



Kenowa Hills Public Schools

VALUE. SUPPORT. EMPOWER.

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Regular Meeting Preliminary Minutes
Monday, January 26, 2026 at 6:00 pm
Kenowa Hills Administration Building
2325 4 Mile Road NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49544

I. Routine and Organizational Business

- A. President LaBotz called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm at Kenowa Hills Administration Building, 2325 Four Mile Road NW, Grand Rapids, MI, 49544.
- B. President LaBotz opened the meeting with a moment of silence.
- C. Members Present: Courtade, Gustinis, Hart (arrived at 6:02 pm), LaBotz, Roberts, Robinson, and Turner are present. Superintendent Hopkins and Director of Finance Long are also present as is Student Representative Chay'ce Smith. Student Representative Aaron Coleman is absent.
- D. Motion by Member Courtade supported by Member Roberts to approve the agenda. **Motion carries 6-0.**

CALL TO ORDER

MOMENT OF SILENCE

ROLL CALL

APPROVE AGENDA

II. Recognition and Correspondence

- A. Recognition
 - 1. Contributions to the District - Superintendent Hopkins expressed gratitude for donors of winter gear for Alpine learners.
 - 2. Kenowa Hills Board of Education - Staff and students shared their appreciation for board members by providing several gifts. Dr. Horner shared a poem that she wrote about our Board.
 - 3. Transportation and Custodial/Maintenance Departments - Dr. Horner highlighted the efforts of the entire transportation staff to ensure all of our busses passed a recent inspection. She also praised the Grounds and Maintenance Crew for braving the elements to keep our sidewalks and parking lots cleared of snow and ice.
- B. Correspondence - None
- C. Board Communication - Members reported on various district events in which they participated.

CORRESPONDENCE

BOE
COMMUNICATION

III. Discussion/Information Items

- A. Michigan Leadership Institute Presentation of Superintendent Search Services - Andrew Ingall from MLI provided an overview of their service when conducting a superintendent search.
- B. Student Representatives Report - Representative Smith highlighted the start of second semester, Student News, and SWIRL will be free this year. He shared his upcoming duties with the Rotary Interact Club, as a speaker at the Black Boys and Men Symposium, an internship with Mercantile Bank coming up, and his acceptance at Morehead College.
- C. Finance
 - 1. Asbestos Abatement Contract Award - Director Long highlighted the process and outcome of the request for proposals to complete the asbestos abatement in Phase 2 of the Early Childhood Center construction. This work will be paid with 2020 Bond Funds.
- D. Office of Teaching & Learning
 - 1. Annual Education Reports - Director Dinkelmann provided an overview of this annual requirement, noting that the building letters will contain a link to access the online reports.

MLI
SUPERINTENDENT
SEARCH

STUDENT
REPRESENTATIVES

FINANCE

ASBESTOS
ABATEMENT AWARD

OFFICE OF TEACHING
& LEARNING

ANNUAL EDUCATION
REPORTS

2. High School Course Proposals - Mr. Dinkelmann emphasized that the process used to formulate the recommendations focused on equity and accessibility for all.

HIGH SCHOOL
COURSE PROPOSALS

- i. Introduction to Knight Strength (Addition)
- ii. Advanced Knight's Strength (Name change) - It was suggested that the wording reflect that this class can be for anyone who has already completed the Introduction to Knight Strength.

- E. Board Communication/Responses - It was suggested that all Board Members refrain from using "Reply All" when emailing and only President LaBotz respond to inquiries to the Board. Further clarification on OMA regulations was requested.

BOARD
COMMUNICATION/
RESPONSES

IV. Public Comment: No audience member addressed the Board.

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.

V. Action Items

- A. Motion by Member Hart supported by Member Robinson to approve the Consent Agenda. **Motion carries 7-0.**

CONSENT AGENDA

1. 1/12/26 Organizational Meeting Minutes
2. 1/14/26 Special Superintendent Search Informational Meeting Minutes
3. Certified Staff Personnel Report

New Hire (Returning)

Rebecca (Becky) Nicolette; (0.6 FTE) Reading Interventionist Teacher, Alpine (effective 1/27/26)

Internal Transfer to New Position

Jodi VanDam; Reading Interventionist Teacher, Central (effective TBD)

Retirement

Gerald Hopkins, Superintendent (effective June 30, 2026)

- B. Motion by Member Roberts supported by Member Robinson to award the contract for Asbestos Removal at the Early Childhood Center to Abatement & Demolition Services, LLC in the amount of \$149,650.00 using 2020 bond funds. Report # 26-019. **Motion carries 7-0.**

ASBESTOS
ABATEMENT
CONTRACT AWARD
REPORT #26-019

- C. Motion by Member Hart supported by Member Robinson to approve the High School Courses as presented but with a minor word change. Report #26-020 **Motion carries 7-0.**

HIGH SCHOOL
COURSE PROPOSALS
REPORT #26-020
SUPERINTENDENT
SEARCH FIRM
REPORT #26-021

- D. Motion by Member Hart supported by Member Gustinis to award a contract to Michigan Leadership Institute for the purpose of guiding the Board through the process of the Superintendent Search. Report #26-021. **Motion carries 7-0.**

VI. Future Items for Consideration

- A. Future Meetings
 1. 02/09/26 6:00 pm Committee of the Whole Workshop - Administration Building
 2. 02/23/26 6:00 pm Regular Board Meeting - Alpine Elementary School

FUTURE MEETINGS

- B. Go Around

GO AROUND

VII. Adjournment

ADJOURNMENT

- A. Seeing no additional agenda items, President LaBotz adjourned the meeting at 7:48 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

_____, Secretary