

INDIAN RIVER SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY, MARCH 24, 2025
INDIAN RIVER HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM

MINUTES

Call to Order

Mrs. Wright called the Regular Meeting of the Indian River School District Board of Education to order at 5:00 p.m.

Roll Call

Board Members present: Mrs. Lisa Briggs, Mr. Derek Cathell, Mrs. Kelly Kline, Mr. Ivan Neal, Mr. Gerald Peden, Mrs. Connie Pryor, Mr. Mark Steele, Mrs. Kim Taylor, Mrs. Anita West Werner, Mrs. Leolga Wright.
Board Members Late: Mrs. Kelly Kline (5:02 pm), Mr. Ivan Neal (5:20 pm).

Executive Session

Mrs. Taylor, seconded by Mrs. West-Werner, motioned to go into Executive Session at 5:01 p.m. for the purpose of discussing personnel, negotiations, litigation. The motion passed unanimously (10-0).

Reconvene Regular Session at 7:05 p.m.

Roll Call

Board Members present: Mrs. Lisa Briggs, Mr. Derek Cathell, Mrs. Kelly Kline, Mr. Ivan Neal, Mr. Gerald Peden, Mrs. Connie Pryor, Mr. Mark Steele, Mrs. Taylor, Mrs. Anita West Werner, Mrs. Leolga Wright.

Approval of Agenda – March 24, 2025

Mr. Peden, seconded by Mrs. Taylor, moved to approve the agenda for March 24, 2025. The motion passed unanimously (10-0).

Approval of Minutes

Board of Education Regular Meeting Minutes – February 24, 2025

Mr. Peden, seconded by Mr. Cathell, motioned to approve the minutes as submitted. The motion passed unanimously (10-0).

Board of Education Executive Session Meeting Minutes – February 24, 2025

Mr. Peden, seconded by Mrs. Pryor, motioned to approve the minutes as submitted. The motion passed unanimously (10-0).

Student Government

Indian River High School's student government representative Stella Yanek reported on events occurring at Indian River High School.

Visitors and Staff in Attendance

Jay Owens, Karen Blannard, Celeste Bunting, Renee Jerns, Kelly Dorman, Tammy Smith, Melissa Whisted, Patti Harris, Jennifer Troublefield, Dan Mann, Preston Lewis, Joe Dooley, Suzanne Timmons, Blair Catlin Brown, JR Emanuele, Cassie Queen, Suzanne Timmons, Shawn Tidwell, Michael Williams, Andy Davis, Kathleen Wilson, Kim Cooper, Christy Kerr, Pamela Webb, Lauren Kirk, Amanda Hendrickson Davis, Beth Illian, Jason Macrides, Rebecca Hagan, Maria Hazzard, Carolyn Fries, Brad Cowen, Jason Pilgrim, James Wheatley, Nika Reid, Lauren Kirk, Bailey Chrobak, Emily Chrobak, Tod Phillips, Selena Gomez, Anastasia Robinson, Katherine Mancuso, Gwen Taylor, Eric Tsavdar, Georgeann White, Melissa Quinney, Sydney Pulcinella, Steven Sites, Dawn Keenan, Kimberly Pettyjohn, Oana Cullen, John Cullen, Jesse Bare, Joanna Hirn, Matt Hirn, Andrew Turner, Betsy Bare, Maggie Bare, Avery Bare, Beth Pettyjohn, Madsion Rearl, Tom Rearl, Pamela Long, Tammy Siedel, Jacqui Stanos, Ashly Dorman, Jeff Forjan, Clayton Riepen, Marley Savage, Torrie Huk, Jena Albright, Kaitlyn Kopf, Robin Alexander, Stella Yanek.

