

**ISOA Executive Board Meeting
March 4, 2026
Minutes**

Present

Dansville Dave Lilly
East Lansing Abbie Tykocki
Holt Matea Caluk/Jessie Jones
Ingham ISD Jason Mellema
Ingham ISD John Wolenberg
Lansing Ciera Strode
Leslie Eric Isham
Stockbridge Carrie Graham

Webberville Joshua Rockey
Williamston Sarah Belanger

Absent

Okemos Leeni Shrestha
Haslett Amy Clark
Waverly Alicia Guevara
Mason Lacy Harding

2026 Legislative Update – Jennifer Smith from MASB

Election & Ballot Proposals

- **Millage Election Restrictions:** The House Elections Integrity Committee is considering HB 5032 (Rep. Kelly), which would disallow the use of state funds for millage elections. Districts would be required to use private donations or local (millage) funds to cover election costs.
 - Millages are critical for infrastructure funding, as there is no alternative state funding source available.
- **Consolidated Election Dates:** HBs 4583-4584 (Rep. Maddock), along with related House and Senate proposals, would move all school millage elections to the November ballot only. Concerns include voter fatigue (potential for lengthy ballots), reduced visibility for school related items, increased administrative burden for local clerks, and the risk of funding lapses if a November millage fails.
- **Primary Shifts:** Proposals would move the presidential primary to the last Tuesday in February and other primaries to the first Monday in May.

2026-27 State Budget & Governor’s Proposal

- **Timeline:** The budget is currently on track due to the 2026 election year, with a 50% chance of completion by July 4. Property tax reform remains a potential delay.
- **Foundation Allowance:** The Governor proposes a 2.5% increase, bringing the per-pupil foundation allowance to approximately \$10,300.

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- **Weighted Funding & Targeted Support:** The proposal shifts toward funding based on student needs, including 6% increases for preschool, CTE, Early-On services, and rural districts.
- **Literacy & Staffing:** The budget includes funding for one new literacy coach per ISD and increased tutoring resources.
- **Early Childhood:** Funding is proposed for "Preschool for All" startup costs and the Great Start Readiness Program.

Legislative & Legal Updates

Transcripts: There is momentum to remove essay and test scores from student transcripts.

- **MPSERS:** The \$100 million removed last year has not been reinstated in the current budget proposal.
- **Section 31aa (Mental Health/Safety):** Funding remains tied up in court proceedings.
- **The "Zombie Bill" (HB 6058):** If signed, this legislation could be retroactive to February 2025. The Supreme Court decision is still pending, and financial implications remain unknown, creating concern for districts as they finalize budgets.
- **Property Tax Debate:** A proposal to shift approximately \$3.5 billion into the School Aid Fund lacks a constitutional funding guarantee. Discussions around expanding sales tax (services vs. goods) are ongoing, with concern that schools may be expected to absorb additional responsibilities without sustainable funding.

Reach out to [Jennifer Smith](#) or [Brenda Pilgrim](#) with questions.

Superintendents' Round Table Update

Dori Leyko, East Lansing Public Schools Superintendent, provided discussion highlights from the February Superintendents' Round Table including:

- **Problem of Practice – students showing up in other districts without supervision.** A subcommittee will be formed to review policies and procedures. One example is requiring that attendees be a student of the home or visiting school or accompanied by an adult to be admitted to events. There is also interest in forming a middle school administration (MS) community group.
- **Safety and Emergency Operation Plans –** Jason Russell and Kirk Ojeba joined the meeting to review school safety and support updates related to the new required EOP revisions. Plans must be updated and board-approved prior to the start of the next school year. The goal is to establish consistent language statewide. Jason's team is developing proposals for our districts and has offered district training. "I Love You Guys" foundation provides free resources; SEC can help us to personalize the plans for your district.
- **Education Policy Guide –** Regularly updated and continue to be a helpful resource for the districts. Each superintendent received a copy.

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- SE Bond – discussion regarding how we can best support communication across the region ensuring that everyone gets the information.
- CARES Collaborative – Hannah Sweeney has been hired to help advocate for our region. She has significant experience in education policy legislation.
- State Special Ed audit – 8 of our districts are participating in the state audit process. This marks the start of a 5-year plan.

District Updates

- Dansville – Amanda Bush, 1st grade teacher, named Region 6 Teacher of the Year. Refinanced a bond saving the district \$2.6M. FFA program is doing well with 31 piglets born this spring.
- East Lansing – Basketball team doing well on the path to States. The new admin building is progressing. Dori did a great job handling the threat that the school received.
- Holt – Selected 6 candidates to interview next week, with final interviews the following week. Renewal ballot is planned for August. DECCA team is advancing to state this weekend and expect to send some to nationals.
- IISD – Ongoing Bond campaign efforts. We are looking forward to the impact of a successful bond. Our WTC students are entering competition season.
- Lansing – Interim superintendent – Jessica Benavides. Eastern HS students attended an out of state leadership conference. Sexton High School went to Basketball district final last week. Graduation rates are much higher than they have been in the past.
- Leslie – The district recently managed a security threat over the weekend.
- Stockbridge – FFA program returned from the Dominican Republic; students spent the week engaged in knowledge-sharing and have been invited to present nationally.
- Webberville – District Basketball game for girls tonight and boys doing well too.
- Williamston – 97% graduation rate that is the highest in the ISD. Rapping up winter sports and festival season. Groundbreaking is scheduled for May 4.
- Jason – Reminder that there will not be a meeting in April. The next meeting scheduled for May 6 will be held in person at the ISD. Congratulations to the 8 board members who recently completed certifications, including Abbie.