

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

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, August 18, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.

President Krull opened with the Pledge of Allegiance followed by 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, and Mr. Richard Alyea

Absent: Mr. Victor Garcia (with notice)

Also present were Mrs. Kim Fulton, Chief Financial Officer, and Mr. Rhett Tauber, Attorney.

Minutes – Regular Meeting of July 21, 2026. Mr. Kuva moved, seconded by Mrs. Smith-Gomez to approve the minutes of July 21, 2026. All voted “aye.” Motion carried.

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

Vouchers. Mr. Kuva moved, seconded by Mrs. Smith-Gomez, to approve the vouchers as printed. All voted “aye.” Motion carried.

Permission to Advertise Budget. The administration requested approval to advertise the 2027 Budgets on Gateway and post the required plans on the School Town’s website. The public hearing for the 2027 Budget, Capital Projects Plan, and Bus Replacement Plan will be held on September 15, 2026.

Worthless Property Resolution. The Beverage Air commercial milk cooler located at the high school is outdated and no longer working. The administration recommended the approval of a resolution declaring this item as worthless property. Mrs. Smith-Gomez moved, seconded by Mr. Kuva, to approve. All voted “aye.” Motion carried.

Donations. The following donations were received: high school - \$100 for boys’ basketball from the Mike Law Memorial; and \$100 from the Town of Highland Twilight Participation for the band. Southridge, Johnston, and Merkley each received \$1,500 from the Highland Education Foundation for the Big Ideas Grant. Mrs. Smith-Gomez moved, seconded by Mr. Alyea, to accept the donations as presented. All voted “aye.” Motion carried.

Special/Support Services. Mr. Rusty McWilliams, Director of Buildings and Grounds, provided the Board with a written report regarding the ongoing maintenance work/repairs over the past month.

2026-2027 Formative Assessment Grant The administration recommended the approval of the 2026-2027 Formative Assessment Grant in the amount of \$13,894.30. The money will go toward an assessment/testing program used by the corporation to measure students’ academic progress. Mr. Alyea moved, seconded by Mrs. Smith-Gomez, to approve. All voted “aye.” Motion carried.

2026-2027 Career Coaching Grant. The administration recommended the approval of the Career Coaching Grant in the amount of \$1,200. The funds will be used to support the School Town of Highland Work-Based Learning Program. Mr. Kuva moved, seconded by Mr. Alyea, to approve. All voted “aye.” Motion carried.

Amend the Agenda Mrs. Smith-Gomez moved, seconded by Mr. Kuva, to amend the agenda, item “C,” to appoint Dr. John Schwuchow as Interim Superintendent at a paid daily rate retroactive to August 11, 2026. The Chair delayed the motion and called for a motion to amend the agenda. Mr. Kuva moved, seconded by

Mr. Alyea, to amend the agenda. All voted "aye." Motion carried. The Chair then called for a vote on Mrs. Smith Gomez's motion. All voted "aye." Motion carried

Resignations. The following resignations were accepted: **Ryan Erdelac**, Assistant Superintendent, effective August 20, 2026; **Adam Ahmad**, middle school wrestling coach-July 22, 2026; **Steven Todorcevic**, assistant wrestling coach-July 23, 2026; **Camron Fouladi**, English teacher-July 22, 2026; **Jessica Venmer**, Johnston instructional aide-August 3, 2026; **Criselda Torres**, bus driver-August 10, 2026; and **Sophia Filis**, middle school bookkeeper-July 28, 2026. The Chair thanked Dr. Erdelac for his twelve years of dedicated service to the School Town of Highland and wished him well. Mrs. Smith-Gomez moved, seconded by Mr. Kuva, to accept the above resignations as presented. All voted "aye." Motion carried.

Appointments/Transfers. The Chair recommend the following appointments effective for the 2026-2027 school year: **Ashley Henderson**, Merkley tech resource assistant; **Daphne Decker**, high school English teacher; **Katie Buffington**, Pathfinder aide; **Chloe Gomez**, middle school social studies teacher; **April Boyd** and **Stacy Steele**, Johnston girls basketball; **Stacy Steele**, middle school cross country coach, **Mark DeLeon**, Johnston boys basketball, **Sherry Tokash**, Merkley instructional aide; **Nona Vanzo**, Johnston Dependent Care; **Jason Jaques**, Warren instructional aide; **Julian Camp**, Merkley instructional aide; **Morgan Schallenkamp**, Johnston instructional aide; **Elia Polites**, Johnston Instructional aide; **Kristin Swallow**, middle school bookkeeper; **Diana Munos**, high school ELL aide; **John Castillo**, study hall aide; **Nick Ecsy**, in-school suspension aide; **David Rivera**, softball coach; **Joann Nunez**, high school PE aide; **Julie Homans**, Robotics Club; **Adriana Garcia**, middle school ELL aide; **Robert Gaskill**, bus driver; **Ryan Moore and Kyndal Brooks**, volunteer football program; **Jessica Perez**, high school custodian; **Delfina Godoy**, bus aide/McKinney Vento Driver; **Breanna Medley**, Dependent Care aide; **Kenneth Sperry**, assistant varsity football coach; **Eric Escamilla**, maintenance; **Donna Scheidt** and **A.J. Lair**, fall supervisor split position; and **Danielle Cerda**, Johnston Dependent Care aide. Mr. Kuva moved, seconded by Mrs. Smith-Gomez, to approve. All voted "aye." Motion carried.

Appointment of Interim Superintendent. Mrs. Smith-Gomez moved, seconded by Mr. Kuva, to appoint Dr. John Schwuchow as Interim Superintendent paid at a daily rate retroactive to August 11, 2026, The Chair explained the cancellation of the public hearing and the process that needs to take place to appoint Dr. Schwuchow as the permanent superintendent. A new posting must be done, and a formal hearing will take place ten days after the posting. All voted "aye" on the motion. Motion carried. Dr. Schwuchow, a former elementary school teacher, expressed his delight in returning to Highland and thanked the Board for the opportunity.

Comments from the Audience. A comment was made regarding the failure of the 2023 School Town of Highland referendum.

Comments from the Board. The Board welcomed Dr. Schwuchow and thanked everyone for their collective efforts to move things forward following the storm. The first day of school for students is August 25.

Future Meetings. The Board will meet for a budget work session on August 25, 2026 at 5:30 p.m. and in regular session on September 15, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.

Adjournment. There being no further business to come before the Board, Mr. Kuva moved, seconded by Mrs. Smith-Gomez, to adjourn at 6:45 p.m. after the signing of claims in the amount of \$7,728,045.93, minutes, payroll file totals, etc. All voted "aye." Motion carried.