PUBLIC WORK SESSION

OF THE

BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES

Elkhart Community Schools
Elkhart, Indiana

# NOTICE OF MEETING CANCELLATION

| | |
|---|---|
| Date: | Tuesday, February 10, 2026 |
| Time: | 5:00 p.m. |
| Location: | J.C. Rice Educational Services Center<br>2720 California Road<br>Elkhart, Indiana 46514 |

Larry Huff

Superintendent of Schools

Posted and electronically delivered to News Media on Tuesday, February 3, 2026, and electronically delivered to Board Members and School Attorney on Tuesday, February 3, 2026.

NOTICE OF EXECUTIVE SESSION
OF THE
BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES

Elkhart Community Schools
Elkhart, Indiana

Date: Tuesday, February 10, 2026

Time: 4:30 p.m.

Purpose: Reference Indiana Code Section 5-14-1.5-6.1

(E) School consolidation.

Location: Elkhart High School
2608 California Road
Elkhart, IN 46514

Larry Huff
Superintendent of Schools

Posted and electronically delivered to News Media on Tuesday, February 3, 2026, and electronically delivered to Board Members and School Attorney on Tuesday, February 3, 2026.

MEETING

OF THE

BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES

Elkhart Community Schools
Elkhart, Indiana

**NOTICE OF MEETING LOCATION CHANGE**

| | |
|---|---|
| Date: | Tuesday, February 10, 2026 |
| Time: | 6:00 p.m. |
| Location: | Elkhart High School Auditorium<br>2608 California Road<br>Elkhart, Indiana 46514 |

Larry Huff

Superintendent of Schools

Posted and electronically delivered to News Media on Tuesday, February 3, 2026, and electronically delivered to Board Members and School Attorney on Tuesday, February 3, 2026.

Revised 02/10/2026

# AGENDA FOR
# BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES
# REGULAR MEETING

Elkhart Community Schools
Elkhart, Indiana

February 10, 2026

## CALENDAR

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Feb | 10 | 4:30 p.m. | Executive Session, Elkhart High School |
| Feb | 10 | 6:00 p.m. | Regular Board Meeting, Elkhart High School |
| Feb | 24 | 5:00 p.m. | Public Work Session, J.C. Rice Educational Services Center |
| Feb | 24 | 6:00 p.m. | Regular Board Meeting, J.C. Rice Educational Services Center |

**********

A. CALL TO ORDER

B. THE ELKHART PROMISE

C. INVITATION TO SPEAK PROTOCOL

D. PUBLIC COMMENT

E. CONSOLIDATION RECOMMENDATION

F. RESOLUTION

G. CONSENT ITEMS:

Minutes – January 27, 2026 – Public Work Session
Minutes – January 27, 2026 – Regular Board Meeting
Claims
Fundraisers
Extra-Curricular Purchases
Gift Acceptances
Conference Leave Requests
Overnight Trip Requests
Grants
Personnel Report

H. OLD BUSINESS

<u>Contracts</u> – The administration presents contracts for final consideration.

- Ivy Tech Community College
- Radio Research Consortium

I. NEW BUSINESS

Contracts – The administration presents contracts for initial consideration.

- Memorandum of Understanding between Elkhart Adult and Community Ed and National Center for Construction Education and Research, LTD dba NCCER

Elkhart County Work-Based Learning Hub Countywide Collaboration Contract – The administration recommends approval of the Elkhart County Work-Based Learning Hub Countywide Collaboration Contract.

Summer Band and Orchestra Fee – The administration recommends approval of the reinstatement of a participation fee for the summer band and orchestra program for sixth- and seventh-grade students who are beginning band or orchestra for the first time.

Instrument Rental Fee – The administration recommends approval of the reinstatement of instrument rental fees for the use of school-owned instruments by students.

J. INFORMATION AND PROPOSALS

From Superintendent and Staff

From Board

K. ADJOURNMENT

# MINUTES OF THE
# PUBLIC WORK SESSION
# OF THE
# BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES

Elkhart Community Schools
Elkhart, Indiana

January 27, 2026

| | |
|---|---|
| J.C. Rice Educational Services Center, 2720 California Road, Elkhart, Indiana 46514 – at 5:02 p.m. | Place/Time |
| Board Members Present: Troy E. Scott, Kellie L. Mullins, Mike Burnett, Dacey S. Davis, Eric Ivory, Anne M. VonDerVellen, Douglas K. Weaver | Roll Call |
| Presenters: April Fetterling, Policy Analytics LLC | |
| The Board received an update from April Fetterling, Policy Analytics LLC, regarding the impact of SEA-1. | Topics Discussed |
| The meeting adjourned at approximately 5:44 p.m. | Adjournment |
| APPROVED: | Signatures |

Troy E. Scott, President

Dacey S. Davis, Member

Kellie L. Mullins, Vice President

Eric Ivory, Member

Mike Burnett, Secretary

Anne M. VonDerVellen, Member

Douglas K. Weaver, Member

# MINUTES
# OF THE REGULAR MEETING
# OF THE BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES

## Elkhart Community Schools
## Elkhart, Indiana

## January 27, 2026

| | |
|---|---|
| J.C. Rice Educational Services Center, 2720 California Road, Elkhart, Indiana 46514 – at 6:00 p.m. | Place/Time |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Board Members Present: | Troy E. Scott<br>Kellie L. Mullins<br>Mike Burnett | Dacey S. Davis<br>Eric Ivory<br>Anne M. VonDerVellen<br>Douglas K. Weaver | Roll Call |

| | |
|---|---|
| Board President Troy Scott called the regular meeting of the Board of School Trustees to order. | Call to Order |
| Board Secretary Mike Burnett recited the Elkhart Promise. | The Elkhart Promise |
| One (1) audience member addressed the Board during public comment regarding the 2026 – 2027 Superintendent's contract. | Public Comment |
| Elkhart High School (EHS) Superintendent's Student Advisory Council (SSAC) students Camryn Tyrakowski and Brendan Scott presented the Moment of Pride highlighting student achievements and activities from December and January across EHS. | Moment of Pride |

The students highlighted academic and co-curricular accomplishments, including multiple top finishes in Speech and Debate at a November tournament. They also reported that the National Honor Society hosted a blood drive on November 25, collecting 85 units of blood, with an additional drive scheduled for March 10. Fine arts accomplishments included the Madrigal Choir performances and multiple winter band, orchestra, and choral concerts held throughout December.

