

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

ISBVI Board Meeting Minutes
March 18, 2024
9:30 a.m.

Members Present:

James Michaels, Chair
Michael Bridwell
John Kissling
Don Koors

Members Not Present:

Kathy Botkin, Vice Chair
Andy Cummings
Senator Liz Brown
Jennifer Spencer

Administration Present: Jim Durst, Superintendent; Raouf Estefanos, Assistant Superintendent of Business; Jay Wilson, Principal; Cara Burchett, Director of Outreach; Jason Askren, Director of Related Services; Dave Brown, Facilities Coordinator; Mark Costlow, Maintenance Supervisor; Karen Keller, Secretary.

I. Call to Order

Board Chair, James Michaels, called the meeting to order at 9:37am and took roll.

II. Approval of Minutes (Attachment 1)

The minutes from the January 22, 2024, meeting were reviewed.

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

III. Superintendent's Report

A. School Update

Education Report – Mr. Wilson

The school has enrolled one new student since the January meeting.

Tim Randolph has been hired as the new middle and high school social studies teacher. He comes to ISBVI from Arizona with 14 years of teaching experience.

Expanded Core Curriculum classes continue to meet two times per week.

Teachers visited School 94 on February 19 to review rooms and give input on layout and furniture needs.

Elementary students enjoyed time swimming at Monon Center on February 28.

The Leadership Club is working with Cunningham Group on a culinary program after school.

Related Services – Mr. Askren

Randa Noller and Angela Mathis have been hired as Residential Mentors. Randa will be serving students on the 2nd shift and Angela on the 3rd shift.

Residential is working to sort through and organize items that will be purged and items that will be moved to ISD. The staff will be making the move along with students and have given positive feedback regarding the space ISBVI will be using while at ISD.

The school's first bowling conference was held March 8 – 9 in Illinois.

Wrestling and cheer teams attended conference in Illinois the weekend of January 26 – 27. The wrestling team brought home the 2nd place trophy, and the cheer team brought home the 4th place trophy. Two cheer team members placed in the top four with their individual routines. The wrestling team had three conference champion wrestlers who won in their class.

Swimming and forensics will compete in Illinois on March 21.

The Dietary department recently completed an audit and an inspection by the Department of Health.

Both reported the school in good status.

ISBVI will have two health center locations after the move. One will be at School 94 and the other in the dorm at ISD. Both will be staffed by ISBVI employees and will be covered both during and after school.

Outreach Report – Ms. Burchett

Outreach consultants continue to provide blind/low vision services to over 300 students and 46 districts. The Braille Challenge and Cane Quest Regional Competitions were held on Saturday, January 27 and Sunday, January 28. The Braille Challenge theme was "*The Very Hungry Caterpillar*". There were 24 participants from ISBVI and districts around the state. While students were testing, parents were in different sessions that included an ECC cooking activity and presentation by a blind chef, a caterpillar movement activity, a Talking Book Library presentation, and a story reading activity with crafts.

Outreach is preparing for the last L.E.A.D.S. Course which is "Imagining Independence" and will take place April 24 – April 26. Nine students are registered for the course. Students will acquire independent living skills such as cooking a small meal, money management/budgeting, and essential daily living skills.

The LEAP into L.E.A.D.S. Course just concluded. Seven students in grades 1 – 5 were in attendance.

The theme was "Widen Horizon". Students learned about goal setting, planning, and budgeting for meals, gardening, and creating their own snack.

VIEWPOINT Art Showcase is a new Outreach initiative. VIEWPOINT is a showcase to celebrate artwork by Indiana students who are blind or visually impaired. It is not a contest, but rather a celebration. The exhibition will be presented as a virtual online gallery with image descriptions and student artist's statements.

Facilities Use – Mr. Brown

RHI Sports completed their season of wheelchair basketball practices in the main gym early in March. St Luke's and the Indiana Math and Science Academy are currently using the track for practices. These will continue throughout April and end in mid-May.

