaled 30.94%

- Remaining balance of the allotment: \$9,736,622.79

Attachment 2B: Fiscal year-end financial statement as of September 30, 2025

- 25% of year was complete, 24.99% was spent from Point One, 73.03% was spent from Points Two through Nine, and overall expenditures totaled 37.93%
- Remaining balance of the allotment: \$8,751,543.92

During the last meeting, there was a question whether vacant positions are already included in the budget. The answer isn't a simple yes or no. The biennium budget starts with the previous year's appropriation; however, several changes happen along the way, such as salary adjustments, benefit increases, retirement payouts, and other factors, which make it difficult to say. Before the school proceeds with filling a vacant position, numbers are run and a budget impact statement form is completed (and required) for each hire, giving the school a time to pause, review, and project financially before moving forward in filling the position. The budget agency has notified state agencies that the employer share of provided benefits will increase starting January 2026, and agencies are expected to absorb the cost. This could be a budget impact of \$100,000 to \$200,000 but it's hard to predict because it could be more or less than that depending on employee benefit elections. A clear picture of the impact will show in January. ISBVI is currently evaluating how to accommodate this increase within the budget in addition to the 5% cut.

Mr. Koors inquired about the \$20,000 moved to Point Five for equipment and the expenditure of \$40,000. Mr. Estefanos commented that it could have been for automobile repairs. He will look into the specifics of the expenditure and provide more information to the Board.

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

Attachment 3A: Status of positions as of August 31, 2025

- 131 filled regular positions, 53 vacant regular positions, 11 filled intermittent positions, and 24 vacant intermittent positions.

Attachments 3B: Status of positions as of September 30, 2025

- 135 filled regular positions, 38 vacant regular positions, 10 filled intermittent positions, and 19 vacant intermittent positions.

After a review of positions and the length of time they had been vacant, 17 positions were removed from the manning table, reducing the number from 219 to 202. The positions removed came from Dietary, Education, the IERC, Laundry, Health Services, and Steam Plant.

IV. New Business

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

Attachments 4A & 4B: Donations and Contributions under \$499 from August 1, 2025, to September 33, 2025

- Restricted donations totaled \$395.00
- Unrestricted donations totaled \$91.31

Attachments 5A & 5B: Donations and Contributions over \$499 from August 1, 2025, to September 30, 2025

- Total restricted and unrestricted donations totaled \$0.00

B. 2nd Reading: Operational Policy O-73 Artificial Intelligence (Attachment 6)

Motion: A motion was made by Mr. Koors and seconded by Dr. Thacker to approve the 2nd readings of Policies O-73 and S-22; motion carried.

C. 2nd Reading: Student Policy S-22 Artificial Intelligence (Attachment 7)

(See Item B above)

D. 1st Reading: Definitions Applicable to ISBVI Policy A-02 (Attachment 8)

Michael Nossett, the school's attorney from the Education vertical, drafted Policy A-02, to address concerns from the Board regarding the definitions of "campus" and "enrolled" while the school is temporarily located in IPS buildings. No changes were suggested.

Motion: A motion was made by Dr. Thacker and seconded by Mr. Cummings to approve the 1st reading of Policy A-02; motion carried.

E. Remove from Circulation (Attachments 9-12)

Mr. Michaels presented four policies for removal from circulation. The policies are outdated or no longer necessary.

Motion: A motion was made by Mr. Koors and seconded by Mr. Cummings to approve the removal of Policies O-19, O-45, OS-45, and O-70 from circulation; motion carried.

F. Policy Review (Attachments 13-28)

The Board reviewed 16 operational and student policies. Mr. Michaels will forward information regarding teacher licensing to Mr. Bridwell. No suggested changes were made.

Motion: A motion was made by Mr. Koors and seconded by Mr. Cummings to approve the 16 policies (Attachments 13-28) as presented for review; motion carried.

V. Public Comments:

None

VI. Board Comments:

None

VII. Next Meeting

The next meeting scheduled is Monday, January 26, 2026, at 9:30am at School 83.

VIII. Adjournment

Motion: A motion was made by Dr. Thacker and seconded by Mr. Cummings to adjourn the meeting at 4:31pm; motion carried.