

**ISOA Executive Board Meeting
December 3, 2025
Minutes**

Present

Dansville	Jennifer Wonnell
East Lansing	Abbie Tykocki
Haslett	Amy Clark
Holt	Matea Caluk
Ingham ISD	John Wolenberg
Leslie	Eric Isham
Mason	Lacy Harding
Okemos	Leeni Shrestha
Stockbridge	Carrie Graham

Webberville	Joshua Rockey
Williamston	Sarah Belanger

Absent

Dansville	Mike Kapp
Ingham ISD	Jason Mellema
Lansing	Deyanira Nevarea Martinez
Waverly	Alicia Guevara

The Anxious Generation – What Every Parent and Educator Needs to Know

Shelley Ruh, Director of Ingham ISD Student Instructional Services (General Education), outlined how SIS consultants support local districts through leadership coaching, staff professional development, MTSS work, and other partnerships focused on improving student outcomes.

She also noted that, as districts reexamine cell phone policies in response to student mental health and engagement concerns, the ISD is leading a book study on *The Anxious Generation* by Jonathan Haidt. The book reviews current data on youth mental health and explores actionable steps for schools, parents, and communities. Discussion points:

- How can we work together to support a healthier childhood in the digital age?
- Early and frequent phone use is reshaping children's brains, hindering their ability to self-regulate, manage conflict, and develop independence.
- From 2010–2015, teens' social lives shifted online, coinciding with a sharp rise in adolescent mental illness.
- Mental health impacts are evident for both girls and boys, though in different ways.
- Similar patterns appear across the Western world, with no alternative explanation fitting the data as well.
- The decline of free, play-based childhood is limiting opportunities for building essential developmental skills.
- States vary widely in their school cell phone policies; Michigan currently has no statewide policy.
- Because cell phone bans are relatively new, more data will emerge as research continues.

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Instructor Opportunities:

- ISD led, countywide book study with district staff participation (62 participants)
- Next session: January 13, 2026, 4:00-5:00pm, covering Part Three - *The Great Rewiring*

Next Steps:

- Propose expanding the learning opportunity to parents and community members across districts.
- Districts may host a community event, either jointly or individually.
- [Shelley](#) offered to attend board meetings to discuss the book and help plan district presentations.

Superintendents' Round Table Update

Jennifer Wonnell, Dansville Schools Superintendent, shared key takeaways from the November Superintendents' Round Table Retreat:

- Ongoing discussions on district cell phone policies, with superintendents exchanging observations about student and teacher impacts.
- Guest Speaker: Ingham County Prosecutor John Dewane – Discussed truancy, chronic absenteeism, and developing consistent protocols between districts and the prosecutor's office.
- Guest Speaker: Bill DeFrance, MASB – Reviewed available MASB services, including legal support, Thrun policy services, leadership development, executive searches, board training, and superintendent evaluations.
- School Safety – A superintendent subcommittee is working to align district Emergency Operations Plans (EOPs). State law will require common terminology in 2026.
- May 2026 Bond Initiative – A proposed special education bond would fund capital improvements at facilities such as the Beekman Center and Heartwood School, serving students from all 12 districts in the Ingham ISD service area.
- 31aa Mental Health and Safety Grant – Reviewed considerations for opting in or out while related state and federal lawsuits proceed.

District Updates

Leslie Upcoming board discussion on the 31aa Resolution.
Reviewing policy changes on backpacks, cell phones, and outside Wi-Fi.

Haslett Ongoing debate on the 31aa Resolution.
Fall activities ending; winter athletics beginning.

East Lansing Board approved the 31aa grant funding after extensive discussion.
Student health center is now open.

Okemos Superintendent Hood will retire in March 2026; Michigan Leadership Institute hired to lead the search.
Board passed the 31aa Resolution.
The district will participate in the PowerSchool lawsuit.

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Mason	Bond passed in November, planning underway. Board voted to opt in to 31aa with an option to opt out later.
Webberville	Winter activities underway. Intends to opt in to 31aa pending litigation, with an opt-out option. Cell phone ban significantly improved behavior: discussing further bans on cell phones, blankets, and jackets (used to cover vape detectors).
Stockbridge	Bond passed in November. Board discussing 31aa and voted to opt in with an opt-out option. Adopted policies banning backpacks, cell phones, and outside Wi-Fi during school hours; behavior has improved.
Holt	New elementary school opened in August. Conducting a community assessment with an outside consultant. Updated mission statement; strategic plan update scheduled for spring. Reviewed policies, including new nasal spray alternative to EpiPens. Electric school bus grant opportunity available.
Ingham ISD	Jen Van Nortwick hired as Executive Assistant to the Superintendent/Board; Barbara retiring Dec. 31. Wilson Talent Center Open House: Dec. 10, 4–7 p.m. Board members are encouraged to tour the Beekman Center ahead of the May 2026 SE bond vote.
Williamston	Middle School and Elementary robotics teams competed; MS placed 4th. Fall activities ending; football team had an undefeated regular season. Bond projects progressing; groundbreaking for new elementary school is in March. Clean audit presented to the board.

NOTE: **The is no ISOA meeting in January** - the next ISOA meeting will be February 4. The ISOA election for President and Vice President will be held during the meeting.