



The law didn't really want to kill a Hines

By Kimra Hines, Reporter

In 1996 my brother, Ricardo "Rick" Hines, was shot 7 times and killed by law enforcement. I was 13 years old.

The night of the shooting, my brother was drunk and threatening his wife. She had seen him drunk plenty of times without calling the police. Something was different that night. Rick was a good guy. He was well liked, worked hard, and stayed out of legal trouble after he grew up. It's hard to imagine the darkness that must've been in his heart the night he died.

He fired on law enforcement as soon as they responded to the call. There was a chase in his vehicle, then he fled on foot cross country, he stole a farm truck, another chase ensued, and he eventually wounded a Highway Patrolman before being killed.

The front-page headlines of the June 12 issue of the Bloomfield Democrat read, "Night of gunfire..." and "The law has wanted to kill a Hines for 20 years." The latter was a direct quote from my father, Don Hines.

Scott Spurgeon won an award for his coverage of the incident. Spurgeon said, "To this day, it's the worst thing I've ever reported on." Twenty-seven years later, I now share an office with Scott.

The Hines fellas had many run-ins with the law over the years. I was taught they were out to get us. As I grew up, I began to objectively consider family legend versus reality.

We all make our own choices in life. I can choose to perpetuate a Hatfield/McCoy style feud with law enforcement or I can choose to heal a dark spot on the collective Hines family heart.

Retired Deputy Sheriff, Doug Chickering, graciously agreed to dredge up the past with me. Doug was the first responding officer to the 911 call that night.

He invited me to his home where we talked for two hours. He recounted the entire story to me, the best he could remember it. He said that he had never met Rick before but had heard stories about the family. He

ensued, and the chaos of law enforcement from five counties, a SWAT team, dogs, and a spotter plane. He said it was before cell phones and 911 addresses so he had to give directions over the radio to officers unfamiliar with the area.

I knew most of the details but he did shed light on a couple of things. At the end, a car with four officers rammed the truck my brother was fleeing in. The truck spun around to face the patrol car. As

the windshield, hitting one of the men. Doug said, "As soon as that officer fell over

waiting to start firing on them again as they approached. One officer opened the

help." His face turned very serious as he said, "I didn't want anyone to die but I didn't know how to stop it."

He went on to say that he did feel bad that a person died and he didn't care who it was.

He talked about being scared for his friends out



there more than for himself. Doug confided that he had nightmares for several years that he himself was being hunted down by someone.

On a lighter note, he also said, "I wasn't getting paid enough for all that!"

Doug never fired his weapon that night but he was there from the beginning to the end. I wanted to talk with him because I can remember his name being talked about, not so fondly, afterwards.

Our conversation was bigger than he and I. It was representative of

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Committee studies impact of 4-day week on student success

By Karen Spurgeon, Publisher

The Davis County Schools' 4-Day Week Study Committee held a Zoom session with staff members of Moulton-Udell and WACO Schools on Jan. 25. The purpose of the meeting was to learn how a four-day week schedule has impacted student achievement and well-being in those districts.

The Davis County School Board will make a decision in March on whether to implement a four-day week in DC Schools and is researching the pros and cons as well as seeking community input on the issue.

Following are the questions asked by Supt. Dan Maeder and the replies given by WACO and Moulton-Udell staff members:

How has the four-day schedule impacted students well-being and student achievement?

WACO instructors said student test scores have remained about the same. "The research turned out to be true," one teacher said, "and the schedule change didn't really affect attendance. It boils down to a changed climate and culture in our buildings."

The WACO athletic director said kids enjoy having Friday off and that creates a positive attitude the rest of the week. "After a three-day weekend, the kids come back with a more positive attitude," he said.

Another teacher added, "That is even more evident at holiday time. I can give a test right before a holiday weekend and they are still focused."

Moulton-Udell's kindergarten teacher said preschool students are on a four-day schedule and there is a natural transition to a four-day week in kindergarten. "They don't know any different," she said. "For kindergarten and first grade students it's beneficial. We go hard; we don't waste any time. I don't think the test scores have changed significantly either way."

Maeder noted the elementary school in Moulton received commendable scores on the school performance profile after the first full year of a four-day week.

The first-grade teacher from M-U, who is new to the district, said she sees a better attitude among the elementary students on a four-day schedule versus the traditional five-day schedule.

