

MINUTES OF THE
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING
Of the Board of Education
Riverside School District No. 96
Held on Wednesday, October 8, 2025
Hollywood Elementary School

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING

20-559 A. President Wesley Muirheid called the Regular Business Meeting to order at 6:15 p.m. and on roll call the following members were recorded as being present:

	Mr. Barostti
	Ms. Kachlic
	Mr. Hunt
	Ms. Claps
	Mr. Muirheid
Absent:	Ms. Gunn
	Mr. Olech

Also in attendance were Superintendent Martha Ryan-Toye, Director of Teaching and Learning Angela Dolezal, Director of Special Education and Student Services, Interim Director of Finance Mark Kuzniewski, Director of Technology Molly Marquardt, Principal Erin Dwyer, the Board of Education recording clerk, a staff member, and a Riverside TV videographer.

20-560 B. A motion was made by Mr. Barsotti and supported by Mr. Hunt to adjourn to Closed Session for the following reasons:

- The appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the District or legal counsel for the District, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee or against legal counsel for the District to determine its validity. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1)

The motion carried on the following roll call vote:

Ayes:	Ms. Claps
	Mr. Olech, arrived at 6:25 pm
	Mr. Barsotti
	Mr. Hunt
	Ms. Kachlic
	Mr. Muirheid
Absent:	Ms. Gunn
Nays:	None

C. Return to Open Session.

The board returned to open session at 7:05 pm.

D. Welcome by Hollywood School Principal Erin Dwyer.

Principal Dwyer welcomed the Board to Hollywood School and shared highlights of the happenings at Hollywood School.

E. Public Comment/Response.

There were no public comments.

F. Changes to the Agenda.

There were no changes to the agenda.

G. Committee Reports

1. Education Committee - Mr. Hunt.

- a. Strategic Plan Goal 1 (Student Growth and Achievement), Goal 2 (Learning Environment and Culture), and Goal 5 (Stewardship of Resources) Updates.
1. Multi-tiered systems of support and social-emotional learning.
 - Director of Special Education Nora Geraghty updated the board on the district's strategic initiative to refine and improve the implementation of a comprehensive, consistent, district-wide Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) for Social-Emotional Learning (SEL). The goal is to continue working toward a proactive, preventive framework that supports the whole child, ensuring that every student has the social and emotional skills necessary to thrive academically and personally.
 - A Multi-Tiered System of Support is a framework that integrates data and instruction to support students' academic and social-emotional needs. It is organized into three tiers of support:
 - Tier 1: Universal, high-quality instruction and support for all students within their classrooms and the school environment. This is generally sufficient for approximately 80% of students.
 - Tier 2: Targeted, small-group interventions for students requiring additional support, which can be classroom-based or supported by additional staff. This is typically a population of approximately 15% of a school community.
 - Tier 3: Intensive, individualized interventions for students with the most significant needs. This generally represents approximately 5% of a given school community.
 - The district is intentionally modeling our more clearly defined SEL MTSS procedures on our existing, successful Academic MTSS framework. This integrated approach is strategic, promoting efficiency by using familiar processes, fostering a holistic view of student needs, reinforcing shared ownership of student success among all staff, and enhancing our data-driven decision-making capabilities.
 - Our district team, led by the Director of Teaching and Learning, the Director of Special Education and Student Services, and the Student Intervention and Support Coordinator, is currently engaged in foundational work across three key areas to ensure a successful implementation:
 - Comprehensive Needs Analysis: To ensure our efforts are appropriately targeted, we are conducting a thorough needs analysis. This process involves reviewing existing data (attendance, behavior referrals, climate surveys), gathering new feedback from staff about their understanding and use of current referral practices, and inventorying current MTSS and SEL practices across the district, which currently vary in some respects between buildings. This includes participating in Data review days across the buildings, working with school staff to understand their buildings' referral processes and existing problem-solving team processes, and understanding how staff currently access support for

