

MINUTES OF THE  
REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING  
Of the Board of Education  
School District No. 96  
Held on Wednesday, April 15, 2026  
Hauser Jr. High School  
Riverside, IL

REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING

20-568 A. Vice President David Barsotti called the Regular Business Meeting to order at 6:15 p.m. and on roll call, the following members were recorded as being present:

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

Also in attendance were Superintendent Martha Ryan-Toye, Director of Technology Molly Marquardt, Director of Facilities and Maintenance Zachary Piros, Hollywood Principal, Erin Dwyer, Hollywood Teachers Ms. Cooley and Mrs. Tomecek, Hollywood students, Hollywood students' families, community members, the Board of Education recording clerk, a Riverside TV videographer, and a reporter with *the Landmark*.

20-569 B. A motion was made by Ms. Gunn 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).
- Litigation, when an action against, affecting, or on behalf of the District has been filed and is pending before a court or administrative tribunal, or when the Board finds that an action is probable or imminent. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(11).

The motion carried on the following roll call vote:

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

C. Return to Open Session.

The Board returned to open session at 7:00 p.m.

D. Public Comment/Response.

- Jill Novak addressed the board regarding the integration of D96 and the La Grange Area Department of Special Education (LADSE) inclusion programs.

E. Changes to the Agenda.

There are no changes to the agenda.

F. Superintendent's Report.

1. Student Presenters - Hollywood Students.

- Principal Erin Dwyer was introduced and shared that students are here tonight to present on Hollywood School's Student Newspaper.
- The Husky News student journalists explained to the board members what they do as members of Hollywood School's Husky News, as reporters, photographers, and layout personnel.
- Students wore their press passes to the board meeting.
- Husky News was launched in 2016 by school paraprofessional Sharon Tomecek, who coordinated the first edition on her own. Christine Cooley joined soon after, and the two have been executive editors.
- The latest edition of the newsletter was shared with board members.
- The board thanked the students and held a short question-and-answer session.

2. Parent Information Session - April 13 with Doug Bolton.

- On April 13, Dr. Doug Bolton presented "Myths That Undermine Children's Wellness" to address the unprecedented emotional challenges facing children and the pressures on families and educators.
- The session, which included a raffle for his book, *Untethered: Creating Connected Families, Schools, and Communities to Raise a Resilient Generation*, highlighted strategies for building a more resilient generation.
- The recorded presentation is available for viewing on the district website. Visit the district's website to watch the full recording.

3. WSCAE Student Art Fair - April 25, 2026.

- Superintendent Ryan-Toye reminded the Board that the WSCAE (West Suburban Consortium for Academic Excellence) multi-district art fair will be held at the Cheney Mansion in Oak Park on April 25, 2026.
- All are invited.

4. Hauser Graduation - May 26, 2026.

- Mark your calendars: The eighth-grade graduation is set for Tuesday, May 26, 2026, at Riverside-Brookfield High School.
- Information for the Board is forthcoming.

5. Strategic Plan Update - 2026-2031

- Superintendent Ryan-Toye expressed her appreciation to board members Dan Hunt, Marlowe Kachlic, and Matt Olech for their participation in the strategic planning process. The Strategic Planning Committee was thanked for its dedication to developing mission/vision statements and goal-setting, and for facilitating stakeholder engagement. This committee consisted of students, staff, faculty, and community partners.
- It has been a great process and a worthwhile endeavor. This plan will take the district through the next five years.
- Board members shared highlights from the process.

