

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



**Regular Meeting**

**March 19, 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 6:31 PM by President Tim Badal

**2) Roll Call**

Policy 2:220 Board of Education Meeting Procedure

Present: Abigail Barrett, Greg Pritchard, Darrin Gengler, Jack Haines, Debi White, Deb Winkle and Tim Badal

Also Present: Dr. Jessica Sonntag and Student Representatives: Savannah McMurtrie, Matthew Badal and 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, 1 Abstention

Abigail Barrett: Yea, Debi White: Abstain, Darrin Gengler: Yea, Greg Pritchard: Yea, Jack Haines: Yea, Deb Winkle: Yea and Tim Badal: Yea

**4) Consent Agenda**

A. **Minutes** - Regular Meeting and Executive Session Minutes

B. **Treasurer's Report**

C. **Bills and Payroll**

D. **Personnel Report**

E. **Renewal of certified staff as submitted**

F. **Administrator Contract renewals for the 2025-2026 school year:**

- Becky Lauer, HS Principal
- Bonnie Osborne, Director of Student Services
- Brandon Kriesch, Director of Operations

Motion to approve the consent agenda was made by Greg Pritchard and seconded by Deb Winkle, passed 7-0

Abigail Barrett: Yea, Debi White: Yea, Darrin Gengler: Yea, Greg Pritchard: Yea, Jack Haines: Yea, Deb Winkle: Yea and Tim Badal: Yea

After voting, President Tim Badal commented that he meant to abstain and apologized for voting on the consent agenda. There was a personal conflict of interest on the personnel report.

**5) Royal Shout Out**

Basketball Team, Coaches and Players, HBR Student Teachers and the Middle School Career Day

Presenters were recognized this month as well as the Ellwood Museum Frame of Mind 2025 contest winners.

**6) Citizens Request to Address the Board**

Aaron White addressed the Board about the easement agreement between his home and the Hinckley-Big Rock School District. Mr. White is requesting that the motion on tonight's agenda get postponed to further the discussion on the terms listed in the agreement.

7) **Presentation**

Sarah Quirk, the Village of Hinckley President, addressed the Board on updates and potential developments in Hinckley. Royal Estates is projected to build 55 homes with 10 already under contract and breaking ground in the next month and an estimated timeline of 18-20 months. On the north end of Royal Estates will be a new Hinckley park for ages 5-11 years old. Sarah explained that the Village is prioritizing safety, wanting to fix sidewalks and repair lead lines in town. The Village invites the community to the open house on April 26th, to see the newly refurbished Village Hall.

8) **Committee Updates**

- A. **IBCC-** Meeting was held on March 12th, 2025. Tim Badal updated the Board. The discussion on chronic absenteeism continued. They discussed the importance of teacher contact with students and parents and came up with creative solutions to use going forward. Expectation of staff for the elementary school drop off day was discussed. The committee is working putting together a list of expectations going forward. The last topic discussed was staff attendance and the impact on teaching and learning was also discussed. The rise of personal days being used before a long break or holiday weekends and the true definition of mental health days for our staff will be discussed further at the May meeting.
- B. **IVVC-** Met on March 5th, 2025. Debi White attended this meeting and updated the board. The 25/26 school calendar was approved. The next meeting is April 2nd. The 50th anniversary celebration and the showcase will be April 16th from 5:30-7:30pm. Dr. Sonntag added that the teaching staff has started negotiations and she is serving as one of the board members. As the program continues to grow, Dr. Sonntag is looking for other ways to engage our students in skill and trade based learning.
- C. **Buildings & Grounds-**No Report, the next scheduled meeting is April 2nd in the Hinckley-Big Rock District Conference Room.

9) **Student Representative Update**

- A. **Vaping Update**  
The student representatives pointed out that the data from the sensors at the high school is showing an overall decrease in vaping in the building, with a significant decrease noted in the girl's restrooms. The boys have seen an increase in vaping in the hallway bathroom due to a high rate of incidents in early February; however, each week following there has been a continued decrease in vape usage in the boys bathroom as well.
- B. **Operation Prom Night**  
Students will participate in a mock prom crash on April 30th. This event will involve a crash with a coordinated rescue by our First Responders from Hinckley and Big Rock. A group of HBR students will also be involved helping to make the whole scene more realistic and personal, while reminding students of the dangers of impaired and distracted driving. The Middle School Student Advisory Committee was also discussed. The Student Representatives met with the middle school students on March 19th and discussed various topics. They mentioned they would like to have pep rallies at the beginning of the year, the water at the school has improved and they would like to see a new track put in.

10) **Administrative Update**

- A. **Amended Budget**  
Dr. Sonntag explained that the district will need to adopt an amended budget this year. This is related to operational funds. The district embarked on capital projects earlier this year that went over the projected budget for this year. There will be a tentative amended budget presented at the April Board meeting with a budget hearing in June. This is due to the fact that there is not 30 days between the May and June Board meetings and we are required to have the tentative budget on display for at least 30 days.

B. Future Planning

Students have requested the opportunity to dual roster for sports. IHSA does allow this and HBRHS is one of the last schools in our conference to do so. After discussion with our co-curricular committee, it was decided to allow the students to do so with coach and parent permission. This not only offers our students more opportunities, but it will allow our programs to grow.

