



**BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**Regular Meeting Preliminary Minutes**  
**Monday, April 20, 2026 at 6:00 pm**  
**Kenowa Hills Early Childhood Center**  
**3971 Richmond Ct NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49534**

**I. Routine and Organizational Business**

- A. President LaBotz called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm at the Kenowa Hills Early Childhood Center, 3971 Richmond Ct NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49534.
- B. President LaBotz opened the meeting with a moment of silence.
- C. Members Present: Courtade, Gustinis, Hart, LaBotz, Roberts, Robinson, and Turner (arrived at 6:02) are present. Superintendent Hopkins, Director Long, and Student Representative Chay'ce Smith are also present.
- D. Motion by Member Hart supported by Member Courtade to amend the agenda by adding an action item to go into closed session to discuss the status of the legal opinion that was provided in the fall. Motion carries 7-0.  
 Motion by Member Courtade supported by Member Hart to approve the amended agenda. Motion carries 7-0.

CALL TO ORDER

MOMENT OF  
SILENCE  
ROLL CALL

APPROVE AGENDA

**II. Recognition and Correspondence**

- A. Recognition - Dr. Horner celebrated our ECC staff, highlighting the intentional work of ECC staff to ensure the inclusion of students with intense needs to be seen, valued, and supported as a valuable part of the entire ECC.
- B. Correspondence - None
- C. Board Communication - Members reported on various district events in which they participated.

RECOGNITION

CORRESPONDENCE  
BOE  
COMMUNICATION

**III. Discussion/Information Items**

- A. Early Childhood Center Spotlight- Director of Early Childhood Programs Cali Lipscomb and Learning Center Lead Teacher Christina Fabian highlighted the upcoming changes to the ECC with Phase 2 construction beginning in June. Special attention was paid to the four distinctive programs that are located at the ECC- Early Childhood Special Education, Preschool, Learning Center Childcare, and Great Start Readiness Preschool (run by the ISD). During construction, high quality, wrap-around care for families will remain constant.
- B. Student Representative Report - Chay'ce shared that the Rotary Interact Club has made progress in getting some new members for next year's club, and there will be one more Student News Video distributed soon.
- C. Finance - Director Long provided an overview of the following items:
  - 1. March 2026 Check Register
  - 2. Condensed Fund Statement
  - 3. Investment Income
  - 4. Bond Sale - 2026 School Building and Site (Series III) & Refunding Bonds
- D. Superintendent's Report

ECC SPOTLIGHT

STUDENT  
REPRESENTATIVES  
REPORT

FINANCE

SUPERINTENDENT  
REPORT

- 2026-27 School Year Start Date - Superintendent Hopkins noted that the District and Association continue discussions surrounding a school calendar for 2026-27. It is recommended the school year begin August 24, 2026 with the rest of the calendar being subject to bargaining. This start date aligns with all but one of the districts in Region 1, Kent ISD programming like KCTC and special education center-based programs and the Grand Rapids Community College schedule for Middle College students.

- Section 31aa Litigation - An update regarding this litigation was provided. Our team is looking at allowable uses of these funds, which must be spent by September 30, 2027.
- Girls Swim/Dive Co-Op - A two-year renewal with Grandville is recommended to continue this cooperative. A board signature is required.

E. KIASB Board of Director Elections - Four candidates are running for six vacant seats on the KIASB Board. Each local Board of Education is to submit a ballot.

KIASB ELECTIONS

F. Superintendent Search - The addition to interview a fifth candidate ensued. Although there was no formal action, board members agreed to invite James Feil. President LaBotz will contact MLI to discuss this possibility.

SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH

**IV. Public Comment:** One audience member addressed the Board.

*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.*

PUBLIC COMMENT

**V. Action Items**

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

CONSENT AGENDA

- March 23, 2026 Regular Meeting Minutes
- March 2026 Check Register; General Fund expenditures of \$1,272,023.65 using checks # 86956 through 86956; School Lunch Fund expenditures of \$44,211.42 using checks # 12013 through 12039; 2022 Building and Site Series expenditures of \$20,573.40 using checks # 158 & 159; 2024 Athletic Bond Series expenditures of \$59,159.18 using checks # 92- 97; Student Activity expenditures of \$12,237.12 using checks # 97603 through 97617. Total expenditures of \$1,408,937.77.

3. April 16, 2026 Special Meeting Minutes

B. Motion by Member Hart supported by Member Turner to to approve the sale of 2026 School Building and Site (Series III) and Refunding Bonds (General Obligation - Unlimited Tax) as authorized in the resolution found in Report #26-034. **Motion carries 7-0.**

BOND SALE AUTHORIZING RESOLUTION REPORT #26-034

C. Motion by Member Hart supported by Member Robinson to approve the 2026-2027 school calendar start date of Monday, August 24, 2026. Report #26-035. **Motion carries 7-0.**

2026-27 SCHOOL YEAR START DATE REPORT #26-035

D. Motion by Member Hart supported by Member Courtade to cast a ballot in support of Erin LaBotz, Anne Hamming, Bill Saxton, and Kelly Kermode to serve 3-year terms, expiring June 30, 2029, on the Kent Intermediate Association of School Boards (KIASB) Board of Directors. Report #26-036 **Motion carries 7-0.**

KIASB BOARD OF DIRECTOR ELECTIONS REPORT #26-036

E. Motion by Member Hart supported by Member Turner to move into closed session under MCL 15.243(1)(g) to receive an update from the legal opinion received November 10, 2025. Secretary Courtade took a roll call vote. **Motion carries 7-0.**

	Y	N	A		Y	N	A		Y	N	A		Y	N	A
Courtade	Y	___		Hart	Y	___		Roberts	Y	___		Turner	Y	___	
Gustinis	Y	___		LaBotz	Y	___		Robinson	Y	___					

The Board adjourned to go into closed session at 7:21 pm.

The Board returned to proceed with the Open Meeting at 8:17 pm.

**VI. Future Items for Consideration**

A. Future Meetings

1. 04/28/2026 5:00 pm Special Meeting @ Middle School LGI; First Round Superintendent Interviews
2. 04/30/2026 5:00 pm Special Meeting @ Middle School LGI; First Round Superintendent Interviews

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FUTURE MEETINGS

3. 05/04/2026 6:00 pm Committee of the Whole Workshop @ Administration Building
4. 05/14/2026 5:00 pm Special Meeting @ Middle School LGI; Second Round Superintendent Inter
5. 05/18/2026 6:00 pm Retirement Celebration and Regular Meeting @ High School

B. Go Around

GO AROUND

**VII. Adjournment**

- A. Seeing no additional agenda items, President LaBotz adjourned the meeting at 8:20 pm.

ADJOURNMENT

Respectfully submitted,

\_\_\_\_\_, Secretary