BLACK RIVER PUBLIC SCHOOL
Board Meeting Minutes
Special Meeting to Set Cell Phone Policy
August 24, 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 5:31pm on August 24, 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 Carrillo, Kim Koeman, TJ McDonald, Tom McGough

Members Absent:
Mary Mims

Staff Present:
Shannon Brunink (Head of School), John K. Donnelly (Dean of Students)

Public Present:
Scott Rumpsa, Claire Rumpsa, Jonathan Buma, Lise Zinck, Megan Hanneken, Gina Buma, Han-luen Kantzer Komline, David Komline, Sarah Schreuder, Crystal Ludwig (DeJong), Adriann Divozzo, Abby Van Beek, Jen Rozman, Dave Rozman, Chris Russell, Carrie Russell, Glen Behan, Liz Hinkley, Sarah Kornfield, Rebecca Padnos Altamirano, Tom Chappell, Kristen Billingsley, Elizabeth Evans

Media Present:
None

Item 3. CELL PHONE POLICY

Mr McGough introduced the cell phone policy topic and asked Mr Benson to present an overview of the survey results. Mr Benson presented a summary of both the parent survey and the faculty survey. He also shared specific details and trends related to the various categories surveyed. Mr McGough thanked Ms Koeman and Mr Benson for their work on the survey over the summer. He also thanked Mr Brunnink for his support and the

preparations the administration made over the summer as well. Mr Benson indicated that there will be public access to a version of the survey results at some point in the future.

The board entered into a discussion about all aspects of the cell phone policy, with survey results in mind, as well as the needs and mission of our school. Mr Brunnink and Mr Donnelly answered questions about rolling out various scenarios and the challenges they pose.

Mr McGough led the board through a discussion of all sections of the policy proposal, including policy enforcement, exceptions to use restriction, and use restriction by learning level.

Motion to approve a bell to bell student owned wireless device policy for elementary, middle and high school students from the time they enter the building in the morning until final dismissal from class, with devices powered off, the one exception being high school lunch in the lyceum or outside. The policy enforcement violation levels will hold for the entire school year, except for a reset back one step at the semester for students on the third offense or later. The motion passed upon a motion by Ms. Bauman, seconded by Mr. Carillo (5-2; Mr. McDonald and Ms. Koemen dissented).

Item 4. PUBLIC COMMENT

Chris Russell shared his concern that the policy would call out students with exceptions. He also expressed concern for the exemption process and specific situations.

Carrie Russell stated her concern for students who need access to an ipad.

Scott Rumpsa thanked the board and administration for their extra time and effort this summer, and for being willing to do a hard thing that matters.

Claire Rumpsa expressed her appreciation for the follow up that happened over the summer following the June board meeting, but would have liked to see more data driven input.

Elizabeth Evans encouraged the BR community to buy into the new policy and suggested we use our knowledgeable staff to help set up device limitations. She also suggested having a parent liaison who could help with this effort.

Sarah Kornfield expressed her concern about detecting policy violations.

Lise Zinck shared her concern for how students can communicate to parents about forgotten items essential to a successful school day.

Jonathan Buma was appreciative of the work the board did over the summer. He suggested looking further into school comparisons in the area.

David Komline thanked the board for its efforts. He also expressed concern that students should be allowed an ipad with a keyboard, as per a BR tech recommendation.

Dave Rozman thanked the board and encouraged staff to communicate the changes well to effectively bring about a school culture change. He also advocated for better communication at the middle and high school level.

Item 5. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:33pm.

Respectfully submitted,