M-U Principal Shane Brown said office referrals have gone down since implementing the four-day schedule. "We're getting more out of them," he said. "They come to school and they know what their job is."

"The high school has no study halls and less free time. They are focusing more on academics and students' mental health is better. They are more rested and have

a three-day weekend to look forward to. We're pulling more out of them as they know they have to get it done in four days."

WACO teachers said the district has good kids to begin with, and their attitude and mental health is good.

"We don't waste time and we're efficient," one teacher said. "Part of that success comes from having a good relationship with the students. They feel good in our building."

"Even though our schedule has no wasted time, there is enough time built in to form relationships. The kids have a good attitude when here," the teacher commented. "We had a five-day week last week due to a missed day. The atmosphere of a four-day week is much better."

Commenting on mental health challenges, WACO teachers said they had time and flexibility in the schedule to work with the kids who need the attention.

"We don't have time during the day for misbehavior," another teacher commented. "Before, misbehavior continued from study hall into other classes. Getting rid of study hall really helps."

Maeder: We have socio-economic concerns and at-risk kids. We're worried about food insecurity on the day they're not in school.

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School board comments on private school vouchers

By Karen Spurgeon, Publisher

Davis County School Board members reacted with many questions following the Iowa Legislature's passage of the Students First Act last week.

The new law allows Educational Savings Accounts (ESAs) funded to the tune of \$7,598 each for students choosing to attend private schools.

"This is a solution in search of a problem," said board member Doug Dixon. "There are more questions than answers."

"Are private schools going to have to jump through the same hoops — hours, curriculum restrictions, etc. — as public schools? Public schools are subject to public scrutiny. The private schools are not. This is like the wild west of school scrutiny."

Dixon asked how this law would help Davis County students since there are no private schools in the county. "I was disappointed in Senator (Cherilynn) Westrich and Representative (Austin) Harris (who voted in favor of the bill). This law can't help us. We don't have the resources to get kids to private schools."

Dixon is especially troubled by past years' delays in determining SSA (Supplemental State Aid) payments to schools, making it difficult for districts to negotiate teacher salaries in a timely fashion. "We've been scraping and clawing to support public schools; now they're

throwing this in the kitty early in the legislative session. When does this start eating into the public school budget? I don't know where they discovered this money."

Dixon went on to say he didn't think the bill would affect Davis County school enrollment, but at some point, it would affect funding.

"If it gets to the point where the state is not funding us with as much as we need, this will come back on the taxpayer. That's the bottom line," he said. "Whether these (ESA vouchers) are helping some local private school or some school in Des Moines, the vouchers are coming out of taxpayer money."

Joni Helton, vice president of the Davis County School Board, doesn't anticipate Davis County losing students under the new school choice legislation, but thinks the plan will eventually hurt the funding of public schools — especially with the new flat tax.

"We'll probably see a decrease in public school funding eventually. This bill, when it is fully implemented, will take \$341-\$350 million annually," she said. "I'm guessing this will be funneled from the public to private education pot."

Helton commented that decreases in public school enrollment will mean less state aid going to public schools.

The added cost for third-party oversight of the ESA program also concerns her. "Where will this money come

from?" she asks.

Helton is concerned about addressing the teacher shortage with only a 2-2.5% increase in SSA funding. "I don't think with inflation, that will be enough," she said. "We're hoping for at least 3%."

"We're trying to attract and retain quality teachers and that's hard to do. Who knows what incentives they (private schools) will offer? This makes me nervous."

Helton said legislators pushed the bill through so quickly she fears the details were not scrutinized as they should have been.

"I'm wondering if many legislators were listening," she commented. "Forty-one of Iowa's counties are without private schools, and what about home-schools? Will they fund that next?"

"We've had families that chose to educate online. Then the students were brought back into public school and they were behind. Kids are behind after the pandemic, and we have to work harder to bring them in, not to mention the behavioral and mental health problems."

With all of these responsibilities falling on teachers, Helton says now is not the time to take money away from the public schools and funnel it elsewhere.

Waiting for one or two years to make adjustments or correct the damage being done now

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\$1.25



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4-DAY WEEK: Next Zoom panel Feb. 1

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What do you suggest?
M-U staff said they had the same concerns and for the past two years they offered backpack meals and sent food home on Thursdays for a three-day weekend. That number has decreased, they said, and very few now accept the meals.