Student-led service and engagement activities were highlighted, including finals stress-relief efforts through Bring Change to Mind, Toys for Tots collections organized by Student Government, outreach visits to elementary schools, appreciation events for transportation staff, and community service projects through Future Farmers of America (FFA) and Society for Better Earth. The Student Government also hosted EHS's first movie night with strong attendance.

Athletic and extracurricular achievements included the district chess

tournament, where Elliot Burns was named overall champion. The boys bowling team competed in conference sectionals on January 10 and was team champion. Individual awards were earned by Wyatt Skipper (1st place), Lucas Claxton (2nd place), Colin Albright (5th place), and Kolin White (6th place). At regionals on January 24, the team placed second and advanced to semi-state competition in Fort Wayne, along with individual qualifiers Wyatt Skipper, Colin Albright, and Kolin White.

In girls wrestling, Kalista Inman was named sectional champion, and Zoe Hunt qualified for regionals. In boys wrestling, the team placed fourth at the Northern Indiana Conference (NIC) meet on January 17, with individual finishes by Kyle Sommer (2nd place), and Hezekiah Martin and Alexander Umana-Isleno (3rd place).

The girls swim and dive team competed at the NIC meet on January 17, placing fifth. Sectionals will be held on February 5 (preliminaries) and February 7 (finals). The boys swim team will compete at the NIC meet on January 31 at home. In addition, the cheer team will host a Nationals Showcase on February 2 at the Freshman Division prior to competing at nationals.

All-State Music was held on January 17 at Purdue Fort Wayne. All-State Choir participants included Sean Dickerhoof, Corgan Hammond, Jaden Mikel Detwiler, Malaya Martinez, Lucy Kristoff, and Luna Londono. All-State Band participants included Madelyn Fletcher, Allison Hochstetler-Norris, Ren Hunt, Josue Andres-Sanchez, and Grey Stutsman, along with Junior All-State Band members Arthur Todillo and Ben Baltazar.

Additional recognitions included Miguel Gyos, who was honored as an All-American soccer player on January 17 and is currently competing internationally with the Juventus Residential Academy. EHS Juniors Isaac Huff, Kaelyn Cobb, Alexis Sheets, and Cordelia Padgett were named Rising Stars of Indiana for their academic achievement. This award is presented by the Indiana Association of School Principals and provides increased visibility and scholarship opportunities for students.

They introduced Roberta Di Francisca, an international exchange student from Palermo, Sicily, Italy, who participates in cheer and shared her appreciation for the opportunities and sense of community at ECS.

Dr. Huff commended the Camryn and Brendan for their presentation, noting their professionalism, strong public speaking skills, and thoughtful representation of student accomplishments throughout the district.

Consolidation Update

April Fetterling of Policy Analytics LLC presented an update on the district's cash flow and expenditure trends as part of the ongoing consolidation analysis. She explained that Policy Analytics is supporting the district with property tax revenue projections, cash flow analysis,

and long-term financial planning.

Ms. Fetterling reviewed current and projected cash balances, noting that while budgets are approved annually, long-term sustainability is driven by available cash balances. She presented a waterfall chart illustrating declining cash balances and explained that projections are based on assumptions including modest growth in state tuition support and certified levy revenue, salary and benefit increases beginning in 2026, and inflationary growth in operational expenses.

Ms. Fetterling noted that higher cash balances in prior years were influenced by ESSER funding and explained that while those federal funds have expired, not all related expenditures were eliminated, resulting in continued pressure on the Education and Operations Funds. She reported while cash balances remain positive in the near term, projections indicate the potential for negative cash balances beginning in 2027 if additional cost-saving measures are not implemented.

Ms. Fetterling reviewed expenditure trends, noting that although total expenditures have historically outpaced revenue growth, the district has slowed the rate of expenditure increases in recent years. She highlighted areas where cost growth has been reduced, including administrative support, purchased services, supplies, and technology. She also noted certain costs, including special education services, utilities, and insurance, are largely non-discretionary and continue to increase due to statutory and regulatory requirements.

Ms. Fetterling emphasized early, and sustained cost reductions have a compounding impact on long-term financial stability and stated projections presented did not yet include additional cost reductions planned for future years. She explained that districts generally have two options to address structural deficits, generating new revenue through an operating referendum or reducing expenditures, and stated cost reduction is the most viable option for the district at this time.

Dr. Huff thanked Ms. Fetterling for the presentation and acknowledged the efforts of district staff in implementing cost-saving measures. He noted that the district has begun addressing community feedback related to administrative structure, staffing alignment, and academic performance, while recognizing additional work remains. Dr. Huff stated that further recommendations will be presented to the Board and evaluated for their financial impact as part of the continued consolidation process.

Excellence of Elkhart

In the area of Academics, Monger students participated in lessons honoring Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. During visits to the media center, Ms. Reed presented Dr. King's life story and facilitated discussions on his lasting influence. Students were also encouraged to explore additional books and resources related to the Civil Rights era.

Additionally, middle school counselors are visiting elementary schools to meet with fifth-grade students to support their transition to middle school. These visits provide students with the opportunity to meet their future counselors and learn about expectations, available supports, and opportunities at the middle school level.

In the area of Arts, Elkhart High School (EHS) Freshman Division student Benjamin Baltazar, a trumpet player, was selected through a competitive audition process to perform in the Indiana Junior All-State Band, earning First Chair honors. The ensemble performed at Fort Wayne's historic Embassy Theatre.

Additionally, Elkhart Area Career Center (EACC) students in the Graphic Design and Commercial Photography programs earned recognition in the Scholastic Art Awards, receiving 25 award-winning pieces. Gold and Silver Key selections will be displayed at the South Bend Museum of Art throughout February and March.

