

INDIAN RIVER SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY, JUNE 23, 2025
SUSSEX CENTRAL 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, 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 Member Absent: Mr. Derek Cathell

Executive Session

Mr. Peden, seconded by Mr. Steele, motioned to go into Executive Session at 5:01 p.m. for the purpose of discussing personnel, negotiations, litigation, and student hearings. The motion passed unanimously (9-0).

Reconvene Regular Session at 7:13 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.

Board Member Absent: Mr. Derek Cathell

Approval of Agenda –June 23, 2025

Mr. Peden, seconded by Mrs. Taylor, moved to approve the agenda for June 23, 2025. The motion passed unanimously (9-0).

Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of Minutes

Board of Education Regular Meeting Minutes – May 19, 2025

Mrs. Briggs, seconded by Mr. Steele, motioned to approve the minutes as submitted. The motion passed unanimously (9-0).

Board of Education Executive Session Meeting Minutes – May 19, 2025

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

Board of Education Meeting Minutes – June 2, 2025

Mr. Peden, seconded by Mrs. Taylor, motioned to approve the minutes as submitted. The motion passed unanimously (9-0).

Board of Education Executive Session Meeting Minutes – June 2, 2025

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

Board of Education Meeting Minutes – June 9, 2025

Mr. Steele, seconded by Mrs. Taylor, motioned to approve the minutes as submitted. The motion passed unanimously (9-0).

Board of Education Executive Session Meeting Minutes – June 9, 2025

Mrs. Pryor, seconded by Mrs. Taylor, motioned to approve the minutes as submitted. The motion passed unanimously (9-0).

Visitors and Staff in Attendance

Jay Owens, Karen Blannard, Celeste Bunting, Renee Jerns, Kelly Dorman, Tammy Smith, Melissa Whisted, Jennifer Troublefield, Dan Mann, Preston Lewis, Joe Dooley, Suzanne Timmons, Blair Catlin Brown, Cassie Queen, Dr. David Carter, Vicky Martner, Carolyn Fries, Bob Blyman, Brandy Truitt, Marisa Hockman, Michelle Parsons, John Reddington, Steve Cobb, Kenneth McLaughlin, Carol Houck, Greg Lindner.

Recognition

- Multilingual Learner Language Achievement (Northern Schools).
- Years of Service – Board Member Connie Pryor

Public Comments

- John Reddington, Mayor of Ocean View, spoke to the Board regarding the importance of a school resource officer at Lord Baltimore Elementary. The SRO 's presence fosters discipline, provides a positive role model, protection, education and mentorship.
- Steve Cobb, Ocean View Town Councilman, spoke to the Board about the importance of a trained SRO at Lord Baltimore Elementary. The residents of Ocean View supported the referendum.
- Carol Houck, Town Manager of Ocean View, spoke to the board about equality with funding the Ocean View SRO compared to the SRO State Police funding.
- Kenneth McLaughlin, Police Chief of Ocean View, spoke to the Board about the continuance of funding for the SRO at Lord Baltimore Elementary.
- Greg Lindner spoke to the Board regarding the referendum. He believes the public referendum in the state is broken and many people are confused about how referendum funds support schools. In the future we need to find a better way to fund schools.

New Business

School Choice Applications 2025-2026 (June 2025)

Mr. Steele, seconded by Mrs. West-Werner, motioned to accept 2025-2026 school choice applicants (June 2025) as presented by Mr. Lewis. The motion passed unanimously (9-0).

2025-2026 Delaware School Board Association (DSBA) Membership Dues

Mrs. Taylor, seconded by Mrs. Pryor, motioned to approve the annual DSBA 2025-2026 Membership dues in the amount of \$12,970.00 as presented. The motion passed unanimously (9-0).

Millsboro Middle School Wrestling Uniforms

Mrs. West-Werner, seconded by Mr. Peden, motioned to table the Millsboro Middle School Wrestling Uniforms. The motion passed unanimously (9-0).