- students.
 - Consistent Data Review Procedures: We are establishing standardized protocols for how all schools will collect, review, and act upon SEL-related data. This includes identifying key data points for review, creating a more uniform meeting protocol for school-based MTSS teams, and continuing a district-wide calendar for data meetings. This systematic approach ensures equity and allows us to continue moving from reactive to proactive in addressing student needs. It will also allow for a consistent understanding of a standardized process across buildings.
 - Development of a Tiered Intervention Menu of supports. The foundation of a strong MTSS is universal support for all students. We are developing an updated menu of evidence-based, practical Tier 1 strategies that all teachers can use in their classrooms. This menu includes techniques for building positive relationships, explicitly teaching social skills and emotional regulation, creating calm and predictable classroom routines, and providing positive feedback.
 - Next Steps:
 - To support our educators in this work, our immediate next step is to identify and implement consistent practices across buildings for tracking, identifying, and helping students who are demonstrating ongoing need. Additionally, District Leadership will incorporate specific training for teachers on classroom strategies to continue supporting Tier 1 practices and classroom-based Tier 2 strategies.
 - Our ultimate goal is to build on our efforts to equip every teacher with the skills and confidence to support their students' social, emotional, and behavioral needs, thereby creating learning environments where all children can be successful.
 - Ms. Geraghty answered the board's questions, and the Board thanked her for this presentation.
2. Technology Update 2025-2026.
- Director of Technology Molly Marquardt updated the board on the technology direction for the 2025-2026 school year. The topics that will be covered will be AI use (Guidance/logistics, Policy and Professional Development), Digital Citizenship, Student devices roadmap for the 2026-2027 school year, and potential change over to Gmail for staff.
 - A1
 - Develop a District-wide AI Plan that addresses the District's approach to the integration of AI;
 - Based on the District-wide AI Plan, establish AI Responsible Use Guidelines to address the responsible use of AI in the District by students and staff;
 - Ensure that AI-enabled tools comply with State and federal law.
 - Ensure that staff receive training and students receive instruction on the appropriate use of AI.
 - Review the District's AI Plan and AI Responsible Use Guidelines annually and update them as needed.
 - Board Policy 6:235 was referenced.
 - A committee is being formed of teachers and administrators to review guidelines and help develop an implementation plan.

- Incorporate the AI guidelines into the AI committee; create opportunities to train and inform parents, e.g., by scheduling a parent night.
 - Digital Citizenship
 - Work to embed digital citizenship into the curriculum for students.
 - Utilizing resources such as Common Sense Education to create targeted lessons
 - Classroom teachers review effective practices and safe use of devices with students in their classrooms before handing them out each year.
 - Highlights responsibility, respect for devices, safety, and use, and how to access classroom resources for the year
 - These practices are collected from resources we have, such as Securly, Dell, and Common Sense Media.
 - Student Devices Roadmap
 - Students will have the content they create in their classes stored on their devices, and can continue to develop and build on what they have made.
 - This applies to native device apps, such as camera, video, notes, and others.
 - Ownership of their device, the care of their device, and the responsibility of their device.
 - Students can make and save their work on their district-issued devices without having to start fresh in a new school year on a new device.
 - Students will be logged in to their district accounts and will not have to reset them every year.
 - Teachers can spend time with their students and engage them with their devices, rather than spend time getting students familiar with them.
 - Creates a consistent cycle of device replacements each school year.
 - Student device movement plans were shared for both elementary and Hauser.
 - Utilizes device lifecycles while ensuring device security.
 - Change over to Gmail for staff.
 - D96 currently uses a single sign-on to Google across curricular platforms in the classroom that are already in use.
 - The district would like to create a password resetting cycle similar to the device replacement cycle.
 - Ms. Marquardt responded to the Board's questions, and the Board thanked her for her presentation.
3. District 96 eLearning.
- Director of Teaching and Learning Angela Dolezal shared that the Illinois School Code (105 ILCS 5/10-20.56) permits students to receive instruction electronically in place of the district's scheduled emergency days, provided that students engage in at least five (5) clock hours of instruction or school work.
 - eLearning plans must be renewed for a three-year term.
 - Riverside School District 96 first approved three eLearning days on December 18, 2019, for the 2019–20 through 2021–22 school years. On October 19, 2022, the Board approved five eLearning days for the 2022–23 through 2024–25 school years.
 - This is being brought before the board today to request renewal of the District 96 eLearning Plan for the 2025–26 through 2027–28 school years.
 - Key Components of the District 96 eLearning Plan were discussed.
 - The board thanked Dr. Dolezal for this information.
 - A public hearing will be held on Wednesday, October 15, 2025, followed by a request

for action at the Regular Business Meeting that evening.