WACO teachers said they used to have a backpack program, but now families are going to the Food Bank to get their food. Some churches also give food out on the weekends.

Maeder: Is the behavior of special education students and at-risk kids more difficult to "reel back in" after a long weekend?

Moulton-Udell teachers said the four-day week is an incentive for the students, even though the first year does require "a bit of adjustment."

WACO staff said the four-day week becomes part of their routine and they don't notice an uptick in behavior referrals on Mondays.

Maeder: What about stamina with lengthened school days?

WACO teachers said they noticed some problems with younger students becoming tired at the beginning of the year, but overall, "they adapt to it."

Junior high students have a "brain break" worked into their schedule, allowing them to go into the afternoon hours with renewed energy.

"During the winter, kids come in for early morning basketball practice and they still have energy at the end of the day," the athletic director said. "They get used to it."

The M-U kindergarten teacher said stamina is a problem for her students at the beginning of the year with 45 minutes added to the day. "They were really dragging for the first couple weeks of school; then they don't think anything of it," she said.

Both schools commented on the need for more snacks for all students with additional time added to the school day.

Shane Brown, M-U principal, said the kids were getting hungry and the school added a snack time. Parents supply the snacks. "We also extended the salad bar to lower

grade levels to offer more food," he said.

WACO teachers found high school students were distracted because they were hungry. "We allow snacks throughout the day and have a snack cart for those kids who want snacks," they said. "Kids also eat before practice."

Maeder: What about the effects on athletic practices?

The WACO athletic director said practice for junior high students on their day off is optional, but most kids attend. "They carpool and find ways to get there," he said. "This has not been an issue. As AD, I had a lot of concerns on how to make this work, but it's been good."

Brown said M-U had an issue with games starting at 4 p.m. on their lengthened days, but with more traffic control and other small adjustments, the schedule has worked out.

"Participation in sports has not been affected. We do have flexibility in scheduling practices for Fridays," he said.

The WACO athletic director said during track season, afternoon class schedules are rotated so track participants are not always missing the same classes on meet days.

Following the panel discussion, Davis County study committee members had an opportunity to ask questions of the panelists and pursued the topic of brain breaks.

They learned WACO teachers frequently took their middle school students outside for a 10-12-minute brain break in nice weather or offered board games. High School students get an occasional break and academic help during homeroom periods.

Maeder asked if the schools have seen a drop in sports participation under the four-day schedule.

WACO instructors said that was not a problem. "Kids can now work on Friday rather than after school," the athletic director said. "Our numbers probably increased when we went to the four-day schedule. Kids can take advantage of jobs and internships, and we can be flexible with practice times and make it work with the kids' schedules."

DC School Board member Joni Helton asked about the length of bus routes.

Brown said the M-U's longest bus routes are right at an hour, but the 7 a.m.-5 p.m. schedule fits parents' work hours and reduces the need for daycare on school days. "Now parents just have to pay for daycare on Fridays," he said.

As Maeder thought about adding minutes to the end of the day so kids wouldn't have to get on the bus so early, Brown replied, "Research says the prime learning time for elementary students is morning."

A WACO teacher said, "Parents will tell you what they prefer."

"I'm not sure I'd go later than 3:45 or 4 p.m.," the athletic director said. "The later you go, the more class time is missed for athletic events. You have to see what works best for you."

Schedule of informational meetings

Davis County Schools are offering numerous opportunities for the public to learn more about the four-day week and its pros and cons. The public is invited to go online and see videos of past panel discussions as well as participate in Zoom town hall meetings prior to the board's decision on the schedule.

The following videos and Zoom sessions, along with reading material on the four-day week, can be found on www.dcmustangs.com:

- Panel Discussion #1 (Jan. 18, video on website) "Nuts and Bolts of a 4-day School Week."
- Panel Discussion #2 (Jan. 25, video on website) "Impact on Student Achievement and Well-being."
- Panel Discussion #3 (Feb. 1, Zoom session for committee and the public) "Impact on Families and Businesses."
- Town Hall meeting, Monday, Feb. 13, 6-7 p.m.
- Town Hall meeting, Saturday, Feb. 23, 10-11 a.m.
- Town Hall meeting, Thursday, March 2, 6-7 p.m.
- Board of Education decision, Monday, March 20.