In the area of Athletics, the EHS Gymnastics Team won the annual Elkhart East/West Invite, improving its overall team score. Individual gymnasts also earned first-place finishes in vault, bars, and floor events.

EHS Cheer qualified for nationals and will compete at the National High School Cheerleading Championship (NHSCC) in Orlando, Florida. A Nationals Showcase will be held on February 2 at 6:00 p.m. in the Freshman Division gym.

Some upcoming events across Elkhart Schools include:

- Jan 31: Wind, Percussion, String Solo & Ensemble
- Jan 31: Wrestling Sectionals
- Feb 2: EHS Cheer Nationals Showcase
- Feb 4: EFD Parent Night

For more information about Elkhart Schools, follow us on social media and the ECS website.

By unanimous action, the Board approved the following consent items: — Consent Items

Minutes – January 13, 2026 – Annual Organizational Meeting — Minutes
Minutes – January 13, 2026 – Annual Board of Finance Meeting
Minutes – January 13, 2026 – Regular Board Meeting

Payment of claims totaling $11,195,072.08 as shown on the January 27, 2026, claims listing. (Codified File 2526-106) — Payment of Claims

Proposed school fundraisers in accordance with Board policy. (Codified File 2526-107) — Fundraisers

| | |
|---|---|
| Extra-curricular purchase request: EHS Boys and Girls Golf Teams to purchase a Golf Simulator for $2,499.00 to help with the growth and development of the golf teams. | Extra-curricular Purchases |
| Elkhart Community Schools (ECS) received the following donation: $500 from Billy and Laura Cronkhite to Pierre Moran to be used to support expenses related to the Hoopla group and its associated activities and $1,200 from Crossroads Community Church to Pierre Moran to be used to support expenses related to the Hoopla group and its associated activities. | Gift Acceptances |
| Confirmation of the following Overnight Trip Requests: EHS, Pierre Moran, West Side, and Roosevelt Chess Teams, to participate in the Indiana Scholastic Chess Individual State Finals in Indianapolis, Indiana on February 6 – 7, 2026. | Overnight Trip Requests |
| Conference leave requests in accordance with Board policy for staff members as recommended by the administration on the January 27, 2026, listing. (Codified File 2526-108) | Conference Leave Requests |
| | Personnel Report |
| Employment of the following two (2) certified staff effective on date indicated:<br>Dwight Luna – Graphic Arts at Career Center, 1/26/26<br>Liam Minielly – Grade 6 Social Studies at West Side, 1/26/26 | Certified Employment |
| Resignation of the following three (3) certified staff effective on date indicated:<br>Erikson Conkling – Mathematics at North Side, 1/16/26<br>Amy King – Social Worker at Elkhart Academy, 4/2/26<br>Jocelyn Mathiak – Grade 1 at Cleveland, 1/23/26 | Certified Resignations |
| Retirement of the following three (3) certified staff effective on date indicated:<br>Kristin Judson – ENL at Roosevelt, 1/26/26 with 4 Years of Service<br>Dwight Mood – Career Readiness at Pierre Moran, 5/29/26 with 3 Years of Service<br>Betsy Tepe – P.E. at North Side, 6/3/26 with 37 Years of Service | Certified Retirements |
| Employment of the following one (1) classified employee effective on date indicated:<br>Lizbeth Alvarado Lopez – Technical Assistant at Elkhart Academy, 3/5/26 | Classified Employment |

Transfer the following one (1) classified employees effective in the 2025 – 2026 school year:

Classified Transfers

Vantha Seth – Custodian at Roosevelt to Custodian at Beck

Employment of the following two (2) substitute teachers effective with the 2025-26 school year:

Substitute Teachers

Laura Rhoade – Substitute Teacher
Tina Slabach – Substitute Teacher

Resignation of the following five (5) classified employees effective on date indicated:

Classified Resignations

Shannon Curtis – Custodian at Elkhart High, 1/16/26
Cynthia Heiman – Bus Driver at Transportation, 1/9/26
Jeanette Maya – Secretary at Beardsley, 1/23/26
Teresa McLain – Secretary at Cleveland, 2/27/26
Kay Swoveland – Paraprofessional at Bristol, 1/12/26

Unpaid leave request for the following one (1) classified employee effective on dates indicated:

Classified Leaves

Cristal Chanon – Building Translator/Parent Liaison at Monger, beginning 2/18/26 and ending 4/2/26

Extension of unpaid leave request for the following one (1) classified employee effective on dates indicated:

Margaret Scott – Paraprofessional at Freshman Division beginning 1/5/26 and ending 1/21/26

Termination of the following one (1) classified employees effective on date indicated:

Classified Terminations

Williams Johnson, Jr. – Custodian at Career Center, 1/27/26 in accordance with Policy 3139.01S, 3162ACS

Death of the following one (1) substitute teacher:

Classified Death

Dana Knapp – Substitute Teacher with 9 Years of Service

Mr. Scott temporarily suspended the regular Board meeting and opened a public hearing regarding the proposed Superintendent's contract. He invited public comment and, hearing none, closed the public hearing and reconvened the regular meeting.

Superintendent's Contract

By unanimous action, the Board approved the Superintendent's contract for Mrs. Michele Riise, effective for the 2026-2027 school year. (Codified File 2526-109)

By unanimous action, the Board approved the Deputy Superintendent's contract for Dr. Amy Rauch, effective for the 2026-2027 school year. (Codified File 2526-110)

Deputy Superintendent's Contract

Mr. Scott invited Mrs. Riise, Superintendent Elect, and Dr. Rauch, Deputy Superintendent Elect, to offer remarks following the approval of their contracts. He congratulated both on their appointments and noted that their contracts take effect July 1.

Dr. Rauch expressed appreciation for the opportunity and the trust placed in her to serve the district. She shared her commitment to working collaboratively with Mrs. Riise and the leadership team to continue advancing the district's vision and supporting staff, students, and the community.

Mrs. Riise thanked the Board for their confidence and expressed appreciation to Dr. Huff for his leadership. She acknowledged the dedication of staff, parents, students, and the greater Elkhart community and affirmed her commitment to leading the district with transparency, collaboration, and a focus on students. Mrs. Riise stated her readiness to lead ECS through the upcoming period of consolidation and financial realignment while maintaining high-quality educational experiences for students.