Sussex Central High School Baseball and Softball Uniforms

Mrs. West-Werner, seconded by Mrs. Kline, motioned to table the Sussex Central High School Baseball and Softball Uniforms. The motion passed unanimously (9-0).

Georgetown Middle School Boys Soccer Uniforms

Mr. Peden, seconded by Mr. Neal, motioned to approve the Georgetown Middle School Boys Soccer Uniforms as presented. The motion passed unanimously (9-0).

Sussex Central High School Change Orders

Mr. Steele, seconded by Mr. Neal, motioned to approve the Sussex Central High School Change Orders as presented by Mr. Dooley and Mr. Blyman totaling \$134,632.74 (alternate #37) and \$973,291.34 (alternate #2). The motion passed unanimously (9-0).

Sussex Central High School Interior Signage Bid Notification

Mr. Dooley notified the Board of Sussex Central High School Interior Signage Bid (A formal estimate from a qualified fabricator is suggested in advance of the formal bid publishing to determine a baseline for pricing expectations).

George Washington Carver/Early Learning Center Sanitary Sewage Replacement

Mr. Dooley notified the Board of the George Washington Carver/Early Learning Center Sanitary Sewage Replacement.

Out of State School Choice Requests of Employees

Mr. Neal, seconded by Mrs. Taylor, motioned to approve the Out of State School Choice Requests for Employees as presented. The motion passed unanimously (9-0).

Old Business

Major Capital Planning

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

G.W. Carver Consent Update

Dr. Whisted shared with the board the following:

Requirements:

- Quarterly Updates on Former Carver Students
 - Quarter 4 will be due at the end of the school year.
 - Meeting with Special Education Coordinators on April 4 and May 15, 2025
- Continuation of Community Advisory Board (CAB)
 - Meeting on 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 June 9, 2025 meeting.

Comprehensive School Safety

No report.

Finance

Mr. Peden reviewed minutes from the June 9, 2025 meeting.

Curriculum

No report.

DSBA Board of Directors

No report.

DSBA Legislative

Mrs. Briggs shared with the Board that DSBA Legislative met on May 28, 2025 where 7 house bills and 6 senate bills were presented.

Special Education Committee

Mr. Neal shared with the Board that the committee met on June 13th to discuss staffing updates, looking for no more virtual speech therapy, reducing the number of contractors, school interns.

Policy

Mrs. Taylor reviewed the minutes from the June 9, 2025 meeting and the following policies for first readings: EA Service Animal Policy for Students, EA.1 Service Animal Policy for Staff, IKE Promotion and Retention

Mr. Steele, seconded by Mrs. Pryor, motioned to approve the following policies for second readings: ECB Integrated Pest Management Policy, IKEA Recovery or Original Credit Opportunities, IKF Graduation Requirements, JO Student Records. The motion passed unanimously (9-0).

IREA Representative

Ms. Blair Caitlin Brown spoke to the Board regarding the importance of the local tax rate decision. She reinforced that it is the duty of the Board and fiduciary responsibility to act on these local tax rates.

Superintendents Report

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

Financial Summaries for month ending May 31, 2025

Mrs. Smith reviewed the financial summaries, major and minor capital improvement financials for the month ending May 31, 2025.

Mr. Peden, seconded by Mrs. Taylor, motioned to accept the financial summaries for the month ending May 31, 2025. The motion passed unanimously (9-0).

Detail Information for month ending May 31, 2025

Mr. Peden, seconded by Mr. Steele, motioned to approve the Detail Information for the month ending May 31, 2025 as presented by Mrs. Smith. The motion passed unanimously (9-0).

Major Capital Improvements for month ending May 31, 2025

Mr. Steele, seconded by Mrs. West-Werner, motioned to approve the Major Capital Improvements for the month ending May 31, 2025 as presented by Mrs. Smith. The motion passed unanimously (9-0).