Democrat closed Thursday for INA Convention

The Bloomfield Democrat will be closed Thursday, Feb. 2, as staff members attend the annual Iowa Newspaper Association Convention in Des Moines.

Karen Spurgeon, Scott Spurgeon, Melissa Millmier, Michael Gates, Kimra Hines and Sydney Callen will be attending

sessions on newswriting, public records reporting, advertising, and design. Roundtable discussions will also be held on "How to Generate Fresh Story Ideas," "Creative Recruiting — Finding Talent," "Revenue Ideas," "Become a Postal Boss in 15 Minutes or Your Money Back," and Managing

Performance Issues." The day will kick off with an inspirational speech by Dr. Richard Deming on "Pursuing Life with Purpose and Passion" and end with the annual INA awards ceremony.

City schedules public hearing on tax levy

The Bloomfield City Council will hold a public hearing on the proposed FY2024 property tax levy at its regular meeting at 7 p.m. Feb. 16 at the Bloomfield Public Library.

The current certified property tax rate for the 2022-2023 fiscal year is \$14.40114 per \$1,000 valuation, with a regular taxable valuation of \$81,089,301 for the city of Bloomfield.

The regular taxable valuation increases to \$82,620,535 for FY 2023-

2024. The budget year effective property tax levy for FY 2023-2024 would be \$14.13232 with a proposed maximum tax levy of \$16.14890 per year, a difference of 14.26%. The council determines the levy within that range.

City Administrator Tomi Jo Day said the council could levy FICA, IPERS and employee benefits with the maximum levy, but frequently the council does not choose to levy the maximum rate.

"Last year, the coun-

cil raised the gas meter charge \$1 to account for lowering the FY22 levy rate by a dollar," Day said.

The proposed tax levy chart on this does not disclose street loans, Day said. "We could levy all street projects, but only one of the three is levied. One goes through regular operating funds and the other goes through LOST (Local Option Sales Tax) funds."

SCHOOL VOUCHERS: We must move forward

From Page 1A

she warned.

Like Dixon, she, too, commented that local tax money will be funding private school scholarships in metro areas because Davis County has no private schools.

Josh O'Dell, school board president, is taking a more laidback approach to the ESA issue. Though he is against using public funds for private schools, he says it will take a year before we know what this "looks like" for public schools.

"There are a lot of questions on how this is going to affect us," he said, "and we don't know yet whether we will get a 2.5% or 3% increase in SSA."

O'Dell said it is important to communicate with politicians. "Sometimes legislation is pushed through so fast they

don't look at everything. Hopefully they will correct this down the road."

O'Dell said he was opposed to this legislation before the decision was made, but "now that the decision is made, I'm not one to cry over spilled milk."

He commented it would take time to figure out the repercussions and address them.

Board member Jeff Greiner says for now the board needs to educate itself on how this bill will affect DC Schools. "I don't think this is going to make private school free to everybody," he said. "We need to do the research and see how this will affect us in the first three years and beyond."

Greiner says Davis County has some of the best teachers in south-

east Iowa, and "as long as we listen to them and make improvements, we can become the school of choice in southeast Iowa."

"We need to provide the highest quality of education in the region. We must move forward with every decision we make," he said.

Board member Brent Wuthrich didn't comment directly on the ESA legislation, but stated, "I believe Davis County Community School District is focused on our mission to provide all students with high quality learning experiences and will continue to improve and adjust to any challenges in the future."

Board members Justin Hunter and Nancy Houghland chose not to comment on the legislation.

The Bloomfield Democrat Office will be closed on Thursday, February 2 so that staff can attend the Iowa Newspaper Association Convention in Des Moines.



NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING - CITY OF BLOOMFIELD - PROPOSED PROPERTY TAX LEVY
Fiscal Year July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024

The City Council will conduct a public hearing on the proposed Fiscal Year City property tax levy as follows:
Meeting Date: 2/16/2023 Meeting Time: 07:00 PM Meeting Location: Bloomfield Public Library, 107 N. Columbia St. Bloomfield, IA 52537
At the public hearing any resident or taxpayer may present objections to, or arguments in favor of, the proposed tax levy. After adoption of the proposed tax levy, the City Council will publish notice and hold a hearing on the proposed city budget.