- A presentation will be shared with the board at the May regular business meeting.
6. Morale Survey-mid year administration overview.
- Superintendent Ryan-Toye shared that on October 14, 2025, District 96 administered the EAB Staff Morale Survey to all certified and non-certified staff members across our five schools. On February 13, 2026, the survey was re-administered to gather mid year data using the same survey instrument.
  - This marks the second year the district has used the EAB platform for a staff morale survey. In preceding years (since 2021), we utilized a staff morale survey developed by Eklund Consulting/Vital Network.
  - The shift to the EAB survey was a collaborative decision involving teachers, staff, and administrators. The EAB tool was selected for two key reasons: 1. Differentiated Feedback: It allows us to gather and analyze feedback at both the building and district levels, providing a more granular understanding of morale. 2. Cost-Effectiveness: Our existing partnership with EAB made this the most cost-effective option for the district.
  - Recommendations: EAB is a professional partnership that involves a paid membership fee. The annual fee has been part of a three-year membership agreement that expires in September 2026. Given the planned leadership transition, it is recommended that District 96 discontinue its current membership with EAB. The most important service in the EAB agreement is the use of the morale survey. It is recommended that District 96 transition from the EAB Morale Survey to the Panorama Morale Survey. The Panorama survey can include staff, parents, and students. The Illinois State Board of Education has recently allowed for the Panorama Survey to replace the currently used 5Essentials survey. The district will consider administering both surveys and/or discontinuing the 5Essentials survey. The shift in survey tools will be reviewed with the District Leadership Team, building leadership teams, the Goal 3 Action Team, and the Riverside Education Council. A final decision will be made by the end of the 2025-2026 school year.
  - The board requested a presentation at a future meeting regarding this matter.

20-570 G. Approval of Consent Agenda.

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

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

The motion carried the following roll call vote:

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

20-571 H. Approve the interim part-time contract for Steve Wilder (March 26-June 30) - Action Item.

A motion was made by Ms. Claps and supported by Mr. Hunt to approve the part-time contract for the interim Director of Finance for the period beginning March 26, 2026, through and including June 30, 2026.

The motion carried the following roll call vote:

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

20-572 I. Approve the interim contract for Maura Zinni - Action Item.

A motion was made by Mr. Hunt and supported by Ms. Claps to approve the interim principal contract with Maura Zinni as presented.

The motion carried the following roll call vote:

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

J. Riverside Education Council.

There was no comment from the Riverside Education Council.

K. Board member comments.

- Member Hunt attended Blythe Park's science fair today. Great event
- It was reiterated that Doug Bolton's presentation was exceptional. Please plan to view the presentation, which was video-recorded and is available on the district's website.
- Member Gunn attended Hauser's band concert. What a great music program at D96.

20-573 L. Old Business.

1. Superintendent Search Firm Recommendation - Action Item.

A motion was made by Ms. Gunn and supported by Ms. Claps to approve BWP & Associates to facilitate the district's Superintendent Search, as presented.

The motion carried on the following roll call vote:

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

Absent: Mr. Muirheid  
Mr. Olech  
Nays: None  
Abstain: None

20-574 L. Old Business.

2. Project Development Agreement for Central/HaUser Boiler Replacement - Action Item.

A motion was made by Mr. Hunt and supported by Ms. Claps to approve the executive summary as presented.

The motion carried on the following roll call vote:

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

M. New Business/Discussion.

1. Technology Update.

- Riverside School District 96 is developing AI implementation plans to align with 2026 Illinois State Board of Education mandates, focusing on ethical use, data privacy, and enhanced student learning. Director of Technology Molly Marquardt presented staff guidelines and a technology roadmap, emphasizing that AI is a tool to support, not replace, educator expertise. The district is piloting secure classroom AI tools and developing staff training programs, with board discussions highlighting the need to audit usage and adhere to policy 6:235.
- The board thanked Molly for this informative presentation and reminded parents to email tech support or start with the classroom teacher if they have any questions.

N. Public Comment/Response.

- There were no public comments.

O. Future Meeting Dates.

- May 6, 2026 - Committee of the Whole Meeting, 7:00 p.m. - multi-purpose room at Central School.
- May 20, 2026 - 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.).
- June 3, 2026 - Committee of the Whole Meeting, 7:00 p.m. in the multi-purpose room at Hollywood School.
- June 17, 2026 - Regular Business Meeting, 7:00 p.m. in the Hauser Learning Resource Center. (The Board will enter into a Closed Session at 6:15 p.m., if necessary, and return to an Open Session at 7:00 p.m.).

P. 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 Report.
4. FOIA Requests/Responses.
5. Financial Statements.
6. Legal Bills.
7. Architect Bills.
8. March 2026 Construction Monthly Report.
9. School Lunches Served Report.

Q. Adjournment.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:22 p.m.

April 15, 2026

Date Recorded

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Date Approved

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President, Board of Education

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Secretary, Board of Education