Contracts For Final Consideration

By unanimous action, the Board approved the AdTec contract as presented during the January 13, 2026, meeting. (Codified File 2526-111)

Board Policies for Final Consideration

Doug Thorne, District Counsel/Chief of Staff, presented recommended revisions to Board Policy 3220.01C – Teacher Appreciation Grants; Board Policy 3413S – Support Staff Working Hours, Compensatory Time, and Overtime; and Board Policy 6700 – Fair Labor Standards Act ("FLSA")

In response to Board inquiry about the criteria used to determine eligibility for Teacher Appreciation Grants, Mr. Thorne explained that state law limits eligibility to 20% of teachers and the district utilizes clear, data-driven measures of student performance and instructional impact, including growth on state assessments and Advanced Placement outcomes, to determine eligibility.

In response to Board inquiry regarding compensatory time provisions within Board Policy 6700, Mr. Thorne explained compensatory time is permitted under the Fair Labor Standards Act for public sector employers and can be a cost-effective alternative to overtime pay. He further clarified that the revision aligns previously inconsistent limits between policies, standardizing the allowable compensatory time from 16 hours to 30 hours.

By unanimous action, the Board approved Board Policy 3220.01C – Teacher Appreciation Grants; Board Policy 3413S – Support Staff Working Hours, Compensatory Time, and Overtime; and Board Policy 6700 – Fair Labor Standards Act ("FLSA").

The Administration presented the following contracts for initial consideration: Ivy Tech Community College; Radio Research Consortium; and The Mind Trust, Inc. dba Indiana Learns, and requested the Board waive second reading for The Mind Trust, Inc. dba Indiana Learns contract.

Contracts for Initial Consideration

By unanimous actions, the Board waived second reading and approved The Mind Trust, Inc. dba Indiana Learns contract. (Codified File 2526-112)

Mr. Scott read the following motion regarding the cancellation of a teaching contract:

Cancellation of Teaching Contract

On December 15, 2025, an EHS teacher received written notice of the preliminary decision of Executive Principal Phil Shults recommending cancellation of her teaching contract, effective upon final action by the Board of School Trustees. The notice advised the teacher of her right to request a conference with the Superintendent within five (5) days of receipt of the notice. The teacher timely requested such a conference, which was held on January 5, 2026, at 2:00 p.m. at the J.C. Rice Educational Service Center.

In accordance with Indiana Code 20-28-7.5-2(f), the teacher was informed of her right to request a conference with the Board of School Trustees within five (5) days following the conference with the Superintendent. The teacher did not request a conference with the Board within the time permitted by law.

Therefore, the motion was made to cancel the teaching contract of the teacher, effective immediately.

By unanimous action, the Board approved the cancellation of the teacher's contract, effective immediately. (Codified File: 2526-113)

Chief Financial Officer Ronda Ross presented the December 2025 financial update to the Board. She reported that although total revenues decreased in December due to a student count adjustment, expenses were reduced, and the month ended with a net positive. A transfer to the Operations Fund was completed, and the Education Fund closed the 2025 calendar year with an ending cash balance of approximately $1.38 million.

Finance Report

Ms. Ross reviewed the original and adjusted budget for the year, noting the revenue budget was reduced from approximately $99 million to $93 million following the ADM adjustment. To address the $6 million revenue gap, the planned transfer to Operations was reduced from $9 million to $3 million, and the remaining difference was absorbed through cash balance reductions.

Ms. Ross summarized year-end expenditures, noting 92% of the Education Fund was spent on wages and benefits (approximately $86 million of the $93 million budget). She emphasized the fund is structurally out of balance, and stated wages and benefits must be reduced to approximately $70 million to achieve a balanced budget.

In response to Board inquiry, Ms. Ross explained, given the separation of the Education and Operations Funds and the absence of a referendum, the district's target for wages and benefits should be closer to 85% rather than 92%.

Next, Ms. Ross reviewed the Operations Fund, noting receipt of approximately $10 million in tax revenue at the end of December. She reported an ending cash balance of over $10 million and noted the normal fluctuation in this fund due to the timing of tax payments and transfers.

No changes were reported to the Rainy Day Fund, which remains at approximately $6.7 million.

The district's overall ending cash balance of approximately $18.8 million, better than projected due to cost saving initiatives. Ms. Ross highlighted payroll comparisons showing a $1.6 million reduction from the same period in 2024, along with additional savings and cost avoidance totaling approximately $4.5 million through curriculum adjustments, staffing reductions, time clock software implementation, food service management improvements, and ongoing consolidation efforts.

In closing, Ms. Ross encouraged the Board and community to review updated financial information on the Financial Dashboard which can be found at www.elkhart.k12.in.us.

Insurance Report

Ms. Ross provided an insurance update to the Board reporting a favorable loss ratio of 86.5%, making note that maintaining a ratio below 100% is a positive indicator for the self-funded plan. December plan expenses were lower than plan premiums, contributing to the favorable performance. She was also excited to announce that district now has an expanded Anthem provider network for plan participants.

Ms. Ross reported that overall plan performance is improved compared to the same time last year and emphasized that the lower ratio reflects effective cost management.

Mr. Scott commended the favorable performance and acknowledged the efforts to contain costs during this period.

Board Member Appreciation

Dr. Huff recognized January as School Board Appreciation Month and expressed appreciation to the Board of School Trustees for their leadership, service, and commitment to students and the Elkhart

community. He acknowledged the complex decisions faced by Board members and thanked them for keeping students at the center of their work.

Director of Human Resources Maggie Lozano also addressed the Board and shared remarks of appreciation on behalf of the district, recognizing the time, care, and thoughtful decision-making provided by Board members. A video message, prepared in collaboration with the Communications Department, expressing gratitude from across the district was shown during the meeting.

Following the video, Board members were presented with a gift of appreciation representing all schools in the district. Board members expressed their appreciation for the recognition.

