

Driven by curiosity

West Branch High School senior Bodee Morehead listens as University of Iowa DeGowin Blood Center phlebotomist Jeanette Rousch-Krafka asks him questions May 14 before he donates blood for the first time. "I thought I'd try it," he said. "I was curious. I wanted to donate." And, it got him out of class, he joked. The blood drive came just before seniors' last day. Originally from Arizona, Morehead plans to attend electrical lineman school in Orlando. WBHS National Honor Society organized the event, and advisor Abby Noelck said 17 signed up and 16 gave, "which is excellent!" "We also had more students registered in advance than we've had in the past, which we are proud of!" she added.

Gregory R. Norfleet/West Branch Times



MSWB

From Page 3

economic vitality, a hub of socializing and community, a convenient place to access necessities, a sense of belonging, and a place to get involved. A range of restaurants and retail establishments contribute heavily to that vitality, and many new businesses identify MSWB as a key reason for coming here.

2. Hosting numerous festivals and activities. Summer Kickoff, Hoover's Hometown Days, Fall Fest, and A Christmas Past - MSWB

is always organizing the event or is heavily involved.

When the City of West Branch needed to hand off HHD, MSWB stepped in, took it over, and then helped the new stand-alone HHD committee get established.

From Ladies' Nights to Bingo to Trick-or-Treat on Main Street, MSWB and its volunteers keep giving us wholesome reasons to turn off the TV, get outside, have fun, and meet our neighbors.

When other economic development groups appear before the West Branch City Council, council

members tend to ask, "What have you done for me lately?"

But they never ask that of MSWB.

Simon asked the council to push marketing dollars in hopes of attracting a second hotel to the city so that more people could stay overnight, visit the Hoover Complex and families, and take part in events. And let's not forget that Little Lights on the Lane also wants this for their many weddings and events.

In addition to many other benefits, the city would also draw more sales tax revenue

and Hotel-Motel Tax revenue.

Main Street West Branch has shown that it can produce results, attracting people to the city for good and positive things. And let's not forget how much it fights for and earns grants on behalf of the downtown district, which prompts businesses to pitch in their own funding. Just last year, private investment in downtown properties came in at more than \$978,000.

Most small towns can only dream of that kind of investment.

Of course, we want

MSWB to continue to earn its funding as it has for the past two decades. So, here's our idea: Increase the donation from the Hotel-Motel Fund annually for each of the three conditions:

- an additional 5 percent as long as the city shows population growth of at least 2 percent annually,
- an additional 5 percent as long as downtown foot traffic grows by 3 percent annually,
- an additional 5 percent until the city gets a second hotel and begins to see those new revenues come in.

That boosts the city's MSWB donation by up to 15 percent. Once that second hotel is up and running, then reevaluate what percent of Hotel-Motel tax revenues should go to the economic development group.

Above, we listed five key factors that drive growth in West Branch. Main Street West Branch cannot levy taxes and already does a lot to help our city grow and thrive. Our suggestion requires they keep working to earn their funding, but also rewards them for doing so.

Scores

From Page 1

West Branch Middle School Principal Brian Walthart noted that he and Hlas changed the layout of the report to better follow cohort groups, so board members can easily track how a particular class moves up through the grade levels.

School board members did not ask questions about the results.

West Branch Community School District set an "initial" goal of seeing 80 percent or more pupils proficient in literacy and math. In the fall, one grade hit that

goal in reading and one did so in math. In the winter, one grade reached the goal in math, but none did so in reading.

Reading

• Kindergarten: Up 15 percent.

In the fall, 57 percent of pupils scored proficient grades on the test. In the winter, that improved to 72 percent.

• First grade: Down 11 percent.

In the fall, 57 percent met or exceeded the proficiency goal. In the winter, that dropped to 46 percent.

• Second grade: Up 4 percent.

Fall score: 50 percent; winter score: 54 percent.

• Third grade: Down 2 percent.

Fall score: 75 percent; winter score: 73 percent.

• Fourth grade: Down 3 percent

Fall score: 70 percent; winter score: 67 percent.

• Fifth grade: Up 6 percent.

Fall score: 59 percent; winter score: 65 percent.

• Sixth grade: Down 9 percent.

Fall score: 80 percent - the only reading area where the grade met the school district's goal; winter score: 71 percent.

• Seventh grade: Down 13 percent.

Fall score: 70 percent;

winter score: 57 percent.

• Eighth grade: Down 3 percent.

Fall score: 55 percent; winter score: 52 percent.

In all, four of the K-8 grades that took the winter reading comprehension tests scored 20 points or more below the district goal, and five scored within 20 points of the goal.

Math

• Kindergarten: Down 4 percent.

In the fall, 77 percent of the class scored proficiently on the tests, meaning they met or exceeded proficiency goals. In the winter, that dropped to 73 percent.

• First grade: Up 5 percent.

