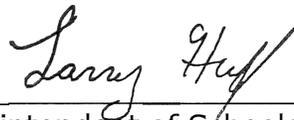


PUBLIC WORK SESSION
OF THE
BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES
Elkhart Community Schools
Elkhart, Indiana

NOTICE OF MEETING CANCELLATION

Date: Tuesday, March 10, 2026
Time: 5:00 p.m.
Location: J.C. Rice Educational Services Center
2720 California Road
Elkhart, Indiana 46514



Superintendent of Schools

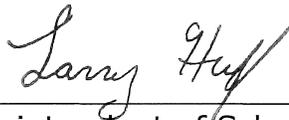
Posted and electronically delivered to News Media on Thursday, March 5, 2026, and electronically delivered to Board Members and School Attorney on Friday, March 6, 2026.

NOTICE OF EXECUTIVE SESSION
OF THE
BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES

Elkhart Community Schools
Elkhart, Indiana

Date: Tuesday, March 10, 2026
Time: 5:00 p.m.
Purpose: Reference Indiana Code Section 5-14-1.5-6.1
(E) School consolidation.

Location: J.C. Rice Educational Services Center
2720 California Road
Elkhart, IN 46514



Superintendent of Schools

Posted and electronically delivered to News
Media on Thursday, March 5, 2026, and
electronically delivered to Board Members and
School Attorney on Friday, March 6, 2026.

AGENDA FOR
BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES
REGULAR MEETING

Elkhart Community Schools
Elkhart, Indiana
March 10, 2026

CALENDAR

Mar 10 5:00 p.m. Executive Session, J.C. Rice Educational Services Center
Mar 10 6:00 p.m. Regular Board Meeting, J.C. Rice Educational Services Center
Mar 24 5:00 p.m. Public Work Session, J.C. Rice Educational Services Center
Mar 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. ELKHART HIGH SCHOOL - BUSINESS AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS SCHOOL OF STUDY REPORT
- F. WOODLAND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL REPORT
- G. EXCELLENCE OF ELKHART
- H. CONSENT ITEMS:
 - Minutes – February 24, 2026 – Public Work Session
 - Minutes – February 24, 2026 – Regular Board Meeting
 - Claims
 - Fundraisers
 - Gift Acceptances
 - Grants
- I. OLD BUSINESS
- J. NEW BUSINESS
 - Personnel Report
 - Cancellation of Teaching Contract

Contracts – The administration presents contracts for initial consideration.

- Professional Benefit Administrators, Inc. (PBA)

Board Policy 2340 – Field and Other Corporation Sponsored Trips – The administration presents a proposed replacement for Board Policy 2340 – Field and Other Corporation Sponsored Trips for initial consideration.

K. INFORMATION AND PROPOSALS

From Superintendent and Staff

From Board

L. ADJOURNMENT

Elkhart High School

Business and International Relations



Excellence of Elkhart

ACADEMICS • ARTS • ATHLETICS

Personnel

Teachers - 22

Counselors - 2 + Early College

Support Staff - 2



Demographics

Demographics:

# Students by Gender	American Indian	Black	Asian	Hispanic	White	Multi	Total
Females	1	18	2	60	30	2	113
<i>% of Females</i>	<i>1%</i>	<i>16%</i>	<i>2%</i>	<i>53%</i>	<i>27%</i>	<i>2%</i>	
Males		29	3	139	91	15	277
<i>% of Males</i>	<i>0%</i>	<i>10%</i>	<i>1%</i>	<i>50%</i>	<i>33%</i>	<i>5%</i>	
Total	1	47	5	199	121	17	390

30%

70%

Attendance Rate: 87.02%



Pathways

Accounting (2)

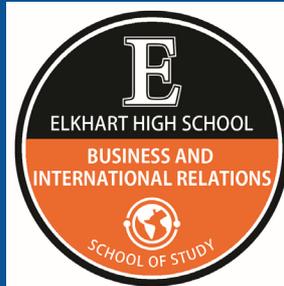
- Principles of Business Management
- Accounting Fundamentals
- Advanced Accounting

Business Management (18)

- Principles of Business Management
- Management Fundamentals
- Accounting Fundamentals

Entrepreneurship (6)

- Principles of Entrepreneurship
- Entrepreneurial Operations
- New Venture Development



Certifications

Microsoft Office Specialist: 26
(Digital Applications)

Quickbooks - Advanced Accounting: 7
(Advanced Accounting)



Students

- Number of Students Taking Dual Credit Classes:
219
- Percentage on Track to Graduate:
12th (95.17%) 11th (85.29%) 10th (85.06%)
- Scholarship Dollars Already Awarded:
\$2,164,249.00
- Colleges Accepting B&IR Students:

Purdue
IU
IU Indy

Northern Michigan
Grand Canyon
Purdue FW

Ball State
Goshen College
Tennessee



FBLA

Future Business Leaders of America

- 37 active members
 - 17 member increase
- 25 registered for State Leadership Conference
 - 12 member increase
- Students compete in a variety of events, including role play and objective tests
- Will also participate in professional development workshops



State Conference in Indianapolis



FBLA State Leadership

Future Business Leaders of America



Allison Norris

Noeli Rodriguez

Dylan Bressler

Odalis Rodriguez

Miranda

State Officer

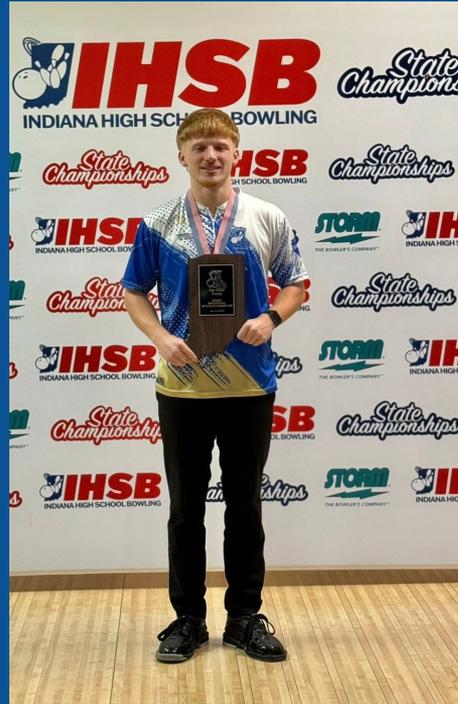
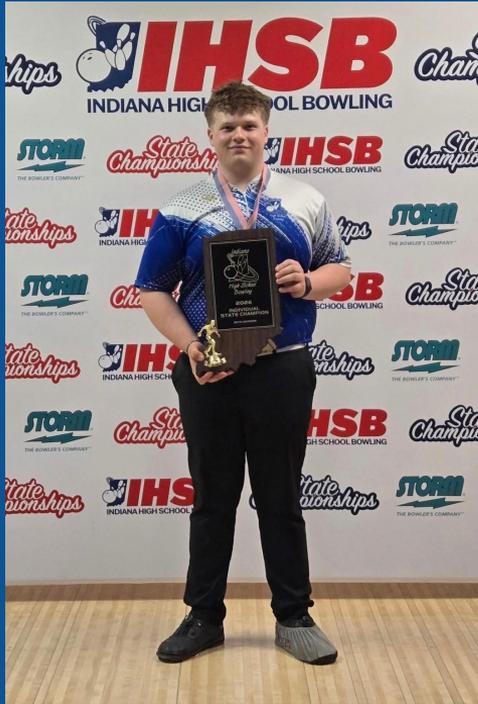
Exec Board

Exec Board

Exec Board



B&IR Showing Up and Showing Out



Individual State Champ!

Colin Albright

Individual State Runner Up!

Wyatt Skipper



B&IR Showing Up and Showing Out



Kyle Sommer

State Bound!



State qualifier for Wrestling!!!!

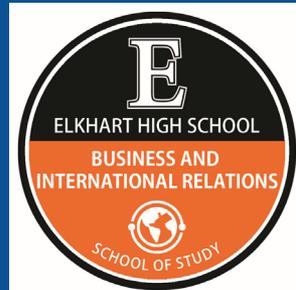
Kyle Sommer



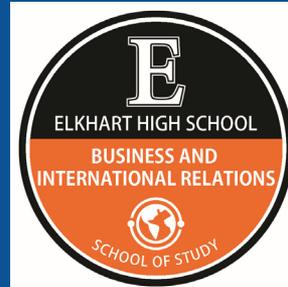
Community Partners

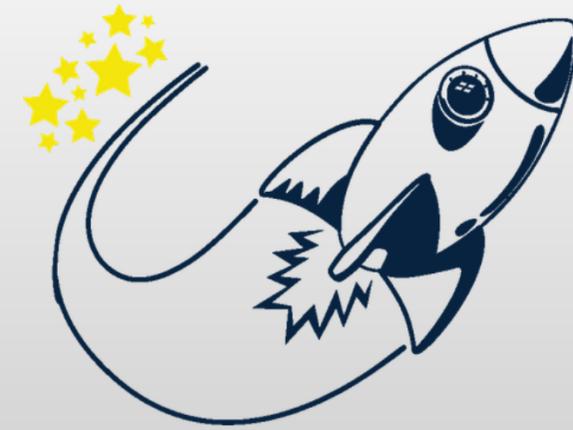


- Offer checking/savings account opportunities for students.
- EHS extracurricular accounts serviced through our branch.
- Athletic department utilizes their services.
- Business classes have used Lake City personnel for class presentations.



The B&IR Team!!





Woodland

Elementary School

2025-26 School Report

Woodland Rocket PRIDE Pledge and the Elkhart Promise

The Rocket PRIDE Pledge

I will demonstrate my Rocket PRIDE by being...

Persistent – I will not give up.

Respectful – working to be kind to everyone.

I will show...

Initiative – by being a problem solver.

I will be...

Dependable – reliable and trustworthy.