From the Superintendent

Dr. Huff expressed appreciation for district staff whose work often goes unseen, specifically recognizing the grounds and custodial teams for their continuous efforts to maintain safe and accessible facilities during recent winter weather. He thanked Director of Building Services Tony Gianesi and his team for their dedication and responsiveness in challenging conditions.

Dr. Huff also commended teachers and paraprofessionals for their flexibility in transitioning to synchronous learning during weather-related closures. He acknowledged the additional planning and effort required to ensure students continued to receive instruction without extending the school calendar and expressed appreciation for staff members' willingness to adapt quickly to meet student needs.

Dr. Huff further recognized Beth Quick, Billie Jo Etchason, Courtney Moreno, and Rhiannon Harrison for stepping into classroom roles to provide consistent instruction for students. He noted their willingness to serve where needed helped ensure continuity of learning and reflected the district's commitment to students.

Dr. Huff concluded by thanking staff across the district for their continued dedication and for keeping students at the center of their work.

From the Board

Board Secretary Kellie Mullins added to the Superintendent's remarks by recognizing Jeff Lindke for stepping back into a classroom role to support students. She also acknowledged the Transportation Department for their efforts in preparing buses each day during the recent cold weather to ensure student transportation remains safe and reliable.

Mrs. Mullins expressed appreciation for community members who have voluntarily cleared neighborhood walking paths to ensure students have safe routes to and from school during winter weather conditions, noting their commitment to student safety.

Mrs. Mullins also reminded the Board and community that Brian "Buck" Buckley will be recognized at the upcoming basketball game and invited the public to attend an open house in the athletic department on February 4, 2026.

Mr. Scott expressed appreciation to district staff and cabinet members for their extensive work related to consolidation planning and financial decision-making, noting the significant time commitment and collaboration involved in these efforts and thanked all staff members for their contributions. He then expressed appreciation for teachers, custodial staff, and employees across the district whose efforts often extend beyond normal responsibilities to support students and school operations.

Mr. Scott congratulated Mrs. Riise, Superintendent Elect, and Dr. Rauch, Deputy Superintendent Elect, and expressed confidence in their leadership as they prepare to assume their roles on July 1. In closing, he thanked Dr. Huff for building a strong leadership team which has allowed the district to maintain continuity and momentum during this transition period.

Board Member Eric Ivory expressed appreciation for the Board appreciation gift, noting its thoughtful and personal nature and the intentional effort behind it.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 6:44 p.m. Adjournment

APPROVED: Signatures

_____
Troy E. Scott, President

_____
Kellie L. Mullins, Vice President

_____
Mike Burnett, Secretary

_____
Dacey S. Davis, Member

_____
Eric Ivory, Member

_____
Anne M. VonDerVellen, Member

_____
Douglas K. Weaver, Member

| School | Fundraising Activity Description/Purpose | Date(s) of Activity | Date Submitted | Sponsor(s) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Elkhart High - NHS | Students and sponsors will sell Flavor Freeze gift cards. Proceeds will fund Teacher Appreciation Day celebrations. | 2/17/2026 - 3/16/2026 | 1/22/2026 | Heather Fellows |
| Elkhart High - NHS | Students an pay to send a note to another student or staff member. Proceeds collected will help fund Teacher Appreciation Day celebrations. | 2/9/2026 - 2/12/2026 | 1/26/2026 | Heather Fellows |
| Elkhart High - Baseball | The team will sell discount cards for local restaurants and businesses. Proceeds will be used to purchase apparel and gear for the 2026 season. | 3/19/2026 - 3/282026 | 1/28/2026 | Scott Rost |
| West SIde - Yearbook | Yearbook squares will be sold for advertising purposes. Funds will be used for yearbook expenses and upgrades. | 1/22/2026 - 4/1/2026 | 1/21/2026 | Donald Shafer |
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| | **Please note the following fundraisers are presented for confirmation only.** | | | |
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**BUSINESS OFFICE**
PHONE: 574-262-5563

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

**ELKHART COMMUNITY SCHOOLS**
J.C. RICE EDUCATIONAL SERVICES CENTER
2720 CALIFORNIA ROAD • ELKHART, IN 46514
PHONE: 574-262-5500

To: Dr. Huff

From: Ronda Ross, CPA
Chief Financial Officer

Date: February 3, 2026

RE: Extra-Curricular Purchase

The Business Office recommends Board approval to purchase the following items from extra-curricular funds:

| School/Account | Item | Amount |
|---|---|---|
| West Side/Athletic ECA | Uniforms | $675.00 |

**WEST SIDE MIDDLE SCHOOL**
101 SOUTH NAPPANEE STREET • ELKHART, IN 46514
PHONE: 574-295-4815

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

**ELKHART COMMUNITY SCHOOLS**
J.C. RICE EDUCATIONAL SERVICES CENTER
2720 CALIFORNIA ROAD • ELKHART, IN 46514
PHONE: 574-262-5500

**To:** Dr. Huff
**From:** Brent Curry / Kerry Leader
**Date:** January 16, 2026
**Re:** Approval for Purchase of Boys Volleyball Uniforms

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West Side Middle School is requesting approval to purchase Boys Volleyball Uniforms from the athletic extra-curricular account. The cost of the equipment is $675.00. The Uniforms will be for our 6th, 7th and 8th grade Boys Volleyball team.

The equipment is being purchased from

AZ Apparels
111 South Elkhart St
P.O. Box 971
Wakarusa, In 46573

AZ APPARELS

# INVOICE

574-350-5893
azapparels13@gmail.com

111 South Elkhart Street P.O. Box #971
Wakarusa, Indiana 46573 USA

Attention: Brent Curry
Title: Athletic Director
Elkhart, IN 46516
Date: 1/12/2026

Project Title: Sublimated Reversible Volleyball Jerseys
Project Description: Sublimated Reversible Volleyball Jerseys-Elkhart MS
P.O. Number: 112
Invoice Number:1
Terms: 15 Days

| Description | Quantity | Unit Price | Cost |
|---|---|---|---|
| Sublimated Basketball Jerseys | 15 | $45.00 | $675.00 |
| Shipping | | | $0.00 |
| | | | |
| | | Subtotal | $675.00 |
| | Tax | 0.00% | $0.00 |
| | | Total | $675.00 |