A Chess program will begin at the elementary school. Tuesdays and Thursdays, 3-4:15pm starting in April. There will be a late shuttle bus service departing from the elementary school to the middle school at 4:05pm so all students can stay later to attend.

HBR has been awarded for the 2nd year in a row, the Meta 2025 Data Center Action Grant.

Those proceeds are going to Susan Clark to procure earbuds that allow for real-time translation services between the school, students and families from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

The district is also writing for a Preschool for All grant with the hope to offer more families in the community to start with us at age 3.

Currently, HBR's Athletic Director is a teacher who is given release time and a stipend. To provide the best experience for all of our stakeholders, we have identified a need for more leadership in this area. Many districts in our conference have an administrator who oversees athletics and activities, in addition to attendance, behavior, and more so that the Principals can focus on teaching and learning and managing building operations. This idea was discussed as a potential option for HBR.

11) **Action**

A. Motion to approve the 2025-2026 student fees as submitted

Motion to approve the 2025-2026 student fees as submitted was made by Jack Haines and seconded by Darrin Gengler, passed 7-0

Abigail Barrett: Yea, Debi White: Yea, Darrin Gengler: Yea, Greg Pritchard: Yea, Jack Haines: Yea, Deb Winkle: Yea and Tim Badal: Yea

B. Motion to approve the engagement letter for Newkirk & Associates as the Independent Auditor  
Motion to approve the engagement letter for Newkirk & Associates as the Independent Auditor was made by Abigail Barrett and seconded by Deb Winkle, passed 7-0

Abigail Barrett: Yea, Debi White: Yea, Darrin Gengler: Yea, Greg Pritchard: Yea, Jack Haines: Yea, Deb Winkle: Yea and Tim Badal: Yea

C. Motion to approve the right of way easement agreements for 520 & 530 West Lincoln Highway  
Motion to approve the right of way easement agreements for 520 & 530 West Lincoln Highway was made by Jack Haines and seconded by Darrin Gengler. Gengler asked for discussion prior to voting on this motion, seeking the Board to table this motion until Mr. White's concerns mentioned in public comment could be addressed. Members Winkle, Pritchard, Barrett, and Haines indicated that the easement has been discussed at previous other meetings and that the agreement was drafted by the District's legal counsel, hence protecting the district while continuing to provide the access to the homeowners. It was determined that the Board would vote on this topic tonight.

Motion passed 5-1, 1 Abstention

Abigail Barrett: Yea, Debi White: Abstain, Darrin Gengler: No, Greg Pritchard: Yea, Jack Haines: Yea, Deb Winkle: Yea and Tim Badal: Yea

D. Motion to approve the LED lighting upgrade in FY26 for the HBRHS and HBRHS soccer fields with the 50% ComEd Incentive as submitted

Motion to approve the LED lighting upgrade in FY26 for the HBRHS and HBRHS soccer fields with the 50% ComEd Incentive as submitted was made by Darrin Gengler and seconded by Deb Winkle, passed 7-0

Abigail Barrett: Yea, Debi White: Yea, Darrin Gengler: Yea, Greg Pritchard: Yea, Jack Haines: Yea, Deb Winkle: Yea and Tim Badal: Yea

E. Motion to approve the parent/ student handbook revisions as submitted

Motion to approve the parent/ student handbook revisions as submitted was made by Jack Haines and seconded by Abigail Barrett, passed 7-0

Abigail Barrett: Yea, Debi White: Yea, Darrin Gengler: Yea, Greg Pritchard: Yea, Jack Haines: Yea, Deb Winkle: Yea and Tim Badal: Yea

12) **FOIA**

A. Joel Orozco, Workforce Development, SMART Local 265

13) **Agenda Items for Next Meeting**

**Motion to Enter Executive Session at 8:13pm**

This motion, made by Jack Haines and seconded by Darrin Gengler, passed 7-0

Abigail Barrett: Yea, Darrin Gengler: Yea, Debi White: Yea, Jack Haines: Yea, Deb Winkle: Yea, Greg Pritchard: Yea, Tim Badal: Yea

14) **Executive Session**

- A. The selection of a person to fill a public office, as defined in the Open Meetings Act, including a vacancy in a public office, when the public body is given power to appoint under law or ordinance, or the discipline, performance or removal of the occupant of a public office, when the public body is given power to remove the occupant under law or ordinance. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(3)
- B. Litigation, when an action against, affecting or on behalf of the particular public body has been filed and is pending before a court or administrative tribunal, or when the public body finds that an action is probable or imminent, in which case the basis for the finding shall be recorded and entered into the minutes of the closed meeting. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(11)

**Motion to Exit Executive Session at 10:12pm**

This motion, made by Jack Haines and seconded by Debi White, passed 7-0

Abigail Barrett: Yea, Darrin Gengler: Yea, Debi White: Yea, Jack Haines: Yea, Deb Winkle: Yea, Greg Pritchard: Yea, Tim Badal: Yea

15) **Adjournment**

The Board of Education adjourned the meeting at 10:12pm

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Debi White and seconded by Deb Winkle, passed 7-0

Abigail Barrett: Yea, Debi White: Yea, Darrin Gengler: Yea, Greg Pritchard: Yea, Jack Haines: Yea, Deb Winkle: Yea and Tim Badal: Yea

The next regular meeting of the Hinckley-Big Rock CUSD #429 Board of Education will be April 16, 2025 at 6:30 PM in the Hinckley-Big Rock High School Library.