

The Board of Education of LaHarpe Community School District #347 held a regular School Board meeting on 18 March 2025 in the Board room. President Dustin Detherage called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm. Roll call was answered by Allen, Blythe, Collins, Deitrich, Detherage, Gebhardt and Walker. Superintendent Janet Gladu, Board Secretary Liz McCarter, and Principal Ryan Hopper were also in attendance.

Visitors in attendance were Chad Burt, Matt Miller and Miriam Miller

A Moment of Silence was observed.

Public Comment: No public comments.

Business Items:

Consent Agenda: The Consent Agenda included the Open Meeting Minutes of the 18 February 2025 Regular Board Meeting of the LaHarpe CSD 347 School, Financial Reports, Individual Fund Balances, Payment of Bills, and action to delete the verbatim closed session meeting recordings that were 18 months and older, and 2025-2026 Consolidated District Plan.

Individual Fund Balances (chart below)

Fund	FY2025	FY 2024
Education	\$2,464,929.89	\$2,397,669.84
Building	\$279,801.22	\$493,273.09
Debt Services	\$108,637.22	\$104,744.32
Transportation	\$156,914.07	\$196,245.74
IMRF	\$80,771.83	\$93,237.00
Capital Projects	\$0	\$0
Working Cash	\$42,541.78	\$150,250.42
TORT Immunity	\$195,266.99	\$183,676.12
Fire Prevention & Safety	\$258,358.86	\$238,439.24
Total	\$3,587,221.86	\$3,857,535.77
Comparison Year		
FY 2024		\$3,857,535.77
FY 2023		\$3,101,712.37
FY 2022		\$2,273,248.28
FY 2021		\$2,253,801.99
FY 2020		\$1,611,617.48

A motion was made by Collins with a second by Blythe to approve the following items on the Consent Agenda: agenda, February 18, 2025 regular minutes, financial reports, payment of bills, and the deletion of verbatim closed session recordings older than 18 months, and the 2025-2026 Consolidated District Plan. Roll Call: Blythe – yes; Collins- yes; Deitrich – yes; Detherage – yes; Gebhardt – yes, Allen – yes; Walker – yes. Motion Carried 7-0.

Approval for Superintendent and Finance Manager to work on the 2025-2026 Budget. Superintendent Gladu stated that her and the Finance manager are in the beginning phases of the 2025-2026 budget and need permission to complete it.

A motion was made by Allen with a second by Deitrich to authorize Superintendent Gladu to develop a tentative budget for fiscal year 2026. Roll Call: Blythe – yes; Collins- yes; Deitrich – yes; Detherage – yes; Gebhardt – yes, Allen – yes; Walker – yes. Motion Carried 7-0.

8th Grade Promotion Date Adjustment to May 23, 2025. Superintendent Gladu stated that the prior approved 8th grade promotion date was set for the same date as the State Track meet. There are several 8th grade students that are anticipated to qualify for state. She stated they would like to move the promotion date to the following Friday, May 23, 2025 at 6pm.

A motion was made by Gebhardt with a second by Deitrich to move the 8th grade promotion date from May 16, 2025 to May 23, 2025 at 6pm. Roll Call: Blythe – yes; Collins- yes; Deitrich – yes; Detherage – yes; Gebhardt – yes, Allen – yes; Walker – yes. Motion Carried 7-0.

Bus Bid – Disposition. Detherage stated that as of right now they have two bids for Bus #6. One is from Ashton Hunter for \$1100. The other was from Rusty Dowell for \$100. Detherage stated that we would receive about \$1440 if we decided to scrap the bus. The board discussed scrapping it and allowing the fire department to use it for training.

A motion was made by Collins with a second by Blythe to accept the bid in the amount of \$1100 for purchasing the district's used bus from Ashton Hunter. Roll Call: Blythe – yes; Collins- yes; Deitrich – yes; Detherage – yes; Gebhardt – yes, Allen – yes; Walker – yes. Motion Carried 7-0.

Stove Bid Disposition. At this time the district does not have any bids for the stove.

Forever and Ever Images. Superintendent Gladu discussed with the board that the district would like to move from Interstate to Forever & Ever images for student and sport pictures. The cost is almost identical between the two companies. The district has not been satisfied with the overall quality of the photos from Interstate. The contract with Forever & Ever images would be for one year.

A motion was made by Deitrich with a second by Detherage to approve the 2025-2026 contract with Forever & Ever Images as the district's photographer for student and activity photos. Roll Call: Blythe – yes; Collins- yes; Deitrich – yes; Detherage – yes; Gebhardt – yes, Allen – yes; Walker – yes. Motion Carried 7-0.

Non-binding Resolution \$75,000 annual to Bond Payments. The board discussed passing a non-binding resolution to commit \$75,000 annually to pay towards bond payments, for the cafeteria addition, pending the passage of the bond referendum. This is non-binding, meaning, the district will not be held to uphold it if the financial status changes.

A motion was made by Allen with a second by Gebhardt to pass Non-binding Resolution 03-2025, committing \$75,000 annually to the payment of Series 2025 bonds, pending the successful passage of the Bond Referendum on the April 2025 ballot. Roll Call: Blythe – yes; Collins- yes; Deitrich – yes; Detherage – yes; Gebhardt – yes, Allen – yes; Walker – yes. Motion Carried 7-0.

Final/Amended FY25 Budget Hearing Date/Time. Superintendent Gladu stated that we need to set our final budget hearing date/time for our FY2024 budget.

A motion was made by Collins with a second by Detherage to set our amended FY25 budget hearing for June 24, 2025 at 6pm. Roll Call: Blythe – yes; Collins- yes; Deitrich – yes; Detherage – yes; Gebhardt – yes, Allen – yes; Walker – yes. Motion Carried 7-0.

