

INDIAN RIVER SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2025
MILLSBORO MIDDLE SCHOOL AUDITORIUM

MINUTES

Call to Order

Mr. Steele called the Regular Meeting of the Indian River School District Board of Education to order at 6:00 p.m.

Roll Call

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

Executive Session

Mr. Cathell, seconded by Mr. Peden, motioned to go into Executive Session at 6:00 p.m. for the purpose of discussing personnel, negotiations, litigation. The motion passed unanimously (10-0).

Reconvene Regular Session at 7:13 p.m.

Roll Call

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

Approval of Agenda – October 27, 2025

Mrs. Taylor, seconded by Mrs. Briggs, moved to approve the agenda for October 27, 2025. The motion passed unanimously (10-0).

Pledge of Allegiance/Presentation of Colors by Sussex Central JROTC

Student Government

Dasahni Coleman, Indian River High School student representative shared with the Board events, activities occurring at Indian River High School.

Approval of Minutes

Board of Education Regular Meeting Minutes – September 22, 2025

Mr. Peden, seconded by Mr. Cathell, motioned to approve the minutes as submitted. The motion passed unanimously (9-0). *It was noted an error in the names. Change Mr. Parsons to Mr. Parker.*

Board of Education Executive Session Meeting Minutes – September August 25, 2025

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

Visitors and Staff in Attendance

Jay Owens, Renee Jerns, Celeste Bunting, Kelly Dorman, Melissa Whisted, Chris Parker, Jennifer Troublefield, Dan Mann, Joe Dooley, Blair Catlin Brown, Jenna Argo, Lauren Kirk, Brad Breasure, Pamela Webb, Kathleen Wilson, Jason Macrides, Beth Illian, Kris Gosnell, Christy Kerr, Monica McCurry, Allisa Booth, Mike Williams, Cassie Queen, Rick Radatovich, Sherin Howett, Brandon Laurie, Michael Daisey, Jessica Shuman, Duane and Connie Smith, Nancy Smith, Jen and Brian Angell, Jim King, Megan Conway, Maria Hazzard, Laura Walter.

Recognition

- Bay Forest Retired Educators, Administrators and Teachers Helping Education (BREATHE)
- Special Education Ambassadors: Kathryn Curl, Wendy Joseph, Jennifer Angell, Jennifer Bower, Renee Short, Stephanie Tietmeyer, Jessica Schumann, Tammy Siedel, Megan Conway, Mary Lagano, Christy Kerr, Amber Szymanski, Maria Wilson, Duane Smith, Trevor Wilkiins

Public Comments

- Wendy Mears, a 23 year veteran teacher and child advocate spoke to the board regarding the hostile work environment she is enduring. She spoke of ongoing human trafficking of children in the area. She feels as a teacher this is a responsibility she bears for these missing exploited children.

New Business

School Choice Applications 2025-2026 (October 2025)

Mrs. Briggs, seconded by Mrs. Taylor, motioned to accept 2025-2026 school choice applicants (October 2025) as presented by Dr. Owens. The motion passed unanimously (10-0).

American Education Week Resolution

Mr. Neal, seconded by Mr. Cathell, motioned to accept the American Education Resolution (November 17-21, 2025) as presented by Dr. Owens. The motion passed unanimously (10-0).

2025-2026 Indian River School District Unit Count Summary

Dr. Owens shared with the Board that as of September 30, 2025 the student enrollment is 10,620 with 886.74 division I units and 952.30 division II units.

Indian River School District Survey

Mrs. West-Werner, seconded by Mr. Cathell, motioned to table Indian River School District Staff Survey. The motion passed unanimously (10-0).

FY '26 Salary Scales for Constables, Investigators, Student Advisors

Dr. Parsons, seconded by Mrs. Kline, motioned to approve option #1 for the FY '26 salary scale for investigators. The motion passed (7-3-0).

For the motion: Mrs. Briggs, Mr. Cathell, Mrs. Kline, Dr. Parsons, Mr. Steele, Mrs. West-Werner, Mrs. Wright.

Against the motion: Mr. Neal, Mr. Peden, Ms. Taylor.

Ms. Taylor, seconded by Dr. Parsons, motioned to approve option #3 for the FY '26 salary scale for constables. The motion passed unanimously (10-0).

Ms. Taylor, seconded by Mr. Cathell, motioned to approve option #2 for the FY '26 salary scale for student advisors. The motion passed (8-2-0).

For the motion: Mrs. Briggs, Mr. Cathell, Mrs. Kline, Mr. Neal, Dr. Parsons, Ms. Taylor, Mrs. West-Werner, Mrs. Wright.

Against the motion: Mr. Peden, Mr. Steele.

Sussex Central Middle School Wrestling Uniforms

Mrs. Briggs, seconded by Ms. Taylor, motioned to approve the Sussex Central Middle School Wrestling Uniforms as presented. The motion passed unanimously (10-0).

Indoor Air Quality Complaint

Mr. Dooley shared with the Board the results of an air quality complaint. After investigating the complaint, the classroom was found to not have an air quality problem.

Sussex Central High School Exterior Sign Logo

Mrs. Wright, seconded by Mrs. Briggs, motioned to approve option #2 for the Sussex Central High School Exterior Sign Logo as presented by Mr. Dooley. The motion passed unanimously (10-0).

Ingram Pond – Sussex Land Trust

Dr. Parsons, seconded by Mrs. Kline, motioned for discussions to preserve land development. The motion failed (3-7-0).

For the motion: Mr. Cathell, Mrs. Kline, Dr. Parsons

Against the motion: Mrs. Briggs, Mr. Neal, Mr. Peden, Mr. Steele, Ms. Taylor, Mrs. West-Werner, Mrs. Wright.

The board suggested a sub-committee be formed for further discussions.