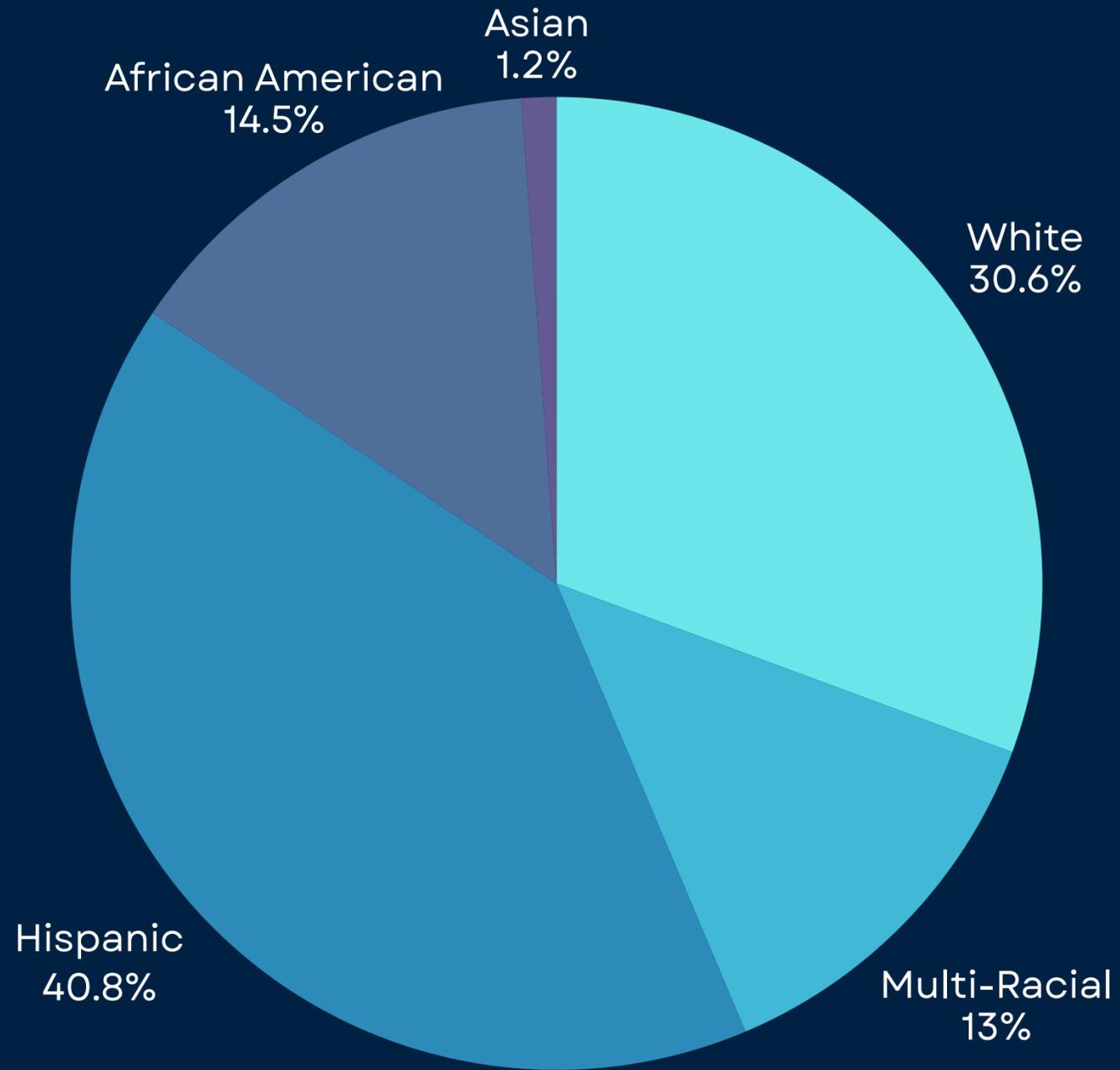
And...

Efficient – being organized, on time, and ready to go.



Woodland Enrollment/Demographics 25.26

346 students as of Feb 2



2025-26 School Improvement Plan Goals

By Summer 2026, Woodland students will **increase their proficiency** on the **IREAD Assessment from 85.6% to 90%**



Woodland students will **increase their proficiency** in the mathematical process **from 25% to 30%** as measured by the **Spring 2026 MA ILEARN Assessment.**

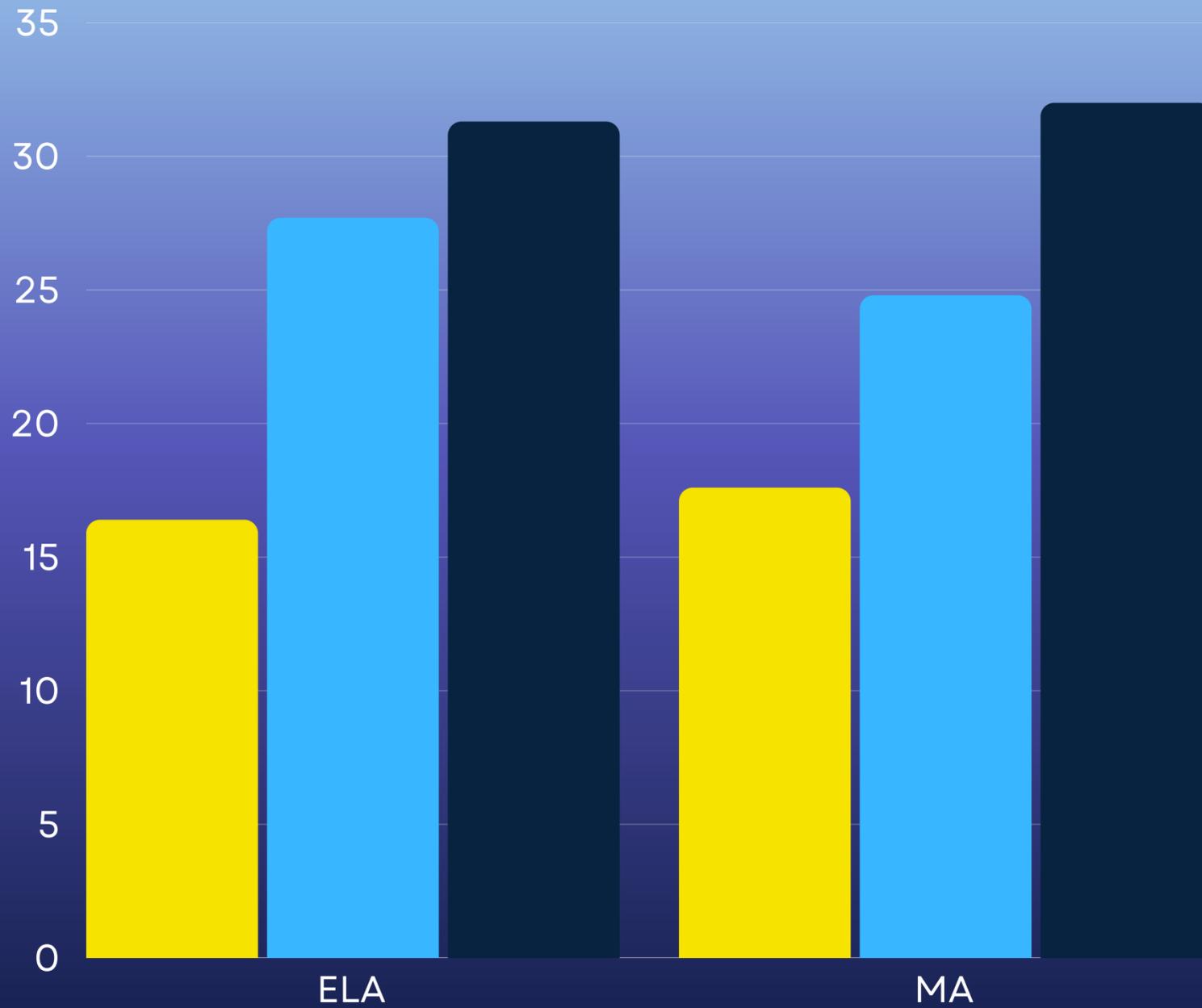
By Spring 2026, Woodland students will read and comprehend informational and literary text proficiently and independently at grade level as evidenced by Third through Fifth Grade Students **increasing from 28% to 34% proficiency** on the **Spring 2026 ELA ILEARN Assessment.**



Woodland ILEARN Trend Data

Elementary School

● 23/24 ● 24/25 ● 25/26 (projected)



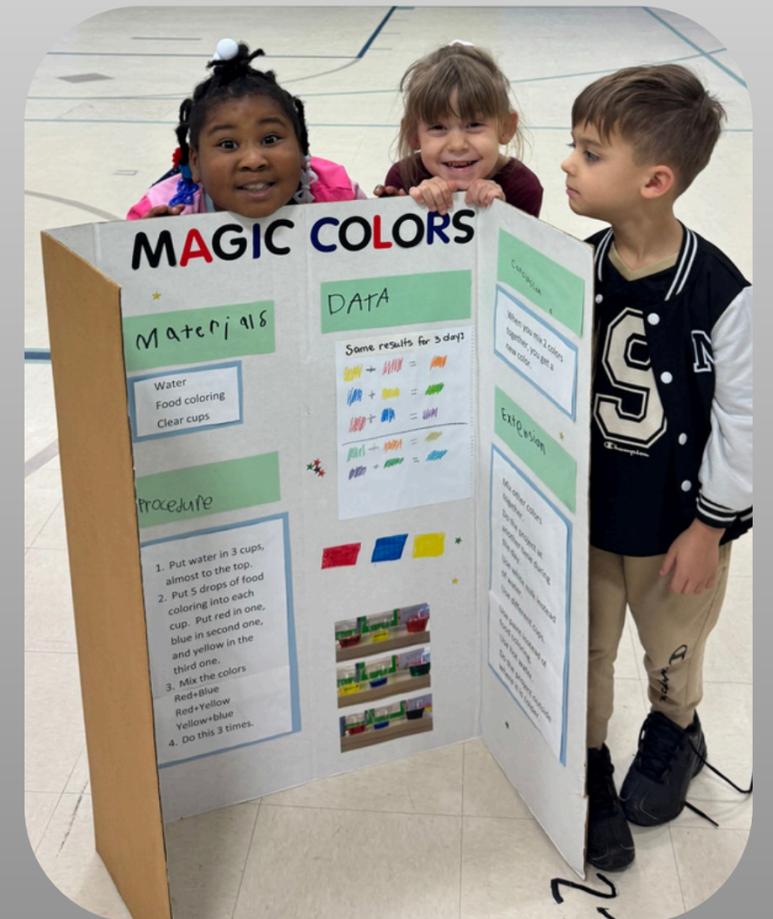


Woodland ELA ILEARN Cohort Data

Elementary School



	Spring 24	Spring 25	Spring 26 (projected)
Third Gr	13%	21%	15%
Fourth Gr		35%	34%
Fifth Gr			45%





