

RIVER BEND COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT #2
1110 3RD STREET
FULTON, IL 61252
BOARD OF EDUCATION
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR APRIL BOARD MEETING

River Bend Community Unit School District #2

April 22, 2026

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of River Bend Community Unit School District #2, Whiteside County, Illinois, was held on Wednesday, April 22, 2026, in the River Bend District Office.

President Portz called the Regular Meeting to order at 6:30pm. Upon Roll Call by the Secretary the following members were present: Kyle Folk, Dan Portz, Jay Ritchie, and Mary Simmons. Absent: Elizabeth Falls, Andrew Meyers, and Travis Temple. Others present: Darryl Hogue, Superintendent, Kelli Parsons, Assistant Superintendent, Jennifer Griser, Recording Secretary, and Paige Emerson, Student Liaison.

President Portz led all present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

President Portz welcomed all visitors including: Emilee Droegmiller, Katie French, Jeremy Leitzen, and Angie Stone; Principals: Patrick Henrekin, Jeffrey Hoese, and Jeff Parsons; Assistant Principals: Nicole Bowers and Aimee Marten.

President Portz led all present in a relationship and culture building activity where everyone took a turn sharing something that they are currently working on that is more challenging than expected.

Dr. Hogue added a Health Insurance Update to the Superintendent's Report.

It was moved by Member Simmons, seconded by Member Folk, to approve the agenda as amended. Voice Vote, all yea, motion carried.

President Portz asked if there was any information the RBEA would like to share. Mrs. Stone stated there was nothing to share at this time.

President Portz asked if anyone would like to speak as part of public forum. There was no one wishing to speak during public forum.

Mr. Hoese informed the board members that the elementary school had once again been chosen as a Capturing Kids Hearts National Showcase School. Mr. Henrekin shared that the middle school had also been chosen as a Capturing Kids Hearts National Showcase School. Mr. Henrekin shared that after a successful 6th grade basketball season he would like to add 6th grade volleyball next school year. This would be a level four stipend position and he did not feel practice space would be an issue.

Mr. Henrekin also informed the board members that he has been approached by some staff members in regards to changing the middle school name from River Bend Middle School to Fulton Middle School. They felt with the addition of the new gymnasium it would be the ideal time to make the change. Mr. Henrekin stated he wanted to be cognizant of the history of the name change previously from Fulton Junior High School to River Bend Middle School, but wanted to open the floor for

discussion. After discussion with the board members, it was decided they would like to move forward with the name change.

Mr. Parsons shared that the ACT testing at the high school went well and they are looking forward to getting the results back. He also shared that the high school had three students earn their Pathway Endorsements with SVCC, two in Education and one in Health Sciences. Mr. Parsons shared that unfortunately the high school did not receive the Capturing Kids Hearts National Showcase School honor due to not having enough parent survey responses submitted.

Paige had no updates since the previous meeting.

Member Simmons shared highlights from the River Bend Education Foundation Meeting.

- April was the last meeting for the current school year, the next meeting will be in September 2026.
- Mrs. Schipper spoke with the Deb Norman family and they would like to continue the scholarship and would also like to see if the high school girls basketball team had any needs at this time to spend down some of their funds.
- The scholarship committee met after the meeting to decide on scholarship winners that will be presented at the high school awards night.

Dr. Hogue shared some highlights from the Facilities Committee Meeting:

- The committee discussed summer projects, there are about twenty seven items on the list. Mitch will collect bids to see what items can be completed this summer and what items may need to be postponed. The district will look to have one additional summer custodian to help with cleaning and other projects.
- The district and Veregy will be meeting soon with the roofing company applying the coatings to the school roofs to decide on a schedule.

Dr. Hogue shared some highlights from the Finance Committee meeting:

- The treasurer's report was reviewed.
- Bonding items were reviewed.
- The budget amendment items were discussed.

The IASB Joint Annual Conference will be held in Chicago November 19-22, 2026. Registration will open June 1st. Dr. Hogue asked that board members start thinking about if they would like to attend and let Ms. Griser know.

Dr. Hogue shared that enrollment is staying steady, the district does not typically see many changes this time of the year. The elementary shared that kindergarten round-up numbers were in the low sixties.

Dr. Hogue informed board members of the middle school promotion and high school graduation and asked for board members to attend and help hand out diplomas. Members Portz and Folk will attend the middle school promotion and Members Meyers, Portz, and Folk will attend the high school graduation.

