



Indiana School for the Blind & Visually Impaired

ESTABLISHED 1847

ISBVI Board Meeting
Monday, February 9, 2026, at 9:30am
School 83
5050 E 42nd Street
Indianapolis, IN 46226

MINUTES

Members Present:

Michael Bridwell, Chair
Don Koors, Vice Chair
Matt Butler
Andy Cummings
Nancy Holsapple
John Kissling
Adam Rodenbeck

Members Not Present:

Senator Liz Brown
Julie Thacker

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 9:30am and took roll.

II. Approval of Minutes (Attachment 1)

The minutes from the October 27, 2025, meeting were reviewed.

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

III. Superintendent's Report

A. School Update

Mission Moment – Mr. Michaels

Mr. Michaels provided the Board with an update on recent wrestling and cheerleading activities. Additionally, representatives from the administrative teams at ISBVI and ISD participated in a “Topping Out” ceremony held at the College Avenue campus on January 21. During the event, attendees had the opportunity to sign the final beam of the Residential Hall, after which they observed its placement.

Education Report – Mr. Wilson

- Students performed well at the Holiday Program held on December 19. Special thanks to Mrs. Pivec and Mr. Bradley for their work preparing students.
- Two new students started at ISBVI for the 2nd semester.
- The Adaptive Ski Program is being offered to students once again thanks to the Indiana Blind Children's Foundation. Students attended the first skiing session of the year at Perfect North Slopes on January 14.
- Typio has been implemented for MS and HS students.
- The rollout of laptops for students in grades 3 and up is continuing.
- Special Programs IEP through PowerSchool has improved. ISBVI is continuing to work with districts to gain access to enrolled students.
- ISBVI has a student attending Ivy Tech. The first 8 weeks will be online, and the remainder will continue in-person. The school is also looking into the possibility of having members of the current teaching staff become instructors to offer more students the opportunity to enroll in dual credit courses.
- Before Winter Break, the IBCF distributed stuffed guide dogs to all students donated by Two Blind Brothers.
- ISBVI rescheduled the preschool Stay and Play event originally planned for January 27 to February 10 due to inclement weather.
- SAT testing will take place in March.
- ISBVI continues to work with DOE and the testing company for ILEARN to make checkpoints accessible. The test itself, although not an ideal measure, is accessible.

Ms. Holsapple requested that Mr. Wilson send the list of districts to which ISBVI requires access via email.

Outreach Report – Ms. Burchett

- Outreach Consultants continue to deliver high-quality blind and low vision services to students across the state and are currently serving 279 students. In addition, staff continue to brainstorm ways to reach more students and districts.
- The December L.E.A.D.S. Course session focused on leadership through engaging, hands-on experiences. The next session, *Life Hack Academy*, is scheduled for February 11–13.
- In the October 30–31 session, students became “sensory detectives” to solve *The Case of the Missing Cupcakes*, using interviews, riddles, and clues to build problem-solving and teamwork skills. The session fostered confidence, independence, and collaboration, with strong camaraderie between Leap into L.E.A.D.S. and ISBVI students. The adventure concluded with a

cupcake celebration and Junior Detective Certificates. The next session, Artful Adventures, will be held January 29 – 30.

- The department hosted its annual Braille Challenge Indiana Regional competition, at the ISBVI Education building on January 31. Braille Challenge, a program of Braille Institute of America based in Los Angeles, California, is a national academic competition that motivates students who are blind or visually impaired to hone their braille literacy skills. The 2026 theme was “Connect with Braille” and had 17 participants.

Related Services – Mr. Askren

Food Services:

- The school’s traditional Thanksgiving and Star Luncheons were successfully hosted on November 18 and December 16.
- The school passed its recent inspection by Marion County.
- ISBVI is continuing to spotlight a “fruit and vegetable of the month.” December’s baked potato bar was a student favorite.

Health Services:

- The Health Services team continues to monitor student health needs while maintaining full compliance with all applicable health regulations and standards.
- ISBVI has recently welcomed Nurse Practitioner, Susie Brandenburg, to the Health Center staff. Susie brings several years of nursing experience, including more than three years of practice as a nurse practitioner.

Residential Life:

- Students and staff are excited about the recent placement of a vending machine within the dormitory. Vending services are being provided by Randolph-Sheppard Blind Enterprise Program through the Indiana Family & Social Services Administration (FSSA).
- All second-shift residential staff have successfully completed activity bus training and certification, enhancing the ability to support student activities and transportation needs.

Athletics:

- The Goalball team competed in the NCASB conference tournament over the November 7 weekend. While ISBVI did not place, they competed well and put their best effort forward.
- ISBVI successfully hosted and livestreamed a wrestling meet on January 8, with teams from Kentucky, Ohio and Illinois. This was the school’s first hosted athletic event on the current campus.
- In addition, wrestlers also competed the following Saturday, January 10, at ISD.
- Wrestling season ended earlier than anticipated due to the inclement weather and the cancellation of the conference meet. The Cheer Team was able to submit a competition video. Results are still pending.
- Bowling season is starting with the first practice taking place today.
- ISBVI continues to partner with the IU School of Optometry to hold Low Vision Clinics on campus. During these assessments, IU makes recommendations for low vision accessories and assistive technology. Donations from IBCF and Lions make it possible to purchase the recommended accessories.