Woodland MA ILEARN Cohort Data

Elementary School

FUTURE ELKHART LIONS & IREAD-3 PASSERS



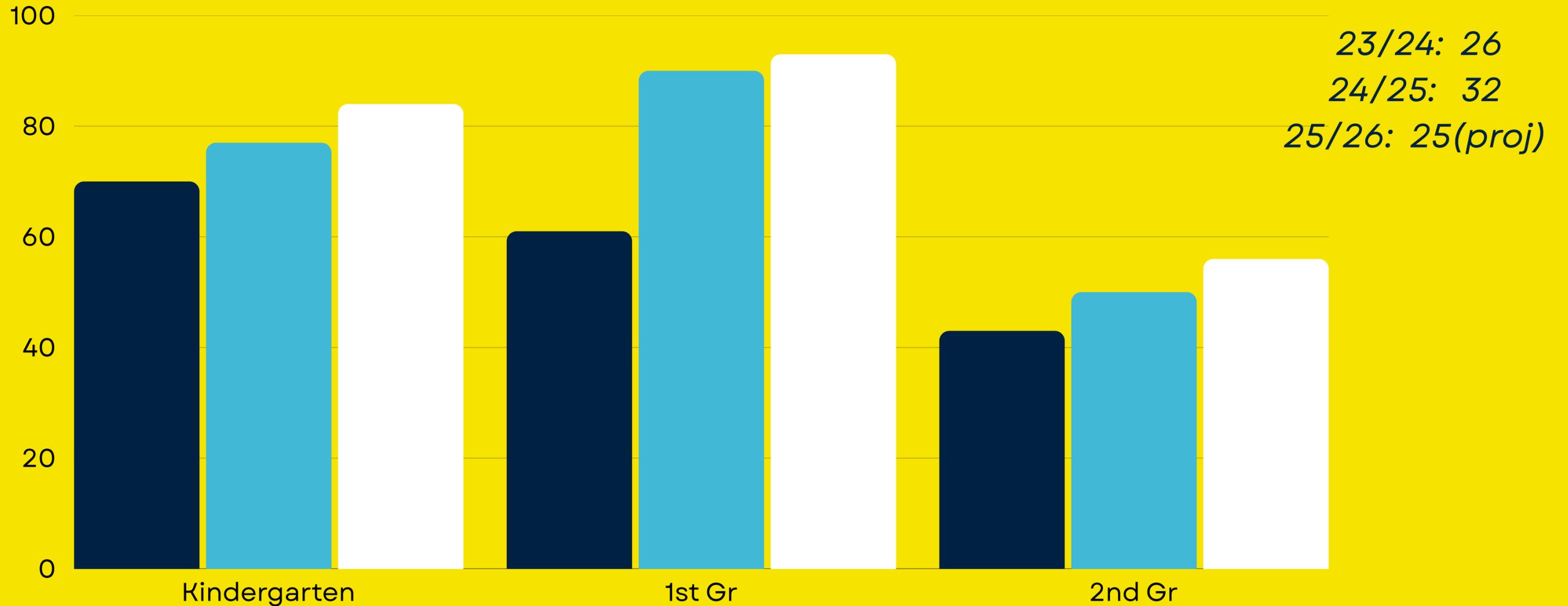
	Spring 24	Spring 25	Spring 26 (projected)
Third Gr	16%	32%	14%
Fourth Gr		32%	43%
Fifth Gr			41%



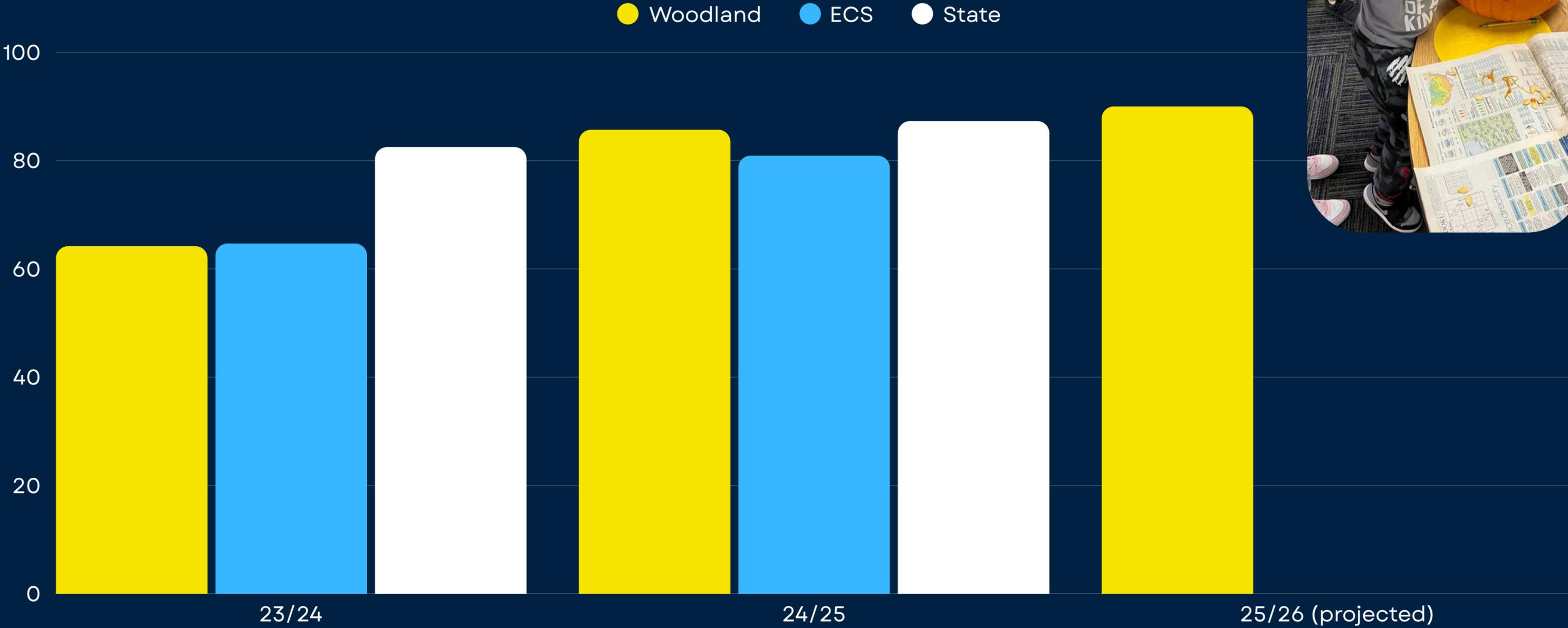
Acadience for K through 2nd

Number of 2nd Graders
passing IREAD3

● BOY ● MOY ● EOY (projected)



Woodland IREAD-3 Trend Data



How?

Explicit or Direct Instruction **.79**

Formative Assessments in the MTSS model **1.29**

Teacher Clarity in Lesson Planning **.75 & .93**

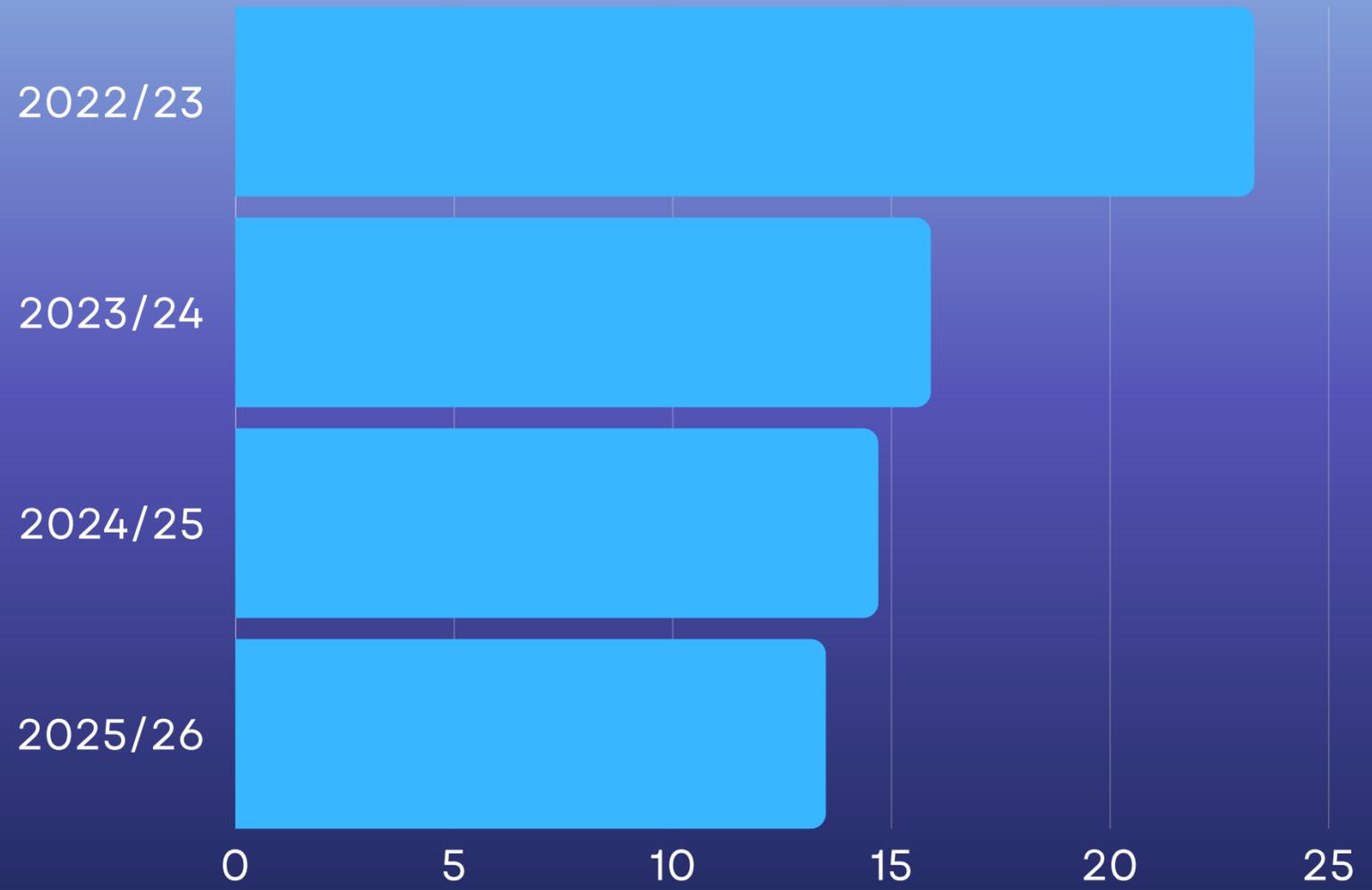
PLCs collaborating with Literacy Cadre Coach
and intentional Planning/Action Mtgs with one another **1.57**

