

MINUTES OF THE
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING
Of the Board of Education
Riverside School District No. 96
Held on Wednesday, October 15, 2025
Hauser Junior High School

REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING and PUBLIC HEARING

20-561 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. Barostti
Ms. Gunn
Ms. Kachlic
Mr. Olech
Mr. Hunt
Ms. Claps
Mr. Muirheid

Absent: None

Also in attendance were Superintendent Martha Ryan-Toye, Director of Teaching and Learning Angela Dolezal, Director of Special Education Nora Geraghty, Director of Technology Molly Marquardt, Hauser Principal Chris Harvalis, Hauser Assistant Principal Katie Kayastha, Hauser students and their families, Steve Wright and Ryan Kelley of DLA Architects, community members, the Board of Education recording clerk, and a Riverside TV videographer.

B. Public Comment/Response.

Lydia Newsome, a student at Hauser Junior High School, wanted to attend tonight's meeting as a follow-up to a May 7, 2025, public comment shared by her family. Ms. Newsome shared her personal experiences with bullying and referenced Policy 7:180, titled Prevention of and Response to Bullying Intimidation and Harassment. She suggested specific changes to help staff better implement the policy's discipline guidelines.

20-562 C. Public Hearing on District eLearning

A motion was made by Mr. Barsotti and supported by Ms. Gunn to open the public hearing on the District eLearning Program.

The motion carried on the following roll call vote:

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

Absent: None

Nays: None

Abstain: None

20-563 A motion was made by Ms. Gunn and supported by Mr. Barsotti to adjourn the public hearing on the district's eLearning Program.

The motion carried on the following roll call vote:

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

C. Changes to the Agenda.

There were no changes to the agenda.

D. Superintendent's Report.

1. Student Presenters - Hauser Junior High Students
 - Principal Chris Harvalis and Assistant Principal Katie Kayastha introduced the Hauser students who shared their experiences participating in Hauser's co-curricular clubs. These clubs include
 - Paper Art - Fridays, HJH Production, Music Workshop (Practice Club), Creative Writing
 - Strategic Games, Robotics, Evergreen Club, Calligraphy Club, and Lego Club, to name a few.
 - These Hauser clubs are offered to families at no cost.
 - A brief question-and-answer session was held.
 - The board thanked the presenters, as well as Mr. Harvalis and Ms. Kayastha, for their presentation.
2. Illinois Association of School Boards (IASB Board Recognition).
 - Riverside School District 96 was again awarded the Illinois Association of School Boards (IASB) Governance Award (2023).
 - The award recognizes school boards for demonstrating a commitment to effective governance and continuous improvement.
 - The District 96 Board will be listed among award recipients at the IASB Joint Annual Conference in November, with additional recognition and presentation of the official plaque at the 2026 Spring Division Meetings.
 - Every two years, the whole board and superintendent are eligible for this award. The board continues to show a commitment to understanding the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary for effective governance.

3. Principal Appreciation Month.
 - Superintendent Ryan-Toye shared that October is Principal Appreciation Month.
 - The principals were acknowledged for their efforts throughout the school year.
4. District 96 Institute Day - October 14, 2025.
 - D96 held a Teacher Institute Day on Tuesday, October 14. The board has the day's agenda detailing all the planned activities.
5. October Staff Morale Survey

It was shared that the first of the three staff morale surveys was administered to D96 staff. More information to come on this topic.
6. Special Education LEA Determination.
 - Director of Special Education Nora Geraghty was congratulated for this determination.
 - The district received the Meets Requirements designation in all special education and services areas, the highest designation that can be awarded. ISBE acknowledged the district and Director of Special Education, Nora Geraghty, for her efforts to improve student outcomes for students with disabilities.
7. Salt Creek Athletic Transportation Update.
 - The district is pleased to announce a new partnership with First Student Bus Company to provide athletic transportation services, effective after the conclusion of the current soccer season.
 - Interim Director of Finance Mark Kuzniewski led efforts to address this matter.
 - We thank our D96 families for their understanding and support in facilitating transportation until this new service begins.
8. Blythe Park Playground Design Proposals.
 - Steve Wright and Ryan Kelley of DLA Architects attended tonight's meeting with the Riverside School District 96 board to receive direction and guidance for the Blythe Park Playground design. After a brief presentation and discussion, the Board provided direction to move forward with Option 2.
 - This design includes natural-looking elements and equipment for gross motor, sensory, and make-believe play. By slightly expanding the current footprint, the playground capacity also increases to 135 children.
 - The review process will continue at four Village of Riverside meetings: Preservation Commission (November 3), Landscape Advisory Commission (November 11), Parks & Recreation (November 17), and Board of Trustees (November 20). The public is welcome to attend to hear more as these plans are finalized. A rendering of the proposed playground design is available to view in Blythe Park's school lobby. The Board thanked DLA for their presentation and will tentatively add this matter to the December Committee of the Whole agenda.