Grant Update. The board was given a copy of the district's current 2024/2025 grants. We are close to the threshold of a higher audit but Superintendent Gladu stated that she will stay under that amount. All of the grants expire June 30th. As of right now we are on target to get everything spent. Most likely all of our student's school supplies will be covered for next year.

Reports:

Board Committee Superintendent Gladu stated that the Curriculum Committee would be ready for recommendations within the next month.

Board Members. Detherage informed the board that he hung up flyers for the Bond Referendum in all of the local businesses. Deitrich reported that they had their first community meeting in Fountain Green. Deitrich asked if La Harpe School would be willing to donate \$100 to the IW Prom. Superintendent Gladu stated that she would check with the Finance Manager and let her know.

Principal/Athletic Director/Transportation Director Hopper stated Family Reading night was attended. He reported that state testing will begin April 1st for the JH students. He talked about the incentives and prizes from local businesses they have available. The 3rd and 4th grade testing will begin a week later and all testing should be completed before Easter break. Penny Wars were a huge success. PTO raised enough to have two bounce houses at the Summer send-off at the end of the school year. Volleyball season has ended and Track will begin Monday, March 24th. The Boosters will have a meeting soon. He reported the new bus is here and everything with transportation is going well.

Superintendent Gladu reported that the February Team Member of the Month is Ashlee Goettsche. The new bus is registered. They did ask for the first payment so now we only have four payments instead of five.

Motion by Blythe with a second by Collins to adjourn to closed session at 6:26pm to discuss items per 5ILCS 120/2/(c)(1). The appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the District; and (15) closed session minutes. Roll Call: Blythe – yes; Collins- yes; Deitrich – yes; Detherage – yes; Gebhardt – yes, Allen – yes; Walker – yes. Motion Carried 7-0.

Motion by Collins with a second by Deitrich to recess closed session at 8:30pm. Voice Vote.

Motion by Detherage with a second by Collins to return to closed session at 8:39pm. Voice Vote.

Motion by Deitrich with a second by Blythe to leave closed session at 8:49pm. Voice Vote.

Motion by Collins with a second by Deitrich to return to open session at 8:50pm. Voice Vote.

Motion by Allen with a second by Gebhardt to approve the closed session minutes from 18 February 2025. Roll Call: Blythe – yes; Collins- yes; Deitrich – yes; Detherage – yes; Gebhardt – yes, Allen – yes; Walker – yes. Motion Carried 7-0.

Motion by Collins with a second by Blythe to rehire Joseph Hincks, Nichelle Pence, Peyton Porter, Amy Simmons and Melissa VanFleet as tenured certified staff members. Roll Call: Blythe – yes; Collins- yes; Deitrich – yes; Detherage – yes; Gebhardt – yes, Allen – yes; Walker – yes. Motion Carried 7-0.

Detherage moved that the Board adopt the Resolution Reference the Dismissal of a Professional Education Licensed Employee Melissa Burt with a second by Walker. Roll Call: Blythe – yes; Collins- yes; Deitrich – yes; Detherage – yes; Gebhardt – abstain, Allen – yes; Walker – yes. Motion Carried, 6 yes, 0 no, 1 abstain.

Motion by Blythe with a second by Deitrich to rehire Rebecca Huston and Courtney Painter as 3rd year, non-tenured certified staff members. Roll Call: Blythe – yes; Collins- yes; Deitrich – yes; Detherage – yes; Gebhardt – yes, Allen – yes; Walker – yes. Motion Carried 7-0.

Motion by Collins with a second by Detherage to rehire Aubrey Porter as a 2nd year, non-tenured staff member. Roll Call: Blythe – yes; Collins- yes; Deitrich – yes; Detherage – yes; Gebhardt – yes, Allen – yes; Walker – yes. Motion Carried 7-0.

Motion by Deitrich with a second by Blythe to rehire Haley Dixon and Sharon Berlett as long-term Substitute Teachers. Roll Call: Blythe – yes; Collins- yes; Deitrich – yes; Detherage – yes; Gebhardt – yes, Allen – yes; Walker – yes. Motion Carried 7-0.

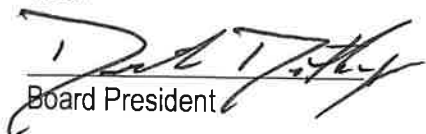
Motion by Collins with a second by Gebhardt to hire Peyton Porter as Assistant Baseball Coach, Ryan Hopper as Baseball Coach and Aubrey Porter as assistant Volleyball Coach for the 2025-2026 and 2026-2027 school years. Roll Call: Blythe – yes; Collins- yes; Deitrich – yes; Detherage – yes; Gebhardt – yes, Allen – yes; Walker – yes. Motion Carried 7-0.


Motion by Blythe with a second by Allen to hire Matt Miller as head boys' basketball coach for the 2025-2026 School year. Roll Call: Blythe – yes; Collins- yes; Deitrich – yes; Detherage – yes; Gebhardt – yes, Allen – yes; Walker – yes. Motion Carried 7-0.

Motion by Deitrich with a second by Gebhardt to extend Ryan Hopper's contract one year, through June 30, 2030. Roll Call: Blythe – yes; Collins- yes; Deitrich – yes; Detherage – yes; Gebhardt – yes, Allen – yes; Walker – yes. Motion Carried 7-0.

Motion by Collins with a second by Blythe to increase Ryan Hopper's base salary 3% effective 1 July 2025. Roll Call: Blythe – yes; Collins- yes; Deitrich – yes; Detherage – yes; Gebhardt – yes, Allen – yes; Walker – yes. Motion Carried 7-0.

Motion by Detherage with a second by Deitrich to adjourn the March 2025 board meeting at 8:56pm. Voice Vote.


Board President


Board Secretary