Recognition

- 2025 Carson Scholar (PS): Kate Dorman
- 2025 Participant Sussex County Junior Honors Band (SM): Mark Cappel, Kevin Yang
- 2025 Carson Scholars (IRHS): Maggie Bare, Evan Forjan
- All State Choir (IRHS): Sara Labarias Veguillas, Madelyn Clattenburg, Nicole Carter, Madison Morgan, William Yannuzzi, Nickolas Oneschuk, Gabriel Young, Sean Coldeira, Joaquin De Los Rios, Madison King, Taylor Mack
- All Eastern Choir (IRHS): Gabriel Young, Sara Labarias Veguillas, Nicole Carter, Madison King
- Senior All-State Band (IRHS): Nicole Carter, Zachary Hirn, Nickolas Oneschuk
- Senior All-State Orchestra (IRHS): Zachary Hirn
- Senior County Band (IRHS): Maria Benavides-Cortes, Maria Calles, Nicole Carter, Leonidas Cash-Velasquez, Joaquin De Los Rios, Evan Forjan, Zachary Hirn, Kaitlyn Kopf, Jose Ojeda-Hernandez, Nickolas Oneschuk, Gabrielle Riebel, Aidin Schaub, Alison Swartz, Logan Truitt,
- Junior County Band (IRHS): Meara O'Lone, Kylie Oneschuk
- BPA State Leadership Conference Winners (IRHS): Catherine Bunting, Wilson Mendoza Velasquez, John Planchart
- 2024 Delaware Class-1A Football State Champion Team (IRHS)
- 2024 Delaware Class-1A Football Coach of the Year (IRHS): Phillip Townsend
- 2024 Delaware Class-1A Football Offensive Player of the Year (IRHS): Darnell Stokes
- 2024 Delaware Class-1A Football Defensive Player of the Year (IRHS): Nolan Staniszewski

Public Comments

- Georgeann White spoke to the Board regarding the branding logo of Sussex Central High School. The logo was changed from a golden knight on horseback to a "Rutgers University" knight back in 2003/2004. This was changed without any alumni or community involvement. For the past 5 years she has been pursuing a reinstatement of the golden knight on horseback.
- Dawn Keenan (teacher) spoke to the board regarding the continuation of the ExCel program in schools.
- Terri Evan (teacher) also spoke to the Board about allocating funds to continue the ExCel program in schools.
- Kate Dorman (student) spoke to the Board about continuing the ExCel program in schools.
- Bailey Chrobak (student) spoke to the Board about the importance of keeping the IB program at Sussex Central High School.
- Megan Chrobak (parent) spoke to the Board about the importance of the IB program at Sussex Central High School.
- Jay Cullen (parent) spoke to the Board regarding all the positive aspects of continuing the IB program at Sussex Central High School.
- Elizabeth Hicks (student) spoke to the Board about her positive experiences with the IB program at Sussex Central High School.
- Todd Phillips (student) spoke to the Board about how important the IB program is to him at Sussex Central High School.
- Stacy Robinson (school nurse) spoke to the board regarding how nurses keep schools safe with consistent quality care of staff and students.
- Eric Tsavdar (teacher) spoke to the Board regarding keeping staff and programs in our schools.
- James Wheatley (teacher) spoke to the Board about the importance of passing the referendum to retain quality teachers for our students.
- Rafael Farrera Juarez (student) spoke to the board about keeping the IB program at Sussex Central High School.
- Gabriel Perez Mercado (student) spoke to the Board regarding the importance of the IB program at Sussex Central High School.

New Business

School Choice Applications 2024-2025 (March 2025)

Mr. Steele, seconded by Mr. Peden, motioned to accept 2024-2025 school choice applicants (March 2025) as presented by Mr. Lewis. The motion passed unanimously (10-0).

School Choice Applications 2025-2026 (March 2025)

Mr. Steele, seconded by Mrs. Taylor, motioned to accept 2025-2026 school choice applicants (March 2025) as presented by Mr. Lewis. The motion passed unanimously (10-0).

2025-2026 District Calendar

Mrs. Kline, seconded by Mr. Steele, motioned to approve the 2025-2026 district calendar as presented. The motion passed unanimously (10-0).

County Impact Fees

Mr. Steele, seconded by Mrs. Pryor, motioned to approve the Indian River School District Board of Education to request the Sussex County Council to adopt the voluntary school assessment process to provide relief to the local school districts related to increase development. The motion passed unanimously (10-0).

Selbyville Middle School Unified Basketball

Mrs. Pryor, seconded by Mrs. Taylor, motioned to approve Selbyville Middle School Unified Basketball request as presented by Mr. Bare. The motion passed unanimously (10-0).