Indian River High School Artesian Water Well

Mrs. West-Werner, seconded by Mr. Cathell, motioned to table Indian River High School Artesian Water Well. The board suggested a sub-committee be formed for further discussions. The motion passed unanimously (10-0).

Sussex Central High School Change Order Notifications

Mrs. Briggs, seconded by Mr. Neal, motioned to approve the 11 Sussex Central High School Change Orders as presented by Mr. Dooley and Mr. Cowen totaling \$193,122.37 with a credit of \$11,096.00. The motion passed (10-0).

Old Business

Major Capital Planning

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

Committee Reports

Buildings and Grounds

Mrs. Wright reviewed the minutes from the October 13, 2025 meeting.

Comprehensive School Safety

No report.

Finance

Mr. Peden reviewed minutes from the October 13, 2025 meeting.

Curriculum

Mr. Neal shared with the Board the minutes from the October 13, 2025.

DSBA Board of Directors

Mrs. Kline shared with the Board the DSBA workshop is scheduled for November 5, 2025.

DSBA Legislative

Mrs. Briggs shared with the board the current education related senate bills and legislative priorities. The next meeting is scheduled for February 14, 2026.

Special Education Committee

Mr. Neal congratulated all the special education ambassadors that were recognized this evening.

Policy

Taylor reviewed the minutes from the October 13, 2025 meeting.

Mrs. Taylor shared the following policies for first readings: BDDH Public Participation at Board Meetings, DA Written Code of Standards Conduct, JECC-A School Choice, KLB Instructional and Library Material Review.

Mrs. West-Werner, seconded by Mrs. Kline, motioned to approve the following polices for a second reading: GCBD.1 Paid Leave for Birth or Adoption of a Child, JE Student Attendance, JF Students Rights and JE Attendance Policy. The motion passed unanimously (10-0).

IREA Representative

Ms. Blair Caitlin Brown spoke to the Board regarding the 0% raise for teaching staff on the local portion of their salary and feel staff are worth more. The teaching staff did receive a 7% raise on the state portion of their salary. They believe the district will lose staff without salary compensation.

Superintendents Report

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

District Calendar Change

Change Georgetown Elementary Picture Day from September 18, 2025 to November 17, 2025; Change Indian River High School National Junior Honor Society Induction Ceremony from November 13, 2025 to November 18, 2025.

Ms. Taylor, seconded by Mrs. Kline, motioned to approve the district calendar changes as presented by Dr. Owens. The motion passed unanimously (10-0).

Financial Summaries for month ending September 30, 2025

Mr. Parker reviewed the financial summaries, major and minor capital improvement financials for the month ending September 30, 2025.

Mr. Peden, seconded by Mr. Cathell, motioned to accept the financial summaries for the month ending September 30, 2025. The motion passed unanimously (10-0).

Detail Information for month ending September 30, 2025

Mrs. West-Werner, seconded by Ms. Taylor, motioned to approve the Detail Information for the month ending September 30, 2025 as presented by Mr. Parker. The motion passed unanimously (10-0).

Major Capital Improvements for month ending September 30, 2025

Mr. Cathell, seconded by Mrs. Kline, motioned to approve the Major Capital Improvements for the month ending September 30, 2025 as presented by Mr. Parker. The motion passed unanimously (10-0).

Minor Capital Improvements for month ending August 31, 2025

Mrs. Briggs, seconded by Mr. Peden, motioned to approve the Minor Capital Improvements for the month ending September 30, 2025 as presented by Mr. Parker. The motion passed unanimously (10-0).

FY 2026 Preliminary Budget – Howard T. Ennis

Mr. Neal, seconded by Mr. Peden, motioned to approve the FY 2026 Preliminary Budget for Howard T. Ennis. The motion passed unanimously (10-0).

FY 2026 Preliminary Budget – Indian River School District

Mrs. West-Werner, seconded by Mrs. Briggs, motioned to approve the FY 2026 Preliminary Budget for Indian River School District. The motion passed unanimously (10-0).

Field Trip Requests

Ms. Taylor, seconded by Mrs. West-Werner, motioned to approve the following field trips as presented by Dr. Owens. The motion passed unanimously (10-0).

- Overnight trip by Sussex Central High School Yearbook Editors on April 15-19, 2026 to Minneapolis, MN.
- Overnight trip by Indian River High School Unified Basketball on June 19-26, 2026 to University of Minnesota.

Executive Session

Mr. Neal, seconded by Ms. Taylor, motioned to go into executive session at 10:05 pm. The motion passed unanimously (10-0).

Reconvene Regular Session at 10:44 pm.

Public Comments

Mr. Michael Daisey spoke to the Board in regards to a "trade school/exploring occupations" at our high schools with the possibility of offering summer classes (apprenticeships with various contractors) for students.

Indian River School District Staff Survey

Mrs. Wright, seconded by Mrs. West-Werner, motioned to approve the Indian River School District Staff Survey as presented. The motion passed unanimously (10-0).

Personnel Agenda for October 27, 2025

Ms. Taylor, seconded by Mr. Neal, motioned to approve the Personnel Agenda for October 27, 2025 as presented by Mrs. Bunting. The motion passed unanimously (10-0).

Personnel Addendum for October 27, 2025

Mrs. Kline, seconded by Mrs. Briggs, motioned to approve the Personnel Addendum for October 27, 2025 as presented by Mrs. Bunting. The motion passed unanimously (10-0).

Notification of Retirements

Notification of retirements was presented to the Board.

Adjournment

Mrs. West Werner, seconded by Mr. Neal, motioned to adjourn the meeting at 10:49 pm. The motion passed unanimously (10-0).

Respectfully Submitted,

Mark L. Steele
President
Board of Education
Indian River School District

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

MLS/JFO:jmt