In the fall, 78 percent of the pupils earned proficient scores; in the winter, that improved to 83 percent. This was the only grade which met the school district's 80-percent proficiency goal.

• Second grade: Up 13 percent.

Fall score: 63 percent; winter score: 79 percent.

• Third grade: Down 9 percent.

Fall score: 81 percent, the only grade to exceed the 80-percent proficiency goal in the fall. Winter score: 72 percent.

• Fourth grade: Down 4 percent.

Fall score: 79 percent;

winter score: 75 percent.

• Fifth grade: Down 6 percent.

Fall score: 71 percent; winter score: 65 percent.

• Sixth grade: Down 10 percent.

Fall score: 77 percent; winter score: 67 percent.

• Seventh grade: Down 11 percent.

Fall score: 68 percent; winter score: 57 percent.

• Eighth grade: Down 1 percent.

Fall score: 55 percent; winter score: 54 percent.

In all, two of the K-8 grades that took the winter math tests scored 20 or more points below the district goal and six scored within 20 points of the district goal.

LEGALS

West Branch school board

Regular Board Meeting
05/11/2026 05:30 PM
Hoover Elementary Library
148 N. Oliphant St.
West Branch, IA 52358
MEETING MINUTES
Attendance
Voting Members
Mrs. Amanda Whaley, Board President
Ms. Lindsay Shultz, Board Vice President
Mrs. Julie Sexton, Board Member
Non-Voting Members
Dr. Marty Jimmerson, Superintendent
Mrs. Sara Oswald, High School Principal
Mr. Brian Walthart, Middle School Principal
Mrs. Angie Klunkammer, School Business Official/Board Secretary
Gregory Norfleet, Tammy Oaks

1. Call to Order/Budget Amendment Hearing FY2026
Board President Whaley called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. There were no comments during the hearing.
2. Vision, Mission & Destination Statements
Board President Whaley read the statements.
3. Approval of Agenda
Motion to approve the agenda.
Motion made by: Mrs. Julie Sexton
Motion seconded by: Ms. Lindsay Shultz
Voting results: Unanimously Approved
4. Budget Amendment for FY2026
Motion to approve the Budget Amendment for FY2026.
Motion made by: Ms. Lindsay Shultz
Motion seconded by: Mrs. Julie Sexton
Voting results: Unanimously Approved

5. Adjourn
Motion to adjourn at 5:31 p.m.
Motion made by: Mrs. Julie Sexton
Motion seconded by: Ms. Lindsay Shultz
Voting results: Unanimously Approved
4. Call to Order/Public Forum (Regular Board Meeting)
Board President Whaley called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m.
5. Approval of Agenda
Motion to approve the agenda.
Motion made by: Mrs. Julie Sexton
Motion seconded by: Ms. Lindsay Shultz
Voting results: Unanimously Approved
6. Honors, Commendations and Success Stories
Several success stories were shared.
7. Bus Bids
Motion to approve the purchase of two regular route buses and one red Activity Bus with regular seats from School Bus Sales.
Motion made by: Mrs. Julie Sexton
Motion seconded by: Ms. Lindsay Shultz
Voting results: Unanimously Approved
8. Consent Items
Motion to approve the May bills, April financial reports and Board minutes.
Motion made by: Mrs. Julie Sexton
Motion seconded by: Ms. Lindsay Shultz
Voting results: Unanimously Approved
9. Administrative Reports
The Principals shared the changes to their respective handbooks. Dr. Jimmerson updated the Board on the HVAC project at the Elementary and the tax credits. May is also School Board Appreciation Month. Dr. Jimmerson thanked our school board for all they do to support our students, staff, and community. This is a thankless job, but he knows they are here to do what they can to make the West Branch Community School District the best it can be and to help us serve our students to the best of our abilities.

He stated that he truly appreciates the support they give him, our administrative team, and our staff as a whole.

10. Personnel Items
A. Contracts
Motion to approve the contracts as presented, Kelly Pizana, Elementary Principal and Laura Nus, 7th/8th Social Studies Teacher.
Motion made by: Mrs. Julie Sexton
Motion seconded by: Ms. Lindsay Shultz
Voting results: Unanimously Approved
- B. Letters of Assignment
Motion to approve the letters of assignment as presented, Kobe Simon, High School Head Boys Wrestling Coach, Ally Kroemer, High School Fresh/Soph Volleyball Coach, Ryan Shelman, High School Assistant Varsity Girls Basketball Coach and Oliver Palmer, High School Assistant Boys Track Coach.
Motion made by: Ms. Lindsay Shultz
Motion seconded by: Mrs. Julie Sexton
Voting results: Unanimously Approved
- C. Resignations
Motion to approve the resignations as presented, LeviHamilton, High School Assistant Boys Wrestling Coach, Jodie Regennitter, Elementary Associate and Bob Cahill, Bus route driver.
Motion made by: Ms. Lindsay Shultz
Motion seconded by: Mrs. Julie Sexton
Voting results: Unanimously Approved
11. Student Handbooks
The District utilizes student handbooks to communicate information which students need to know. Handbooks provide additional details regarding policies, protocols and useful information for new students. The West Branch Community School District also utilizes handbooks as way to provide clear, formal communications that assist in the building of a culture where issues are dealt with fairly and consistently. The handbooks have been