Sussex Central High School Uniforms: Cross Country, Fall Cheer Warm Ups, Girls Volleyball

Mr. Peden, seconded by Mr. Steele, motioned to approve the Sussex Central uniform requests for Cross Country, Fall Cheer Warm Ups, Girls Volleyball as presented. The motion passed unanimously (10-0).

Nutrition Services – Selbyville Middle School Dishwasher Replacement

Mrs. Taylor, seconded by Mr. Steele, motioned to approve the Selbyville Middle School dishwasher replacement in the amount of \$60,465.00 as presented by Mr. Toomey. The motion passed unanimously (10-0).

Nutrition Services – East Millsboro Elementary Outside Freezer Replacement

Mr. Steele, seconded by Mr. Cathell, motioned to approve the East Millsboro outside freezer Replacement in the amount of \$21,839.00 as presented by Mr. Toomey. The motion passed unanimously (10-0).

District Air Quality Response Coordinator – Mr. Joe Dooley

Mr. Steele, seconded by Mrs. Taylor, motioned to approve Mr. Joe Dooley as the District Air Quality Response Coordinator. The motion passed unanimously (10-0).

Sussex Central High School Modular Classrooms

Mr. Steele, seconded by Mrs. Kline, motioned to approve the removal of the modular classrooms at Sussex Central High School as presented by Mr. Dooley. The motion passed unanimously (10-0).

Sussex Central High School Change Order

Mr. Neal, seconded by Mrs. Briggs, motioned to approve the Sussex Central change order in the amount of \$175,789.38 as presented by Mr. Dooley and Mr. Cowen. The motion passed unanimously (10-0).

Sussex Central High School Change Order Notifications

Mrs. Taylor, seconded by Mr. Neal, motioned to approve the 21 Sussex Central High School Change Order Notifications totaling \$297,438.49 as presented by Mr. Dooley and Mr. Cowen totaling \$62,332.19. The motion passed unanimously (10-0).

Old Business

Major Capital Planning

Dr. Owens shared with the Board the most recent construction updates at the new Sussex Central High School.

Referendum

Dr. Owens shared with the board the voting totals for the March 20, 2025. A total of 10,173 were cast with 4,749 for the referendum and 5,424 against the referendum.

G.W. Carver Consent Update

Dr. Whisted shared with the board the following:

Requirements:

- Quarterly Updates on Former Carver Students
 - End of Quarter 2 Updates- February 2025
- Continuation of Community Advisory Board (CAB)
 - Successful Meeting held on March 6, 2025 at 4:00 p.m.
 - Next Meeting will be June 5, 2025 @ Howard T. Ennis
- Monitoring of District Plans
 - Disproportionality of Graduation Rate
 - Disproportionality of Discipline

Committee Reports

Buildings and Grounds

Mr. Steele reviewed the minutes from the March 10, 2025 meeting.

Comprehensive School Safety

No report.

Finance

Mr. Peden reviewed minutes from the March 10, 2025 meeting.

Curriculum

Mr. Neal reviewed the minutes from the March 10, 2025 meeting.

DSBA Board of Directors

Mrs. Pryor shared with the Board the March 6, 2025 meeting was open to the public.

DSBA Legislative

No report.

Special Education Committee

No report.

Policy

Mrs. Taylor reviewed the minutes from the March 10, 2025 meeting and the following policies for a first reading: ECB.1 School-Related Traumatic Event Policy, JHFA Student Supervision, KLA Complaint Procedures for Possible Policy Violations.

Mr. Steele, seconded by Mrs. Pryor, motioned to approve the following policies for second readings: CC Administrative Organization, EE Transportation Service Management, JG Student Discipline. The motion passed unanimously (10-0).

IREA Representative

Ms. Blair Caitlin Brown shared with the board the staff at IRSD is feeling scared after the referendum failure, they are anxious about jobs. She also shared the IREA fundraiser is on April 3, 2025 at Grotto's in Millsboro, DE.

Superintendents Report

Dr. Owens shared with the Board the Superintendent monthly activities.

