

BLACK RIVER PUBLIC SCHOOL
Board Meeting Minutes
March 18, 2024

Item 1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting of the Board of Directors of Black River Public School was called to order by President Kim Mitchell at 5:34pm on March 18, 2024, in room 229 at the school's Columbia Avenue campus. Recognition was made that a quorum was present through a roll call.

Item 2. ROLL CALL

Members Present:

Elisabeth Bauman, Matt Benson, Craig Davis, TJ McDonald, Tom McGough, Kim Mitchell, Tom Pietri

Members Absent:

Sarah Bast, Mary Mims

Staff Present:

Shannon Brunink (Head of School), Michelle Byrne (Administrative Assistant), Rachel Carlson (Business Manager), John K. Donnelly (Dean of Students), Ericka Foreman (BR Teacher), Jim Levering (Elementary Administrator), Sarah Lozano (BR Teacher), John Zoellner (Business Director)

Public Present:

Bill Barker, Landon Brenny, Minal Gandhi, Nitya Gandhi, Errol Goldman, Megan Hanneken, Andrew Slagh

Media Present:

None

Item 3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

There being no corrections, all minutes of the Board's February 19, 2024 meeting were approved upon a motion by Ms. Mitchell, seconded by Ms. Bauman. (7-0)

Item 4. BUSINESS REPORT

Mr. Zoellner distributed the financial report and went over details for the board.

Item 5. ADMINISTRATION REPORT

Mr. Levering shared that the spring book fair, which took place during parent/teacher conferences, raised \$3,000 to support the book vending machine and classroom libraries. He thanked Ms. Barb Jonker for taking on the bookfair and applauded her efforts to make it such a successful event. Black River hosted this year's county spelling bee and Mr. Levering was thrilled to announce our own Mr. Patrick Burch as the winner. Shadow days have begun for 3rd and 5th grade students to help ease the transitions for next year. The Herrick District Library will be hosting our annual Kindergarten library card night to introduce and establish the habit of using that resource. Mr. Levering also highlighted Ms. Abby Brower, BR's Speech Therapist, for publishing her first book titled *How to be a Speech Sleuth*.

Mr. Donnelly explained that there has been an uptick in activity with cell phone and elevator behaviors and proposed that it could be due to an increase in policy enforcement. He indicated that he learned a lot of good information while attending a recent two day security conference as well as at a meeting with the Ottawa Area Superintendents.

Mr. Brunink explained that the local superintendents will participate in interviews this week about the Public Service Announcement they recorded providing education on deep fakes. The enrollment lottery for the 2024-2025 school year went well and he thanked Ms. Kelli Heneghan for everything she does to make that happen. He also emphasized the efforts of Ms. Kerrie Esmeier to promote the school through social media. He was proud to report that Black River's attendance rate topped those in the county and thanked Ms. Allison Hilgert and Ms. Christie Phillips for their dedication to accounting for each and every student. Ms. Wise is currently collecting course registrations for next year and will soon begin the immense task of organizing those requests. Black River continues development with the Sex Education Advisory Board with support from Ms. Stacy Sills at the OAISD. Mr. Brunink shared that the school has posted all positions in order to proactively collect resumes. Although there are no current openings this will help expedite the hiring process as the need may arise prior to the start of next school year. Ms. Wise has been preparing for the upcoming state testing season that will begin after Spring Break. Mr. Brunink also spoke of the state legislation proposed to fund PreK education. He explained how this could affect us and is evaluating the feasibility of possible expansion. Forward movement continues on the new playscape and outdoor learning spaces. He again thanked everyone who was involved in that planning and fundraising process and is excited to see it all come together.

Item 6. FACULTY COUNCIL REPORT

Ms. Lozano indicated that Faculty Council did not have anything new to share but is looking forward to future collaborations.

Item 7. STUDENT REPORT

Miss Gandhi explained that Student Council just completed this year's elections and are working to prepare for Spring Thing and Prom.

Item 8. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Ms. Mitchell shared that both she and Mr. Pietri plan to end their service on Black River's Board of Trustees when their terms end this year. She asked members to consider participating in a nominating committee to recommend possible replacements.

Item 9. GVSU REPORT

Mr. Barker reminded members that the next board training will be held on Monday. He also indicated that if the board would like to appoint new members prior to the end of the year names need to be submitted in May for a vote at GVSU's June meeting.

Item 10. OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Benson shared his thoughts on the Faculty Council goal for fundraising. He expressed interest in learning more about alternative revenue streams and invited other members to join.

Item 11. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business brought before the board.

Item 12. PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Hanneken shared her appreciation for the opportunity to see the inner workings of Black River. She outlined where she hopes the technology and cell phone conversation is headed and expressed interest in collaborating with those involved.

Ms. Foreman encouraged increased diversity on the school's board and staff as well as expressed concern for veteran teachers choosing to leave the school.

Item 13. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the board, the meeting was adjourned at 6:23pm.

NEXT MEETING:

The next regular meeting is scheduled for 5:30 pm on April 22, 2024.

Respectfully submitted,



Mary M. Mims, Secretary