

RIVER BEND COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT #2
1110 3RD STREET
FULTON, IL 61252
BOARD OF EDUCATION
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR DECEMBER BOARD MEETING

River Bend Community Unit School District #2

January 21, 2026

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of River Bend Community Unit School District #2, Whiteside County, Illinois, was held on Wednesday, January 21, 2026, in the River Bend District Office.

President Portz called the Regular Meeting to order at 6:30pm. Upon roll call by the Secretary, the following board members were present: Kyle Folk, Andrew Meyers, Dan Portz, Jay Ritchie, and Mary Simmons, Absent: Elizabeth Falls and Travis Temple. Others present: Darryl Hogue, Superintendent, Kelli Parsons, Assistant Superintendent, Jennifer Griser, Recording Secretary, and Paige Emerson, Student Liaison.

President Portz led all present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

President Portz welcomed all visitors including: Sam Howard, Michele James, and John Lambert; Principals: Patrick Henrekin, Jeffrey Hoese, and Jeff Parsons; Assistant Principals: Nicole Bowers and Aimee Marten.

President Portz led all present in a relationship and culture building activity where everyone took a turn sharing something significant that happened in their life recently.

Dr. Hogue added to the Superintendent's Report section Building Usage Guidelines During Inclement Weather to the agenda.

It was moved by Member Meyers, seconded by Member Simmons, to approve the agenda as amended. Voice Vote, all yea, motion carried.

President Portz asked if there was any information the RBEA would like to share. Mr. Howard stated there was nothing to share at this time.

President Portz asked if anyone would like to speak as part of public forum. There was no one wishing to speak during public forum.

The elementary and middle schools had nothing to add to their Principal Reports and there were no questions from the board. Mr. Parsons congratulated Paige on being chosen for the All State Choir.

Paige shared results with the board members from students regarding any concerns and stated that the addition of a potential \$5 Steam Anchor gift card increased the number of participants.

Mrs. Parsons shared some highlights from the Citizen's Advisory Committee Meeting:

- Mr. Henrekin shared survey results regarding the Anxious Generation. The committee discussed ways to get information out to parents to help limit and monitor student social media usage.

- Veregy presented and reviewed the most recent layout design for the middle school gymnasium build.

Dr. Hogue shared some highlights from the Finance Committee meeting:

- The treasurer's report and overall fund balances were reviewed.
- The transportation fund was discussed in detail
 - The district has buses coming due for lease renewal; different lease to own options were discussed.

Dr. Hogue reminded board members of the IASB Northwest Division meeting being held on March 5, 2026. River Bend is hosting the meeting at the high school. Students will be giving tours and highlighting STEAM spaces, the jazz band will be performing and the culinary students will be catering the meal. The art students will also have pieces on display.

Dr. Hogue shared that enrollment is down a net loss of eleven students, mainly due to the high school having five students graduate early at the end of the first semester. The district will continue to monitor class sizes for the potential to reduce the expanded grade levels from four sections back down to three.

Mrs. Parsons shared the option 2.1 2026-2027 school year calendar. She had shared two options with staff and the survey results came back with option 2.1 being the majority vote winner. The first option had school starting the second week of August, the second, chosen option, has school starting the third week of August, with the first semester ending in January to help keep the number of days per semester closer to even.

Michele James and John Lambert with Veregy shared an updated drawing for the middle school gymnasium project. Member Folk and Veregy coordinated on the new drawing to ensure the gymnasium size would match the needs of the district as well as fit into the budget. At this time, there will be no classroom additions with the gymnasium space, but there is room for expansion down the road. Veregy would like to go out for bids soon to determine what, if anything, needs to be removed or minimized from the current design.

Dr. Hogue shared that the high school would like to start having students in the construction classes take the OSHA certification training and test. There is a small fee associated with this training, discussion is still being had as to if the students would pay for this or if it would be district paid.

Dr. Hogue shared he was looking for feedback regarding building rental usage during inclement weather. The local wrestling club had the high school rented for their annual wrestling tournament on an evening it was predicted there would not be school in session due to predicted cold temperatures. After discussion it was decided the wrestling club would continue to be allowed to host their event even if there was no school.