Washington Township Special Olympics will also be using the track starting the 2nd week of April. The Windcombe Community has requested to use the campus on March 30 for their annual Easter Egg Hunt.

A request has been made to the construction company to use the current track in the fall for the next track season. The request is being taken into consideration.

Physical Plant – Mr. Malone

Most significant repairs have been on hold due to the pending moves.

A circulation pump and motor were placed in Churchman Dining Room.

A condensate return float for a condensate return tank at the far end of the steam system was replaced. Another expense was a new water heater in the Elementary. This will be able to be moved and used within the new construction.

Repairs have been made recently to the fire alarm system.

Bus inspections were performed and ISBVI is in good status.

Staff have been working on emptying areas and the disposing of old, unused items.

Movers are currently on campus to start the move for the IERC to School 83.

Construction activities are taking place on campus such as core drilling for the new geothermal system. The final capital project is the last phase of the tuck-pointing project which includes the replacement of medallions on the aquatic center building.

Mr. Bridwell asked how the school is identifying items that will be saved.

Mr. Malone commented that from the physical plant side, there will be several items that will be able to be used by the construction company as they continue to light, heat and cool certain areas while at the same time stripping other areas to prepare for demolition/construction.

Mr. Durst expanded on the answer and stated that the position the school has taken, with the support of the state, is that students should not be inconvenienced as far as health, safety, welfare, and comfort over the course of the next few months. If items are needed and cannot be transferred or swapped from another department, they are purchased. There was an instance recently where, due to the cost, the school decided not to replace a card reader that needed replacement and instead issued keys to appropriate staff.

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

Attachment 2A is the monthly financial statement for January 31, 2024. At that point, the year was 59% over, Point One expenditures were at 56.71%, Points Two through Nine reflected 88.56% spent, and

overall expenditures totaled 65.03%. In Preventative Maintenance (PM), 21.92% of the allotment had been spent. The remaining balance of the allotment was \$5,086,850.74.

Attachment 2B, the statement for February 29, 2024, reflects the year being 67% over, 64.64% spent from Point One, 91.71% spent from Points Two through Nine, and overall expenditures totaling 71.71%. In PM, 24.01% had been spent. The remaining balance of the allotment was \$4,114,824.74. The school is maintaining a 3% increase in salaries and is on track to meet the 2% reversion of \$296,834.

Mr. Koors asked if the school is expecting to come within the budgeted allotment or if a request will be made for the reserve to be released.

Mr. Estefanos replied that since the school has maintained the 3% increase in salaries, a request could be made to ask for the reversion to be released, however it is not anticipated that it will be necessary. The school is anticipating that additional expenses will be incurred moving forward. The leases have started to go into effect and the school is working with IPS on how to cover utility costs. The school has also requested separate meters and has been keeping the state budget agency up to date regarding additional costs. The state has advised the school to utilize internal resources before taking advantage of other resources.

Mr. Michaels inquired about future budgets and if they would be reduced.

Mr. Durst replied that it was not anticipated that the budget would be reduced until the next biennium budget in FY2026.

Mr. Bridwell asked if the school would be updating the Board on the costs of the construction once it begins or if it would be managed elsewhere.

Mr. Estefanos commented that the school would report on the budget and expenses of the construction, but it may be tracked by the IDOA.

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

Attachment 3A reflects the status of positions as of January 31, 2024, with 141 filled regular positions, 43 vacant regular positions, 12 filled intermittent positions and 23 vacant intermittent positions. Attachment 3B, the report for February 29, 2024, reflects 139 filled regular positions, 45 vacant regular positions, 12 filled intermittent positions and 23 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 January 1, 2024, to February 29, 2024, totaling \$229. Four donations were restricted, and three were unrestricted.

Attachments 5A and 5B reflect Donations and Contributions over \$499 from January 1, 2024, to February 29, 2024, totaling \$20,310.60. This was a single restricted donation.

