

**NORTH BRANCH INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 138
NORTH BRANCH AREA EDUCATION CENTER, BOARD ROOM C120,
38705 GRAND AVENUE, NORTH BRANCH, MN 55056
REGULAR SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
THURSDAY, May 14, 2026
5:30 PM**

The School Board of Independent School District 138 met in regular session on Thursday, May 14, 2026 at 5:30 p.m. in the Boardroom at the North Branch Area Education Center.

Chair MacMillan called the meeting to order.

Roll Call: Sarah Grovender, Shelly Johnson, Jesse LaValla, Tim MacMillan, and Superintendent Paul

Absent: Heather Naegele and Adam Trampe

Others in attendance: Rachel Kytönen, Pakou Lee, Denise Martin, Todd Tetzlaff, Pat Tepoorten and David Treichel

Approval of Agenda:

Moved by Grovender, seconded by LaValla, and carried unanimously to approve the agenda.

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Paul highlighted district efforts supporting career pathways, student belonging, community engagement, and workforce innovation aligned to the district's vision and mission.

Career readiness updates included North Branch JROTC, Future Forward Day, and agricultural education grant opportunities providing students with hands-on learning, leadership development, and workforce-connected experiences.

Student belonging efforts included Viking Music, theatre programming, Native American cultural engagement, and Viking Hispanic Night to strengthen student voice, culture, and community connections.

Community engagement highlights included Chalk the Walk for Hope, Walk and Roll to School, workforce partnerships, Scholarship Night for the Class of 2026, and continued support from the North Branch Area Education Foundation, Edelstein Family Foundation, and Maximizing Impact Endowment Fund.

Superintendent Paul also shared that the Minnesota Teachers Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee received a \$3 million state grant to expand teacher apprenticeship

programming statewide, further positioning North Branch as a leader in educator workforce development.

The update concluded with district highlights including a 93% graduation rate, structured literacy implementation, four bond rating improvements, elimination of cash-flow borrowing, over \$800,000 in grant funding secured since 2021, and \$1.2 million in scholarships supporting students and staff.

Removal of Consent Items for Discussion:

None

Consent Items:

Moved by Grovender, seconded by LaValla and carried unanimously to approve the consent agenda.

- A. Minutes of April 9, 2026 Policy Committee Meeting
- B. Minutes of April 9, 2026 Regular School Board Meeting
- C. Minutes of April 14, 2026 OPEB Committee Meeting
- D. Minutes of April 23, 2026 Work Session
- E. Authorization of Payments, Transfers, and Investment Activity
 - Accounts Payable, Bank 07 – \$ 1,608,343.27
 - Auxiliary, Bank 12 - \$ 289,824.52
 - Payroll, Bank 13 - \$ 2,049,388.91
 - Scholarship, Bank 18 - \$ 0.00
 - High School Student Activities, Bank 31 - \$ 20,975.31
 - Middle School Student Activities, Bank 32 - \$ 13.26
- F. Personnel
 - 1. Robert Pufall, resignation effective July 15, 2026, as Special Education Assistant at North Branch Area Education Center
 - 2. Stacy Redding, resignation effective June 30, 2026, as Counselor at North Branch Area High School
 - 3. Steven Schoener, resignation effective June 5, 2026, as Special Education Assistant at North Branch Area High School
 - 4. Rebecca Springman, resignation effective at the end of 2025-26 school year, as Science Teacher at North Branch Area High School

