



Kenowa Hills Public Schools

VALUE. SUPPORT. EMPOWER.

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Organizational Meeting Preliminary Minutes

Monday, January 12, 2026 at 6:00 pm

Kenowa Hills Administration Building

2325 Four Mile Road NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49544

I. Routine and Organizational Business

- A. Superintendent Hopkins called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. at the Kenowa Hills Administration Building, 2325 Four Mile Road NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49544.
- B. Superintendent Hopkins opened the meeting with a moment of silence.
- C. Members Present: Courtade, Gustinis, Hart, LaBotz, Roberts, Robinson, and Turner are present. Superintendent Hopkins and Director of Finance Ken Long along with Student Representative Aaron Coleman are also present. Chay'ce Smith is absent.
- D. Motion by Member Hart supported by Member LaBotz to appoint Superintendent Hopkins to serve as temporary chair until a new president is elected and Julie Lanka to serve as Temporary Secretary until the new secretary is elected. Report #26-000. **Motion Carries 7-0.**
- E. Motion by Member Hart supported by Member Courtade to approve the agenda. **Motion Carries 7-0.**

CALL TO ORDER

MOMENT OF SILENCE

ROLL CALL

TEMPORARY CHAIR
REPORT #26-000

APPROVE AGENDA

II. Recognition and Correspondence

- A. Recognition
 1. Board Appreciation Month- a Proclamation from the Governor and MASB Certificates of Appreciation were presented to the Board Members.
 2. Contributions to the District - Donors of items for the Middle School and High School students were acknowledged with appreciation.
- B. Correspondence - None.
- C. Board Communication - Members reported on various district events in which they participated.

RECOGNITION

CORRESPONDENCE
BOE COMMUNICATION

SUPERINTENDENT'S
REPORT

III. Information Items

- A. Superintendent's Report
 1. Inside the Castle: Bond Progress and Updates/ STEM Academy Showcase - A review of work that has been completed from the recent bond proposals, as well as the work that is planned to be completed, along with the STEM Academy Showcare will be highlighted in the Middle School LGI on Thursday, 1/22/26 starting at 6:00 p.m. followed by the STEM Showcase at 6:30 p.m.
 2. Retirement Notification - Superintendent Hopkins gave official notice to the Board of his intent to retire effective 6/30/26.
- B. Finance Report
 1. December 2025 Check Register
 2. Bond Funds Investment Income
 3. Audit Report - Director of Finance Long provided an update on the status of the audit being completed.

FINANCE REPORT

IV. Public Comment - There was not any public comment.

The purpose of this meeting is to conduct Board of Education business. There will typically be no attempt to comment or give answers at this meeting. Audience members who wish to make comments are invited to complete the appropriate form located at the entrance. Each speaker has a maximum of three (3) minutes to address the board. Inquiries requiring a response will be referred to the superintendent in the cases where contact information is provided. We ask all individuals making public comments to follow our board policy.

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V. Organizational Action Items

A. Election of Officers. Action Report # 26-001.

1. Temporary Chair Hopkins opened nominations for President.

Member Hart nominated Member Courtade (who accepted the nomination)

Member Turner nominated Member LaBotz (who accepted the nomination)

Hearing no further nominations, Temporary Chair Hopkins closed the nominations for President.

Temporary Secretary Lanka took a roll-call vote to elect the President.

Courtade voted for Member Courtade

Gustinis voted for Member LaBotz

Hart voted for Member Courtade

LaBotz voted for Member LaBotz

Roberts voted for Member LaBotz

Robinson voted for Member Courtade

Turner voted for Member LaBotz

Member LaBotz was elected President.

2. President LaBotz opened nominations for Vice-President.

Member Hart nominated Member Courtade (who accepted the nomination)

Member Roberts nominated Member Turner (who accepted the nomination)

Hearing no further nominations, President LaBotz closed the nominations for Vice-President.

Temporary Secretary Lanka took a roll-call vote to elect the Vice-President.

Courtade voted for Member Courtade

Gustinis voted for Member Turner

Hart voted for Member Courtade

LaBotz voted for Member Turner

Roberts voted for Member Turner

Robinson voted for Member Courtade

Turner voted for Member Turner

Member Turner was elected Vice-President.

3. President LaBotz opened nominations for Secretary.

Member LaBotz nominated Member Courtade (who accepted the nomination)

Hearing no further nominations, President LaBotz closed the nominations for Secretary.

Member Courtade was elected Secretary, 7-0.

4. President LaBotz opened nominations for Treasurer.

Member Courtade nominated Member Hart (who accepted the nomination)

Hearing no further nominations, President LaBotz closed the nominations for Treasurer.

Member Hart was elected Treasurer, 7-0.

