

**BOARD OF EDUCATION
HINCKLEY-BIG ROCK COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT #429**



**Regular Meeting
August 13, 2025**

The meeting begins at 6:30 PM in the Hinckley-Big Rock High School Library.
This meeting is also live streamed for public
viewing: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCcNJ6ijnqwe0nF8UpSCsB8A>.

- 1) **Call to Order - Regular Meeting of the Hinckley-Big Rock Board of Education**
The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM by President Greg Pritchard
- 2) **Roll Call**
Policy 2:220 Board of Education Meeting Procedure
Present: Abigail Barrett, Greg Pritchard, Debi White, Tim Badal, Myia Sittig and Jack Haines
Also Present: Dr. Jessica Sonntag and Student Representatives: Savannah McMurtrie and Matthew Badal
Absent: Darrin Gengler and Student Representative Alex Casanas
- 3) **Approval of the Agenda**
Policy 2:220 Board of Education Meeting Procedure
Motion to approve the agenda was made by Jack Haines and seconded by Abigail Barrett, passed 6-0,
Abigail Barrett: Yea, Debi White: Yea, Tim Badal: Yea, Greg Pritchard: Yea, Jack Haines: Yea, and Myia Sittig: Yea
- 4) **Consent Agenda**
 - A. **Minutes** - Regular Meeting and Public Hearing Minutes
 - B. **Treasurer's Report**
 - C. **Bills and Payroll**
 - D. **Personnel Report**

Dr. Sonntag made a note about the personnel report being revised before the board meeting.
Motion to approve the consent agenda was made by Jack Haines and seconded by Tim Badal, passed 6-0,
Abigail Barrett: Yea, Debi White: Yea, Tim Badal: Yea, Greg Pritchard: Yea, Jack Haines: Yea, and Myia Sittig: Yea
- 5) **Royal Shout Out**
This month's Shout Out went to the O&M staff, including our student workers. There is a lot that goes into preparing our facilities for the start of the school year and we want to acknowledge their hard work and dedication!
- 6) **Citizens Request to Address the Board**-none
- 7) **Committee Updates**
 - A. Buildings, Grounds & Transportation-This committee did not meet this summer. The next scheduled meeting is September 3. Greg Pritchard reviewed many summer projects that were completed to continue to maintain our facilities. The projects were carry-overs from FY25 discussions and were funded using reserve funds. These projects included: the replacement of the HVAC system and the glycol flush at the middle school; the flush will be concluded by October. The LED replacement at the high school is almost complete; they are just finishing up the online access portal. The technology infrastructure including the phones, servers and switches is just about completed, we are just needing the printers to be updated. The fence at the elementary school was replaced.
 - B. IVVC- The IVVC Board of Controls met on August 6, 2025. The Joint Agreement was reviewed, and a renewed commitment from the Board to follow it. There was a specific focus on ensuring

that the funding formula and administrative leadership from member districts were understood and followed.

- C. IBCC-IBCC will hold their first meeting in September. The committee will discuss the 2026/2027 calendar and prepare it for approval by the Board in December. If you have feedback for the committee to consider regarding the school calendar, please email suggestionbox@hbr429.org.

8) **Student Representative Update**

Matthew Badal and Savannah McMurtrie attended this month's meeting but there was no report.

9) **Administrative Update**

A. FY25 End of Year Financial Review

Dr. Sonntag explained that our annual summary landed exactly as projected. Our audit is currently underway, and we should have audited numbers coming soon.

B. Summer Updates & Looking Ahead

For K-8, summer school was pushed to the end of summer. For high school we had 1 session instead of 3. Providing transportation to those students who were in need. 31 courses were recovered and those who used transportation finished all of their coursework.

Though we had a long personnel list of new hires we were unable to fill some positions: Spanish Teacher, Early Childhood Teacher and Elementary Special Education Teacher.

Carolyn Taylor is willing to come out of retirement to teach Spanish this year. Ms. Taylor taught Spanish at HBRHS for over 30 years.

Amber Murphy will work as an Inclusion Facilitator and Blair Rodgers will serve as the lead teacher with Christi Stonebraker as the Instructional Assistant.

HBR is participating in a Grow Your Own teacher preparation model, using a job embedded paraprofessional to teacher pathway program in partnership with Bloomboard, Inc. This program allows teacher interns to work as paraprofessionals while obtaining their teaching degree/licensure in return for a commitment to work at HBR when their program is completed. This is one creative way to recruit and retain highly qualified teachers for our students. We have a Hinckley alumni working with us as a paraprofessional for 3 years and then once graduated will work as a special education teacher for 3 years.