Minor Capital Improvements for month ending May 31, 2025

Mr. Peden, seconded by Mrs. West-Werner, motioned to approve the Minor Capital Improvements for the month ending May 31, 2025 as presented by Mrs. Smith. The motion passed unanimously (9-0).

FY 2026 Local Tax Rates

Mr. Steele, seconded by Mrs. West-Werner, motioned to table FY 2026 Local Tax Rates until the July 1, 2025 Board Organizational meeting. The motion passed unanimously (9-0).

Communications

Field Trip Requests

Mr. Peden, seconded by Mrs. Taylor, motioned to approve the following field trips. The motion passed unanimously (9-0).

- Overnight trip by Sussex Central High School Yearbook Editors on July 27-29, 2025 to Gettysburg, PA
- Overnight trip by Sussex Central High School Wrestling Team on June 19-23, 2025 to Manchester, NH
- Overnight trip by Sussex Central School TSA on June 27-July 1, 2025 to Nashville, TN

Field Trip Requests

Mr. Neal, seconded by Mrs. Taylor, motioned to approve the field trip request as presented. The motion passed unanimously (9-0).

- Overnight trip by Sussex Central High School Yearbook Editors on November 13-16, 2025 to Nashville, TN.

Executive Session

Mr. Steele, seconded by Mrs. West-Werner, motioned to go into Executive Session at 9:17 p.m. The motion passed unanimously (9-0).

Reconvene Regular Session at 10:34 p.m.

Personnel Agenda for June 23, 2025

Mr. Steele, seconded by Mrs. Pryor, motioned to approve the Personnel Agenda for June 23, 2025 as presented. The motion passed unanimously (9-0).

Personnel Addendum for June 23, 2025

Mr. Peden, seconded by Mr. Steele, motioned to approve the Personnel Addendum for June 23, 2025 as presented. The motion passed unanimously (9-0).

Personnel Addendum #2 for June 23, 2025

Mrs. West-Werner, seconded by Mr. Peden, motioned to approve the Personnel Addendum #2 for June 23, 2025 as presented. The motion passed unanimously (9-0).

Contractual Agenda for June 23, 2025

Mr. Steele, seconded by Mrs. Taylor, motioned to approve the Personnel Contractual Agenda for June 23, 2025 as presented. The motion passed unanimously (9-0).

Notification of Retirements

Notification of retirements was presented to the Board.

Nutrition Service Managers Contract

Mr. Steele, seconded by Mrs. Pryor, motioned to table Nutrition Services Managers Contract.

Nutrition Service Workers Contract

Mr. Steele, seconded by Mrs. Pryor, motioned to table Nutrition Services Workers Contract.

Student Hearings

Student No. 25-93

Mr. Neal, seconded by Mrs. Taylor, motioned to amend the hearing officer's recommendation to allow student No. 25-93 to return to Sussex Central High School on the first day of the 2025-2026 school year under the following conditions: He will remain on social probation until a date determined by the administration. The Superintendent/Assistant Superintendent or their designee will assign the other conditions he must demonstrate. If he receives an additional disciplinary referral, then he will revert back to the original recommendation of the hearing officer. The motion passed (8-0-1). For the motion: Mrs. Kline, Mr. Neal, Mr. Peden, Mrs. Pryor, Mr. Steele, Mrs. Taylor, Mrs. West-Werner, Mrs. Wright. Abstained: Mrs. Briggs.

Student No. 25-94

Mr. Steele, seconded by Mrs. Briggs, motioned to uphold the hearings officer's recommendation on Student No. 25-94. The motion passed (8-1-0). For the motion: Mrs. Briggs, Mr. Neal, Mr. Peden, Mrs. Pryor, Mr. Steele, Mrs. Taylor, Mrs. Werner, Mrs. Wright. Against the motion: Mrs. Kline.

Public Comments

No comments.

Adjournment

Mr. Peden, seconded by Mrs. Kline, motioned to adjourn the meeting at 10:39 pm. The motion passed unanimously (9-0).

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