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

B. 2023 – 2024 ISBVI School Calendar Change (Attachment 6)

The current calendar lists Monday, April 8, as a professional development day for teachers. Due to the information the school received about the number of visitors that will be traveling to Indiana for the total eclipse, Administration felt it would be safer if staff did not report on this day. The school has also opted to bring students back on Tuesday, April 9, to avoid the heavy traffic being predicted for the event. To fulfil contractual obligations, a professional development day was added on Friday, May 31, 2024.

Motion: A motion was made by Mr. Bridwell and seconded by Mr. Koors to approve the proposed changes for the 2023 – 2024 school calendar; motion carried.

Students and their families who have been involved in Tactile Engineering’s pilot project for the Cadence tablet, have been invited to the Indianapolis Motor Speedway for the total eclipse. The Associated Press held an interview with Administration for a story they are developing on the Cadence and the impact it is going to have on accessing information. An additional interview regarding the Cadence has also been scheduled with WTHR.

C. New Phone System

Progress is being made on the new phone system. AT&T will be the carrier and the current phone numbers will not change. The switchboard will be housed at School 94 and calls will be transferred internally at 94 or externally to School 83 and ISD.

Meetings are also being held with the school’s new postal service in Lawrence. The mailing address will be School 83 for the school at large, and mail will be couriered by staff to School 94 and ISD.

For a smoother transition, the school is also communicating with the Lawrence Post Office regarding the substantial number of books, materials, supplies, and equipment they will be receiving for the IERC.

D. Co-location of Schools

The IERC is in the process of moving books, materials, and supplies to School 83. They will continue to be physically housed on campus until the technology infrastructure is in place which could be as late as April 18. They will work between two sites until the infrastructure is complete.

Outreach, the Business Office and the foundation are scheduled to move April 18.

Education is scheduled to move in June.

E. School 83 & School 94 Visits

Teachers have visited 94 and additional visits are being scheduled to plan for the layout of rooms.

The school is actively engaged with a designer and a contractor that will be building a culinary arts kitchen in School 94. It will not be in place when staff first move in, however the goal is to have this complete by October. This new space will allow students to take their culinary and ECC skills to a new level. It is being funded almost exclusively by the IBCF.

Other renovations that will be taking place at School 94 include dividing certain rooms to make multiple office space, taking a wall out of a lounge to expand the room and use the space for the Student Center, and expanding and moving the current health center.

Additionally, the loading dock at School 83 will be renovated for the IERC.

It is anticipated that all staff will be moved off the current campus by the middle of June.

Mr. Koors inquired about security and the installation of a fence around School 94 that had been previously discussed.

Mr. Durst commented that approval is being sought from the city of Indianapolis.

Mr. Bridwell asked if the school planned to conduct an audit of items that were marked to be moved. Mr. Durst informed the board that the school had purchased iPads for this task. Pictures will be taken in each room to document items marked for disposal and items to be moved. Mr. Frownfelter set up a central virtual storage location where the photos will be gathered to provide a visual of what items are being kept, stored, disposed of, and moved. Asset Management is also helping in this process.

F. MAPT Rebranding Contract

Administrators continue to meet with MAPT bi-weekly and are pleased with the services they are providing to assist the school in the transition to Schools 83 and 94. MAPT has conducted demographic studies about the communities ISBVI is moving to and is helping the team to think about how the school can engage with the communities. When ISBVI returns to College Avenue, the IPS buildings must be left in the condition they were prior to ISBVI's stay. Keeping this in mind, MAPT is designing new, temporary signage and providing templates for items such as logos.

V. Public Comments:

No public comment.

VI. Board Comments:

Mr. Durst commended the Division Directors and Administrators for the work they have accomplished and continue to accomplish during this particularly challenging time.

Mr. Michaels and the Board agreed and thanked Administration for their hard work.

VII. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Indiana School for the Blind and Visually Impaired School Board will be Monday, May 13, 2024, at 9:30am.

VIII. Adjournment

Motion: A motion was made by Mr. Bridwell and seconded by Mr. Koors to adjourn the meeting at 10:19am; motion carried.