

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

River Bend Community Unit School District #2

October 15, 2025

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of River Bend Community Unit School District #2, Whiteside County, Illinois, was held on October 15, 2025, in the River Bend District Office.

President Portz called the Regular Meeting to order at 6:35pm. Member Meyers was appointed Secretary Pro-Tem. Upon roll call by the Secretary Pro-Tem, the following board members were present: Elizabeth Falls, Kyle Folk, Andrew Meyers, Dan Portz, and Travis Temple, Absent: Jay Ritchie and Mary Simmons. 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, Kris Guenther, Lauren Guenther, Michele James, John Lambert, Jeremy Leitzen, Haylee Mussman, Jessa Read, Tara Read, and Taylor Whitney; 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 if they enjoy halloween and a favorite memory or activity.

Dr. Hogue added Negotiation Team to the Superintendent's Report section.

It was moved by Member Meyers, seconded by Member Falls, 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. Ms. Droegmiller 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. Parsons introduced Lauren Guenther and Jessa Read, the Overall Steamers of the Quarter. Both students are very involved in extra curricular activities and advise underclassmen to get involved as well. Mrs. Bowers shared the changes the high school is looking to make with their credit recovery process. Many of the changes are just language changes to clarify and clear questions up. Member Folk asked how the new cell phone policy was going at the high school. Mr. Parsons answered that it is going well, both students and staff like it, students are staying more engaged and not feeling the constant need to check their notifications. Paige shared that she likes that now all teachers have the same policy for phones.

Mr. Henrekin had nothing to add to, or highlight from, his report. Member Folk asked if benchmark scores would be going home to parents for review. Mr. Henrekin stated they would be sent home prior to Parent/Teacher Conferences so they could be discussed at that time.

The elementary school also had nothing to add to, or highlight from, their report. Member Falls asked if the school has after action reporting on drills. Mr. Hoeser stated that administration sends out an email after drills covering things that were noticed, both good and items that need to be worked on. At the beginning of the year there are typically rostering hiccups with new staff learning the app so administration will work with them one-on-one to provide more training.

Paige shared information from a survey she sent to students asking for feedback on the potential building additions. Most students had heard about the potential additions and had discussed it with their parents.

Dr. Hogue shared information from the October River Bend Education Foundation Meeting. The foundation approved around \$14,000 in mini grants for teachers as well as approximately \$4,000 in Martin Grant requests for teachers to attend conferences and take college courses.

Dr. Hogue shared some highlights from the Citizens Advisory Committee meeting.

- Dr. Hogue shared construction survey results with the committee members and shared updated construction plans for the middle school gymnasium. The district is looking at current bonding options to bond for the cost of construction of the gymnasium as opposed to putting a referendum vote on the ballot. The district is looking to get costs under \$12 million to be able to bond and use current district funds for the new middle school gymnasium. The district would then look to put up for referendum vote the cost of the multi-purpose space at the high school and roof coating for all of the buildings.
- Mrs. Parsons shared the Steamer Success Indicators with the committee members and the district's plan for future work with the indicators.
- Dr. Hogue and Mr. Henrekin shared survey results regarding the Anxious Generation and social media use. Mr. Henrekin received many survey results from both students and parents and will work on compiling all the responses. There was also a toolkit provided to parents to help them navigate how to use social media with their children.

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

- Review of Treasurer's Report; the district continues to see decreased revenue and the spending down of reserves.
- Dr. Hogue reviewed the FY25 audit; overall clean audit, the district's financial profile score dropped from 3.9 to 3.45.
- Dr. Hogue shared three levy options – flat, 9.9%, and 12%; the committee would like to go with the 12% levy option to capture all available funds.
- Mark Hansen with PMA presented financing scenarios for the potential construction projects.

Dr. Hogue shared that overall enrollment remains steady.

The audit presentation from Benning Group, LLC has been postponed to the November Board of Education meeting.

Michele James with Veregy presented the board members with updated options for the middle school gymnasium addition where one to two classrooms and the fitness room are removed to bring costs down. Michele shared that once the district decides it is moving forward with building the new gymnasium, Veregy and the district can sit down and iron out what is necessary for the gymnasium so bids can be gathered. Once bids have been gathered, there may be an opportunity to add back in items that were initially removed to decrease costs.