City Website (if available): www.cityofbloomfield.org City Telephone Number: (641) 664-2260

	Current Year Certified Property Tax 2022 - 2023	Budget Year Effective Property Tax 2023 - 2024	Budget Year Proposed Maximum Property Tax 2023 - 2024	Annual % CHG
Regular Taxable Valuation	81,078,301	82,620,535	82,620,535	
Tax Levies:				
Regular General	656,734	656,734	669,226	
Contract for Use of Bridge			0	
Opr & Maint Publicly Owned Transit			0	
Rent, Ins. Maint. Of Non-Owned Civ. Ctr.			0	
Opr & Maint of City-Owned Civic Center			0	
Planning & Sanitary Disposal Project			0	
Liability, Property & Self-Insurance Costs			0	
Support of Local Emer. Mgmt. Commission			0	
Emergency			22,308	
Police & Fire Retirement			0	
FICA & IPERS	140,461	140,461	265,616	
Other Employee Benefits	370,425	370,425	377,081	
Total Tax Levy	1,167,620	1,167,620	1,334,231	14.26
Tax Rate	14.40114	14.13232	16.14890	

Explanation of significant increases in the budget:
FY24 has an increase in expenses for the City due to a significant increase in medical benefit premiums. In addition to the premiums, the IPERS and FICA outgoing expense has increased due to the standard payroll raises given for this fiscal year.

If applicable, the above notice also available online at:
www.cityofbloomfield.org and the City of Bloomfield Facebook page.

*Total city tax rate will also include voted general fund levy, debt service levy, and capital improvement reserve levy.
**Budget year effective property tax rate is the rate that would be assessed for these levies if the dollars requested is not changed in the coming budget year

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING - PROPOSED BUDGET
Fiscal Year July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024
City of: PULASKI

The City Council will conduct a public hearing on the proposed Budget at: (entered/Pulaski Community Hall upon publish) Meeting Date: 2/6/2023
Meeting Time: 06:00 PM
At the public hearing any resident or taxpayer may present objections to, or arguments in favor of, any part of the proposed budget. This notice represents a summary of the supporting detail of revenues and expenditures on file with the City Clerk and County Auditor.
City budgets are subject to protest. If protest petition requirements are met, the State Appeal Board will hold a local hearing. For more information, consult <https://dom.iowa.gov/fiscal-gov-appeals>.

The Budget Estimate Summary of proposed receipts and expenditures is shown below. Copies of the detailed proposed Budget may be obtained or viewed at the offices of the Mayor, City Clerk, and at the Library.

	Budget FY 2024	Re-estimated FY 2023	Actual FY 2022
The estimated Total tax levy rate per \$1000 valuation on regular property		0.00000	
The estimated tax levy rate per \$1000 valuation on Agricultural land is		0	
At the public hearing, any resident or taxpayer may present objections to, or arguments in favor of, any part of the proposed budget.			
Phone Number (641) 675-3390			City Clerk/Finance Officer's NAME: J L STODOLLE
Revenues & Other Financing Sources			
Taxes Levied on Property	1	0	47,440
Less: Uncollected Property Taxes-Levy Year	2	47,444	0
Net Current Property Taxes	3	-47,444	47,440
Delinquent Property Taxes	4	0	0
TIF Revenues	5	0	0
Other City Taxes	6	0	24
Licenses & Permits	7	200	200
Use of Money and Property	8	0	1,853
Intergovernmental	9	24,784	48,529
Charges for Fees & Service	10	50,000	68,000
Special Assessments	11	0	0
Miscellaneous	12	0	25,161
Other Financing Sources	13	0	0
Transfers In	14	0	0
Total Revenues and Other Sources	15	27,540	164,169
Expenditures & Other Financing Uses			
Public Safety	16	28,180	66,897
Public Works	17	29,422	60,335
Health and Social Services	18	0	0
Culture and Recreation	19	34,260	25,701
Community and Economic Development	20	2,600	2,612
General Government	21	29,206	40,206
Debt Service	22	0	0
Capital Projects	23	0	0
Total Government Activities Expenditures	24	123,668	134,668
Business Type / Enterprises	25	0	0
Total ALL Expenditures	26	123,668	134,668
Transfers Out	27	0	0
Total ALL Expenditures/Transfers Out	28	123,668	134,668
Excess Revenues & Other Sources Over (Under) Expenditures/Transfers Out	29	-96,128	67,329
Beginning Fund Balance July 1	30	588,706	559,205
Ending Fund Balance June 30	31	492,578	588,706