Dr. Hogue shared that he invited Ms. Droegmiller and Mrs. French from the high school English department to present their request for a new English curriculum at the high school level. Ms. Droegmiller shared that the English department spent many years working on competency based curriculum and are now moving towards standards based. This curriculum that the department has selected aligns with the state standards and provides the rigor that they are looking for. The curriculum

that they have chosen also allows for more rigor for those students who enroll in Honors English versus Regular English courses. Mrs. French shared that she is looking forward to having a text book again versus having to write the curriculum as they have had to do the past years with competency based learning. Board members asked about alignment with the middle school as well as the speech component of the new suggested curriculum. Ms. Droegmiller and Mrs. French both shared that each unit has options for final assessment where the student can prepare a speech or podcast episode versus writing an essay. They also shared they are looking forward to having consumables for the students so that they can lessen the screen time for students. They also feel being able to actually see, write, and highlight items while following along with the lesson or story being read will benefit the students as well. Mrs. Bowers shared that they will work closely with the middle school to make sure there are no missing areas of content as well as ensure the same novels are not being studied.

Mrs. Parsons shared that the professional development afternoon that took place today was the last one scheduled this school year with Mark Hansen to work on teaching and learning. Mrs. Parsons would like to schedule three work days at the completion of the school year for certified staff to come in and continue to work on the teaching and learning. This will help keep professional development afternoons in the coming school year free for building level meetings. Funding for these days would mainly be from Title grants.

Mrs. Parsons shared information on a potential staffing partnership with the Regional Office of Education (ROE). The position is part of the Alternative Learning Opportunities Program (ALOP). This program provides a staff member to offer extra mentorship and support for students in grades four through twelve. This is the third year the ROE has offered the program. These staff members are not social workers or counselors, however, they help with students' social and emotional needs. At this time, the district is looking to add two of these positions, one in the elementary school and one in the middle school. Mr. Hoese emphasized that after visiting Amboy and speaking with their ALOP staff he felt this would be beneficial at the elementary school to help free up not only the counselor's time, but also the administration's time, for those students who are in need of support.

Mrs. Parsons presented an update to the student and spectator event code of conduct. Infractions to the code of conduct could result in suspensions from home games up to a lifetime ban depending on the number of infractions.

Mrs. Parsons shared information about the Schools of Illinois Public Cooperative and the district's access to an app for maintenance issues. This app would allow any staff member to submit a maintenance concern to the proper staff as well as submit a photo if needed. The district will also be switching companies that cleaning products are brought through as there is a company association with the coop that offers custodian training as well as inventory management.

Dr. Hogue shared a health insurance update. The insurance committee met earlier in the week and decided to stay in the insurance coop for another year as the project cost increase is lower in future years. Throughout the negotiation process, the district and union will look at different health insurance plan options to help lower costs.

It was moved by Member Simmons, seconded by Member Folk, to approve the consent agenda, including the March 18, 2026 Regular Meeting Minutes, March 18, 2026 Closed Session Minutes, March Treasurer's Report, and April Bills recommended for payment in the amount of \$211,297.80 subject to audit. Roll Call Vote.

*Member Folk, yea Member Ritchie, yea
Member Portz, yea Member Simmons, yea*

Motion carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended approval of the lawn bid submitted by Spring Green, the district's current lawn care company. There were no other bids submitted.

It was moved by Member Ritchie, seconded by Member Folk, to approve the lawn bid submitted by Spring Green, the district's current lawn care company, at a cost of \$1,270 for the buildings and \$1,020 for the football field. Roll Call Vote.

*Member Folk, yea Member Ritchie, yea
Member Portz, yea Member Simmons, yea*

Motion carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended approval of the 2025-2026 tentative amended budget and to set the budget hearing for June 17, 2026.

It was moved by Member Ritchie, seconded by Member Folk, to approve the 2025-2026 tentative amended budget with total revenues in the amount of \$26,349,916.78 and expenditures in the amount of \$14,413,778.63 and set the budget hearing for June 17, 2026 at 6:30pm. Roll Call Vote.

*Member Folk, yea Member Ritchie, yea
Member Portz, yea Member Simmons, yea*

Motion carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended declaring old Spanish textbooks at Fulton High School as surplus goods and to dispose of in an appropriate manner. They are textbooks that have not been used and were found when cleaning out cabinets.

It was moved by Member Folk, seconded by Member Simmons, to declare Spanish textbooks at the high school as surplus goods and dispose of in an appropriate manner. Roll Call Vote.

*Member Folk, yea Member Ritchie, yea
Member Portz, yea Member Simmons, yea*

Motion carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended approval of the 2026-2027 Board of Education Meeting dates.

It was moved by Member Folk, seconded by Member Simmons, to approve the 2026-2027 Board of Education meeting dates as presented. Roll Call Vote.

*Member Folk, yea Member Ritchie, yea
Member Portz, yea Member Simmons, yea*

Motion carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended approval of the IESA Member Dues and Registration fees for Fulton Elementary School at \$275.00 and River Bend Middle School at \$705.00 for the 2026-2027 school year.

It was moved by Member Simmons, seconded by Member Ritchie, to approve the 2026-2027 IESA Membership Dues and Registration fees as presented. Roll Call Vote.