20-564 E. 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 Mr. Hunt to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

The motion carried the following roll call vote:

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

F. Riverside Education Council.

There were no comments from Riverside Education Council.

G. Board Member Comments.

- Member Muirheid is looking forward to this year's fall play.

20-565 H. Old Business.

1. District 96 eLearning Plan - Action Item.

A motion was made by Ms. Gunn and supported by Mr. Barsotti to approve the eLearning program for the 2025-2026 school year and the subsequent two years, with no more than five (5) eLearning days utilized.

The motion carried the following roll call vote:

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

20-566

2. Resolution Authorizing Transfer of \$1,276,000 from the Educational Fund to the Capital Projects Fund - Action Item.

A motion was made by Ms. Claps and supported by Mr. Olech to authorize and direct the transfer of the sum of one million two hundred seventy-six thousand Dollars (\$1,276,000) from the Educational Fund to the Capital Projects Fund, as presented.

The motion carried the following roll call vote:

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

20-567

3. Approval of DLA Mou for Hauser Window Replacement - Action Item.
A motion was made by Mr. Barsotti and supported by Mr. Hunt to approve Vistara's recommendation, and approve construction administration services in the value of \$112,625 to DLA Architects for the Hauser Window Replacement project to be performed between fall 2025 and summer 2026, as presented.

The motion carried the following roll call vote:

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

20-568

4. Approval of Hauser Cornice Repair - Action Item.
A motion was made by Mr. Barsotti and supported by Ms. Claps to accept Vistara's recommendation to approve a change order in the value of \$332,438.95 to MBB Enterprises of Chicago for the Hauser Cornice Repairs to be performed during the summer of 2026, as presented.

The motion carried the following roll call vote:

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

Abstain: None

20-569

5. Approval of Hauser Cornice Tuckpointing - Action Item.

A motion was made by Ms. Gunn and supported by Mr. Barsotti to accept Vistara's recommendation to approve construction administration services at a value of \$12,250 to DLA Architects for the Hauser Cornice Tuckpointing to be performed during summer 2026, as presented.

The motion carried the following roll call vote:

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

Absent: None

Nays: None

Abstain: None

I. New Business/Discussion.

1. Professional Learning Considerations for 2026-2027 School Calendar.

- Director of Teaching and Learning Angela Dolezal shared
- Since the 2023-2024 school year, District 96 has included one half-day of professional learning in April. This addition has provided an essential opportunity for districtwide collaboration, particularly for elementary grade-level teams, which otherwise only meet collectively during Institute Days.
- Before the start of this school year, teachers participated in eight after-school professional learning sessions (each lasting 75 minutes), totaling 600 minutes of collaborative professional learning. While this structure provided consistent learning opportunities, the shorter sessions often limited the depth of conversation and planning that could be achieved within each meeting.
- A memo was shared with the Board that outlines a proposal to include four half-day professional learning sessions in the 2026-2027 district calendar, one per trimester, in addition to continuing the current April session.
- This schedule would restore the 600 minutes of collaborative professional learning time previously available while consolidating it into longer, more productive sessions that better support sustained professional growth and meaningful collaboration.
- While the half-day structure slightly reduces the instructional minutes on those four days, the return on investment, through improved instructional quality, coherence, and student learning outcomes, makes the time exceptionally well spent.
- To support families, the district has an agreement with the Riverside Parks and Recreation Department to provide childcare options during the half-day professional learning sessions. This partnership ensures that families have access to a consistent and convenient childcare option on these days.

- The shift from eight short after-school sessions to four half-day sessions allows teachers the extended, uninterrupted time necessary to collaborate meaningfully on high-impact instructional priorities. This proposal is designed to regain our total professional learning minutes, align with our district strategic goals, and support the continued improvement of teaching and learning for all students.
- The recommendation is that the proposed school calendar for 2026-2027 include four half-day professional learning sessions, one per trimester, in addition to the April session. The complete public school calendar will be presented to the Board of Education for approval in early 2026.
- It was mentioned that, through the IGA, partnering with Riverside Parks & Recs, the impact on families will be minimal because Parks and Rec is ready and exploring ways to meet this need.
- The administration is beginning to look at dates and will embed them in the 2026-2027 calendar.

J. Public Comment/Response.

There were no public comments.

K. Future Meeting Dates.

- 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, 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.).
- December 3, 2025 - Committee of the Whole Meeting, 7:00 p.m. in the library 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. Information Items.

1. District 96 Student Enrollment Report.
2. District 96 Absence Report.
3. District 96 District 96 Substitute Report.
4. Financial Statement.
5. FOIA Responses.
6. Legal Bills.
7. Architects Bills.
8. School Lunches Served Report.
9. September 2025 Construction Monthly Report.

M. Adjournment.

The meeting adjourned at 8:44 p.m.

October 15, 2025

Date Recorded

Date Approved

President, Board of Education

Secretary, Board of Education