Kenowa Hills Public Schools
VALUE. SUPPORT. EMPOWER.

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Committee of the Whole Preliminary Minutes
Monday, August 10, 2026 at 6:00 pm
Kenowa Hills Middle School
3950 Hendershot Ave NW Grand Rapids, MI 49544

I. Routine and Organizational Business

CALL TO ORDER

A. President LaBotz called the Committee of the Whole Workshop to order at 6:12 p.m. at the Middle School, 3950 Hendershot Ave NW, Grand Rapids, MI. 49544

MOMENT OF SILENCE

B. President LaBotz opened the meeting with a moment of silence.

ROLL CALL

C. Members Present: Courtade, Hart, LaBotz, Roberts, Robinson, and Turner are present. Superintendent Horner and Director of Finance Long are also present.

APPROVE AGENDA

D. Motion by Member Hart supported by Member Courtade to approve the agenda. **Motion carries 6-0**

II. Hearings and Correspondence

CORRESPONDENCE

A. Correspondence; President LaBotz read the following statement: I also want to acknowledge the members of our community who are here tonight. We know there are strong feelings surrounding this situation, and the Board is here to listen.

The investigation initiated by the Board during the tenure of the former superintendent brought forward information that required us to make difficult decisions. We recognize that those decisions involve people who are respected and valued by many in our community, and we do not take that lightly.

At the same time, families trust the adults in our schools to fulfill the responsibilities of their roles, particularly when it comes to student safety and student equity. When concerns are raised, we expect them to be addressed appropriately. When we learn that did not happen, the Board has a responsibility to act.

We can support our students, our athletic programs, and the experiences that make Kenowa Hills special while also expecting accountability from the adults entrusted with their care.

We know members of our community may have questions, concerns, or perspectives they want to share tonight. We will listen respectfully, even when we may not be able to respond publicly because of the personnel matters involved.

Our responsibility remains to each and every student we serve.

BOE COMMUNICATION

B. Board Communication - Members reported on various district events in which they participated.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

A. Superintendent's Report

Motion by Turner supported by Roberts to amend the agenda for a personnel update. **Motion Carries 6-0**

Superintendent Horner read the following statement: Before we begin tonight's meeting, I want to address an investigation and personnel actions that have generated significant attention in our community in the past few days.

During the 2025–2026 school year, the Board of Education initiated an investigation in response to concerns about students' equal access to Knights Strength classes at Kenowa Hills High School. The initial investigation from fall 2025 was initiated due to complaints about gender equity in these classes. In late spring 2026, additional information came forward - information that this board and I were not expecting - including concerns related to student safety and whether previously raised concerns had been appropriately addressed.
Those safety concerns became clearer as the school year was coming to an end, and the investigation was completed after students had left for summer break. Once the findings were presented, the Board and I had a responsibility to carefully review them and determine the appropriate response.

A portion of that investigation is now being made public. We recognize that the information is difficult, particularly because it involves individuals who are well known and valued by many in our community. The decisions that followed were not made quickly or lightly, but they were made based on the findings of the investigation and our responsibility to students.

There has also been a significant amount of speculation and misinformation circulating. I want to be very clear about a couple of points: these personnel actions will not prevent our student-athletes from participating in their seasons or using the weight room this school year. The Board of Education and I fully support our students continuing to compete, participate, and have the experiences they have worked hard to earn.

In addition, I want to address concerns about student safety and the suggestion that safety concerns were known and kept from our families. That is not an accurate representation of what occurred. This investigation began due to concerns about equal access to Knights Strength classes. As additional safety concerns came to light during the investigation, the scope of the work expanded to examine those concerns more closely. Those findings became clearer as the school year was ending and were ultimately solidified after students had left for summer break.

We can support our students and their teams while also holding adults accountable for the responsibilities entrusted to them. Those two things are not in conflict.

At Kenowa Hills, every student deserves equitable access to opportunities, a safe environment, and confidence that when concerns affecting their well-being are raised, they will be taken seriously and addressed. That responsibility must remain at the center of our decisions, even when those decisions are difficult.

Because this involves personnel matters, there will be limits on what I or members of the Board can discuss beyond the information that has been released. I understand that may be frustrating, but we will continue to communicate what we appropriately and legally can share while keeping our focus on our students.