Member Folk, yea

Member Ritchie, yea

Member Portz, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Motion carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended declaring old storage lockers in the high school shop classroom as surplus goods and to dispose of in an appropriate manner. There are thirteen sections of three to four lockers, without doors, that are old physical education lockers that will be scrapped and the proceeds deposited into the high school FFA account.

It was moved by Member Simmons, seconded by Member Folk, to declare old storage lockers in the shop classroom at the high school as surplus goods and to dispose of in an appropriate manner. Roll Call Vote.

Member Folk, yea

Member Ritchie, yea

Member Portz, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Motion carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended approval of the lease for the purchase of school buses.

It was moved by Member Simmons, seconded by Member Ritchie, to approve the bus lease as presented. Roll Call Vote.

Member Folk, yea

Member Ritchie, yea

Member Portz, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Motion carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended approval of the 2026-2027 student registration, extracurricular, meals, fess, and prices. Families will continue to save \$5 for early registration, breakfast prices will increase by \$0.10 and lunch prices will increase by \$0.15 for students, adult breakfast and lunch prices will increase by \$0.25.

It was moved by Member Folk, seconded by Member Simmons, to approve the 2026-2027 student registration, extracurricular. meals, fees, and prices as presented. Roll Call Vote.

Member Folk, yea

Member Ritchie, yea

Member Portz, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Motion carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended approval of the resolution providing for the issue of not to exceed \$16,850,000 General Obligation School Bonds for the purposes of paying claims against the District, altering and reconstructing school buildings and purchasing and installing equipment therein for fire prevention and safety, energy conservation and school security purposes, and refunding certain

outstanding bonds of the District, providing for the levy of a direct annual tax sufficient to pay the principal and interest on said bonds, and authorizing the sale of said bonds to the purchaser thereof.

It was moved by Member Ritchie, seconded by Member Portz, to approve the resolution as presented. Roll Call Vote.

Member Folk, yea

Member Ritchie, yea

Member Portz, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Motion carried.

There were no gifts to the district this month.

It was moved by Member Simmons, seconded by Member Folk, to approve the following personnel items:

- *Approve the resignation of Thomas Eden as River Bend Middle School History Teacher, effective the end of the 2025-2026 school year.*
- *Approve the resignation of Thomas Eden as 7th Grade Boys Basketball Coach, effective the end of the 2025-2026 school year.*
- *Approve the resignation of Brianna Beale as Speech Language Pathologist for River Bend schools, effective the end of the 2025-2026 school year.*
- *Approve the resignation of Stacy Gates as Fulton High School Student Council Advisor, effective the end of the 2025-2026 school year.*
- *Approve the internal transfer of Julie Miner from 4th Grade Teacher at Fulton Elementary School to Math Interventionist at Fulton Elementary School, effective the start of the 2026-2027 school year.*
- *Approve the resignations of Emily Phillips and Emilee Droegmiller as National Honor Society Co-Sponsors at Fulton High School, effective the end of the 2025-2026 school year.*
- *Approve the maternity leave request of Sydney Manon, starting May 13, 2026 through the end of the 2025-2026 school year.*
- *Approve the resignation of Ally Curley as Sophomore Volleyball Coach at Fulton High School, effective the end of the 2025-2026 school year.*
- *Approve the resignation of Haylee Mussman as Math Teacher at Fulton High School, effective the end of the 2025-2026 school year.*
- *Approve the transfer of Shelby Rolston from Math Teacher at River Bend Middle School to Math Teacher at Fulton High School, effective the start of the 2026-2027 school year.*
- *Offer a 2nd Year Contract beginning the 2026-2027 school year to Chris Marten, Industrial Ag, High School.*
- *Approve the maternity leave request of Samantha Whitney, effective April 8, 2026 through the end of the 2025-26 school year.*
- *Approve the internal transfer of Brianna Stuart from Math Teacher at River Bend Middle School to 4th Grade Teacher at Fulton Elementary School, effective the 2026-2027 school year.*
- *Approve the internal transfer of Josie Helm from 1st Grade Teacher to 5th Grade Teacher at Fulton Elementary School, effective the 2026-2027 school year.*
- *Approve the recommendation to hire Kraig Schipper as Social Studies teacher at River Bend Middle School, effective the 2026-2027 school year.*

Roll Call Vote.

Member Folk, yea

Member Ritchie, yea

Member Portz, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Motion carried.

There was no closed session.

The next Regular Board Meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 20, 2026, at 6:30pm at the River Bend District Office.

It was moved by Member Simmons, seconded by Member Ritchie, to adjourn the meeting at 8:28pm. Voice Vote, all yea, motion carried.

Dan Portz, President
Board of Education
River Bend CUSD #2
Whiteside County

Mary Simmons, Secretary
Board of Education
River Bend CUSD #2
Whiteside County