

April 21, 2026

Highland, Indiana

MINUTES OF A REGULAR SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
THE BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES
OF THE SCHOOL TOWN OF HIGHLAND

A meeting of the Board of School Trustees of the School Town of Highland was held at the Administration Center, 9145 Kennedy Avenue, Highland, Indiana, on Tuesday, April 21, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.

The Chair opened the meeting of the Board of School Trustees with the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silent reflection. On call of roll, the members of the Board were shown to be present or absent as follows:

Present: Mr. Patrick Krull, Mr. Robert Kuva, Mrs. Erica Smith-Gomez, Mr. Victor Garcia, Mr. Richard Alyea

Also present were Dr. Brian Smith, Superintendent of Schools, Mrs. Kim Fulton, Chief Financial Officer, and Mr. Rhett Tauber, Attorney for the Board.

Public Participation. Comments were made regarding a Hall of Fame Committee and the Feasibility Study recommendation.

Minutes of March 17, 2026. Mr. Kuva moved, seconded by Mr. Garcia, to approve the minutes of March 17, 2026 as presented. All voted “aye.” Motion carried.

Superintendent’s Report. Dr. Smith noted the events occurring as the school year ends. He encouraged all to see the theatre group’s new musical, *Big Fish*, playing May 1-3. Lastly, he reported that he received questions regarding the heat in the school buildings. There was an issue when attempting to start up the new chillers last week, and that issue has since been addressed.

Board Liaison Reports. Mr. Garcia reported on the recent regional Indiana School Boards Association (ISBA) meeting where information was shared on new laws and their potential impact on the school district, as well as updates at the federal level. He encouraged everyone to continue monitoring the legislative updates provided by ISBA.

Mr. Kuva attended the Northwest Indiana Special Education Cooperative meeting where several items were presented. These included an upcoming fire alarm system upgrade, the graduation of four students from the program this year, and a staff appreciation dinner to be held on May 6. Lastly, a search is on for a new Executive Director since Marsha Horn will be retiring.

Mr. Krull attended the Highland Park Board meeting. He reported that with the departure of the park superintendent, a search has begun for a replacement. Also discussed were some improvements to the park at Main Square.

Treasurer’s Report. Mrs. Smith-Gomez moved, seconded by Mr. Alyea, to approve the treasurer’s report as presented. All voted “aye.” Motion carried.

Vouchers. Mr. Garcia moved, seconded by Mr. Kuva, to approve the vouchers as presented. All voted “aye.” Motion carried.

Architect Services. The administration recommended engaging Schmidt Associates to provide professional architectural and engineering services for projects associated with the 2025 General Obligation Bond. The

base fee is \$170,000, plus reimbursable expenses such as mileage, printing, design approvals, permitting, and building code consulting. Mrs. Smith-Gomez moved, seconded by Mr. Garcia to approve. All voted “aye.” Motion carried.

Letter of Engagement/Construction Management. The administration recommended a Letter of Engagement from the Skillman Corporation in the amount of \$96,750 to manage the pavement projects planned in the General Obligation Bond. Mr. Kuva moved, seconded by Mr. Garcia, to approve. All voted “aye.” Motion carried.

Bid Advertisement. The administration requested permission to advertise bids for the paving projects for Highland Middle School and Southridge School parking lots. A bid schedule was submitted. Skillman will be bidding and overseeing these projects. Mrs. Smith-Gomez moved, seconded by Mr. Garcia, to approve. All voted “aye.” Motion carried.

Letter of Engagement/Financial Feasibility Study. The administration recommended approving a Letter of Engagement with Policy Analytics to conduct a comprehensive financial feasibility study focused on property tax impacts and revenue analysis. The study will include analysis of property tax effects, revenue implications, and related financial considerations to support informed decision-making. Based on this information, a recommendation was made to approve the Letter of Engagement with Policy Analytics. Mr. Garcia moved, seconded by Mr. Kuva, to approve. All voted “aye.” Motion carried.

