

The Board of Education of LaHarpe Community School District #347 held a regular School Board meeting on 21 April 2026 in the Board room. President Dustin Detherage called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm. Roll call was answered by Blythe, Dowell, Burt, Detherage, Gebhardt, and Deitrich. Principal Ryan Hopper and Board Secretary Liz McCarter was also in attendance.

Visitors in attendance: Laura Jones, Niki Pence, Julie Garrison, Jacques Reynolds, Vi Roberts, John Quigle, Karen Nudd, Ned Eckhardt, Courtney Painter, Dave Clover, Randy Shumaker

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

A Moment of Silence was observed.

Public Comment:

Public comment was heard from Dave Clover.

Public comment was heard from Amy Simmons.

Business Items:

A motion was made by Blythe with a second by Dowell to approve the items on the Consent Agenda minus the bills: Minutes from March 24, 2026, financial reports, deletions of verbatim closed session records, 2025-2026 final school calendar, permission for the superintendent to see fuel bids, authorization to expend funds to cover expenses and liabilities between July 1, 2026 and the adoption of Fiscal Year 2027 budget, permission to seek bids for 2 new boiler units, and FOIA requests. Roll Call: Blythe- yes; Burt – yes; Detherage – yes; Dowell – yes; Gebhardt – yes; Deitrich – yes Motion Carried 6 – yay, 0 – abstain, 0 – nay, 1 – Absent: Motion Carried: 6-0.

Burt questioned a line item on the expenditure report regarding Board Legal Fees. Detherage explained that 80% of those were from legal fees for the grievances. Questions were also asked regarding a line item on the vendor expense sheet. Discussion about the fee to Heart Technologies and a new camera that was mounted. Michael explained that there was a broken camera that needed replaced. Burt asked if there was a warranty.

A motion was made by Burt with a second by Gebhardt to approve the payment of the bills after all the questions were answered. Roll Call: Blythe- yes; Burt – yes; Detherage – yes; Dowell – yes; Gebhardt – yes; Deitrich – yes Motion Carried 6 – yay, 0 – abstain, 0 – nay, 1 – Absent: Motion Carried: 6-0.

Board Policy Update:

Detherage stated there are several new updates to policy. He also stated this is a first read only so no action is needed.

Architect/Cafeteria Update: Jacques stated that construction is set to start the second week of May. He stated that the point we are at samples are coming in for verification. He said patters, textures and colors need to be locked in. He stated that he has chosen samples that match best or coordinate with what is already here. He asked the board how much they want to go through together. He said they can go through

as little or as much as they choose. Blythe responded that they wanted to look at all of it. Dowell stated that she wanted to choose the most cost effective that will last. Jacques responded that no matter what they choose from the options he is presenting, it will not change the cost. Jacques and the board walked through wall colors, flooring samples, tile colors and textures. The next thing he brought up was the tables for the cafeteria. He stated a decision needed to be made about the school logo on the table or no. After discussion about warranty and how they hold up it was decided they would put logos on half. Ryan stated that he will email the logo to Jacques. Jacques stated the tables are adjustable and they are bench seats. He stated that he is aware the bench seats are not preferred. Jacques stated that there was a request to see the cost of two tables that have individual fixed seating for pre-k. Jacques also stated there will be decisions that need to be made regarding preferred vendors and stated it may be more suited to just communicate with Michael on these. The board agreed. Jacques asked the board how he should address other questions and decisions moving forward. Blythe and Gebhardt requested he email the board. Jacques requested Liz send all the board members email addresses to him and he will proceed in this way with questions. Michael then reported that both boilers are causing issues. He said the one is at least \$14,000 in parts, the other is about \$9,000 in parts. Michael said new they are around \$25,000 each.

OMA Discussion:

Detherage stated that there were some questions about OMA. He asked the board if the attorney being present last meeting helped answer those questions. Burt replied yes. Burt also stated he just thinks they should all have the same info. It was also discussed to begin to have two meetings a month. Burt stated there are a lot of issues right now that seem to need to be discussed. Dowell stated there are things that need to be talked about sooner than waiting a month for the next meeting. It was discussed that they could be special meetings that are set up so if they are not needed they can be cancelled. Dowell stated there are things that are getting lost month to month because there is so much going on. May 7th at 6pm was discussed as a date to schedule a special meeting.

