

**RESOLUTION TO DECLARE INTENTION TO CONSIDER THE TERMINATION OF
CONTRACT WITH FULL SPECIFICATION OF THE GROUNDS FOR SUCH
CONSIDERATION**

The Riverside Local School District Board of Education ("Board") met in regular session on December 4, 2025, with the following members present:

Board President Scott Fishel,
Board Vice President Dennis Keeney
Board Member Denise Brewster
Board Member Belinda Glavic Grassi
Board Member Lori Krenisky

FISHEL moved to adopt the following Resolution:

WHEREAS the Board believes that the conduct of Dr. Christopher J. Rateno ("Rateno") constitutes grounds for termination under R.C. 3319.16 and applicable laws, and that the character of the charges against Rateno warrants suspension of Rateno without pay pending action to terminate pursuant to R.C. 3319.16 and applicable laws.

WHEREAS, on November 26, 2025, Rateno was advised, in writing, that a pre-discipline/pre-termination meeting/conference was scheduled for December 4, 2025, at 5:30 p.m., to provide Rateno the opportunity to appear before the Board to show cause as to why the employment contract of Rateno should not be suspended and terminated pursuant to R.C. 3319.16 and applicable laws.

WHEREAS, on December 4, 2025, at 5:30 p.m., a pre-discipline/pre-termination meeting/conference was conducted to provide Rateno the opportunity to appear before the Board to show cause as to why the employment contract of Rateno should not be suspended and terminated pursuant to R.C. 3319.16 and applicable laws.

WHEREAS Rateno has been given the opportunity to appear before the Board to show cause as to why the employment contract of Rateno should not be suspended and terminated pursuant to R.C. 3319.16 and applicable laws.

WHEREAS the Board intends to suspend Rateno without pay or other fringe benefits effective December 5, 2025, pending final action to terminate the employment contract of Rateno as, in the judgment of the Board, the character of the charges warrants such action pursuant to R.C. 3319.16 and applicable laws.

WHEREAS, before terminating the employment contract of Rateno, the Board shall furnish Rateno a written notice signed by Treasurer Stephen Thompson ("Treasurer") of the Board's intention to consider the termination of the employment contract of Rateno with full specification of the grounds for such consideration pursuant to R.C. 3319.16 and applicable laws.

WHEREAS the notice requirements of R.C. 121.22, R.C. 3313.16, and applicable laws were complied with for this board meeting of December 4, 2025.

WHEREAS all formal action of the Board concerning and relating to the adoption of the instant resolution was taken in an open meeting of the Board and all deliberations that resulted in such formal action were in meetings open to the public in compliance with the law.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT it is the intention of the Board to proceed to consider the termination of the employment contract of Rateno for good and just cause and that the specification of the grounds for such consideration is as follows:

1. Rateno currently holds a five-year professional superintendent license, a five-year professional high school (7-12) license, and five-year professional principal license with the Ohio State Board of Education, each of which expires on June 30, 2028.
2. Rateno is currently appointed and employed by the Board in the position of superintendent pursuant to an R.C. 3319.01 employment contract that expires on July 31, 2026.
3. Pursuant to R.C. 3319.01, Board Policy 1100, Board Policy 1120, Board Policy 1130, Board Policy 1200, Board Policy 1210, Board Policy 1220, Board Policy 1230, and other applicable laws; Rateno serves as the professional adviser, executive officer, and administrative officer for the Board.
4. Pursuant to R.C. 3319.01, Board Policy 1240, Board Policy 1240.01, Board Policy 1210, and other applicable laws; the Board has adopted procedures for Rateno's evaluation and has evaluated Rateno in accordance with those procedures. Copies of Rateno's evaluations have been provided to Rateno, are part of Rateno's personnel file, and are attached hereto and incorporated herein by the instant reference.
5. Pursuant to Board Policy 1210 and other applicable laws, the Board has established goals for Rateno through annual evaluations of Rateno's performance. Copies of Rateno's goals have been provided to Rateno, are part of Rateno's personnel file, and are attached hereto and incorporated herein by the instant reference.
6. Pursuant to Board Policy 1210 and other applicable laws, the Board has, whenever possible, relied upon the objective outcomes of Rateno's evaluations, rather than on subjective opinions, in formulating the Board's position regarding Rateno's performance.
7. Pursuant to Board Policy 1240.01 and other applicable laws, Rateno's services have been found by the Board to be unsatisfactory, Rateno has been notified of such unsatisfactory conditions, Rateno has been given an opportunity to correct such unsatisfactory conditions, Rateno's service continues to be unsatisfactory, and

Rateno has been notified of such continued unsatisfactory conditions.

