

MINUTES OF THE
REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING
Of the Board of Education
School District No. 96
Held on Wednesday, November 19, 2025
Hauser Jr. High School
Riverside, IL

REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING and PUBLIC HEARING

20-572 A. President Wesley Muirheid called the Regular Business Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and on roll call the following members were recorded as being present:

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

Also in attendance were Superintendent Martha Ryan-Toye, Interim Director of Finance and Operations Mark Kuznieski, Director of Teaching and Learning Angela Dolezal, Director of Special Education and Student Services Nora Geraghty, Director of Technology Molly Marquardt, IT Field Technician Charles Scott, Blythe Park Principal Casimira Gorman, Blythe Park teachers Jennifer Graf, and Katherine Lacey, students from Blythe Park, Blythe Park families, the recording clerk to the Board of Education, videographer from Riverside TV, and community members.

B. Public Comment/Response.

Kshitij Sharma, of Launchpad Robo Lab, attended tonight's board meeting to provide the board information about his company, which offers robotics education for kids.

20-573 C. Public Hearing on the 2025 Property Tax Levy.

1. A motion was made by Mr. Barsotti and supported by Mr. Hunt to open the 2025 Property Tax Levy Hearing.

President Muirheid opened the meeting to community members and Joel Marhoul, a former Board member and community member, shared that he supports the district's continued efforts to increase the levy at the rate of inflation.

The motion carried on the following roll call vote:

Ayes:	Mr. Olech
	Mr. Hunt
	Mr. Barsotti
	Ms. Gunn
	Mr. Muirheid
Absent:	Ms. Claps
	Ms. Kachlic
Nays:	None
Abstain:	None

20-574 C. Adjourn the Public Hearing on the 2025 Property Tax Levy.

2. A motion was made by Mr. Barsotti and supported by Mr. Olech to close the 2025 Property Tax Levy Hearing.

The motion carried on the following roll call vote:

Ayes:	Mr. Hunt
	Ms. Gunn
	Mr. Barsotti
	Mr. Olech
	Mr. Muirheid
Absent:	Ms. Claps
	Ms. Kachlic
Nays:	None
Abstain:	None

D. Changes to the Agenda.

There were no changes to the agenda.

E. Superintendent's Report.

1. Students Presenters - Blythe Park School.

- Blythe Park took the spotlight at this board meeting.
- Principal Casimira Gorman introduced a group of students eager to share their insights.
- Students from kindergarten to fifth grade explained how they are actively using "Lead Behaviors" to master mathematical concepts.
- Each grade level focused on a specific behavior and shared practical examples of how they apply it in their daily work.
- Blythe Park teachers Ms. Graf and Ms. Lacey were also present.
- A short presentation highlighted students in action, followed by an interactive Q&A session.
- The board praised the students and staff for their excellent presentation.

2. School Board Member Day.

- November 15 of each year is designated as "School Board Member Day" to honor those citizens who devote their time and energy to the successful education of our children and future leaders.
- Hauser art teacher and art students created ornaments for the board.
- Elementary art teachers and students, as well as all staff, expressed their appreciation to the board of education through thank-you notes featuring hand-painted district logos on the front.
- Superintendent Ryan-Toye also acknowledged the board's work.

3. Educational Leadership Solutions Strategic Plan Presentation.

- Dr. Gary Zabilka from Educational Leadership Solutions delivered a brief presentation highlighting his company's data-driven approach to strategic planning that will both improve the district and move District 96 forward over the next three to five years. This process, which also incorporates input from the district's stakeholders, including board members, administrators, staff members, parents, students, and community members, will provide the best data and information to determine the district's needs and aspirations for the future.

- Dr. Don White and Dr. Gary Zabilka currently work with the districts' leadership and teacher leadership teams, and a Living the Plan session is scheduled for December 5. This meeting will help the district's action team leaders clarify the district's vision.
- A question-and-answer session was held.
- The board thanked Dr. Zabilka for his presentation.

4. Catalyst for Educational Change (CEC) Strategic Plan Presentation.

- Elisa Brente, Managing Director, and Crystal Conley, Field Director, of CEC presented to the board to initiate the development of District 96's next strategic plan.
- CEC previously facilitated the district's current strategic plan, which is nearing its sunset date.
- CEC offers nearly four decades of experience in facilitating strategic planning with Illinois districts and school systems nationwide.
- Their established framework emphasizes inclusive, data-driven collaboration, designed to unite diverse voices around shared priorities and measurable outcomes.
- This approach is grounded in three core guiding principles: inclusive engagement, actionable design, and equity and access.
- CEC expressed enthusiasm for collaborating once more with D96 to co-create a plan that truly captures the spirit of Riverside School District 96.
- A question-and-answer session followed the presentation, and the board thanked Ms. Brente and Ms. Conley for their presentation.