5. Roberta Backus, leave request effective April 13, 2026 through May 1, 2026, as School Counselor at North Branch Area Middle School and Norse Area Learning Center
6. Erika Duffy, leave request effective August 19, 2026 through October 11, 2026, as Grade 4 Teacher at Sunrise River School
7. Kristina Murphy, leave request effective May 1, 2026 through June 5, 2026, as Lunchroom/Playground Assistant at Sunrise River School
8. Cynthia Scheele, leave extension request through May 11, 2026, as Youth Connections Program Manager at North Branch Area Education Center
9. Jenna Battaglia, position change effective July 1, 2026, from Accountant to Controller at North Branch Area Public Schools
10. John Roggemann, beginning with the 2026-27 school year, position change from Special Education Assistant to Special Education Teacher at North Branch Area High School
11. Madison Boeke, BS, Step 4, beginning with the 2026-27 school year, as Elementary Teacher at North Branch Area Education Center
12. Matthew DiMartino, MA, Step 11, beginning with the 2026-27 school year, as Math Teacher at North Branch Area High School
13. Alyssa Hempel, BS, Step 1, beginning with the 2026-27 school year, as Elementary Teacher at Sunrise River School
14. Cassandra Johnson, BS, Step 1, Long Term Substitute Teacher for Erika Duffy, effective April 13, 2026 through June 8, 2026, as Grade 4 Teacher at Sunrise River School
15. Benjamin Wacker, BS, Step 1, one-year contract for the 2026-27 school year for a Tier 1 License, as Elementary Teacher at North Branch Area Middle School
16. Jillian Anderson, employment effective May 11, 2026, as Human Resources Specialist at North Branch Area Public Schools
17. Bao Yang, temporary employment effective March 26, 2026 through the end of the 2025-26 school year, as Special Education Assistant at North Branch Area Education Center
18. 2025-26 Extracurricular Spring Coach Positions

- a. Jules Horsfall, Class 6, Step 1, as (0.5 FTE) Middle School Softball Coach
- b. Casey Schwalbe, Class 4, Step 3, as Assistant Coach for Baseball
- c. Bryant Meyer, Class 5, Step 5, as Assistant Coach for Boys Tennis
- d. Andrew Orf - Volunteer Baseball Coach
- e. Mikayla Carlson - Volunteer Softball Coach
- f. Peyton Verdon - Volunteer Softball Coach
- g. Carl Neumann - Volunteer Track & Field Coach

19. 2025-26 Activity Advisor Position

- a. Erik Lund, Class 9, Step 1, as Advisor for Musical Set Construction
- b. Tristen Ray, Class 9, Step 2, as Advisor for Musical Tech Booth (Lights & Sound)

G. Tenure of the Following Teachers

- a. Maxwell Anderson - English Teacher - North Branch Area High School
- b. Jennifer Berg - Elementary Teacher - Sunrise River School
- c. Olivia Berg - Elementary Teacher - Sunrise River School
- d. Jonathan Bodell - Business Teacher - North Branch Area High School
- e. Hunter Brandel - Social Studies Teacher - North Branch Area High School
- f. Jessica Carlson - Community Education Early Childhood Teacher - North Branch Area Education Center
- g. Annette Fairbanks - Early Childhood Coordinator - North Branch Area Education Center
- h. Alissa Glines - Elementary Teacher - Sunrise River School
- i. Kaitlyn Lindquist - Elementary Teacher - Sunrise River School
- j. Megan Nysse - Elementary Teacher - North Branch Area Education Center

- k. Claire Patterson - Math Teacher - North Branch Area High School
- l. David Pirrie - English Teacher - Distance Learning Academy
- m. Gracia Quinehan - Science Teacher - North Branch Area Middle School
- n. Ashton Salow - Math Teacher - North Branch Area Middle School
- o. Abigale Webster - Community Education Early Childhood Teacher - North Branch Area Education Center
- p. Eric Wilson - Elementary Teacher - Sunrise River School

H. Policy

- a. Policy 427 - Workload Limits for Certain Special Education Teachers
- b. Policy 521 - Student Disability Nondiscrimination
- c. Policy 613 - Graduation Requirements