updated to reflect updated board policies and personnel changes.
Motion to approve the handbooks as presented.
Motion made by: Mrs. Julie Sexton
Motion seconded by: Ms. Lindsay Shultz
Voting results: Unanimously Approved
- 12. Approval of Audit
Mrs. Klunkammer shared and reviewed the FY2025 audit report.
Motion to approve the FY2025 audit.
Motion made by: Ms. Lindsay Shultz
Motion seconded by: Mrs. Julie Sexton
Voting results: Unanimously Approved
- 13. Student Breakfast/Lunch Prices
Motion to approve the increase in student meal prices for the 2026-27 school year.
Lunch: EK-8th grade lunch-\$ 2.95 to \$ 3.40
9-12th grade lunch--\$ 3.10 to \$ 3.55
Guest lunch--\$ 5.00 to \$ 6.00
Breakfast: EK-12 breakfast-\$ 1.85 to \$ 2.30
Additional Item-Current Price-New Price
Milk-\$.60-\$.70
Juice-\$.60-\$ 1.00
Second entree breakfast-\$ 1.10-\$ 1.55
Second entree lunch-\$ 2.10-\$ 2.55
Cereal-\$.80-\$ 1.25
A la carte-\$.25 to 2.25-\$.50 to 2.55
Motion made by: Mrs. Julie Sexton
Motion seconded by: Ms. Lindsay Shultz
Voting results: Unanimously Approved
- 14. Adult Breakfast/Lunch Prices
Motion to approve the increase in adult meal prices for the 2026-27 school year.
Lunch: \$5.00 to \$6.00
Breakfast: \$2.25 to \$2.70
Motion made by: Ms. Lindsay Shultz
Motion seconded by: Mrs. Julie Sexton
Voting results: Unanimously Approved
- 15. Milk Bids
The District is in year two in 2026-27 of

a three-year milk bid. No recommendation needed.
No recommendation needed.

16. Bread Bids
The District made an annual request for bread supplier bids. Bread bids were sent out to four companies in April to Alpha Baking, Bimbo Bakeries, Pan-O-Gold and Rotella.
We did not receive bids from any of the suppliers.
We will continue to purchase from Martin Brothers, as they are our main vendor. Being a part of the AEA Purchasing group does give us better pricing.
No recommendation needed.
17. WBELC Rates
Last Summer, the district made increases to the rates for many of the age groups. It was a larger than usual increase, but something that was needed as expenditures were more than revenues from month to month. The District said that at that time, that it would make smaller incremental increases to age groups. This year, the District is recommending making increases again to the rates. They are smaller than last year's rate increases, but due to inflationary increases, they are higher than what the District had wanted to do.
The District understands that any change to rates can be concerning, and it wants to assure parents that it has carefully considered the impact on families. The WBCSD remains committed to providing affordable childcare options while maintaining the highest standards of quality and safety. It believes that these adjustments are necessary to ensure the long-term sustainability and success of our daycare center.

- July 1- 2 year old rates will increase from \$250/week to \$263/week
- July 1- 3+ year old rates will increase from \$225/week to \$236/week
- July 1- Wraparound rates will increase from \$170/week to \$179/week
- July 1- Kids Club Summer rates will increase from \$190/week to \$200/week
- August 24- Kids Club School Year rates will increase from \$100/week to \$105/week

The District is also recommending that wraparound rates are only through the school year and once school is out, those families who were charged a wraparound rate will go back to pay the 3+ year old rate.

All of the rates that are proposed increases are rates that are still less or equal to surrounding daycare centers rates based on our research.

Motion to approve rate increases for the WBELC to go into effect on July 1, 2026.
Motion made by: Ms. Lindsay Shultz
Motion seconded by: Mrs. Julie Sexton
Voting results: Unanimously Approved
- 18. Board Policy Updates
Motion to approve the second reading of Board policies: 104, 104R1, 104E1, 104E2, 104E3, 104E4, 104E5, 104E6, 701.01R1, 701.01E1 and 701.01E2.
Motion made by: Mrs. Julie Sexton
Motion seconded by: Ms. Lindsay Shultz
Voting results: Unanimously Approved
- 19. Adjournment
Motion to adjourn at 6:28 p.m.
Motion made by: Mrs. Julie Sexton
Motion seconded by: Ms. Lindsay Shultz
Voting results: Unanimously Approved

Chairperson
Secretary
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