- B. Motion by Hart supported by Courtade to approve a Schedule of Meetings for the 2026 calendar year. Report #26-002. **Motion carries 7-0.**
- C. Motion by Hart supported by Courtade to approve the Investment Authority Resolution. Report #26-003. **Motion Carries 7-0.**
- D. Motion by Hart supported by Courtade to designate depositories for district funds for the 2026 calendar year. Report #26-004. **Motion carries 7-0.**
- E. Motion by Hart supported by Courtade to approve a Resolution Authorizing Electronic Transactions of Funds. Report #26-005. **Motion carries 7-0.**

ELECTION OF OFFICERS
REPORT #26-001

PRESIDENT

VICE-PRESIDENT

SECRETARY

TREASURER
MEETING SCHEDULE
REPORT #26-002

INVESTMENT
AUTHORITY RESOLUTION
#26-003

DESIGNATE
DEPOSITORY
REPORT #26-004

ELECTRONIC TRANSFER
OF FUNDS
REPORT #26-005

F. Motion by Hart supported by Gustinis to authorize signatures for various accounts. Report #26-006. **Motion carries 7-0.**

ORIZE SIGNATURES
REPORT #26-006

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G. Motion by Hart supported by Gustinis to appoint the Superintendent or their designee to post all notices on behalf of the Board. Report #26-007. **Motion carries 7-0.**

H. Motion by Hart supported by Turner to appoint the Superintendent or his designee to accept support staff resignations and retirements on behalf of the Board of Education. Report #26-008. **Motion carries 7-0.**

I. Motion by Hart supported by Turner to authorize the Superintendent to hire support staff on behalf of the Board of Education. Report #26-009. **Motion carries 7-0.**

J. Motion by Hart supported by Turner to authorize the Superintendent to serve as Hearing Officer for disciplinary matters with students involving long-term suspensions and expulsions as outlined in Report #26-010. **Motion carries 7-0.**

K. Motion by Hart supported by Courtade to designate Clark Hill and Thrun Law as the District's Legal Counsel. Report #26-011. **Motion carries 7-0.**

L. Motion by Hart supported by Courtade to designate Maner Costerisan as the District's auditing firm. Report #26-012. **Motion carries 7-0.**

M. Motion by Hart supported by Courtade to designate SET SEG as the District's property/casualty Insurance Agent. Report #26-013. **Motion carries 7-0.**

N. Motion by Hart supported by Courtade to designate GMB as the District's Architectual Firm. Report #26-014. **Motion carries 7-0.**

O. Motion by Hart supported by Courtade to designate Owen-Ames-Kimball as the District's Construction Management Company. Report #26-015. **Motion carries 7-0.**

P. Motion by Hart supported by Turner to assign board members to a specific building to be the liaison between the building and the board of education. Report #26-016. **Motion carries 7-0.**

POSTING NOTICES
REPORT #26-007

ACCEPT RESIGNATIONS
& RETIREMENTS
REPORT #26-008

AUTHORIZE TO HIRE
REPORT #26-009

AUTHORIZE TO SERVE AS
HEARING OFFICER
REPORT #26-010

APPOINTMENT OF
DISTRICT LEGAL
COUNSEL
REPORT #26-011

APPOINTMENT OF
DISTRICT AUDIT FIRM
REPORT #26-012

APPOINTMENT OF
DISTRICT INSURANCE
AGENCY
REPORT #26-013

APPOINTMENT OF
DISTRICT ARCHITECT
REPORT #26-014

APPOINTMENT OF
CONSTRUCTION
MANAGEMENT
COMPANY
BUILDING LIAISONS
REPORT #26-016

BUILDING	BOARD MEMBER
Early Childhood Center	COREY TURNER
Alpine Elementary	JEFF GUSTINIS
Central Elementary	DANIELLE ROBERTS
Zinser Elementary	MARK ROBINSON
Middle School	TRACEY HART
High School	ERIN LABOTZ
Pathways High School	MELISSA COURTADE

VI. Business Action Items

A. Motion by Hart supported by Courtade to approve the consent agenda. **Motion carries 7-0.**

1. December 15, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes
2. December 2025 Bills Payable: General fund expenditures of \$2,311,045.94 using checks # 86318-86489; School Lunch Fund expenditures of \$18,623.23 using checks #11737 through 11750; 2010 Qualified School Construction Bond Fund expenditures of \$750 on check #004; 2022 Building and Site Series expenditures of \$120,775.67 using checks #149-151; 2024 Athletic Bond Series expenditures of \$3,687,671.94 using checks #076-081; Student Activity expenditures of \$31,677.39 using checks #97551-97569; Total expenditures for December 2025 were \$3,629,208.04.
3. Certified Staff Personnel Report

CONSENT AGENDA

New Hires
Macy Austin; (0.6 FTE) Art Teacher, Alpine (effective January 26, 2026)
Melissa Evans; (0.6 FTE) STEM Teacher, Alpine (effective January 19, 2026)

Salary Adjustment

Gerald Hopkins; Superintendent

\$3,383 (2% COL increase to be paid over remaining pays in 2025-26 contract)

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SECONDARY COURSES
DELETIONS/ADDITIONS
REPORT #26-017

B. Motion by Hart and support by Courtade to approve the secondary course proposal deletions and additions as noted in Report #26-017. **Motion carries 7-0.**

1. Middle School
 - i. 8th Grade Tech (Removal)
 - ii. Computers 1, 2, and 3 (Removal)
 - iii. Web Design (Removal)
 - iv. Teen Leadership (Removal)
 - v. Journalism (Removal)
2. High School
 - i. Algebra 2A and 2B (Removal)
 - ii. Advanced Algebra with Statistics 1 and 2 (Removal)
 - iii. Precalculus (Removal)
 - iv. Honors Algebra 2 (Addition)
 - v. AP Statistics (Addition)
 - vi. AP Precalculus (Addition)

VII. Future Items for Consideration

A. Future Meetings

1. January 14, 2026 6:00 pm @ Admin Building - Superintendent Pre-Search Informational Meeting

B. Go Around

FUTURE MEETINGS

VIII. Adjournment

A. Seeing no additional agenda items, President LaBotz adjourned the meeting at 7:20 p.m.

GO AROUND

ADJOURNMENT

Respectfully submitted,

Melissa Courtade, Secretary