Financial Summaries for month ending February 28, 2025

Mrs. Smith reviewed the financial summaries, major and minor capital improvement financials for the month ending February 28, 2025.

Mr. Peden, seconded by Mr. Steele, motioned to accept the financial summaries for the month ending February 28, 2025. The motion passed unanimously (10-0).

Detail Information for month ending February 28, 2025

Mr. Peden, seconded by Mr. Cathell, moved to approve the Detail Information for the month ending February 28, 2025 as presented by Mrs. Smith. The motion passed unanimously (10-0).

Major Capital Improvements for month ending February 28, 2025

Mr. Peden, seconded by Mrs. Taylor, motioned to approve the Major Capital Improvements for the month ending February 28, 2025 as presented by Mrs. Smith. The motion passed unanimously (10-0).

Minor Capital Improvements for month ending February 28, 2025

Mr. Peden, seconded by Mr. Neal, motioned to approve the Minor Capital Improvements for the month ending February 28, 2025 as presented by Mrs. Smith. The motion passed unanimously (10-0).

Communications

Field Trip Requests

Mr. Steele, seconded by Mrs. Taylor, motioned to approve the following field trips. The motion passed unanimously (10-0).

- Overnight trip by Indian River High School BPA on May 6-11, 2025 to Orlando, FL
- Overnight trip by Georgetown Middle School BPA on May 6-11, 2025 to Orlando, FL
- Overnight trip by Selbyville Middle School BPA on May 6-11, 2025 to Orlando, FL
- Overnight trip by Sussex Central High School BPA on May 6-11, 2025 to Orlando, FL
- Overnight trip by Indian River High School Band & Choir on April 10-13, 2025 to Pigeon Forge, TN
- Overnight trip by Sussex Central High School Educators Rising on June 25-30, 2025 to Orlando, FL
- Overnight trip by Selbyville Middle School Drone Team on May 28-31, 2025 to Fairmont, WV
- Overnight trip by Sussex Central High School & Sussex Central Middle School Competitive Cheer on August 12-15, 20-25 to Honesdale, PA

Use of Facility Request

Mr. Peden, seconded by Mr. Neal, motioned to approve the use of facility request. The motion passed unanimously (10-0).

- Use of Sussex Central High School Auditorium on Sunday, May 11, 2025 by the Take Two Drama Club.
- Use of John M. Clayton Elementary softball field from March 15, 2025 to November 1, 2025 (Tuesdays 5-8 pm, Thursdays 5-8 pm, Saturdays 9:30 am -1:00 pm, Sundays 9:30 am – 1:00 pm or 3:30 pm - 6:30 pm).
- Use of Sussex Central High School Stadium and bathrooms by United Church on April 12, 2025.

Personnel Agenda for March 24, 2025

Mr. Peden, seconded by Mrs. Taylor, motioned to approve the Personnel Agenda for March 24, 2025 as presented by Mrs. Bunting. The motion passed unanimously (10-0).

Personnel Addendum for March 24, 2025

Mr. Peden, seconded by Mr. Steele, motioned to approve the Personnel Agenda for March 24, 2025 as presented by Mrs. Bunting. The motion passed unanimously (10-0).

Notification of Retirements

Notification of retirements was presented to the Board.

Southern DE School of the Arts Principal Recommendation

Mr. Steele, seconded by Mr. Cathell, motioned to table the Southern DE School of the Arts principal recommendation until the March 31, 2025 board meeting. The motion passed unanimously (10-0).

Executive Session

Mrs. Cathell, seconded by Mrs. Kline, motioned to reconvene Executive Session at 9:16 p.m. for the purpose of discussing personnel, negotiations, litigation. The motion passed unanimously (10-0).

Reconvene Regular Session at 10:40 p.m.

Public Comments

No comments.

Adjournment

Mr. Neal, seconded by Mrs. West-Werner, motioned to adjourn the meeting at 10:41 pm. The motion passed unanimously (10-0).

Respectfully Submitted,

Leolga T. Wright
President
Board of Education
Indian River School District

Jay F. Owens, Jr.
Superintendent
Board of Education
Indian River School District

LTW/JFO:jmt