Motion by Robinson supported by LaBotz to place Principal Robrahn on an unpaid five day leave for failure to implement the findings and directives of the Knight Strength investigation and committee. Motion carries 6-0

1. Bond Construction Update - Superintendent Horner gave an update on the work ongoing at the Early Childhood Center

B. Finance

1. June 2026 Check Register — JULY CHECK REGISTER
2. July 2026 Check Register — JULY CHECK REGISTER

IV. Public Comment: 18 people 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 Roberts to approve the Consent Agenda. **Motion carries 6-0.** — CONSENT AGENDA

1. June 29, 2026 Special Meeting Minutes — SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
2. July 27, 2026 Special Meeting Minutes
3. August 5, 2026 Special Meeting Minutes

4. June 2026 Check Register: General Fund expenditures of $652,035.95 using checks #1862,1896, and 87306 through 87542; School Lunch fund expendituresof $77,287.42 using checks #1690 through 12625: Capitol Projects expenditures of $29,154.94 using check #26: 2024 Athletic Bond Series expenditures of $838,374.90 using checks #111 through 120: 2020 Site and Building Series III Bond Funds in the amount of $304,830.72 using checks #15 through 19; Student Activity expenditures of $8,725.71 accounting for checks #97658 through 97672: Total expenditures for the month total $1,910,428.79.

5 July 2026 Check Register: General Fund expenditures of $1,926,404.09 using checks #87543 through 87685; School Lunch Fund Expenditures of $20,565.79 using checks #12626 through 12636; Capitol Projects funds of $9,124.98 using check #27; 2024 Athletic Bond expenditures of $820,040.09 using checks # 121 through 124; 2020 Site & Building Series III Bond Funds in the amount of $597,814.94 using checks #20 through 24; Student Activity expenditures of $16,934.69 using checks #97673 through 97684. Total expenditures of $3,390,884.58 for the month of July. — JULY 2026 CHECK REGISTER

6 Certified Staff Personnel Recommendations — CERTIFIED STAFF PERSONNEL RECOMMENDATIONS

i. New Hires

Saige Jeltema; Special Education ASD Teacher, Middle School (effective August 17, 2026)

GVSU; BS: SpEd K-12 & Elem Ed -ASD focus

Nathan Visser; School Psychologist, High School, ECC, & Alpine (effective August 17, 2026)

GVSU: BS, MA, MS: School Psychology & BCBA Certification

Claudia Berroa; 3rd Grade Teacher, Central Elementary (effective August 17, 2026)

Florida State University; BS, MS: Elementary Education, Curriculum & Instruction

Kelsey Leys; 3rd Grade Teacher; Central Elementary (effective August 17, 2026)

MSU; BA : K12 and SpEd

Tracy Lemkie; .6 Elementary STEM Teacher, Alpine Elementary (effective August 17, 2026)

GVSU and University of Phoenix; BS: Education; MA: Curriculum and Instruction

Kimberly Schrebe; 0.5 Occupational Therapist, District-wide (effective August 17, 2026)

WMU; BS & MS: OT Health Services

Anna Theune; Social Studies Teacher, Middle School (effective August 17, 2026)

GVSU; BA: Secondary Education; Social Studies and Minors in Spanish and History

Zoie Mokma; Special Education Resource Room Teacher, High School (effective August 17, 2026)

GVSU; BS: SpEd K-12 (LD)

Gabriel Jordan; Science Teacher, High School (effective August 17, 2026)

GVSU; Biology and Chemistry

Mica Walter Rooks; 0.6 Elementary Art Teacher, Alpine Elementary (effective August 17, 2026)

Calvin University; BA: Studio Arts; Minors in English and Archaeology; MA: Education

Samuel Bailey; English Language Arts Teacher, Middle School (effective August 17, 2026)

GVSU; BA: Education with Minor in Psychology

Lauren Goodyear; PE and Health Teacher, MS & HS (effective August 17, 2026)

BA Hope College; Physical and Health Education

David VanOver 0.8 Elementary STEM Teacher, Central Elementary (effective August 17, 2026)

BA Sienna Heights; LA, Minor Elementary Education K-12 ESL, K-5 All Subjects

Elizabeth Mason; English Language Arts Teacher, Middle School (6th grade)

GVSU; BA: Language Arts Elementary

Riley Mossburg; Math Teacher, 6th Grade (effective August 17, 2026)

MSU; BA SpEd and Upper Elementary

ii. Resignations

Jen Rykse, .6 FTE Art, Zinser

Danielle Maycroft, 5th Grade Teacher, Zinser

Liz VanderLugt, .8 FTE STEM Teacher, Central Elementary

Shakur Sanders, 1.0 Success Coach, Middle School

VII. Future Items for Consideration

FUTURE MEETINGS

A. Future Meetings

1. 08/24/2026 6:00 pm Regular Meeting @ Administration Building
2. 09/14/2026 6:00 pm Committee of the Whole Meeting @ Administration Building
3. 09/28/2026 6:00 pm Regular Meeting @ Zinser Elementary
4. 10/12/2026 6:00 pm Committee of the Whole Meeting @ Administration Building
5. 10/26/2026 6:00 pm Regular Meeting @ Kenowa Hills Middle School

GO AROUND

B. Go Around

VIII. Adjournment

ADJOURNMENT

A. Seeing no additional agenda items, President LaBotz adjourned the meeting at 7:23 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

_____, Secretary