Auction of School Buses The administration recommended that the transportation department partner with CIS Auction for the sale of surplus school buses and auxiliary equipment that are over twelve (12) years old and no longer serve the district’s operational needs. Low trade-in values were discussed. Mr. Garcia moved, seconded by Mr. Alyea to approve. All voted “aye.” Motion carried.

Donations. The following donations were received for the middle school: tissue and construction paper valued at \$57.92 for Ms. Mavity’s room; wish list items valued at \$117 for the Voyager Team; and Christmas trees donated by Erica Gomez and Siobhan Fagen. The high school received 206 scoops of ice cream from Culvers for Senior Honor Awards and a trombone and clarinet valued at \$650 for the band program. Southridge received potting soil valued at \$30 for the second grade Earth Day project. Mrs. Smith-Gomez moved, seconded by Mr. Garcia, to accept all donations as presented above. All voted “aye.” Motion carried.

Buildings and Grounds Report. Mr. Rusty McWilliam, Director of Buildings & Grounds, submitted a report on the ongoing work throughout the corporation for the past month.

Professional Leaves. The following were presented for professional leave: **Amy Harrington and Eric McMahon**, Digital Threat Assessment – April 17, 2026; **Don Liles**, ESC Math Teacher Circle – April 21, 2026; **Kim Fabian**, English Lerner Exit Criteria- April 23, 2026; **Kari Tolliver**, WVEC Reading Specialist – May 12, 2026; **John Zach**, SRO/School Safety Conference, - June 17-19, 2026; **Britni Luster**, NWI FSD monthly meeting,- April 8, 2026, SFSPP Training Summer Meals – April 9, 2026, NWIESC monthly meeting – April 17, 2026, May 13, 2026, and May 14, 2026; **Courtney Condes**, Quarterly AD meeting – April 10, 2026; and **Eric Kundich**, Indiana Basketball Coaches Clinic – April 23-24, 2026. Mr. Kuva moved, seconded by Mrs. Smith-Gomez, to approve the above professional leaves as presented. All voted “aye.” Motion carried.

Retirements/Resignations. The administration recommended to accept the retirements of **Amy Wilhite**, middle school math teacher effective May 28, 2026; **Thomas Glover**, high school custodian effective September 11, 2026; **Matt Topp**, high school custodian effective July 17, 2026; **Linda Hojnicky**, high school attendance secretary effective July 27, 2026, and the resignations of **Barbara Whiting**, Johnston Dependent

Care aide effective May 28, 2026, and **Courtney Condes**, middle school team leader effective May 28, 2026. Mrs. Smith-Gomez moved, seconded by Mr. Garcia, to accept the above retirements/resignations as presented. All voted “aye.” Motion carried.

Appointments. The Superintendent presented the recommendation for the following appointments: **Travis Anderson**, Highland High School Principal, and **Kimberly Hayes**, Southridge Elementary Principal, effective July 1, 2026, and **Ryan Moore** and **Gip Dills** as volunteers for the middle school spring football program for the 2025-2026 school year. Mr. Kuva moved, seconded by Mr. Alyea, to approve the above appointments as presented. All voted “aye.” Motion carried. Both newly appointed principals were invited to speak. They shared their prior experience and expressed gratitude to the administration and Board for the opportunity to be part of the Highland team.

Comments from the Audience. Comments were made on the financial feasibility study and future state funding, National Library Week, and if next year’s scheduling will affect the advisory period.

Comments from the Board. Members of the Board commented on the need for a comprehensive feasibility study, thanked retirees for their years of service, and welcomed the new Highland High School and Southridge School principals.

Future Meeting. The next regular meeting of the Board of School Trustees is May 19, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.

Adjournment. There being no further business to come before the Board, Mr. Kuva moved, seconded by Mr. Garcia, to adjourn at 6:50 p.m. after the signing of claims in the amount of \$3,024,399.40, minutes, payroll file totals, etc. All voted “aye.” Motion carried.