24 Hours of Live Virtual Training LETRS Vol 1 & 2
and the Application of that Learning on teacher professional practice **1.29**





Reducing Chronic Absenteeism



**YTD Attendance Rate
95.72%**

The Woodland Rocket Community



Excellence of Elkhart

March 10, 2026



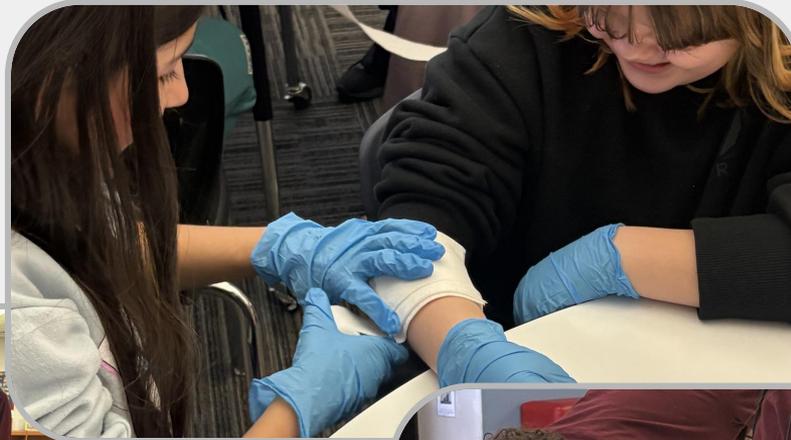
Excellence of Elkhart

ACADEMICS • ARTS • ATHLETICS



ACADEMICS

EACC & Cleveland Partnership





ACADEMICS

Dual Credit Biology





ARTS

Presidents' Day Crafts





ARTS

Building Globes





ARTS

ISSMA State Solo & Ensemble Festivals





ATHLETICS

Gymnastics

A graphic for the Elkhart Gymnastics team. It features a yellow and grey geometric background. On the left, the text 'ELKHART GYMNASTICS' is written vertically. In the center, the Elkhart Lions logo is shown with 'ELKHART LIONS' above it and 'EHS' on the lion's chest. Below the logo, a white box contains the text 'ELKHART GYMNASICS, FINISH 3RD!'. To the left of this box, the number '3RD' is written vertically in large blue letters. On the right, a female gymnast in a blue leotard is posing. In the bottom right corner, the 'SEIFERT' logo is present, with 'SERVING ELKHART COUNTY SINCE 1978' and 'ELKHART · WAKARUSA · KANAWHA' below it.

ELKHART GYMNASTICS

3RD

ELKHART
LIONS



ELKHART GYMNASICS,
FINISH 3RD!

SEIFERT
SERVING ELKHART COUNTY
SINCE 1978
ELKHART · WAKARUSA · KANAWHA



FUTURE HAPPENINGS

- **March 11:** North Side Bands & Orchestras ISSMA Preview Concert
- **March 13-15:** EHS Shrek Musical
- **March 16:** Winter Athletic Awards
- **March 18:** Freshman Division Choirs ISSMA Preview Concert

**As always, you can
stay-up-to-date by
following us on social
media**



ElkhartCommunitySchools



Elkhartschools



Elkhart Community Schools



ParentSquare



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

Elkhart Community Schools
Elkhart, Indiana

February 24, 2026

J.C. Rice Educational Services Center, 2720 California Road, Elkhart,
Indiana 46514 – at 5:10 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: David Bird
Krista Riblet
Denny Trigg

The Board received a report from the following Elkhart High School, Schools
of Study: Engineering, Technology, and Innovation, Health and Public Safety,
and Human Services.

Topics
Discussed

The meeting adjourned at approximately 5:53 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

February 24, 2026

J.C. Rice Educational Services Center, 2720 California Road, Elkhart, Indiana 46514 – at 6:03 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
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Board President Troy Scott called the regular meeting of the Board of School Trustees to order. Call to Order

Board Member Eric Ivory recited the Elkhart Promise. The Elkhart Promise

Chief Financial Officer Ronda Ross provided an overview of four (4) resolutions related to the district’s 1028 Hearing. She explained the first resolution confirms the execution of an amendment to lease and related matters, allowing the building corporation to issue up to \$6,865,000 in 2026A bonds and up to \$6,865,000 in 2026B bonds. These bonds will finance district-wide elementary school facility projects, focused on improving aesthetics and consistency across remaining elementary buildings, and secondary school facility projects addressing mechanical systems, roofing, and other maintenance needs. 1028 Hearing

Miss Ross stated the second resolution is an appropriations resolution to approve the additional appropriation of the bond proceeds and related interest earnings for these projects.

She explained the third resolution seeks authorization to issue an additional \$6,865,000 bond to reimburse the Operations Fund for prior facility improvements and projects, while the fourth resolution would appropriate the proceeds and interest earnings from this reimbursement bond to the Operations Fund.

Miss Ross noted the anticipated completion date for the district-wide elementary and secondary projects is no later than December 2028, and the estimated tax impact of all three (3) bond issuances would be approximately one cent on the district’s debt service fund rate.

Following the presentation, the Board suspended the regular meeting to open the public hearing for comment regarding the 1028 resolutions. Hearing no public comments, the hearing was closed, and the Board resumed the regular meeting for consideration and vote on the resolutions as presented.

By unanimous action, the Board approved the resolution confirming approval of the First Amendment to the Lease and the issuance of the 2026A and 2026B Mortgage Bonds and related matters. (Codified File: 2526-124) Resolution

By unanimous action, the Board approved the resolution authorizing the additional appropriation of the 2026A and 2026B First Mortgage Bond proceeds and interest earnings and related matters. (Codified File: 2526-125) Resolution

By unanimous action, the Board approved the resolution authorizing the 1028 issuance of bonds, reimbursement, and related matters. (Codified File: 2526-126) Resolution

By unanimous action, the Board approved the resolution approving additional appropriation of 2026 General Obligation Bond proceeds and interest earnings and related matters. (Codified File: 2526-127) Resolution

Nine (9) audience members addressed the Board during public comment regarding a student search; referral rate for black students; consolidation decisions regarding special education and alternative education services; RIFs; last minute school closures; student search; and better hiring practice. Public Comment

Ron Shirk, Development Director for the Elkhart Salvation Army, addressed the Board to express appreciation for the district's partnership in organizing a community-wide food drive. He explained conversations with district administration began the previous year to explore collaborating on a food drive that would benefit the Salvation Army food pantry, which serves families within Elkhart Community Schools (ECS). Salvation Army

Mr. Shirk reported the food drive, held in November, and supported by schools and district buildings across the system, resulted in the collection of more than 7,000 pounds of non-perishable food. He noted this amount equates to approximately 5,833 meals for families and children in the Elkhart community.

He thanked the district for its collaboration and support, emphasizing that the partnership helps provide food and nutrition for local families and students so they can be successful in school. Mr. Shirk expressed hope this effort will continue as an ongoing collaboration in the years ahead.

Mason Erlacher and Jania Walker, Superintendent's Student Advisory Council (SSAC) members, presented during the Moment of Pride providing the Board with recent accomplishments and activities at Elkhart High School (EHS).

Moment of
Pride

They reported that at the ISSMA contest on January 31, six soloists and six ensemble groups qualified to advance to the state competition on February 28. In wrestling, five athletes advanced to sectionals on February 14 and Kyle Sommers advanced to the state finals on February 20.

Students also recognized several school events and initiatives, including sophomore class representatives delivering gift bags for National School Counseling Week, recognition of a Teacher of the Month, and a Freshman Division parent night where eighth-grade students and families learned about scheduling, schools of study, and the new diploma requirements.

Additional student-led activities included a National Honor Society "Tape a Teacher" fundraiser to support Teacher Appreciation Week, and the Dollars for Scholars event where twenty-five students raised \$9,500 to support scholarships for Elkhart students. They also noted a visit from the state treasurer of the Future Farmers of America (FFA), who met with students and led activities.

Athletic accomplishments included the bowling club placing sixth at the state competition; several wrestlers advancing to regional competition, with Kyle Sommers earning the regional championship and finishing fourth at Semi-State; and participation in regional events for girls swimming and diving, with Camryn Tyrakowski qualifying for the state meet. They also reported that the girls' basketball team finished the season with a 16-8 record and noted upcoming postseason competitions for several winter sports.

They concluded by highlighting upcoming events, including FAFSA information nights for families, winter sports awards, and upcoming sectional competitions for athletics.

Siobhan Carey, Regional Vice President for Chartwells K12 in the Midwest Region, and Nick Koenig, Area Director overseeing food service operations for ECS, provided the Board with a first-quarter update on the district's food service program.

Chartwells
Update

Ms. Carey began by thanking the Board and Superintendent, Dr. Huff, for the opportunity to partner with the district to serve students. She expressed appreciation for the collaboration and support provided by district staff, specifically recognizing Chief Financial Officer, Ronda Ross, and her team, Sarah Castleman, for serving as the district's food service liaison, Director of Technology, DJ Rhoades, and the technology department for assisting during the transition, and Director of Building

Services, Tony Gianesi, for operational support.

Mr. Koenig then introduced the on-site Chartwells management team, including the resident district manager, directors of dining services, the district chef responsible for culinary training and nutrition education programming, and the resident dietitian who supports compliance, allergies, and nutrition education. He also noted that two members of the previous Elkhart food service management staff joined the Chartwells leadership team and have provided valuable support during the transition.

Mr. Koenig reported approximately 140 frontline associates are currently employed in the district's food service program, with about 80 percent of staff transitioning from the district's previous program. Six employees have already been promoted into leadership roles, and staff have completed more than 3,000 hours of training, including a three-day training program prior to the start of the school year and ongoing professional development throughout the year.

He also highlighted several operational improvements implemented during the first quarter, including new cafeteria signage at middle schools, a new serving line installed at North Side Middle School with plans for additional upgrades at the other middle schools, updated digital signage at the high school, and expanded menu options. In addition, elementary schools transitioned from centralized meal production to on-site preparation and batch cooking to improve freshness and quality.

