



Kelly DiBenedetto  
Chairperson  
School Board  
1200 E. 42<sup>nd</sup> Street  
Indianapolis, IN 46205

Indiana School for the Deaf  
School Board Meeting

April 21, 2020  
2:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Via Zoom

Minutes

**Voting Members Absent:**

**Non-Voting Members Absent:**

P. J. McGrew

**Voting Members Present:**

Kelly DiBenedetto, Chairperson  
Dr. Ray Furner  
Andy Leffler  
Terri Miller  
Ann Reifel, Vice Chairperson  
Amy Waggoner  
Lucy Witte

**Non-Voting Members Present:**

Rep. Ed Clere  
Patrick Rhodes

**ISD Staff:**

Superintendent Dr. Geeslin

- I. **Call to Order:** Before the Call to Order Supt. Geeslin provided Zoom meeting protocols to the Board. Chairperson DiBenedetto convened the meeting at 2:30 p.m., noting that a quorum was met.
- II. **Approval of minutes:** Motion by Dr. Furner, second by Ms. Miller to accept the February 18, 2020 minutes as printed. Motion passed.
- III. **Chairperson's Remarks:** Chairperson DiBenedetto thanked the Board for their participation in today's unique meeting. Everyone was asked to follow the Zoom protocol as explained by Supt. Geeslin. Supt. Geeslin has been in constant contact with the Chairperson and the Vice-Chairperson regarding the situation at ISD. The Chairperson is seeing a tremendous amount of communication (emails and videos) shared from ISD.
- IV. **Superintendent report:** As things change daily/hourly due to the COVID-19 pandemic, ISD staff continues to be flexible with the priority of serving our staff, students, and families and keeping everyone safe. Some ISD staff are interpreting, into ASL, documents (Executive

The Indiana School for the Deaf is a bilingual educational environment  
where students belong, excel and thrive academically and socially.

Orders, etc.) released by Gov. Holcomb or Ind. State Dept. of Health. The vlogs are shared on many social media formats to/for the Deaf community.

Supt. Geeslin asked that the Administration Team provide a Division update to the Board.

a. Jeremy Hawk, Director of Operations & Chief Financial Officer:

- Maintenance staff returned to campus last week
- Campus Police have remained on campus
- Business Office staff are working remotely
- ISD's budget is looking very good. ISD has agreed to revert \$500,000 (could possibly be more) back to the State this year.
- Capital Projects (replacement windows in buildings 1, 2 & 3): All are running ahead of schedule due to campus availability.
- Visual Communication System: Purchase Order and contract has been finalized. Walk-through is scheduled for next week.
- Utility costs are low

Q: What is the State's direction regarding hourly paid employees?

A: ISD received directives from State Personnel Department with each stay-at-home order. The recent Federal CARES Act provides 80 hours of emergency sick leave for those who cannot work remotely. ISD is staying on top of this issue to make sure our staff receive a paycheck.

b. Matt Krueger, Student Life Director:

- ISD was contacted to possibly be a location for first responders to use as a "home away from home" during the pandemic. Another location was selected.
- Camp Willard has been cancelled for this year.
- Sports camps are still on the schedule for this summer. ISD will continue to work with IHSAA (following their guidelines), monitor the pandemic situation and adhere to the Governor's guidelines.
- Dorm furniture: The first-floor lounge furniture has been received including living room furniture for 4 pod areas. It looks great but unfortunately there is no one here to enjoy it, yet.

Q Do we know how the residential students are coping? Do they have hot meals/snacks, etc.?

A ISD's food pantry for students is open by appointment. We average one or two families per week. ISD's social workers and counselors are in touch with the families and provide resources.

Q Are there projects on campus that Student Life staff can perform to continue to receive a paycheck?

A ISD is doing all we can to ensure that staff continue to receive a paycheck.

c. Kim Kause, Director of Instruction:

- Continuous/E-learning began at ISD on March 17. Effective April 2 to May 21 ISD provides remote learning Tues.-Thurs. (22 days). There were a few issues: 1) Elementary students did not have their iPads

- ISD arranged for parents to pick up their student's iPads or staff delivered iPads to the student's homes.
- 2) some families do not have internet access
  - The local school corporation provided assistance to ISD for families (5 in Elementary, 5 in Middle School, 5 in High School) without internet access. For those families still without internet access, hard copies are mailed to the student.
- ISD was contacted by Gallaudet University asking about our E-learning process. Several Deaf schools throughout the U.S. struggled and were not able to provide instruction for several weeks. Our Education Technology Specialists have been integral supporting our teachers (some of them struggled in the beginning) with training, support and resources to meet the challenge. Our staff have kept up and adjusted quickly to changes that happened overnight.
- ISD's counselors and behavioral specialists reached out and continue to work with local LEA's to provide support to the families.
- OT/PT/SLP staff continue to provide services to the student.

Q Is ISD following the normal routine of participating on LEA case conference meetings to determine whether a student should enroll at ISD?

A Annual Case Reviews are continuing as scheduled via Zoom/videophone/telephone. New student case conferences will be held in August.

Comment: ISD should document if parents do not want wish to hold a case conference.

Q How is ISD handling situations when a child turns 3?

A ISD waits until invited by the LEA to the case conference. ISD will document that the child will start at ISD in August and will work with the Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

Q Why do some families not have internet access?

A There are a variety of reasons.

Comment: AT&T, some cable providers and possibly Verizon are offering programs for low-income families.

Ms. Kause will follow up with her team and report back to the Board.

## V. **Old Business:** None

## VI. **New Business:**

### a. 2019-2020 Instructional Days – Superintendent Geeslin

- Due to Ind. Dept. of Education's directive schools must provide instruction via remote learning until one of the following occurs: 1) the school has provided at least 160 days of instruction during the 2019-2020 school year or 2) the school has provided at least 20 instructional days of remote learning between April 2 and June 30. ISD met the 20 days of remote learning as of April 1. Supt. Geeslin requests a Board vote that ISD's last instructional day end on May 21. Motion by Dr. Furner, second by Mr. Leffler to close school on May 21. Motion carried.

VII. **Public comments:** None

VIII. **Board comments:**

- Chairperson DiBenedetto: Have there been discussions surrounding graduation exercises?
  - Supt. Geeslin: Yes, although no final plans have been determined, yet. Students have expressed their desire for a live graduation on June 5<sup>th</sup>. ISD must keep the health and safety for students/families/staff in the forefront of any decision. Kari Cook will be the guest commencement speaker (via video) and Governor Holcomb will also share remarks (via video) to our graduates. ISD is also looking at what other local schools are offering. ISD will decide and share this with everyone soon.
  - Kim Kause: ISD will also host our traditional promotion (kindergarten, 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade) ceremonies virtually. We are working with our teachers to schedule the events.
- Vice Chairperson Reifel: Recognized ISD staff for their hard work and being flexible during this unexpected crisis. Would like to have the graduation ceremony live streamed and posted on ISD's website for anyone in the Deaf community to view.
- Ms. Miller: Shared that, from what she is seeing, students' needs are being met in their local school districts. Asked that ISD staff needs also be kept in mind, including mental health.
  - Supt. Geeslin shared that CEASD hosted a town hall meeting today on mental health and how to take care of both students' and staffs' needs.

IX. **Next meeting:** May 19, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. via Zoom. Supt. Geeslin will share the link with the School Board.

X. **Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned by Chairperson DiBenedetto at 3:30 p.m.