

# **BLACK RIVER PUBLIC SCHOOL**

## **Board Meeting Minutes**

**February 16, 2026**

### **Item 1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting of the Board of Directors of Black River Public School was called to order by President Tom McGough at 5:34pm on February 16, 2026, in room 229 at the school's Columbia Avenue campus. Recognition was made that a quorum was present through a roll call.

### **Item 2. ROLL CALL**

#### Members Present:

Sarah Bast, Elisabeth Bauman, Matt Benson, Abe Carillo, Craig Davis, Kim Koeman, TJ McDonald, Tom McGough, Mary Mims

#### Members Absent:

None

#### Staff Present:

Carrie Ames (Elementary Curriculum Director), Shannon Brunink (Head of School), Michelle Byrne (Administrative Assistant), Rachel Carlson (Business Director), John K. Donnelly (Dean of Students), Haley Masse (BR Teacher), Jake Stid (BR Teacher)

#### Public Present:

Arabella Benson, Bethany, Henrik Bauman, Kristin Billingsly, Gina Buma, Christin, Errol Goldman, Megan Hanneken, Barb Jonker, Bethany Rickwald, Claire Rumpsa, Courtney Stahl,

#### Media Present:

None

### **Item 3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

There being no corrections, all minutes of the Board's December 15, 2025 meeting were approved upon a motion by Mr. McGough, seconded by Mr. McDonald. (9-0)

### **Item 4. STUDENT REPORT**

Miss Benson and Mr. Bauman outlined the current sports records and highlighted upcoming matches. Miss Delyla Martinez and Mr. Jamison Huizenga were congratulated for breaking previous records. They brought attention to upcoming events including Robotics competitions, RatFest Fine Arts Night, music concerts, and BR Theater Company performances. They also shared information about the Snowcoming spirit week, games, and dance. Project Term schedules have been released.

#### **Item 5. BUSINESS REPORT**

Ms. Carlson distributed Budget Amendment 1 for the 2025-2026 school year and explained the updated format. Budgeting is based on supporting the school mission, safety, and employee wellbeing. She outlined the many factors that go in to the adjustment this time of year and indicated that data is on par with that of previous years. Ms. Carlson also reminded members of the board to complete their annual conflict of interest forms.

Mr. McGough explained that the board will plan to vote to approve Budget Amendment 1 at the next meeting. He, along with Mr. Brunink, thanked Ms. Carlson for her work and forethought to make this a successful year.

#### **Item 6. ADMINISTRATION REPORT**

Mr. Donnelly talked about the house bill regarding cell phones in schools and expressed his hope that this can support BR's current policy. He thanked Mr. Steve Eicher for his help in analyzing the available data collected through the school's implementation. Mr. Donnelly is thrilled to be able to attend this year's LAUP conference tomorrow and spoke on its value. He spoke about spirit week and answered questions.

Mr. Brunink distributed the 2026-2027 school year calendar and explained how the dates fall, requiring what may feel like a late start. He answered questions about half days, days off, and snow days. Mr. Brunink also summarized open enrollment data for the upcoming year.

**Motion to approve** the 2026-2027 School Year Calendar. The resolution passed upon a motion by Ms. Bauman, seconded by Ms. Mims. (8-1)

Ms. Ames gave a presentation on how the Elementary implements Multi Tiered Systems of Support. She explained the different tiers and how they assist students both with academic and social/emotional needs. Ms. Ames indicated that they have utilized the half day professional development to restructure in a way that can expand offerings and provide more Tier 3 supports. She also shared data showing the growth that has been observed due this extra assistance.

#### **Item 7. FACULTY COUNCIL REPORT**

Mr. Stid indicated that the results from the staff survey are in and being used to develop this year's recommendations from Faculty Council. He stated that they look forward to their continued work with administration and the board.

**Item 8. PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Mr. McGough discussed the subcommittees that work with Faculty Council as well as the 31aa security grant. Strategic planning is also underway.

**Item 9. GVSU REPORT**

Ms. Stahl distributed this year's School Performance Report, briefly highlighted Black River's good performance, and indicated that she is happy to answer questions after there has been time to review the document.

**Motion to accept** this year's Academic Grant Award from Grand Valley State University. The resolution passed unanimously upon a motion by Mr. Benson, seconded by Mr. Carrillo. (9-0)

**Motion to recommend** Mr. Matt Benson, Ms. Elisabeth Bauman, Mr. Craig Davis, and Mr. Tom McGough for another term on Black River's board. The resolution passed unanimously upon a motion by Ms. Bast, seconded by Ms. Koeman. (9-0)

**Item 10. OLD BUSINESS**

Mr. McGough spoke of the latest information on the 31aa security grant. Mr. Brunink outlined what it is for, caveats of concern, and the discussions that were had when making the decision to accept the grant. Mr. McGough thanked the team for their thoughtful and sobering discussions.

**Motion to ratify** the acceptance of the 31aa grant funds. The resolution passed upon a motion by Mr. Benson, seconded by Ms. Bauman. (8-1)

**Item 11. NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business brought before the board.

**Item 12. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Ms. Jonker spoke about the cell phone policy and the data collected.

Ms. Hanneken echoed the sentiments about the cell phone policy and spoke of the value of surveys.

**Item 13. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the board, the meeting was adjourned at 7:44pm.

**NEXT MEETING:**

The next regular meeting is scheduled for 5:30pm on March 16, 2026.

Respectfully submitted,



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Mary M. Mims, Secretary