It was moved by Member Meyers, seconded by Member Simmons, to approve the consent agenda, including the December 17, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes, December Treasurer's Report, and January Bills recommended for payment in the amount of \$304,310.42 subject to audit, and authorize to dispose of the closed session audio tapes for January 25, 2024, February 20, 2024, and June 19, 2024. Roll Call Vote.

Member Folk, yea

Member Ritchie, yea

Member Meyers, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Member Portz, yea

Motion carried.

Closed session minutes were reviewed. It was recommended to retain closed session minutes for August 5, 2025 at this time due to the need to retain confidentiality.

It was moved by Member Simmons, seconded by Member Meyers, to retain closed session minutes dated August 5, 2025 at this time due to the need for confidentiality to exist to all or part of the minutes. Roll Call Vote.

Member Folk, yea Member Ritchie, yea
Member Meyers, yea Member Simmons, yea
Member Portz, yea

Motion carried.

Dr. Hogue shared that the district received \$500 from CGH for Athletics, \$500 from Community State Bank for the District, \$500 from ABC Advertising for High School Athletics, \$1,000 from Agri-King and First Wealth Financial both for the Eric Ottens Shootout Sponsorship.

It was moved by Member Folk, seconded by Member Portz, to accept gifts to the district as presented. Roll Call Vote.

Member Folk, yea Member Ritchie, yea
Member Meyers, yea Member Simmons, yea
Member Portz, yea

Motion carried.

It was moved by Member Meyers, seconded by Member Simmons, to approve the following personnel items:

- *Approve the recommendation to hire the following Coaches/Sponsors for the 2026-2027 school year:*
 - **Level I**
 - *Varsity Football - Patrick Lower*
 - *Varsity Volleyball - Stacy Germann*
 - **Level IA**
 - *Golf - Mitch Van Zuiden*
 - **Level II**
 - *Assistant Football - Zach Ryder*
 - *Assistant Golf - Kyle Jackson*
 - *Sophomore Football - Dan Wilkins*
 - *Freshman Football - Jared Wessels*
 - *Sophomore Volleyball - Ally Curley*
 - *Freshman Volleyball - Jenna StremLOW*
 - **Level III**
 - *7th Grade Volleyball - Kendra Terry*
 - *8th Grade Volleyball - Colleen Temple*
- *Approve the resignation of Kyle McLuckie as Assistant Track Coach at Fulton High School, effective immediately.*
- *Approve the recommendation to hire Adrien Loncar as Quiz Bowl Coach at River Bend Middle School for the 2025-26 school year.*

- *Approve tenure for the following teachers:*
 - *Caitlin Maloney*
 - *Samantha Whitney*
 - *Brianna Beale*
 - *Jeanelle Iben*

(These teachers were missed last year under the updated tenure laws; the error was discovered when updating/verifying the seniority lists and Sequence of Honorable Dismissal for the 2025-26 school year.)

Roll Call Vote.

<i>Member Folk, yea</i>	<i>Member Ritchie, yea</i>
<i>Member Meyers, yea</i>	<i>Member Simmons, yea</i>
<i>Member Portz, yea</i>	

Motion carried.

It was moved by Member Simmons, seconded by Member Meyers, to move into closed session for the purpose of discussing matters concerning the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees, specific individuals who serve as independent contractors or volunteers of the public body or legal counsel for the public body at 8:34pm. Roll Call Vote.

<i>Member Folk, yea</i>	<i>Member Ritchie, yea</i>
<i>Member Meyers, yea</i>	<i>Member Simmons, yea</i>
<i>Member Portz, yea</i>	

Motion carried.

It was moved by Member Meyers, seconded by Member Simmons, to come out of closed session for the purpose of discussing matters concerning the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees, specific individuals who serve as independent contractors or volunteers of the public body or legal counsel for the public body at 8:57pm. Roll Call Vote.

<i>Member Folk, yea</i>	<i>Member Ritchie, yea</i>
<i>Member Meyers, yea</i>	<i>Member Simmons, yea</i>
<i>Member Portz, yea</i>	

Motion carried.

The next Regular Board Meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 18, 2026, at 6:30pm at the River Bend District Office.

It was moved by Member Simmons, seconded by Member Meyers, to adjourn the meeting at 9:01pm. Voice Vote, all yea, motion carried.

Dan Portz, President
Board of Education
River Bend CUSD #2
Whiteside County

Mary Simmons, Secretary
Board of Education
River Bend CUSD #2
Whiteside County