Ms. Carey shared feedback gathered from parent surveys and student focus groups. A survey of 218 parents indicated strong satisfaction with cafeteria staff, noting they are friendly and helpful to students. Parents identified taste and food variety as the most important factors in school meals and expressed interest in additional service points and expanded nutrition education. Student focus groups conducted at middle and high schools similarly praised staff and identified favorite menu items such as pizza, burgers, and grill station offerings. Students also expressed interest in healthier breakfast options, faster lunch lines, greater availability of popular items during later lunch periods, and expanded fruit, vegetable, and beverage options.

Ms. Carey then provided a financial update covering July through January. During that time, the program served more than 722,000 lunches and 352,000 breakfasts, representing approximately 74 percent participation in lunch and 38 percent participation in breakfast. She noted efforts are underway to increase breakfast participation, including exploring additional hot breakfast options. A la carte sales totaled approximately \$227,000, and overall food service sales, including federal reimbursements and point-of-sale purchases, exceeded \$4.69 million.

She reported the program is currently operating at a break-even point for the first quarter and is projected to end the school year with a positive financial balance. She also highlighted the purchasing power of the Chartwells program, noting that approximately \$459,000 in rebates, about 20 percent of purchasing costs, will be returned to the district.

Looking ahead, Chartwells plans to continue improving operational efficiency, expanding breakfast options, and introducing new programs. These include the Navigate Foundation work-based learning program, which offers a 12-week paid culinary internship for high school students interested in careers in food service or hospitality; the Mood Boost nutrition education initiative for elementary students focused on how food affects mood and wellness; and Global Eats, a program for secondary students featuring international cuisine and guest chefs who share cultural culinary experiences with students.

Ms. Carey concluded by thanking the district again for the partnership and invited questions from the Board.

Mr. Scott thanked the Chartwells team for the presentation and noted the first six months of the partnership appear to be moving in a positive direction. He stated the financial results were reassuring and aligned with the expectations the district had when entering the partnership. He also commended Chartwells for engaging students through surveys and focus groups to gather feedback on menu items and preferences. Mr. Scott noted that this type of student engagement is important in helping shape food service offerings.

Mrs. Mullins asked for clarification regarding the Navigate Foundation internship program and whether it would be available to upperclassmen. Ms. Carey confirmed the program is designed primarily for juniors and seniors who may be interested in entering the workforce after graduation. She explained the program would be offered as a collaborative opportunity and could align with existing culinary programs and career pathway opportunities already available through the district's career center.

In the area of Academics, eighth grade students across the district took an important step in their academic journey as they visited the EHS Freshman Division. During the visit, students toured the campus, explored various programs, and connected with current freshmen who shared their experiences, helping prepare them for a successful transition to high school.

Excellence of
Elkhart

Congratulations to the Elkhart Lions at EHS who earned Academic Letters. This honor recognizes students for outstanding academic achievement based on a combination of GPA, SAT/ACT performance, and participation in academic competitions, reflecting their dedication to excellence in the classroom.

In the area of Arts, fifth-grade students across the district recently had the opportunity to select the band or orchestra instrument they will play in middle school. This exciting milestone marks the beginning of their journey in the district's middle school music programs and supports their continued growth in the arts.

EHS seniors Owen Marks and Christian Overgaard also recently participated in a unique bass workshop led by Aleck Belcher, associate principal bassist of the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra. During the workshop, students practiced bass fundamentals, listened to a professional performance, asked questions, and even had the opportunity to try his instrument, creating a memorable and enriching learning experience.

In the area of Athletics, EHS senior wrestler Kyle Sommers was recognized as he prepared to compete in the IHSA State Wrestling Tournament at Gainbridge Fieldhouse. Kyle entered the state tournament as a sectional and regional champion and a fourth-place finisher at Semi-State, representing Elkhart with outstanding achievement and dedication.

EHS student-athletes also visited Pinewood Elementary School to participate in the March Madness Book Bracket by reading with elementary students. The visit provided a meaningful opportunity for athletes to share their love of reading, build connections with younger students, and help generate excitement about books.

Some upcoming events across Elkhart Schools include:

- Feb 25: West Side Bands & Orchestras ISSMA Preview Concert
- Feb 26: Black History Month Programs at Mary Beck and Roosevelt

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

At the request of a Board member, a roll call vote was taken. By a 5-2 roll call vote (yeas: VonDerVellen, Weaver, Scott, Davis, and Ivory; nays: Mullins and Burnett), the Board approved the following consent items:

Consent Items

Minutes – February 10, 2026 – Regular Board Meeting

Minutes

Payment of claims totaling \$7,130,818.28 as shown on the February 24, 2026, claims listing. (Codified File 2526-128)

Payment of Claims

Proposed school fundraisers in accordance with Board policy. (Codified File 2526-129)

Fundraisers

ECS received the following donation: \$5,000 from Elkhart Education Foundation (EEF) Henkin Music Grant to EHS Choir Extra-curricular program to be used to purchase supplies, equipment, and expenses for concerts, competitions, travel, registrations, and productions; \$10,000 from EEF Henkin Music Grant to EHS Theatre Extra-curricular program to be used to purchase supplies, equipment, and expenses for concerts, competitions, travel, registrations, and productions; \$10,000 from EEF Henkin Music Grant to be used to purchase supplies, equipment, and expenses for concerts, competitions, travel, registrations, and productions; and \$500 from EEF to Cleveland Music Program/Children’s Choir to be used to benefit students.

Gift Acceptances

Conference leave requests in accordance with Board policy for staff members as recommended by the administration on the February 24, 2026, listing. (Codified File 2526-130)

Conference Leave Requests

Confirmation of the following Overnight Trip Requests: EHS ElkLogics Robotics Team to participate in the FIRST Indiana Robotics Lafayette District Event in Lafayette, Indiana on March 26 – 28, 2026.

Overnight Trip Requests

Confirmed submission of the following grants: One Book, One School Author Visit hosted by Community Foundation of Elkhart County, totaling \$23,000, enabling EHS and EHS Freshman Division to pay for paperback copies of the book Hey, Kiddo, by Jarrett Krosoczka as well as an author visit to the Freshman Division, EHS main campus, and at a community event in the evening for all Elkhart families; Community Development Block Grant Public Service Program hosted by City of Elkhart, totaling \$12,000 to be used to directly support high-quality entrepreneurship instruction by covering teacher compensation and instructional delivery costs for participants receiving startup funding through the City of Elkhart; and Indiana Connectedness Project, hosted by Johns Hopkins University, totaling \$3,000, to be used to focus on a cohort of sophomores and juniors to be ambassadors for new students entering EHS to develop a sense of belonging for those students. (Codified File 2526-131)

Grants

Personnel Report

Reassignment of the following nine (9) certified administrators for the 2026-2027 school year:
Heather Burton – Principal at Osolo to Assistant Principal at Pinewood
Kendra Clayton – Assistant Principal at Osolo to Assistant Principal at Beardsley
Robb Freeze – Principal at Feeser to Assistant Principal at Daly
Timothy Pedley – Principal at Bristol to Principal at Feeser

Certified Administrator Reassignment

Jennifer Roden – Assistant Principal at North Side to Assistant Principal at Freshman Division
 Nicole Serge-Nemes – Assistant Principal at Woodland to Assistant Principal at Cleveland
 Shannon Stanley – Interim Principal at Roosevelt to Assistant Principal at Roosevelt
 Meredith Warnock – Supervisor of Early Childhood at HELC to Supervisor of Early Childhood at Roosevelt
 Tervonda Washington – Principal at Beck to Principal at Roosevelt

Non-renewal of the following five (5) certified administrators for the 2026-2027 school year: Certified Administrators Non-Renewal
 Keith Baker – Assistant Principal at Freshman Division
 Lisa Ernsberger – Assistant Principal at Beck
 Christy Hauptert – Assistant Principal at West Side
 Angelica Nagy – Assistant Principal at Beardsley
 Marissa Tinkle – Assistant Principal at Bristol

Revision to the following one (1) certified staff effective on the date indicated: Classified Revision
 Amy King – Social Worker at Elkhart Academy, 3/5/26

Approval of the following two (2) certified administrative job description revisions: Certified Job Description Revisions
 Supervisor of Exceptional Learners/High Ability
 Supervisor of Early Learning

Employment of the following one (1) classified employee effective on date indicated: Classified Employment
 Kelli Savage – Paraprofessional at Cleveland, 4/17/26

Transfer the following four (4) classified employees effective in the 2025 – 2026 school year: Classified Transfers
 Tiffany Rush – Secretary at Elkhart High/SOS to Secretary to Principal at Freshman Division
 Antionette Schmucker – Head Custodian at North Side to Head Custodian at Career Center
 Ashley Swihart – Substitute Nurse at ESC to Registered Nurse at Daly
 Michael Waterhouse – Development Assistant at WVPE to Promotions Manager at WVPE

Employment of the following one (1) substitute teachers effective with the 2025-26 school year: Substitute Teachers
 Madyson Valderrama – Substitute Teacher

Employment of the following one (1) Claims employee in the 2025-26 school year: Claims
 Irae Copley – Driver Trainee at Transportation

Employment of the following one (1) Coach in the 2025-26 school year:	Coaches
Megan Huys – Assistant Boys Volleyball Coach at Elkhart High	
Resignation of the following six (6) classified employees effective on date indicated:	Classified Resignations
Seth Barnett – Career Counselor at Adult Ed, 2/6/26	
Madison Gross-Warr – Bus Helper at Transportation, 2/3/26	
Michael Janovic – Promotions Manager at WVPE, 2/20/26	
Brandon Kratkoczki – Communications Specialist at ESC, 2/4/26	
Steven McCarty – Mechanic at Transportation, 2/27/26	
Paula Verteramo – Secretary at Career Center, 2/20/26	
Retirement of the following one (1) classified employees effective on date indicated:	Classified Retirement
Cynthia Weaver – Custodian at Daly, 3/31/26 with 13 Years of Service	
Rescission of the following one (1) classified employee effective on the date indicated:	Classified Rescission
Teresa McLain – Secretary at Cleveland	
Termination of the following three (3) classified employees effective on date indicated:	Classified Terminations
Jose Gonzales – Bus Driver at Transportation, 2/24/2026 in accordance with Policy 3139.01S	
Christopher Ingle – Substitute Teacher at ESC, 2/24/26 in accordance with Policy 3139.01S	
Lisa Wig – Bus Driver at Transportation, 2/24/26 in accordance with Policy 3139.01S, 3122.01ACS, and 3170.02ACS	
Death of the following one (1) classified employee on the date indicated:	Classified Death
Willie Williams – Substitute Custodian, 2/4/26 with 3 Years of Service	
By unanimous action, the Board approved a contract with Vector Solutions and waived second reading. (Codified File 2526-132)	Vector Contract
By unanimous action, the Board approved a Beacon Health System Community Impact Memorandum of Understanding with ECS. (Codified File 2526-133)	Memorandum of Understanding
Miss Ross presented the January financial update, beginning with an overview of the Education Fund. She reported that the district budgeted \$97 million in revenue for 2025 but received \$93 million, and revenue	Financial Report

for 2026 is projected to be approximately \$90 million due to declining student enrollment. Wages and benefits continue to represent the largest portion of Education Fund expenditures. Because expenses exceeded revenue in 2025, the district used cash reserves, reducing the Education Fund balance from \$3.5 million to \$1.4 million. For 2026, the district aims to operate under budget and rebuild the cash balance.