I. Acceptance of Donations

APRIL 2026

DATE	DONATION FROM	DONATION TO	AMOUNT	USE
4/1/2026	Pine Tech & Community College, 900 4th Street SE, Pine City, MN 55063	NBHS	\$100.00	Career Day Donation
4/2/2026	Charley Klopp, PO Box 301, North Branch, MN 55056	NBHS Scholarship A/C	\$1,000.00	Scholarship Donation
4/2/2026	Maureen Thomsen, 7214 385th St, North Branch, MN 55056	NBHS Scholarship A/C	\$1,000.00	Scholarship Donation
4/9/2026	A1 Tire Service, 5550 Athens Trl, North Branch, MN 55056	NBHS Athletics	\$100.00	FTC Robotics Program Donation
4/9/2026	Anonymous	NBHS Athletics	\$100.00	FTC Robotics Program Donation
4/9/2026	CAF America/Associated Bank (J. Thelander)	NBHS Athletics	\$250.00	Boys Tennis Program
4/9/2026	Claudia & Al Hulbert, 19944 Heron Loop, Bend, OR 97702-2223	NBHS Scholarship A/C	\$1,000.00	Scholarship Donation
4/9/2026	Neighborhood National Bank, 5481 St. Croix Trl, North Branch, MN 55056	NBHS Athletics	\$100.00	FTC Robotics Program Donation
4/10/2026	Anderson & Koch Ford, PO Box 158, North Branch, MN 55056	Sunrise River Elem.	\$500.00	Fun Run Donation
4/10/2026	Anderson Landscaping, 39155 Mica Ave, North Branch, MN 55056	Sunrise River Elem.	\$1,000.00	Fun Run Donation
4/10/2026	First Resource Bank, PO Box 308, Wyoming, MN 55092	Sunrise River Elem.	\$250.00	Fun Run Donation
4/10/2026	Greenside Electric, 7768 Lent Trl, Stacy, MN 55079	Sunrise River Elem.	\$500.00	Fun Run Donation
4/10/2026	Kwik Trip, PO Box 2107, La Crosse, WI 54603	Sunrise River Elem.	\$500.00	Fun Run Donation
4/10/2026	Neighborhood National Bank, 5481 St. Croix Trl, North Branch, MN 55056	Sunrise River Elem.	\$250.00	Fun Run Donation
4/10/2026	North Branch BBQ (Dickeys), 5466 St. Croix Trl, North Branch, MN 55056	Sunrise River Elem.	\$500.00	Fun Run Donation
4/10/2026	North Branch Lions Club, PO Box 172, North Branch, MN 55056	Sunrise River Elem.	\$750.00	Fun Run Donation
4/10/2026	North Grid Electric, 1347 440th St, Harris, MN 55032	Sunrise River Elem.	\$250.00	Fun Run Donation
4/10/2026	Polaris Industries, 2100 Hwy 55, Medina, MN 55340	Sunrise River Elem.	\$750.00	Fun Run Donation
4/16/2026	ECE, PO Box 39, Braham, MN 55006-0039	NBHS Scholarship A/C	\$4,500.00	Scholarship Donation
4/16/2026	Barbara & Michel Nelson, PO Box 102, North Branch, MN 55056	NBHS Scholarship A/C	\$2,000.00	Scholarship Donation
4/16/2026	The NRA Foundation, 11250 Waples Mill Rd, Fairfax, VA 22030-9400	NBHS Athletics	\$2,048.00	Clay Target Program Donation
4/17/2026	Gustafson Excavating, PO Box 788, North Branch, MN 55056	NBHS	\$100.00	Career Day Donation
4/23/2026	Charley Klopp, PO Box 301, North Branch, MN 55056	NBHS Athletics	\$100.00	DECA Program Donation
4/23/2026	Dianne Patras Smith, 30840 Cedar Crest Trl NE, North Branch, MN 55056	NBHS Athletics	\$100.00	FTC Robotics Program Donation
4/23/2026	Perrault Chiropractic & Acupuncture, PO Box 782, North Branch, MN 55056	NBHS Athletics	\$100.00	DECA Program Donation
4/23/2026	Peterson's North Branch Mill, PO Box 218, North Branch, MN 55056	NBHS Athletics	\$100.00	DECA Program Donation
4/23/2026	Kim Pierce Theis, 4715 384th St, North Branch, MN 55056	NBHS Athletics	\$250.00	DECA Program Donation
4/23/2026	Plastic Products, 13116 Lake Blvd, Lindstrom, MN 55045	NBHS Athletics	\$500.00	FRC Robotics Program Donation
4/23/2026	Revive Chiropractic, PO Box 94, North Branch, MN 55056	NBHS Athletics	\$50.00	Boys Basketball Program-Sports Physical Donation
4/23/2026	Revive Chiropractic, PO Box 94, North Branch, MN 55056	NBHS Athletics	\$50.00	Softball Program-Sports Physical Donation
4/23/2026	Team Foundation, 105 Park Ave NW, Bagley, MN 56621	NBHS Athletics	\$3,000.00	FTC Robotics Program Donation
4/23/2026	The Drive In Restaurant, PO Box 283, Taylor Falls, MN 55084	NBHS Athletics	\$500.00	DECA Program Donation
4/24/2026	Allina Health System, PO Box 1583, Minneapolis, MN 55440-1583	Community Ed	\$2,500.00	Adult Rec Donation
4/29/2026	Revive Chiropractic, PO Box 94, North Branch, MN 55056	NBHS Athletics	\$50.00	Track Program-Sports Physical Donation
4/29/2026	James Riley, RILEYJAMESP@JOHNDEERE.COM	NBHS Athletics	\$400.00	FRC Robotics Program Donation
4/29/2026	VFW Post 6424, PO Box 373, North Branch, MN 55056	NBHS Athletics	\$100.00	FTC Robotics Program Donation
4/30/2026	Boka Haven, 5251 386th St, North Branch, MN 55056	NBHS	\$100.00	Career Day Donation
			\$25,448.00	