8. By way of example only, the Board provided Rateno with an average percentage rating of just over approximately sixty-one percent for the 2023-2024 school year evaluation, which addresses deficiencies in Rateno's communication with the Board. A copy of this evaluation has been provided to Rateno, is part of Rateno's personnel file, and is attached hereto and incorporated herein by the instant reference.
9. By way of example only, the Board provided Rateno with performance objectives for the 2024-2025 school year in the 2023-2024 school year evaluation including, but not limited to, Rateno's communication deficiencies with the Board. A copy of these performance objectives has been provided to Rateno, are part of Rateno's personnel file, and are attached hereto and incorporated herein by the instant reference.
10. By way of example only, the Board provided Rateno with an average percentage rating of approximately sixty percent for the 2024-2025 school year evaluation, which addresses deficiencies in Rateno's communication with the Board. A copy of this evaluation has been provided to Rateno, is part of Rateno's personnel file, and is attached hereto and incorporated herein by the instant reference.
11. By way of example only, the Board provided Rateno with performance objectives for the 2025-2026 school year in the 2024-2025 school year evaluation including, but not limited to, Rateno's communication deficiencies with the Board. A copy of these performance objectives has been provided to Rateno, are part of Rateno's personnel file, and are attached hereto and incorporated herein by the instant reference.
12. By way of example only, the Board provided Rateno with a mid-year evaluation for the 2025-2026 school year, which addresses deficiencies in Rateno's communication with the Board. A copy of this evaluation has been provided to Rateno, is part of Rateno's personnel file, and is attached hereto and incorporated herein by the instant reference.
13. Even though the Board only speaks through its minutes and the Board voted to proceed with the Buckeye Building Project pursuant to a specific plan, Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, amount to a deliberate attempt to sabotage the will of the Board with respect to the Buckeye Building Project.
14. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, caused the Board to violate the Ohio Sunshine Laws, Board Bylaw 0164, Board Bylaw 0165, Board Bylaw 0166, and Board Bylaw 0169.2, and other applicable laws by allowing a sham board meeting to be coordinated and conducted on November 8, 2025, which was initially designated as a "special board meeting" for the purposes of taking formal action to rescind the prior formal action taken by the Board with respect to the Buckeye

Building Project. See, e.g., https://youtu.be/TkxhvwRJl4?si=4x_GAeMvD211vHDh (accessed Dec. 4, 2025).

15. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, caused the Board to violate the Ohio Sunshine Laws, Board Bylaw 0164, Board Bylaw 0165, Board Bylaw 0166, and Board Bylaw 0169.2, and other applicable laws by allowing a sham board meeting to be coordinated and conducted on November 8, 2025, which was initially designated as a "special board meeting" for the purposes of taking formal action to rescind the prior formal action taken by the Board with respect to the Buckeye Building Project and then immediately converting the same to a "Community Listening Session" on November 8, 2025, to discuss taking formal action to rescind the formal action taken by the Board with respect to the Buckeye Building Project, which Rateno then caused such discussions to be recorded and disseminated to the public online. See, e.g., https://youtu.be/TkxhvwRJl4?si=4x_GAeMvD211vHDh (accessed Dec. 4, 2025).
16. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, amounted to improper communication with stakeholders in the Buckeye Building Project including, but not limited to, Sudsina & Associates, LLC that were intended to undermine and, in fact, undermined the prior formal action taken by the Board with respect to the Buckeye Building Project.
17. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, caused the Buckeye Building Project to not go forward as planned in the prior formal action taken by the Board.
18. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, caused Sudsina & Associates, LLC to resign as the municipal advisor for the Board and from the Buckeye Building Project.
19. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, violated the prior formal action taken by the Board with respect to the Buckeye Building Project.
20. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, are not protected by the First Amendment to the United States Constitution as Rateno is a high-level employee; Rateno was seeking to release, and did release, confidential information; Rateno was not speaking as a private citizen; Rateno was not speaking about a matter of public concern but, instead, were speaking about internal personal disputes and grievances; Rateno's speech is normally part of Rateno's job duties and/or Rateno was speaking in Rateno's official capacity; Rateno's speech interfered with Rateno's job; and Rateno's speech disrupted the Board's interest in an efficient workplace.
21. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, are not protected against retaliation for whistleblowing as Rateno was not reporting to the Board actions that are illegal, abusive, and/or violate specific public policies.

22. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, amount to Rateno's failure to perform Rateno's responsibilities as the professional adviser, executive officer, and administrative officer of the Board pursuant to R.C. 3319.01, Board Policy 1100, and other applicable laws.
23. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, amount to Rateno's failure to maintain unquestionably high standards of honesty, integrity, impartiality, and professional conduct pursuant to Board Policy 1130 and other applicable laws.
24. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, amount to Rateno's failure to maintain the proper performance of school business and administration through the service of integrity, high ideals, and human understanding pursuant to Board Policy 1200 and other applicable laws.
25. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, amount to Rateno's failure to maintain high standards in Rateno's working relationships, in the provision of Rateno's professional leadership in the Riverside Local School District and community, and in the performance of Rateno's duties to recognize basic dignities of all individuals with whom Rateno interacts in the performance of Rateno's duties pursuant to Board Policy 1200 and other applicable laws.
26. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, amount to Rateno's failure to maintain high standards in Rateno's working relationships, in the provision of Rateno's professional leadership in the Riverside Local School District and community, and in the performance of Rateno's duties to seek and apply the knowledge and skills appropriate to Rateno's assigned responsibilities pursuant to Board Policy 1200 and other applicable laws.
27. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, amount to Rateno's failure to maintain high standards in Rateno's working relationships, in the provision of Rateno's professional leadership in the Riverside Local School District and community, and in the performance of Rateno's duties to keep in confidence legally confidential information pursuant to Board Policy 1200 and other applicable laws.
28. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, amount to Rateno's failure to maintain high standards in Rateno's working relationships, in the provision of Rateno's professional leadership in the Riverside Local School District and community, and in the performance of Rateno's duties to refrain from using Rateno's position or public property, or permitting another person to use a public position or public property, for partisan political purposes pursuant to Board Policy 1200 and other applicable laws.
29. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, amount to Rateno's failure to maintain standards of exemplary professional conduct and conform Rateno's behavior to the code of ethics as adopted from the American Association of School Administrators' Statement of Ethics for School Administrators by fulfilling

Rateno's professional responsibilities with honesty and integrity pursuant to Board Policy 1200 and other applicable laws.

30. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, amount to Rateno's failure to maintain standards of exemplary professional conduct and conform Rateno's behavior to the code of ethics as adopted from the American Association of School Administrators' Statement of Ethics for School Administrators by implementing the Board's policies and administrative rules and regulations pursuant to Board Policy 1200 and other applicable laws.
31. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, amount to Rateno's failure to maintain standards of exemplary professional conduct and conform Rateno's behavior to the code of ethics as adopted from the American Association of School Administrators' Statement of Ethics for School Administrators by avoiding the use of Rateno's position for personal gain through political, social, economic, and/or other influences pursuant to Board Policy 1200 and other applicable laws.
32. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, amount to Rateno's failure to administer the policies of the Board pursuant to Board Policy 1210 and other applicable laws.
33. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, amount to Rateno's failure to serve as the professional adviser, executive officer, and administrative officer to the Board pursuant to Board Policy 1210 and other applicable laws.
34. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, amount to Rateno's failure to take responsibility for the development, supervision, and operation of the school program and facilities under the oversight of the Board pursuant to Board Policy 1210 and other applicable laws.
35. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, amount to Rateno's failure to properly administer the Riverside Local School District pursuant to Board Policy 1220 and other applicable laws.
36. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, amount to Rateno's failure to strive to achieve the Riverside Local School District's goals pursuant to Board Policy 1230 and other applicable laws.
37. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, amount to Rateno's failure to act as a proper role model both in the school and outside the Riverside Local School District pursuant to Board Policy 1230 and other applicable laws.
38. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, amount to Rateno's failure to act as the professional adviser, executive officer, and administrative officer of the Board pursuant to Board Policy 1230 and other applicable laws.

39. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, amount to Rateno's failure to direct and supervise the work of all the schools, offices, and employees of the Board, except the Treasurer, pursuant to Board Policy 1230 and other applicable laws.
40. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, amount to Rateno's failure to take responsibility for any task performed by any designated subordinate employee pursuant to Board Policy 1230 and other applicable laws.
41. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, amount to Rateno's failure to make all reports and recommendations to the Board through Rateno's office pursuant to Board Policy 1230 and other applicable laws.
42. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, amount to Rateno's failure to serve as the professional adviser, executive officer, and administrative officer of the Board and be directly responsible to the Board pursuant to Board Policy 1230 and other applicable laws.
43. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, amount to Rateno's failure to support the majority position of the Board, when officially enacted, pursuant to Board Policy 1230 and other applicable laws.
44. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, amount to Rateno's failure to perform such duties as cooperatively identified and discussed with the Board pursuant to Board Policy 1230 and other applicable laws.
45. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, amount to Rateno's failure to, with the aid and cooperation of those directly concerned, issue such publications as are deemed necessary for the effective administration of the Riverside Local School District pursuant to Board Policy 1230 and other applicable laws.
46. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, amount to Rateno's failure to outline procedures which will provide interpretative information about the schools to citizens pursuant to Board Policy 1230 and other applicable laws.
47. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, amount to Rateno's failure to be directly responsible to the Board for the performance of assigned duties and responsibilities pursuant to Board Policy 1230 and other applicable laws.
48. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, amount to Rateno's failure to comply with the statement of philosophy of the Board pursuant to Board Policy 2110 and other applicable laws.
49. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, amount to Rateno's failure to comply with the facilities planning of the Board pursuant to Board Policy 7100 and other applicable laws.

50. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, amount to Rateno's failure to comply with the public relations objectives of the Board pursuant to Board Policy 9110 and other applicable laws.
51. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, amount to Rateno's failure to comply with the public relations objectives of the Board pursuant to Board Policy 9120 and other applicable laws.
52. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, amount to violations of Rateno's employment contract with the Board including, but not limited to, the "Model Conduct" provisions of Paragraph 16 of the same, which provides that: "The Superintendent acknowledges and agrees that: a) the Superintendent will maintain model conduct professionally and personally during the existence of this Agreement or any extension of it; b) the Superintendent's conduct to the contrary – including but not limited to unethical, immoral, or dishonorable behavior – will materially impede the Superintendent's ability to supervise the public schools of the Riverside Local School District and discharge the other responsibilities of the office of Superintendent in the manner required by the Board; and c) the Superintendent's breach of this provision will be grounds for termination under this Agreement and Ohio law." A copy of this contract has been provided to Rateno, is part of Rateno's personnel file, and is attached hereto and incorporated herein by the instant reference.
53. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, amount to violations of Rateno's job description.
54. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, amount to Rateno's failure to behave as a professional.
55. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, amount to Rateno's failure to serve as a positive role model.
56. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, amount to Rateno's failure to be responsible for preserving the dignity and integrity of Rateno's profession.
57. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, amount to Rateno's failure to practice Rateno's profession according to the highest ethical standards.
58. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, amount to Rateno's failure to adhere to the Licensure Code of Professional Conduct for Ohio Educators.
59. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, amount to Rateno's failure to accurately report information regarding the Buckeye Building Project.

60. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, amount to Rateno's failure to take responsibility, in whole or in part, for the allegations set forth herein and, instead, Rateno has asserted that (1) any and all culpability rests with the Board including, but not limited to, Board Members Belinda Glavic Grassi and Lori Krenisky, Treasurer Stephen Thompson, and Board General Counsel Daniel M. McIntyre, but not Rateno; (2) any action taken by the current Board including, but not limited to, discipline, termination, and/or nonrenewal will simply be undone once the new members of the Board are sworn into office in January 2026 – *i.e.*, Belinda Glavic Grassi, Joseph Audino, and Jimmielee Vires; and (3) Rateno was engaged in constitutionally protected speech.
61. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, amount to violations of the Licensure Code of Professional Conduct for Ohio Educators including, but not limited to, Principles 1, 1(a), 3, 3(a), 8, and 8(b), which can be viewed at <https://dam.assets.ohio.gov/image/upload/sboe.ohio.gov/Professional-Conduct/Licensure-Code-of-Professional-Conduct.pdf> (accessed Dec. 4, 2025).
62. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, amount to violations of written rules and regulations as set forth by the Board including, but not limited to, Board Bylaws 0164, 0165, 0166, and 0169.2; Board Policies 1100, 1120, 1130, 1200, 1210, 1220, 1230, 1240, 1240.01, 1541, 2110, 7100, 9110, and 9120; and all applicable administrative guidelines, which can be viewed at (accessed Dec. 4, 2025).
63. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, amount to incompetency.
64. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, amount to inefficiency.
65. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, amount to dishonesty.
66. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, amount to insubordination.
67. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, amount to discourteous treatment of the public.
68. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, amount to neglect of duty.
69. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, amount to misfeasance, which is generally defined as the unintentional act of engaging in an action and/or duty but failing to perform the duty correctly.
70. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, amount to malfeasance, which is generally defined as intentional conduct that is wrongful and/or unlawful, especially by public employees.

71. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, amount to nonfeasance, which is generally defined as the omission to perform a required duty and/or the failure to act when a duty to act existed.
72. Rateno's actions and inactions, jointly and severally, amount to just cause to both discipline Rateno and terminate Rateno's employment with the Board.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Board shall not proceed with formal action to terminate the employment contract of Rateno until after the tenth day Rateno has been furnished a written notice signed by the Treasurer of the Board's intention to consider the termination of the employment contract of Rateno with full specification of the grounds for such consideration.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, within ten days after receipt of the notice from the Treasurer, Rateno may file with the Treasurer a written demand for a hearing before the Board or a referee pursuant to the applicable rights granted to Rateno under R.C. 3319.16, R.C. 3319.161, and other applicable laws.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT Rateno is suspended without pay or other fringe benefits effective December 5, 2025, pending final action to terminate the employment contract of Rateno as, in the judgment of the Board, the character of the charges warrants such action.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Treasurer, after consultation with legal counsel, shall prepare and serve upon Rateno by certified mail, regular mail with a certificate of mailing, or other form of delivery with proof of delivery, including electronic delivery with electronic proof of delivery, the instant action which includes a full specification of the grounds for the intention to consider the termination of the employment contract of Rateno.

KEENEY seconded the motion.

Upon roll call on the adoption of the Resolution, the vote resulted as follows:

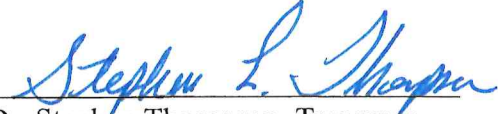
Board President Scott Fishel	<u>YES</u>
Board Vice President Dennis Keeney	<u>YES</u>
Board Member Denise Brewster	<u>YES</u>
Board Member Belinda Glavie Grassi	
Board Member Lori Krenisky	<u>NO</u>

ADOPTED: 12/5/25

ATTEST: Stephen L. Thompson
Dr. Stephen Thompson, Treasurer

TREASURER'S CERTIFICATION

The foregoing is a true and correct excerpt from the minutes of the meeting on December 4, 2025, of the Riverside Local School District Board of Education showing the adoption of the Resolution hereinabove set forth.


Dr. Stephen Thompson, Treasurer