Miss Ross noted that January included three payroll cycles, resulting in higher expenses and a temporary negative Education Fund cash balance of approximately \$250,000, underscoring the need to strengthen reserves.

She then reviewed the Operations Fund, explaining its primary revenue sources are local property tax revenue and transfers from the Education Fund. Because property tax payments are received primarily in December and June, the fund typically experiences months where expenses exceed receipts. Board Member Anne VonDerVellen, noted the Operations Fund balance must support district expenses until the next tax payment, reinforcing the need for the previously approved General Obligation bond to maintain operations.

Miss Ross reported the Rainy Day Fund remains at \$6.7 million and total district cash balances at the end of January were approximately \$13.7 million. Projections prepared by Policy Analytics indicate the district is still operating with deficit spending in 2026, though the deficit is trending downward. Savings from consolidation efforts are expected to begin appearing later in 2026.

She also highlighted ongoing cost-saving initiatives, noting payroll expenses are down more than \$2.3 million compared to the same period last year total savings initiatives now exceed \$5.1 million. Additional savings are being realized through time clock software, the food service management contract, and consolidation efforts. She concluded by encouraging the community to review the district's online financial dashboard for additional information.

Miss Ross provided the monthly insurance report, noting the district's current loss ratio is 70.9 percent, compared to 68.9 percent at the same time last year. She explained this indicates plan expenses remain below plan premiums, reflecting a favorable loss ratio and a stable performance of the district's insurance plan.

Insurance
Report

Dr. Huff provided a consolidation update, noting the purpose of the February 24 presentation was to share preliminary logistical planning as the district continues moving through Phase Three of the consolidation process. He emphasized the information being presented was not final and the district continues to review feedback and make adjustments to ensure decisions align with the district's goals and commitments.

Consolidation
Update

Dr. Huff reiterated that consolidation has been a phased process. Phase One focused on explaining the need for consolidation, including the district's long-term financial challenges and declining enrollment. Phase Two involved developing and presenting recommendations to the Board regarding the district's footprint and school realignment.

He explained Phase Three focuses on implementation and supporting the transition of students, staff, and programs as the district moves forward. Dr. Huff acknowledged the significant impact of the decisions, including the reassignment of students and the closure of several schools, and noted the process has required extensive work and careful consideration by district leadership. He emphasized the district's priority throughout the process remains supporting students, staff, and the community while making decisions necessary for the long-term stability of ECS.

Dr. Huff then introduced the next portion of the presentation, which would focus on program planning, beginning with information about non-traditional school programs presented by Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Schools Dr. Amy Rauch.

Dr. Rauch shared information regarding ECS's non-traditional programs, explaining district administration recommends housing all K-12 non-traditional programs within a single building. This model would maintain the existing programs of Elkhart Academy, PRIDE Middle School Academy, and PRIDE Academy while creating a more cohesive continuum of services for students.

She noted a centralized location would improve student access to resources and support services. The district will continue working closely with staff to ensure students enrolled in these programs receive the same level of support and services they currently experience.

Dr. Rauch also reported the district is exploring the creation of a virtual school beginning next year. She explained the district lost at least 300 students to external virtual schools last year, and establishing a local virtual option would allow those students to remain enrolled in ECS while maintaining associated funding within the district.

Director of Student Services and Exceptional Learners Lindsey Brander provided an update on programs serving students with disabilities. She explained the Young Adult Program, which serves students with disabilities who have completed high school and continue receiving services through their 22nd birthday, will remain at its current location at the EHS Freshman Division. The facility was specifically designed to support transition-aged students and includes spaces such as an apartment setting and kitchen to provide authentic opportunities for students to practice independent living and job skills. She noted there will be no changes to service delivery, and students will continue

receiving individualized transition supports and community-based instruction focused on postsecondary readiness and independence.

Ms. Brander also addressed the district's Intense Interventions special education programs, noting the district has received feedback from families and staff as part of the consolidation planning process. She explained the district is carefully reviewing several factors before making any decisions, including student needs, program requirements, staffing, transportation, environmental considerations, and the importance of maintaining established student cohorts whenever possible. She emphasized preserving peer groups and trusted adult relationships is an important part of supporting continuity and stability, and the district's priority is to make student-centered, data-informed decisions while ensuring high-quality programming and continuity of services.

Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Schools Michele Riise reminded the Board that all PACE, Title I, and Head Start classrooms will be relocated to Roosevelt STEAM Academy as part of the consolidation planning. With Hawthorne being impacted, she explained that the district believes preschool programs are most effective when housed together in one location, consistent with the current model.

Mrs. Riise noted Roosevelt has designated space specifically for preschool programming to support a smooth transition. She added services will remain the same, and the relocation will provide additional opportunities for preschool students to be immersed in an elementary environment, helping strengthen their transition into kindergarten and the early elementary grades.

Dr. Rauch reported the district's High Ability programs will remain in their current locations, with the elementary High Ability program continuing at Roosevelt and the middle school High Ability program remaining at West Side Middle School. She noted student cohorts will remain intact and there will be no changes to service delivery.

Dr. Rauch also shared district administration recommends relocating the Adult Education program from Hawthorne to the EHS Freshman Division. The move is recommended because the facility offers secure space originally designed for the program and provides a central location for participants. She emphasized services and programming will remain unchanged.

Director of Human Resources Maggie Lozano then outlined the staffing transition timeline related to consolidation. She explained the staffing selection criteria, process, and timeline were shared with staff on February 10, and implementation began on February 20. At that time, notifications were provided to employees currently serving under emergency permits, transition to teaching licenses, or temporary contracts to provide as much advance notice as possible.

Ms. Lozano reported on March 4 the district will share a list of available positions for the 2026–2027 school year along with a preference form for staff impacted by consolidation. Staff will have until March 13 to submit their placement preferences. Those preferences will be reviewed alongside district needs, with a priority placed on maintaining classroom stability and consistent class sizes.

Reassignment notifications for impacted certified and classified staff are expected to be issued by March 27. She noted some staffing adjustments will occur through natural attrition to help minimize the overall impact on employees. The traditional internal transfer window will then open from April 1 through May 15, with transfer decisions communicated by May 29. Any remaining positions as of June 1 will be posted for external candidates. Ms. Lozano emphasized the district’s goal throughout the process is to provide clarity, fairness, and support for staff during the transition.

Ms. Brander provided an update on student registration for the 2026–2027 school year. She reported registration will open on March 9 for both new and returning students. Families of returning students will receive an email with a link to complete registration, while families of new students, including incoming kindergarteners, can access registration through the district website.

Ms. Brander also noted the transfer application window will be open from April 13 through May 8. In addition, the district will host Kindergarten Kickoff on April 16 from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. at receiving elementary schools to welcome incoming kindergarten families and provide assistance with registration if needed.

She emphasized timely registration is important to ensure accurate student information, which directly supports staffing decisions, classroom assignments, resource allocation, and transportation planning for the upcoming school year.

Dr. Huff concluded the consolidation update by noting that the information presented will be posted on the district’s consolidation website. He explained that the presentation was a brief overview of ongoing planning and stated his goal is to bring final recommendations to the Board before spring break.

Dr. Huff then invited Ms. Brander to provide additional clarification regarding the district’s Intense Interventions programming. Ms. Brander explained the district has received significant feedback from families and staff regarding services for students with significant disabilities. She noted these students require specialized curriculum, care, and staff training, making it essential administrators and staff in receiving buildings are prepared to support their needs. She emphasized that maintaining student cohorts and preserving peer relationships are important considerations as the district evaluates any

potential program changes, and feedback from families and staff will continue to guide decisions.

Dr. Huff added the district's goal is to maintain program continuity whenever possible so students currently attending schools with Intense Interventions programs would likely remain in those settings or transition with their existing cohorts. He stressed while efficiency may be a consideration in planning, decisions must ultimately prioritize what is best for students. He highlighted the importance of both academic support and social connections, noting relationships with peers and trusted adults play a critical role in student success. Dr. Huff then invited Board members to ask questions before concluding this portion of the presentation.

Board members expressed appreciation for the administration's continued work and communication throughout the consolidation process.

Board Member Kellie Mullins thanked Dr. Huff and the district leadership team for having open and authentic conversations with families and staff, and for clearly communicating the district's plan of action. She noted the team has done a commendable job representing the consolidation work and listening to feedback from the community while navigating difficult decisions.

Mr. Scott also commended the administration for its willingness to adjust plans when new information or stakeholder feedback is received. He noted consolidation requires thoughtful decision-making and flexibility, and he appreciated the team's efforts to explain the reasoning behind recommendations and respond to concerns raised by families and staff.

Board Member Eric Ivory expressed pride in the approach taken by the administration and cabinet, highlighting their efforts to balance feedback from the community while continuing to move the district forward.

Board Member Dacey Davis added the consolidation process has been difficult for everyone involved and encouraged the community to recognize that many individuals are experiencing challenges as a result of the changes. She emphasized the importance of supporting one another and working together to make the best possible decisions for students and the district.

Dr. Huff continued his remarks by emphasizing that the consolidation process remains fluid and that the district has been committed to listening to feedback from the community and adjusting plans when necessary. He encouraged stakeholders to continue engaging in dialogue, noting that district leaders are committed to listening and responding to concerns.

From the
Superintendent

Dr. Huff also addressed a recent safety matter involving district operations. He informed the Board he had authorized an investigation into Human Resources and the Transportation Department to review hiring procedures and ensure the district is following all appropriate protocols related to student safety. He stressed safety is the district's top priority and situations involving student safety must be addressed directly and transparently.