10) **Discussion**

A. FY26 Draft Budget

Dr. Sonntag presented the FY26 tentative budget. Two important things to note in this year's budget: we are intentionally spending down the operations and maintenance reserves to stay below the newly legislated allowable caps and Special Education costs have increased significantly over the past two fiscal years, close to a million dollars. We have seen a steady rise in enrolled students with needs that we are not able to support in our school setting, resulting in a greater number of students attending private day school settings best equipped to meet these needs. Additionally, we have added paraprofessionals to support student needs in the district.

Some of our funding has gone down. Our district has moved from a Tier 2 EBF funding to Tier 3 EBF funding. This decreases additional funding we have previously received by 23%. Moving to Tier 3 is a positive as it indicates that we are approaching adequacy of personnel and services for our diverse learners and need less funding to do so, but unfortunately, we lose funding. Title II funding is not allocated in the budget yet. It should be provided in the budget hearing in September.

We will still end the year with just over 10 million dollars in the reserves which is 4 times higher than our board policy requires us to have in our reserves.

B. District Goals 2025-2026

Every year ISBE gives a state designation to every school. Last school year our Elementary school was targeted in special education. Which means our students with identified learning disabilities growth did not perform at the rate that the state sets as a target. With this, HBRES was put on a 4 year school improvement plan. The draft superintendent, district, and building goals were reviewed, with a deliberate emphasis on curriculum mapping and evaluation throughout the school year. This process is critical to ensuring that our teaching and learning

remain aligned with essential skills, ultimately leading to measurable student growth and achievement.

C. **School Improvement Plan**

The administrative team and Dr. Sonntag have planned for more targeted professional development, intervention materials, and data collection and analysis. With the funding provided by the 4 year school improvement plan, we can pay a teacher a stipend to work with teams to develop, map, and review curriculum. The administrative team is looking at this as a positive and an opportunity for all areas of our curriculum to review and map out what is or isn't working.

D. **Policy Review Schedule**

At the Board Retreat in June, the Board expressed interest in reviewing and understanding policy, Dr. Sonntag has provided a policy review schedule. Over the next year and a half the board and Dr. Sonntag will review the board policy. This would be an opportunity to amend or revise our policy to better align with our District.

11) **Action**

A. **Motion to approve the contract for speech language therapy as presented**

Motion to approve the contract for speech language therapy as presented was made by Jack Haines and seconded by Abigail Barrett, passed 6-0,

Abigail Barrett: Yea, Debi White: Yea, Tim Badal: Yea, Greg Pritchard: Yea, Jack Haines: Yea, and Myia Sittig: Yea

B. **Motion to approve Press Issue 118 as presented**

Motion to approve Press Issue 118 as presented was made by Debi White and seconded by Abigail Barrett, passed 6-0,

Abigail Barrett: Yea, Debi White: Yea, Tim Badal: Yea, Greg Pritchard: Yea, Jack Haines: Yea, and Myia Sittig: Yea

C. **Motion to approve the substitute pay rates for the 2025-2026 school year**

Motion to approve the substitute pay rates for the 2025-2026 school year was made by Abigail Barrett and seconded by Jack Haines, passed 5-0, 1 Abstention

Abigail Barrett: Yea, Debi White: Yea, Tim Badal: Abstain, Greg Pritchard: Yea, Jack Haines: Yea, and Myia Sittig: Yea

D. **Motion to approve the 2025-2027 School Improvement Plan as presented**

Motion to approve the 2025-2027 School Improvement Plan as presented was made by Abigail Barrett and seconded by Tim Badal, passed 6-0,

Abigail Barrett: Yea, Debi White: Yea, Tim Badal: Yea, Greg Pritchard: Yea, Jack Haines: Yea, and Myia Sittig: Yea

E. **Motion to approve the athletic sponsorship fundraiser for the 2025-2026 school year.**

Motion to approve the athletic sponsorship fundraiser for the 2025-2026 school year was made by Abigail Barrett and seconded by Tim Badal, passed 6-0,

Abigail Barrett: Yea, Debi White: Yea, Tim Badal: Yea, Greg Pritchard: Yea, Jack Haines: Yea, and Myia Sittig: Yea

12) **FOIA**

A. **Smart Procure: quarterly expenses**

B. **Smart Procure: staff name, building, email, and phone extensions**

13) **Agenda Items for Next Meeting**

14) **Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn was made by Jack Haines and seconded by Debi Whaite, passed 6-0 with a unanimous voice vote, Aye at 7:37pm

Abigail Barrett: Aye, Debi White: Aye, Tim Badal: Aye, Myia Sittig: Aye, Jack Haines: Aye, and Greg Pritchard: Aye

The next regular meeting of the Hinckley-Big Rock CUSD #429 Board of Education will be September 17th, 2025 at 6:30 PM in the Hinckley-Big Rock High School Library.