Open Mic

None

Old Business

A. Approval of Second Reading of the Following Policy

Moved by LaValla, seconded by Johnson and carried unanimously to approve a Second Reading of the Following Policy.

1. Policy 514 - Bullying Prohibition

New Business

A. Approval of the Lease and Premise Use Agreement Between SCRED and North Branch Area Public Schools

Moved by Johnson, seconded by LaValla and carried unanimously to approve the Lease and Premise Use Agreement Between SCRED and North Branch Area Public Schools.

B. Approval of Setting June 11, 2026 at 5:30 p.m. for Public Hearing on Student Fees

Moved by Grovender, seconded by Johnson and carried unanimously to approve Setting June 11, 2026 at 5:30 p.m. for Public Hearing on Student Fees.

C. Approval of the Superintendent Contract 2026 - 2029

Moved by Grovender, seconded by LaValla and carried unanimously to approve the Superintendent Contract 2026 - 2029.

D. Approval of a First Reading of the Following Policy

Moved by LaValla, seconded by Johnson and carried unanimously to approve the Superintendent Contract 2026 - 2029.

1. Policy 522 - Title IX Sex Nondiscrimination Policy, Grievance Procedure and Process

Information

Fundraising Reports from November 1, 2025, through April 30, 2026

Board Requests

None

Committee Reports

Member MacMillan gave an update on the American Indian Parent Advisory Committee (AIPAC)

Member Grovender gave an update on SCRED

Member LaValla gave an update on the Community Education Advisory Council

Member Johnson gave an update on East Central Regional Development Commission

Dates to Remember

- A. May 28, 2026 at 5:30 PM - School Board Work Session, North Branch Area Education Center - Board Room, Room C120
- B. June 7, 2026 at 12:30 PM, Graduation Ceremony Meet & Greet, North Branch Area High School - Door #1
- C. June 7, 2026 at 2:00 PM, Graduation Ceremony, North Branch Area High School - West Gym
- D. June 11, 2026 at 4:30 PM, Policy Committee Meeting, North Branch Area Education Center - DO Conference Room B122
- E. June 11, 2026 at 5:30 PM, Regular School Board Meeting, North Branch Area Education Center - Board Room, Room C120

Adjournment

Moved by Grovender, seconded by LaValla and carried unanimously to adjourn the regular meeting at 6:12 PM.

Heather Naegele, Clerk