He explained the purpose of the investigation is to evaluate current procedures, identify any areas requiring improvement, and ensuring the district is taking every possible step to protect students as they travel to and from school. Dr. Huff stated he will present a comprehensive report to the Board before spring break outlining the findings, including areas where the district is performing well as well as recommendations for immediate improvements where needed.

Dr. Huff acknowledged the district may have fallen short of expectations in the past and emphasized his commitment to ensuring similar issues do not occur under his leadership. He reiterated student and staff safety remains the district's highest priority and the administration will take the necessary steps to strengthen hiring and safety procedures moving forward.

Mr. Scott confirmed the Board supports the investigation and authorized Dr. Huff to proceed with the review.

Mrs. VonDerVellen expressed support for the investigation, noting that continuous improvement is important across all departments and organizations. She emphasized reviewing processes and procedures provides an opportunity for the district to learn, grow, and strengthen its systems.

Mrs. VonDerVellen added the district has already worked behind the scenes to rebuild systems, protocols, and procedures across multiple areas, and that reviewing departments such as transportation is especially important because of their direct impact on student safety. She stated regularly evaluating what the district is doing well and identifying areas for improvement helps ensure the district continues striving for excellence and setting a strong standard for operations.

Board members offered additional closing remarks, recognizing student accomplishments, and thanking the community for their engagement.

From the Board

Mrs. Mullins congratulated the district's music students as they prepare for upcoming performances and competitions, noting the continued growth and success of the district's music programs. She also recognized the bowling team for its achievements and praised the dedication of the students and coaches. Mrs. Mullins thanked parents and community members who spoke during the meeting and expressed appreciation for their continued involvement and support of ECS. She

also reminded the community about the opportunity to support students through the Dollars for Scholars program and encouraged continued support for student scholarships.

Board Member Mike Burnett echoed earlier comments regarding the consolidation process and specifically addressed families of students with special needs. He shared, as a parent of a child with special needs, he understands the concerns expressed by families and assured the community the Board is carefully considering the impact of decisions on those students. He emphasized the Board is working to make informed decisions based on the information available and encouraged the community to allow time for the district's plans to unfold while continuing to share feedback.

Miss Davis thanked community members for attending the meeting and advocating for issues important to them. She encouraged families to remain engaged throughout the process, noting ongoing collaboration and partnership between the district and the community will help strengthen the school system.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:10 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



STUDENT SERVICES

PHONE: 574-262-5540



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:  Natalie Bickel, Supervisor Student Services

Date: February 26, 2026

Subject: Gift Acceptance

Elkhart Education Foundation provided a donation of \$1,600.00 for our school social workers in support of the students that we serve.

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:

Elkhart Education Foundation
200 W Lusher Ave
Elkhart, IN 46517



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: March 4, 2026

TO: Dr. Larry Huff
Board of School Trustees

FROM: Phil Shults (Executive Principal)
Nathan Berkey (Teacher/Sponsor)

RE: EHS Theatre Donation

Elkhart High School received a donation of \$500.00 to the Theatre Extra-Curricular Activity. Your donation will be used to purchase supplies, costumes, set supplies, snacks and decorations for the Fall Play and Spring Musical. 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:

Edward Jones
12555 Manchester Road
St. Louis, MO 63131-3729



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: 2-23-26

TO: Dr. Huff
Board of School Trustees

FROM: Cary Anderson (Principal)
Sgt Scott Rutledge (Teacher/Sponsor)

RE: Donation Approval

Elkhart High School received a donation of \$1,000.00 from Get Wet For A Vet, Inc. The donation is in support of the AFJROTC program and will be used to purchase supplies, snacks, the Military Ball, competition registrations and equipment for the cadets.

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:

Get Wet For A Vet, Inc.
2604 Emerson Forest Parkway
South Bend, IN 46614



ELKHART AREA CAREER CENTER

ELKHART
COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

INTERNAL MEMO

**TO: DR. HUFF
BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES**

FROM: BRANDON EAKINS BE *[Signature]*

DATE: FEBRUARY 23, 2026

RE: DONATION APPROVAL - EACC

Monteith's Best-One has donated (2) Challenger 10k 2 post lifts, with an owner estimated value of \$16,000.00, to our Automotive Technology classes.

This donation will be useful in the classrooms as the lifts will be used by students for training purposes.

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:

Monteith's Best-One
Attn: Tim Wolfe, President
2503 Cassopolis St
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: March 5, 2026
TO: Dr. Larry Huff
Board of School Trustees
FROM: Jacquie Rost, Athletic Director
RE: Donation Approval

We are in receipt of an extracurricular donation in the amount of \$975.00 for the Boys Track team. This donation will go towards the purchase of training equipment for the program.

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:

Elkhart Athletic Club
2608 California Rd.
Elkhart, IN 46514

Sincerely,

Jacquie Rost
Elkhart High School, Athletic Director

Grant Approvals to Board of School Trustees - 3/10/2026

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?
Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Grant	Indiana Commission for Higher Education	EACC	Brandon Eakins	\$ 815,539.00	Funds are utilized for large equipment purchases, staffing, professional development, and career exploration activities. Brandon Eakins	Preparing all students to be college and career ready are priorities for the EACC and supported through Perkins Grant funds. Ensuring students have access to the new innovations and technologies helps ease the transition to post-secondary. Additionally, vital support personnel are funded through the Perkins Grant. Lastly, professional development for EACC staff members and career exploration activities for students in our region are supported through Perkins funding.	Personnel-\$319,700 Fringe-\$64,500 Travel-\$25,000 Contracted Services-\$48,728 Supplies/Materials-\$249,311 Equipment-\$108,300	3/31/2026
Indiana Connectedness Project	Johns Hopkins University	Elkhart High School - Early College	Mary Bowers and Cara Starzyk	\$3,000	\$1500/year for two years beginning SY 2026-2027. Money will be used to focus on a cohort of sophomores and juniors to be ambassadors for new students entering Elkhart High School to develop a sense of belonging for those students. Money will also be used to implement flexible evidence-based connectedness strategies. Mary Bowers and Cara Starzyk will oversee management of the grant through ECA. Dana Britten (Treasurer) will create an Early College line item in ECA to monitor expenditures.	According to the 2024-2025 Panorama Student Survey, 85% of students responded that they have positive relationships with adults. However, only 41% of students felt a sense of belonging to the school (20th percentile for the nation). Research shows that students who feel a sense of belonging also demonstrate positive attendance trends.	\$1,000 school gear \$600 advisory kits - conversation starter kits for IMPACT \$400 mentorship kickoff - breakfast for student mentors \$500 recognition system \$500 belonging visuals - posters for hallways and classrooms	3/15/2026


3/2/2026



Human Resources Department

2720 California Road • Elkhart, IN 46514

Phone: 574-262-5500

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

PERSONNEL RECOMMENDATIONS

CERTIFIED

- a. **Resignation** – We report the resignation of one (1) employee.
- b. **Administrative Retirement** – We report the retirement of one administrator who will have provided 27 years of service.
- c. **Retirement** – We report the retirement of eleven (11) employees who have provided a total of three hundred ten (310) years of service.

CLASSIFIED

- a. **Classified Staff Transfers** – We recommend the transfer of five (5) classified staff for the 2025-26 school year.
- b. **Substitute Teachers** – We recommend the employment of two (2) substitute teachers for the 2025-26 school year.
- c. **Claims** – We recommend the employment of one (1) employee for the 2025-26 school year.
- d. **Coaches** – We recommend the employment of six (6) coaches for the 2025-26 school year.
- e. **Coaches** – We recommend the employment of one (1) coach for the 2026-27 school year.
- f. **Separation** – We report the separation of eleven (11) employees.
- g. **Job Description** – We recommend the approval of one (1) job description revision.



DISTRICT COUNSEL/
CHIEF OF STAFF

ELKHART
COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

For First Consideration

TO: BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES

FROM: W. DOUGLAS THORNE *[Signature]*
DISTRICT COUNSEL/CHIEF OF STAFF

DATE: MARCH 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
Professional Benefit Administrators, Inc. (PBA)	Ronda Ross	Recommendation to approve proposed Plan Document and Summary Plan Description for Medical Flexible Spending Account, Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account, and Pre-Taxed Premium Plan to be administered by Professional Benefit Administrators, Inc. (PBA)	Self-Insurance Fund	No cost – part of employee benefit plan

WDT/crr

Cc: Dr. Larry Huff, Superintendent

Book	Policy Manual
Section	2000 Program
Title	Proposed - Replacement Policy - FIELD AND OTHER CORPORATION-SPONSORED TRIPS
Code	po2340
Status	First Reading
Adopted	November 22, 2016
Last Reviewed	March 10, 2026

2340 - FIELD AND OTHER CORPORATION-SPONSORED TRIPS

The School Board recognizes the value of organized trips or other excursions away from the classroom as a valuable part of the School Corporation's educational programming and a valuable opportunity to obtain additional educational experiences not offered directly in the curriculum offerings. These opportunities occur in four (4) primary forms addressed in this policy: a) field trips; b) extra-curricular/co-curricular program-related trips; c) overnight trips; and d) other Corporation-sponsored trips.

Field Trips

For purposes of this policy, a field trip shall be defined as any planned journey for one or more students away from Corporation premises, which is under the supervision of a professional staff member, approved by the Superintendent and furthers or supplements an integral part of a course of study as planned and incorporated into that course of study by the teacher.

Properly planned and executed field trips should cultivate new interests among students, help students relate school experience to the reality of the world outside of school, bring the resources of the community within the students' learning experience, and afford students the opportunity to study real things and processes in their actual environment.

Out-of state field trips that do not include an overnight stay must be approved by the Superintendent and the Board.

Field trips to destinations more than two hundred (200) miles from the Corporation must be approved by the Superintendent and the Board.

Extra-Curricular/Co-Curricular Trips

The Board recognizes that student trips will occur for reasons that are not directly incorporated into the curriculum as part of a class, but rather are part of the extra-curricular/co-curricular activities offered by the Corporation. For example, a Corporation athletic team may travel to away games or take a trip to an out-of-town tournament. Any such trips must be identified at the beginning of the activity for the school year or for the particular season. Extra-curricular or co-curricular trips shall be approved by the Superintendent, Building Principal, or athletic director in accordance with the same procedures used for approving field trips. In cases where such advance notice is not possible (such as travel to State tournament competition), the staff member responsible for such activity shall notify the Superintendent, athletic director, and building administrator of the activity and pertinent information.