Extracurricular Events/Days/Homework:

There was discussion in regards to a request about a district wide night free of any activities. The board discussed current schedules and Hopper stated the athletic schedules are already set for the next two years.

Reports:

Board Committee:

Hopper stated the Athletic Co-op met on 4/13. He said they discussed bringing 4th graders up to play 5th/6th grade. He said for most sports it worked but for volleyball all 4th graders were allowed to play up and it was too many girls. There was talk about changing the wording to as needed instead of all. Hopper stated discussion was had on how LH and DC will share expenses for state tournaments involving transportation, hotel, meals, etc.

Board Members:

Detherage stated the trees were moved where the construction is going to happen. He talked about the maintenance grant and speaking with Dr Gladu about that.

Principal/Transportation Director/Athletic Director:

Hopper stated that Family Reading night was a huge success. He said there was a lot of positive feedback. Someone from Bickle's came to talk about bicycle safety. IW students came and did activities with kids in the greenhouse. Hopper said that teachers were there and involved, reading to students and in other ways. He said there are no issues with transportation, everything is going well.

Superintendent:

Dr Gladu's report stated the staff are working on spending this year's grant monies. Currently they still have \$8,303 for supplies available and \$5,167 for professional development. Her report

also stated the district's CEP expires June 30th. It is a four-year grant. The new grant was submitted on April 15th. The state usually awards/declines the grant sometime over the summer. The district's poverty level is statistically the same as it was 4 years ago. Her report also stated she is working on next year's pre-k grant that is due on May 13. Laura Jones is our March Team Member of the month.

A motion was made by Gebhardt with a second by Dowell to adjourn to closed session at 7:06pm to discuss items per 5ILCS 120/2/(c)(1). The appointment, employment, or compensation, or specific employees of the District and (21) closed session minutes. Roll Call: Blythe- yes; Burt – yes; Detherage – yes; Dowell – yes; Gebhardt – yes; Deitrich – yes Motion Carried 6 – yay, 0 – abstain, 0 – nay, 1 – Absent: Motion Carried: 6-0.

A motion was made by Dowell with a second by Deitrich to adjourn the closed session at 8:46pm. (Voice Vote)

A motion was made by Blythe with a second by Detherage to return to open session at 8:47pm. (Voice Vote)

Action on Closed Session Items:

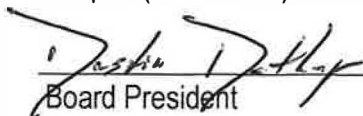
The meeting was called to order at 8:47pm.

A motion was made by Gebhardt with a second by Dowell to approve the closed session minutes from March 24, 2026. Roll Call: Blythe- yes; Burt – yes; Detherage – yes; Dowell – yes; Gebhardt – yes; Deitrich – yes Motion Carried 6 – yay, 0 – abstain, 0 – nay, 1 – Absent: Motion Carried: 6-0.

A motion was made by Detherage with a second by Deitrich to hire Max Richardson as the Assistant Boy's Basketball coach. Roll Call: Blythe- yes; Burt – yes; Detherage – yes; Dowell – yes; Gebhardt – yes; Deitrich – yes Motion Carried 6 – yay, 0 – abstain, 0 – nay, 1 – Absent: Motion Carried: 6-0.

A motion was made by Gebhardt with a second by Burt to hire Linda Kruzan as a substitute bus driver. Roll Call: Blythe- yes; Burt – yes; Detherage – yes; Dowell – yes; Gebhardt – yes; Deitrich – yes Motion Carried 6 – yay, 0 – abstain, 0 – nay, 1 – Absent: Motion Carried: 6-0.

A motion was made by Detherage with a second by Blythe to adjourn the April 2026 board meeting at 8:48pm. (Voice Vote)


Board President


Board Secretary

5-19-26
Date Approved