Dr. Hogue went over the three levy options that had been shared with the finance committee. Board members were in agreement to move forward with the 12% levy.

Dr. Hogue shared the district has seven school bus leases that are up for renewal. The district will purchase two of the currently leased buses, trade in one of the currently owned buses, and lease six new ones. This will help keep lease costs down, while keeping buses that are in good condition.

Dr. Hogue shared that this is the last year of the current collective bargaining agreement between the school district and the union. He would like to have the first negotiation meeting in November, with an additional one or two prior to winter break. He asked board members to let him know if they would like to be a part of the negotiation team.

It was moved by Member Temple, seconded by Member Falls, to approve the consent agenda, including the September 17, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes, September Treasurer's Report, and October Bills recommended for payment in the amount of \$386,623.78, subject to audit. Roll Call Vote.

Member Falls, yea

Member Portz, yea

Member Folk, yea

Member Temple, yea

Member Meyers, yea

Motion carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended approval of estimated board member expenses for the Triple I Conference in Chicago in November. Member Portz is the only board member attending this year, he would like to attend two focus sessions on Friday.

It was moved by Member Falls, seconded by Member Temple, to approve estimated board member expenses for the Triple I Conference. Roll Call Vote.

Member Falls, yea

Member Portz, yea

Member Folk, yea

Member Temple, yea

Member Meyers, yea

Motion carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended approving the request of a sophomore student to enroll in dual credit courses at SVCC for the second semester.

It was moved by Member Meyers, seconded by Member Falls, to approve the request of a high school sophomore to enroll in dual credit courses at SVCC. Roll Call Vote.

Member Falls, yea

Member Portz, yea

Member Folk, yea

Member Temple, yea

Member Meyers, yea

Motion carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended approval of the renewal proposal for Workman's Compensation Insurance from Illinois Public Risk Fund (IPRF). The cost has increased and is in line with other insurance premium increases. Member Temple suggested meeting with the insurance company to make sure the three categories shown for our workers are accurate and to see if anything can be broken down into more groups to save costs.

It was moved by Member Temple, seconded by Member Meyers, to approve the Workman's Compensation Insurance proposal as presented by IPRF for an annual premium of \$106,290.00. Roll Call Vote.

Member Falls, yea

Member Portz, yea

Member Folk, yea

Member Temple, yea

Member Meyers, yea

Motion carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended approval of Activity Fund Surety Bonds for the secretaries. This is an annual renewal for staff who write checks out of the activity funds at the buildings.

It was moved by Member Meyers, seconded by Member Folk, to approve District Activity Surety Bonds for secretaries for an annual premium of \$200.00. Roll Call Vote.

Member Falls, yea

Member Portz, yea

Member Folk, yea

Member Temple, yea

Member Meyers, yea

Motion carried.

Dr. Hogue shared that the district received \$1,000 from the Parker Family for high school boys and girls golf and \$1,000 from Judith Lower for high school football.

It was moved by Member Folk, seconded by Member Falls to approve gifts to the district as presented. Roll Call Vote.

Member Falls, yea

Member Portz, yea

Member Folk, yea

Member Temple, yea

Member Meyers, yea

Motion carried.

It was moved by Member Temple, seconded by Member Meyers, to approve the following personnel items:

- *Approve the following volunteer Robotics coaches for the 2025-26 school year: Shea Grennan and Logan Seesser.*
- *Approve the resignation of Mick Ryan as Buildings and Grounds Director for River Bend, effective October 15, 2025.*
- *Approve the recommendation to hire Victoria Ashmore as Night Custodian at Fulton Elementary School.*

Roll Call Vote.

Member Falls, yea

Member Portz, yea

Member Folk, yea

Member Temple, yea

Member Meyers, yea

Motion carried.

There was no closed session.

The next Regular Board Meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 19, 2025, at 6:30pm at the River Bend District Office.

It was moved by Member Meyers, seconded by Member Falls, to adjourn the meeting at 9:26pm. 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