Extra-curricular trips that extend to an overnight stay are considered overnight travel, other than IHSAA athletic teams participating in State tournaments/meets.

Overnight Travel

Overnight travel is defined as a field trip that involves one or more overnight stays. The Corporation views overnight travel outside of the Corporation related to the curriculum/program as an adjunct to that curriculum/program. As such, it is an important feature of the overall educational program. The Corporation recognizes the importance of overnight travel outside

of the Corporation to amplify and enhance studies that occur in the schools' classrooms through unique enrichment opportunities that are not available locally. Overnight travel shall be approved first by the Principal and Superintendent in accordance with the Corporation's overnight travel guidelines, and then must be submitted to the Board for final approval.

International field trips present special considerations that need to be taken into account when planning these activities. The Board must approve these trips to be considered Corporation-sponsored trips. The Board will approve only international field trips that are affiliated with a sponsoring or commercial organization that specializes in international travel and that is responsible for establishing the cost of such programs and for collecting payment directly from participating students or their parents.

Approval of international travel also shall take into account travel warnings for Americans to avoid travel to specified countries. These warnings are issued by the United States Department of State based on current conditions around the world and are updated as deemed necessary.

Other Corporation-Sponsored Trips

Other Corporation-sponsored trips shall be defined as any planned student-travel activity that is approved as part of the Corporation's total educational program, but not a part of a particular course and not expressly connected to an established extra-curricular/co-curricular activity. These trips may include such trips as summer trip programs, youth service trips, and other types of day trips that are organized by or through school staff or facilitated in some fashion through the Corporation.

Trip Approval Process

No staff member may offer or lead any trip as a Corporation-sponsored trip unless the trip has been approved in the manner prescribed in this policy.

Proposals shall include the details and the cost of the trip, identify any third party entities that will be involved in the trip, identify the curriculum-based purpose of the trip, identify what students will be eligible to participate, and any other pertinent information. If overnight, the proposal must describe how accommodations will be provided and how such arrangements will be supervised properly.

Any trip included in curriculum guides shall be considered to have been approved in advance. Each field trips not listed in the curriculum guide must be approved.

General Trip Provisions

The Superintendent shall approve all ~~other such~~ trips.

Students may be charged reasonable fees for field trips.

Students on all Corporation-sponsored trips remain under the supervision of this Board and are subject to the Corporation's policies and administrative guidelines.

All trips must be well-planned, properly-timed, and related to regular learning activities or to Corporation goals and objectives. There cannot be "free time" assigned on any single day or overnight field trip; students must be accountable to a chaperone at all times; students must be accounted for and in their assigned rooms each evening.

The person who signs the application must be a teacher going on the trip. However, the application must be approved by a building administrator. This person will be known as the trip leader and is responsible for planning and conducting the trip and for implementing a security plan. For overnight field trips, the teacher must submit to the Principal a security plan that must be prepared prior to the commencement of the trip. This security plan must describe the manner of bed checks and must include emergency contact information detailing the itinerary (hotels/short-term housing rental, destinations, transportation company information, etc.) for administrators, school police officers or SROs, parents, and nurses. The security plan must detail the responsibilities of each chaperone with their student assignments for the length of the overnight trip at all times.

For overnight field trips, the following lodging rules shall apply:

- A. Students (and their parents/guardians) shall be held liable for any damage or loss of property at all times while on the trip.
- B. There are to be NO MIXED GROUPS in hotel/lodging rooms or short-term housing rental rooms; that is, no males in females' rooms or vice versa. If students want to be in mixed-gender groups, they will need to do so in the lobby or

public area of the hotel or short-term housing rental.

- C. Students shall be in their rooms by curfew, which will be announced each night. Students may not leave their rooms after bed check. No exceptions will be made unless there is an emergency.
- D. Students must be considerate and respectful of other hotel guests or the host/owner of the short-term housing rental. Unnecessary and loud noises, such as slamming doors, running in the hallways, and loud music, are forbidden.
- E. No room service is allowed.
- F. Students will neither open hotel/lodging or short-term housing rental windows nor hang/throw objects out of hotel/lodging or short-term housing rental windows.
- G. Students are not permitted to change assigned hotel/lodging or short-term housing rental rooms.
- H. Students are not permitted to invite or solicit unknown person(s) or anyone not associated with the tour to the hotel.
- I. Students are not permitted to use facilities such as the pool or jacuzzi/hot tub unless a chaperone is present at all times.
- J. Students are not allowed to leave hotel/lodging or short-term housing rental grounds without a chaperone.
- K. Hotel/lodging rooms and short-term housing rental rooms are rented by and in the name of the school, not the individual students.

The Board does not endorse, support, or assume liability in any way for any staff member, volunteer, or parent of the Corporation who takes students on trips not approved by the Board or Superintendent. No staff member may solicit students of this Corporation for such trips within the facilities or on the school grounds of the Corporation without Board permission. Permission to solicit neither grants nor implies approval of the trip. Such approval must be obtained in accordance with this policy and the Corporation's administrative guidelines.

The Superintendent shall prepare administrative guidelines for the operation of both field and other Corporation-sponsored trips, including athletic trips, which shall ensure:

- A. the safety and well-being of students;
- B. parental permission is sought and obtained before any student leaves the Corporation on a trip;
- C. each trip is properly planned and, if a field trip, is integrated with the curriculum, evaluated, and followed up by appropriate activities which enhance its usefulness;
- D. the effectiveness of field trip activities is judged in terms of demonstrated learning outcomes;
- E. each trip is properly monitored;
- F. student behavior while on all trips complies with the ~~Student Code of Conduct~~ Rules for a Safe Learning Community & Good School Order;
- G. the staff member in charge shall have access to each student's Emergency Medical Authorization Form;
- H. provisions have been made for the administration of medication to those students for whom medications are administered routinely while at school;
- I. provisions have been made at the trip destination and in transportation, if and when required, to accommodate students and/or chaperones with disabilities;
- J. provisions have been made for the selection of lodging (for overnight trips) that provide a safe and secure environment.

A professional staff member shall not change a planned itinerary while the trip is in progress, except where the health, safety, welfare of the students in their charge is imperiled, or where changes or substitutions beyond their control have frustrated the purpose of the trip.

In any instance in which the itinerary of a trip is altered, the professional staff member in charge shall notify their administrative superior immediately.

Trips Not Sponsored by the Corporation

No staff member, volunteer, coach, or other individual acting in some capacity for the Corporation may solicit students of this Corporation to participate in any trip not sponsored by the Corporation unless that individual has received approval of the principal and Superintendent to promote such trips within the facilities or on the school grounds. This includes summer trips abroad or other trips offered through a third-party organizer in which a staff member, volunteer, coach, or other individual acting in some capacity for the Corporation is participating as well as athletic activities outside the Corporation's athletic program.

If approval is granted to solicit students to participate, that individual must communicate clearly to parents that the trip is not Corporation-sponsored and that the individual is not participating within the staff individual's role representing the Corporation. Coordination and/or participation in such a program shall be consistent with Policy 3210 - Staff Ethics.

Transportation for Field and Other Corporation-Sponsored Trips

Regular or special-purpose school vehicles shall be used for transportation on field and other Corporation-sponsored trips.

Transportation for all field and other Corporation-sponsored trips shall use vehicles owned or approved by the Corporation and driven by approved drivers. Exceptions must have the approval of the Superintendent.

The Corporation shall assume transportation costs for all field trips, subject to the provisions set forth below.

It shall assume the vehicle cost for all other trips, including co-curricular, athletic, and other extra-curricular trips, but a mileage charge will be assessed to cover the cost of the driver and fuel. This charge is to be paid by the sponsoring organization or from a designated fund.

Transportation may be limited by the availability of vehicles, drivers, and scheduling and will not be available when needed for general school purposes.

All field trips shall be supervised by members of the staff. All other Corporation-sponsored trips shall be supervised by either staff members or adults from the sponsoring organization. Any time students are on the vehicle, at least one (1) sponsor, chaperone, or staff member is expected to ride in the vehicle and to supervise students upon return to the Corporation and while they are waiting for rides home.

All students are expected to ride the approved vehicle to and from each activity. A special request must be made to the staff member or sponsor by the parent, in writing or in person, to allow an exception.

Corporation students not affiliated with the trip activity, incorporation students, and/or children of preschool age shall not be permitted to ride on the trip vehicle without prior approval from the principal.

No student is allowed to drive on any trip. An exception may be made by the principal on an individual basis provided the student has written parental permission.

The Superintendent shall prepare administrative guidelines to ensure that all transportation is in compliance with Board policy on use of Corporation vehicles and/or use of private vehicles.

Pursuant to State law, school buses may be used if the trip does not involve more than 200 miles of out-of-state travel.

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~~2340 – EDUCATIONAL STUDY TRIPS~~

~~Educational study trips may be permitted under rules established by the Superintendent of Schools. In giving approval for such trips, the Superintendent or designee shall give consideration to the educational value of the activity, safety of students, and cost in terms of time and money. School sponsored trips shall be under the direct supervision of employees of the Elkhart Community Schools who may be assisted by other adults.~~

An educational study trip is a school-sponsored trip in which students leave the school and its nearby surroundings and/or travel to another location for the purposes of studying and/or enhancing Elkhart Community Schools' presentation of the approved curriculum. Any overnight trip needs prior approval of the Board of School Trustees.

When students are to be taken on educational study trips, the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) shall be required to sign a permission slip. Generally, a permission slip shall be obtained for each trip. Signed permission slips shall be kept on file by the principal throughout the school year.

The Board of School Trustees may permit, by written authorization, the use of school buses for transportation of children and necessary adult chaperones to and from educational or recreational activities approved or sponsored by a political subdivision if:

- A. the transportation originates from a place within the geographical limits of the Elkhart Community Schools; and
- B. the trip, other than extended trips related to classes for school credit, does not involve more than 200 miles of travel out of state.

The Board does not endorse, support, or assume liability in any way for any staff member, volunteer, or parent of the Corporation who takes students on trips not approved by the Board or Superintendent. No staff member may solicit students of this Corporation for such trips within the facilities or on the school grounds of the Corporation without Board permission.

Permission to solicit neither grants nor implies approval of the trip. Such approval must be obtained in accordance with the Corporation's Administrative Guidelines for Extended Trips.

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