2. Finance Committee - Ms. Claps/Facility Committee - Ms. Olech..
 - a. Strategic Plan Goal 5 (Stewardship of Resources) Update.
 - i. Finance Update.
 - Interim Director of Finance Mark Kuzniewski presented a historical overview of the district's fund balances, highlighting the district's Policy 4:20, which establishes a 40% fund balance threshold. The district's fund balance is currently showing healthy growth, which the board acknowledged as a positive development.
 - Mr. Kuzniewski offered a different perspective on future capital expenditures, expressing reservations about the district's projected surplus. He noted several factors that could impact the bottom line:
 - Increased Special Education Costs: Transportation costs for special education have risen over the past two years, with a recent \$600,000 transfer into the transportation fund.
 - New Collective Bargaining Agreement: A new agreement, which accounts for 80% of the district's overall education fund, will also affect the budget.
 - The board thanked Mr. Kuzniewski for his assessment, stating that his insights will help them prioritize capital projects. They agreed that as they approach the 40% fund balance threshold, a clearer picture of future expenditures will be crucial for determining how much to spend on these projects annually.
 - ii. Facility Update.
 - Interim Director of Finance Mark Kuzniewski shared that the long-range maintenance projects, discussed at the September 8th Facility Advisory Meeting, were highlighted for the Board. Projects include:
 - Hauser Windows: A proposed summer project where DLA Architects would prepare drawings (MOU in board packet).
 - Hauser Tuckpointing: Additional third-level tuckpointing, a holdover from summer 2025, to be combined with cornice repair as a change order.
 - Summer school will not be held at Hauser again this year due to these projects.
 - These items will be added to the October 15th agenda.
 - The Board President shared that capital project management has been an intentional, multi-year effort by past boards.
 - The Facility Advisory Committee will also consider the Ames Elementary playground surface improvement project in the future.
3. Family Engagement Committee - Ms. Kachlic.
 - Ms. Kachlic and Mr. Olech shared highlights from the September Parent Leadership Team meeting.
 - The first Family Engagement Committee of the school year is scheduled for October 30.
 - AI could be a future parent learning topic.
 - More information to share at the next Committee of the Whole meeting.
4. Policy Committee - Ms. Gunn.

There were no policy committee updates.

5. Personnel Committee - Mr. Barsotti.

There was no personnel committee updates.

J. Public Comment/Response.

There were no public comments.

K. Future Meeting Dates.

- October 15, 2025, Regular Business Meeting, 6:15 p.m. in the Hauser Learning Resource Center. (The Board will enter a Closed Session immediately after the meeting).
- November 5, 2025 - Committee of the Whole Meeting, 7:00 p.m. in the Multi-Purpose room at Ames School.
- November 19, 2025 - Regular Business Meeting, 6:15 p.m. in the Hauser Learning Resource Center. (The Board will enter a Closed Session immediately after the meeting). Note: Hauser's Fall Play is scheduled that evening, starting at 5:30 pm in the Auditorium.
- December 3, 2025 - Committee of the Whole Meeting, 7:00 p.m. in the Multi-Purpose room at Blythe Park School.
- December 17, 2025 - Regular Business Meeting, 7:00 p.m. in the Hauser Learning Resource Center. (The Board will enter into Closed Session at 6:15 p.m., if necessary, and return to Open Session at 7:00 p.m.).

L. Adjournment.

The meeting adjourned at 8:37 p.m.

October 8, 2025

Date Recorded

Date Approved

President, Board of Education

Secretary, Board of Education