Maintenance – Mr. Costlow

Inclement Weather: January 26

- Mark spoke with Mr. Michaels on Sunday evening, January 25, to provide an update on the snow removal plan for January 26. Despite hazardous driving conditions, all Maintenance staff members arrived safely at ISD, where all equipment is stored. Once ISD was plowed, the crew proceeded to School 94.
- Fortunately, IPS had already cleared the parking lots at both School 94 and School 83. The crew worked diligently for 12 hours to ensure entrances, walkways, and parking lots were fully accessible for students and staff.
- On Tuesday, the team put in another 10-hour day, with Mark keeping Mr. Michaels informed about road conditions and potential impacts on bus routes. The equipment purchased last year proved invaluable, enabling the crew to perform their tasks. Collaboration with ISD also contributed to the effort, allowing the team to utilize additional snow blowers.

B. IBCF Update

- The Preschool room renovation has been successfully completed. Funding for the new room design and updated curriculum was primarily provided by the “Through the Looking Glass Gala,” which contributed approximately \$50,000. The room is divided into three components: an active learning space, a sensory corner, and play area space. Feedback will be received from tomorrow’s Stay and Play through an ISBVI survey and interviews immediately following the event by the foundation’s communication manager.
- This week IBCF celebrates Share the Love Week, during which the foundation expresses its appreciation for all stakeholders. Highlights include Chick-Fil-A Day, an adaptive skiing event, a Donor Appreciation Breakfast, and the distribution of Valentine’s Day cards featuring artwork created by an ISBVI student.
- The adaptive skiing program remains highly successful and continues to inspire and impress all involved. Observing students transform within just three hours—from feeling apprehensive to confidently skiing down the slopes alongside instructors—has been truly remarkable. The foundation is enthusiastic about expanding this initiative and is actively collaborating with the school to explore opportunities for involving families in future sessions.

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

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

- 33% of year was completed, Point One expenditures were at 31.92%, Points Two through Nine reflected 73.80% spent, and overall expenditures totaled 43.20%
- Remaining balance of the allotment: \$8,008,329.78

Attachment 2B: Monthly financial statement as of November 30, 2025

- 42% of year was complete, 40.12% was spent from Point One, 75.17% was spent from Points Two through Nine, and overall expenditures totaled 49.56%
- Remaining balance of the allotment: \$7,111,871.41

Attachment 2C: Monthly financial statement as of December 31, 2025

- 50% of year was complete, 50.18% was spent from Point One, 75.88% was spent from Points Two through Nine, and overall expenditures totaled 57.10%

- Remaining balance of the allotment: \$6,048,552.24

***NOTE: Point Five on the above three reports reflects 0.00 being spent. New reports showing the correction of Point Five will be sent to the Board.*

Mr. Kissling asked about the future budgets for ISBVI and ISD following the transition to the new campus. Mr. Estefanos responded that discussions on this matter are ongoing; however, it appears that the budgets will remain independent, with each business unit continuing to operate separately.

Mr. Koors inquired about the total cost of employee elections and their potential impact on the school's budget. Mr. Estefanos responded that this information is still pending, as it was not reflected in the first paycheck of the year. He added that the school expects to provide an update on the amount in March, including any potential bonuses or performance review compensation.

D. Staff Metrics (Attachments 3A, 3B, 3C)

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

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

Attachment 3B: Status of positions as of November 30, 2025

- 135 filled regular positions, 38 vacant regular positions, 11 filled intermittent positions, and 18 vacant intermittent positions.

Attachment 3C: Status of positions as of December 31, 2025

- 135 filled regular positions, 38 vacant regular positions, 11 filled intermittent positions, and 18 vacant intermittent positions.

IV. New Business

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

Attachments 4A, 4B, 4C: Donations and Contributions under \$499 from October 1, 2025, to December 31, 2025

- Restricted donations totaled \$430.00
- No unrestricted donations for this time period

Attachments 5A, 5B, 5C: Donations and Contributions over \$499 from October 1, 2025, to December 31, 2025

- Restricted donations totaled \$57,020.27
- No unrestricted donations for this time period

Motion: A motion was made by Mr. Koors and seconded by Mr. Rodenbeck to approve Attachment 5A; motion carried.

Motion: A motion was made by Mr. Koors and seconded by Mr. Rodenbeck to approve Attachment 5C; motion carried.

B. 2026 – 2027 School Calendar (Attachment 6)

The proposed calendar is similar to last year’s calendar. Some Professional Development days were moved to better sync with the ISD calendar. In addition, February 15 will be an e-learning day.

Motion: A motion was made by Mr. Rodenbeck and seconded by Mr. Koors to approve the 2026 – 2027 School Calendar as proposed; motion carried.

C. 2nd Reading: Definitions Applicable to ISBVI Policy A-02 (Attachment 7)

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 Mr. Koors and seconded by Dr. Butler to approve the 2nd reading of Policy A-02; motion carried.

D. Revision: Policy O-25 Overtime (Attachment 8)

Language was changed in this policy more specifically reference overtime eligible employees.

Motion: A motion was made by Ms. Holsapple and seconded by Mr. Cummings to approve the revision of Policy O-25; motion carried.

V. Public Comments:

None

VI. Board Comments:

Mr. Rodenbeck inquired if the school would be required to make up January 26. Mr. Michaels responded that a make-up day would not be necessary, as the date was designated as an e-learning day. He further clarified that the school is permitted up to three e-learning days each academic year.

VII. Next Meeting

The next meeting scheduled is Monday, March 16, 2026, at 3:30pm at School 83.

VIII. Adjournment

Motion: A motion was made by Dr. Butler and seconded by Mr. Koors to adjourn the meeting at 10:25am; motion carried.