Thank you for your business. It's a pleasure to work with you on your project.
Your next order will ship in 15 days

Sincerely yours,

Albert White

**ELKHART HIGH SCHOOL**
2608 CALIFORNIA ROAD • ELKHART, IN 46514
PHONE: 574-262-5600

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

**ELKHART COMMUNITY SCHOOLS**
J.C. RICE EDUCATIONAL SERVICES CENTER
2720 CALIFORNIA ROAD • ELKHART, IN 46514
PHONE: 574-262-5500

DATE: February 3, 2026

TO: Dr. Larry Huff
Board of School Trustees

FROM: Phil Shults (Executive Principal)
Nick Seidl (Teacher/Sponsor)

RE: Donation Approval

Elkhart High School received a donation of $250.00 from American Millwork, LLC. The donation will be used to purchase supplies, equipment and expenses related to robot construction and attending competitions. I am requesting approval from the Board of School Trustees to accept this donation and that an appropriate letter of acknowledgement and appreciation is sent to:

**American Millwork, LLC**
**Attn: Ann Keenan**
4840 Beck Drive
Elkhart, IN 46516

**ELKHART HIGH SCHOOL**
2608 CALIFORNIA ROAD • ELKHART, IN 46514
PHONE: 574-262-5600

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

**ELKHART COMMUNITY SCHOOLS**
J.C. RICE EDUCATIONAL SERVICES CENTER
2720 CALIFORNIA ROAD • ELKHART, IN 46514
PHONE: 574-262-5500

DATE: February 3, 2026

TO: Dr. Larry Huff
Board of School Trustees

FROM: Phil Shults (Executive Principal)
Nick Seidl (Teacher/Sponsor)

RE: Donation Approval

Elkhart High School received a donation of $250.00 from Hopman Jewelers. The donation will be used to purchase supplies, equipment and expenses related to robot construction and attending competitions. I am requesting approval from the Board of School Trustees to accept this donation and that an appropriate letter of acknowledgement and appreciation is sent to:

**Hopman Jewelers**
**D-Flawless, Inc.**
**Attn: Anita**
100 N. Main Street
Elkhart, IN 46516

**ELKHART HIGH SCHOOL**
2608 CALIFORNIA ROAD • ELKHART, IN 46514
PHONE: 574-262-5600

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

**ELKHART COMMUNITY SCHOOLS**
J.C. RICE EDUCATIONAL SERVICES CENTER
2720 CALIFORNIA ROAD • ELKHART, IN 46514
PHONE: 574-262-5500

DATE: February 3, 2026

TO: Dr. Larry Huff
Board of School Trustees

FROM: Phil Shults (Executive Principal)
Nick Seidl (Teacher/Sponsor)

RE: Donation Approval

Elkhart High School received a donation of $500.00 from Kettering University. This donation was sent directly to FIRST and credited to the ElkLogics Robotics account. The donation will be used to purchase supplies, equipment and expenses related to robot construction and attending competitions. I am requesting approval from the Board of School Trustees to accept this donation and that an appropriate letter of acknowledgement and appreciation is sent to:

**Mr. Eric Szczepanski**
**Director of Alumni Engagement**
**Kettering University**
1700 University Ave
Flint, MI 48504

**ELKHART HIGH SCHOOL**
2608 CALIFORNIA ROAD • ELKHART, IN 46514
PHONE: 574-262-5600

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

**ELKHART COMMUNITY SCHOOLS**
J.C. RICE EDUCATIONAL SERVICES CENTER
2720 CALIFORNIA ROAD • ELKHART, IN 46514
PHONE: 574-262-5500

DATE: February 3, 2026

TO: Dr. Larry Huff
Board of School Trustees

FROM: Phil Shults (Executive Principal)
Nick Seidl (Teacher/Sponsor)

RE: Donation Approval

Elkhart High School received a donation of $500.00 from Shield. The donation will be used to purchase supplies, equipment and expenses related to robot construction and attending competitions. I am requesting approval from the Board of School Trustees to accept this donation and that an appropriate letter of acknowledgement and appreciation is sent to:

**Shield**
3802 Gallatin Way
Elkhart, IN 46514

**ELKHART HIGH SCHOOL**
2608 CALIFORNIA ROAD • ELKHART, IN 46514
PHONE: 574-262-5600

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

**ELKHART COMMUNITY SCHOOLS**
J.C. RICE EDUCATIONAL SERVICES CENTER
2720 CALIFORNIA ROAD • ELKHART, IN 46514
PHONE: 574-262-5500

**DATE:** 01/21/2026

**TO:** Dr. Larry Huff
Board of School Trustees

**FROM:** Brian Buckley & Jacquie Rost
Elkhart High School Athletic Department

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**Re: Donation Approval - EHS - Athletics**

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A donation in the amount of $1,500 has been given to the Elkhart High School Cheerleading Team, from an Anonymous donor. These funds will be used to assist with the growth and development of our Cheerleading Team.

We are requesting approval from the Board of School Trustees to accept this donation.

**ELKHART HIGH SCHOOL**
2608 CALIFORNIA ROAD • ELKHART, IN 46514
PHONE: 574-262-5600

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

**ELKHART COMMUNITY SCHOOLS**
J.C. RICE EDUCATIONAL SERVICES CENTER
2720 CALIFORNIA ROAD • ELKHART, IN 46514
PHONE: 574-262-5500

DATE: January 22, 2026

TO: Dr. Larry Huff
Board of School Trustees

FROM: Phil Shults (Executive Principal)
Brian Ketchum (Teacher/Sponsor)

RE: Donation Approval

Elkhart High School received a donation of $500.00 from Mr. Brian Ketchum-Brian's Tree Service. The donation will be used to pay for costs associated with purchasing equipment, uniforms, snacks and registrations for students participating in this new extra-curricular activity.