20-575 F. Approval of Consent Agenda.

The Secretary to the Board of Education read the Consent Agenda items aloud.

A motion was made by Mr. Barsotti and supported by Ms. Gunn to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

The motion carried on the following roll call vote:

Ayes:	Ms. Gunn
	Mr. Olech
	Mr. Barsotti
	Mr. Hunt
	Mr. Muirheid
Absent:	Ms. Claps
	Ms. Kachlic
Nays:	None
Abstain:	None

20-576 G. Approval of Director of Facilities and Maintenance - Action Item.

A motion was made by Mr. Hunt and supported by Mr. Barsotti to approve the 2025-2026 contract for the Director of Facilities and Maintenance for Zachary Pros, with a start date of December 1, 2025, as presented.

The district updated the job description for our Director of Building and Grounds position, aiming to elevate the role to be more proactive and communicative with our building levels.

Superintendent Ryan-Toye took a moment to congratulate and thank Bill Radtke for his many years of service to the district.

After a thorough interview process, the district is excited to introduce Zachary Pros as our new

Director of Facilities and Maintenance.

The motion carried on the following roll call vote:

Ayes:	Mr. Hunt
	Mr. Olech
	Mr. Barsotti
	Ms. Gunn
	Mr. Muirheid
Absent:	Ms. Claps
	Ms. Kachlic
Nays:	None
Abstain:	None

Mr. Pros thanked the board for the opportunity and shared that he looks forward to starting work in District 96. A warm welcome to Mr. Pros from the entire board.

H. Riverside Education Council.

There were no comments from the Riverside Education Council.

I. Board Member Comments.

- Member Hunt attended the Blythe Park book club's review of *The Anxious Generation*, the second session in a three-part series. The event generated meaningful conversations.
- Members Muirheid, Olech, and Hunt have actively participated in several village meetings concerning the ongoing playground discussions.
- It was noted that the Village of Riverside has a meeting scheduled for tomorrow night, including a discussion of the Blythe Park playground on the agenda. Due to a scheduling conflict, Member Muirheid is unable to attend; however, Member Olech confirmed he will attend.

20-577 J. Old Business.

1. Tax Year 2025 Levy - Action Item.

A motion was made by Mr. Barsotti and supported by Ms. Gunn to adopt the Resolution Approving the 2025 Tax Levy.

The motion carried on the following roll call vote:

Ayes:	Mr. Barsotti
	Mr. Olech
	Mr. Hunt
	Ms. Gunn
	Mr. Muirheid
Absent:	Ms. Claps
	Ms. Kachlic
Nays:	None
Abstain:	None

K. New Business/Discussion.

There was no new business.

L. Public Comment/Response.

There was no public comment.

M. Future Meeting Dates.

- December 3, 2025 - Committee of the Whole Meeting, 7:00 p.m. in the multi-purpose room at Central School.
- December 17, 2025 - Regular Business Meeting, 7:00 p.m. in the Hauser Auditorium (The Board will enter into Closed Session at 6:15 p.m., if necessary, and return to Open Session at 7:00 p.m.).
- January 7, 2026 - Committee of the Whole Meeting, 7:00 p.m. in the library at Blythe Park School. It was noted that the January Committee of the Meeting is usually cancelled; however, the district is back in session, so this meeting will be held.
- January 21, 2026 - 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.).
- February 4, 2026 - Committee of the Whole Meeting, 7:00 p.m. in the MPR at Hollywood School.
- February 18, 2026 - 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.).
- March 4, 2026 - Committee of the Whole Meeting, 7:00 p.m. in the MPR at Ames School.
- March 18, 2026 - 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.).
- April 1, 2026 - **Cancelled** - Committee of the Whole, 7:00 p.m. This meeting will be cancelled because it was scheduled during Spring Break.

N. Information Items.

The Board received updates and information on the following monthly reports:

1. District 96 Student Enrollment Report.
2. District 96 Absence Report.
3. District 96 Substitute Usage Report.
4. FOIA Requests.
5. Financial Statements.
6. Legal Bills.
7. Architect Bills.
8. School Lunches Served Report
9. October 2025 Construction and Technology Monthly Reports.

O. Adjournment.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:51 p.m.

November 19, 2025

Date Recorded

Date Approved

President, Board of Education

Secretary, Board of Education