I am requesting approval from the Board of School Trustees to accept this donation and that an appropriate letter of acknowledgement and appreciation is sent to:

**Mr. Brian Ketchum**
**Brian's Tree Service**
29770 County Road 2
Granger, IN 46530

PIERRE MORAN MIDDLE SCHOOL
200 WEST LUSHER AVENUE • ELKHART, IN 46517
PHONE: 574-295-4805

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

ELKHART COMMUNITY SCHOOLS
J.C. RICE EDUCATIONAL SERVICES CENTER
2720 CALIFORNIA ROAD • ELKHART, IN 46514
PHONE: 574-262-5500

Date: February 2nd, 2026

To: Board of School Trustees

From: Jeff Hemmerlein, PMMS Principal

RE: Hoopla Donation

Pierre Moran Middle School respectfully requests permission to accept a generous donation of **$1,000.00** from **Elkhart Education Foundation**.

These funds will be used to support expenses related to the **Hoopla** group and its associated activities. This donation will help enhance the group's efforts in promoting mental health awareness and reducing stigma within our school community.

We greatly appreciate the support of our community partners and look forward to utilizing this donation to further our students' well-being.

Thank you for your consideration.

Charlene Masten
Elkhart Education Foundation
200 W Lusher Ave
Elkhart Indiana 46516

Sincerely,

Jeff Hemmerlein
Pierre Moran Middle School Principal

**FRESHMAN DIVISION**
ONE BLAZER BOULEVARD • ELKHART, IN 46516
PHONE: 574-295-4700

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

**ELKHART COMMUNITY SCHOOLS**
J.C. RICE EDUCATIONAL SERVICES CENTER
2720 CALIFORNIA ROAD • ELKHART, IN 46514
PHONE: 574-262-5500

**To: Board of School Trustees**
**Superintendent Dr. Larry Huff**

**From: Mrs. LaTosha Bonds**

**Date: 2/2/2026**

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**RE: Gift Acceptance**

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The Elkhart Freshman Division respectfully requests permission to accept a generous donation of $450.00 from Workers of the Indiana Toll Road.

These funds will support the Student Care Closet, which provides essential items to meet students' basic needs.

I am requesting approval from the Board of School Trustees to accept this donation and ask that an appropriate letter of acknowledgement and appreciation be sent to:

Workers of the Indiana Toll Road
3200 Cassopolis St
Elkhart, IN 46514

Thank you for your consideration,

LaTosha Bonds
Freshman Division Principal

# Elkhart Community Schools

Phone: 574-262-5500

**To:** **Board of School Trustees**

**Dr. Larry Huff**
**Superintendent**

**From:** **Lindsey Walters**

**Date:** **February 4, 2026**

**Subject:** **Gift Acceptance**

Elkhart Education Foundation is providing a donation of $500 to support our elementary-wide Elkhart Build Readers Book Bracket for grades Pre-K-5. The donation will be used toward grand prizes for classes who win the Book Bracket in the form of two class pizza parties.

I am requesting approval from the Board of School Trustees to accept this donation and that an appropriate letter of acknowledgement and appreciation is sent to:

Charlene Masten
Elkhart Education Foundation
200 W. Lusher Avenue
Elkhart, IN 46517

# Human Resources Department

2720 California Road • Elkhart, IN 46514
Phone: 574-262-5500


**TO:** DR. LARRY HUFF
BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES
**FROM:** MS. MAGGIE LOZANO, DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES
**DATE:** FEBRUARY 10, 2026

**RE: DONATION**

The Human Resources Department is pleased to share that Scooters has generously contributed $530.00 worth of gift cards to support the district's recognition of National School Counselor and National Social Worker Weeks. The donation provides $10.00 gift cards to Scooters for every school counselor and social worker as a token of appreciation for their dedication.

Board approval is respectfully requested to formally accept this donation and acknowledge Scooters for their continued partnership and support of Elkhart Community Schools.

ML/mm

## Grant Approvals to Board of School Trustees - 2/10/2026

| What is the title of the grant? | What is the name of the granting agency/ entity? | Please list school/entity applying. | Individual/ contact applying for the grant? | What is the amount applied for? | How will the grant funds be used and who will oversee the management of the grant? | Please explain how the grant funds will be used to support the district vision, focus, and goals. | Please outline the grant budget for the funds requested. | What is the grant submission deadline? |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Adult Education Continuation Grant (for Program Year 2026-2027) | Department of Workforce Development | Elkhart Career Center/Elkhart Adult and Community Education | Greg Stover | $555,000 | Continuation grant funds will enable Elkhart Adult and Community Education to sustain and expand essential academic and workforce programs for adult learners. The majority of funding will support qualified instructors and support staff who deliver High School Equivalency (HSE), English Language Learner (ELL), Integrated Education and Training (IET), and career pathway programs. Funds will also be used for instructional materials, curriculum, testing resources, classroom supplies, and hands-on training equipment that ensure students receive high-quality, industry-aligned instruction.<br><br>Additionally, grant funds will support student services, technology, professional development, and program administration necessary for compliance and accountability under WIOA and Indiana DWD guidelines. These resources allow our program to provide flexible learning options, career counseling, and workforce connections that lead to credential attainment, employment, and postsecondary success. Continuation funding is critical to maintaining access, improving outcomes, and strengthening the economic stability of individuals, families, and the Elkhart community.<br><br>Greg Stover will oversee the management of the funds with support from Jennifer Lee and Brandon Eakins. | This continuation grant supports district goals by strengthening Elkhart's community and improving educational and workforce outcomes for local residents. By funding adult education, job training, and student support services, the grant helps more adults earn diplomas, gain job skills, and secure stable employment. As individuals and families become more self-sufficient, the entire community benefits through a stronger workforce, higher graduation rates, and increased economic stability. This investment allows Elkhart Community Schools to expand opportunity, improve long-term outcomes, and build a healthier, more successful community. | The state expects budget amounts to remain consistent with the current program year. This proposed budget reflects our existing funding structure and priorities, with a similar breakdown planned for the upcoming year. While we anticipate maintaining this overall framework, minor adjustments may be made at the end of the school year based on program outcomes, enrollment trends, and identified needs as we finalize plans for the next program year.<br>**Budget**<br>**Program Costs - $491,303.87**<br>Adult Basic Education (ABE): $336,878.36<br>Integrated Education and Training / Workforce Education Initiative (IET/WEI): $154,425.51<br>**Administrative Costs - $63,696.13**<br>ABE Administrative: $55,281.64<br>IET/WEI Administrative: $8,414.49 | 3/12/2026 |

2/4/2026

# Human Resources Department

2720 California Road • Elkhart, IN 46514
Phone: 574-262-5500


**TO:** DR. LARRY HUFF
**FROM:** MS. MAGGIE LOZANO
**DATE:** FEBRUARY 10, 2026

## PERSONNEL RECOMMENDATIONS

### CERTIFIED

a. **New Certified Staff** – We recommend the approval of two (2) new certified staff for the 2025-26 school year.

b. **Separation** – We report the separation of one (1) employee.

c. **Retirement** – We report the retirement of one (1) employee who has provided thirty-two (32) years of service.

### CLASSIFIED

a. **New Classified Staff** – We recommend four (4) new classified staff for employment in the 2025-26 school year.

b. **Classified Staff Transfers** – We recommend the transfer of six (6) classified staff for the 2025-26 school year.

c. **Substitute Teachers** – We recommend the employment of two (2) substitute teachers for the 2025-26 school year.

d. **Claims** – We recommend the employment of one (1) employee for the 2025-26 school year.

e. **Coaches** – We recommend the employment of thirty-six (36) coaches for the 2025-26 school year.

f. **Separation** – We report the separation of eight (8) employees.

g. **Retirement** – We report the retirement of one (1) employee who has provided 12 years of service.

h. **Job Description Revision** – We recommend the revision of one (1) job description.

DISTRICT COUNSEL/
CHIEF OF STAFF
★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★
ELKHART
COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

**For Final Consideration**

TO: BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES

FROM: W. DOUGLAS THORNE
DISTRICT COUNSEL/CHIEF OF STAFF

DATE: FEBRUARY 6, 2026

RE: CONTRACTS RECOMMENDED FOR BOARD APPROVAL

The Administration recommends approval of the following contracts. These contracts have been reviewed by the Chief Financial Officer and District Counsel prior to submission to the Board.

| Contractor | Requesting Administrator | Description | Funding Source | Amount |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ivy Tech Community College | Doug Thorne | Recommendation to approve MOU with Ivy Tech Community College – South Bend/Elkhart to allow EACC students enrolled in Health Science programming – including Pre-Nursing, Emergency Medical Technician, and Exercise Science – to earn college credit at no cost to the student. | Perkins Grant | $85,000 |
| Radio Research Consortium | Doug Thorne | Recommendation to approve agreement between WVPE and Radio Research Consortium. Agreement gives WVPE five (5) years access to Nielsen data related to WVPE programming operations. | WVPE | 2026 $5,040<br>2027 $5,200<br>2028 $5,390<br>2029 $5,610<br>2030 $5,870 |

WDT/crr

Cc: Dr. Larry Huff, Superintendent

DISTRICT COUNSEL/
CHIEF OF STAFF

ELKHART
COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

**For First Consideration**

TO: BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES

FROM: W. DOUGLAS THORNE
DISTRICT COUNSEL/CHIEF OF STAFF

DATE: FEBRUARY 10, 2026

RE: CONTRACTS RECOMMENDED FOR BOARD APPROVAL

The Administration recommends approval of the following contracts. These contracts have been reviewed by the Chief Financial Officer and District Counsel prior to submission to the Board.

| Contractor | Requesting Administrator | Description | Funding Source | Amount |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| National Center for Construction Education & Research, LTD dba NCCER | Dr. Amy Rauch | Recommendation for approval of MOU between NCCER and ECS Adult Education to launch and expand a construction pathway supported by NCCER curriculum, credentials, and instructional resources. In connection with this agreement, Elkhart Adult Education has been awarded a $20,000 grant from NCCER to support initial program implementation. | NCCER GRANT | $20,000 |

WDT/crr

Cc: Dr. Larry Huff, Superintendent

**ELKHART COMMUNITY SCHOOLS MUSIC**
KYLE WEIRICH, COORDINATOR OF K-12 MUSIC
EMAIL: KWEIRICH@ELKHART.K12.IN.US
PHONE: 574-262-5644

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

**ELKHART COMMUNITY SCHOOLS**
EDUCATIONAL SERVICES CENTER
2720 CALIFORNIA ROAD • ELKHART, IN 46514
PHONE: 574-262-5500

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: Elkhart Community Schools Board of Education

FROM: Kyle Weirich, Coordinator of K-12 Music

DATE: February 5, 2026

RE: Fee for Summer Band & Orchestra

I am requesting approval to reinstate a participation fee to help cover the costs associated with the Summer Band and Orchestra program, a foundational instructional program for incoming 6th and 7th grade students who are beginning band or orchestra for the first time. This request reflects the same fee structure that was in place in 2023.

The program will run from July 7–30, 2026, with students attending a one-hour class each day.

**The proposed fee is $75 per student, with a reduced fee of $15 for students who qualify for free or reduced-price lunch.** This reduced rate is intended to ensure equitable access while supporting the operational costs of the program.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

**ELKHART COMMUNITY SCHOOLS MUSIC**
KYLE WEIRICH, COORDINATOR OF K-12 MUSIC
EMAIL: KWEIRICH@ELKHART.K12.IN.US
PHONE: 574-262-5644

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

**ELKHART COMMUNITY SCHOOLS**
EDUCATIONAL SERVICES CENTER
2720 CALIFORNIA ROAD • ELKHART, IN 46514
PHONE: 574-262-5500

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Elkhart Community Schools Board of Education

FROM: Kyle Weirich, Coordinator of K-12 Music

DATE: February 5, 2026

RE: Instrument Rental Fee

I am requesting approval to reinstate a student usage fee for school-owned instruments, consistent with the fee structure previously in place in 2023. This fee supports the ongoing maintenance, repair, and replacement of district-owned instruments.

**The proposed fee is $50 per instrument, with an additional $25 fee for a second large instrument kept at home** (including cello, bass, French horn, baritone, tuba, tenor saxophone, and baritone saxophone). No student would be denied participation in band or orchestra due to an inability to pay this fee.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.