MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF LA HARPE SCHOOL DISTRICT #347 IN THE PD ROOM ON October 20, 2026.

The meeting was called to order by President Detherage at 6:00pm in the PD Room. The following board members answered roll call. Blythe, Burt, Detherage, Dowell. Also present were Interim Superintendent Grimm, Principal Hopper, and Board Secretary McCarter. Visitors in attendance were Laura Jones and John Quigle.

President Detherage led those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

The Board observed a moment of silence.

Interim Superintendent Grimm encouraged the Board to spend a few minutes at each meeting highlighting the good things that are happening in the district.

GOOD NEWS ITEMS:

- Superintendent Grimm mentioned that our La Harpe Elementary School's Early Childhood Program has once again met the eligibility requirements for the ExceleRate Illinois Gold Circle of Quality designation. Congrats to Carrie Finch and her team.
- Mr. Hopper mentioned that it has been great to see teachers helping other teachers with problems they are having. He mentioned the PTO and the Golden Ticket Fundraiser.

APPROVE AGENDA:

Motion by Gebhardt with a second by Blythe to approve the agenda as presented.

Roll Call: Blythe – yes; Burt- yes; Dowell – yes; Deitrich – absent; Gebhardt – yes; Detherage – yes; Walker – absent. Motion Carried 5-0.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC:

There was no public comment.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion by Detherage with a second by Blythe to approve the following board meeting minutes.

D. Regular Meeting, September 23, 2026
E. Closed Session, September 23, 2026

Roll Call Blythe – yes; Burt- yes; Dowell – yes; Deitrich – absent; Gebhardt – yes; Detherage – yes; Walker – absent. Motion Carried 5-0.

FINANCIAL ACTIVITY:

There was some discussion regarding the pay request from Maas. There was also discussion about a couple of the line items on a report. Laura Jones was able to answer some questions.

those. Detherage stated that he would like to keep Ralph on to help with the tax levy as well as for him to oversee the rest of the Solar Project. There was discussion regarding the activity bus the school currently owns and uses daily for practice shuttles. There is no heat and no air and it can not be fixed. Mr. Grimm suggested taking it out of commission. Mr. Burt asked for a cost comparison between using a bus vs an activity bus. Mr. Hopper stated we currently have one sub that can drive a bus. If he is not available and we do not have the activity bus he will have to pay two drivers to take both mini vans. Mr. Grimm also discussed the plans for the small room off of the kitchen where the board had originally discussed storing the tables after breakfast. Mr. Grimm suggested they rethink this idea and set that room up now during construction for classroom space instead of storage. Logistically Mr. Grimm stated there is not currently a maintenance person on staff in the mornings between 8-10 to clean the tables move them and clean the floors. Mr. Grimm suggested hiring custodian to be here for those two hours. Dowell suggested that it is probably cheaper to do this now than to build it later if we need more classroom space. Mr. Burt asked if we could get confirmation on what the final decision was on the flooring in the new cafeteria

Principal- Mr. Hopper discussed parent/teacher conferences, Special Person's Day, Halloween Costume Parade, 1st Quarter Attendance Incentive, and Veteran's Day Program.

Athletic Director- Mr. Hopper talked about girl's basketball season that has started and mentioned boy's basketball will be starting on Oct. 19th.

Transportation Director: Mr. Hopper stated that everything is going well and all busses are running.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

A. UPDATE ON PROJECTS: An update was given on the building addition and projects.
B. FOIA REQUESTS: Mr. Grimm updated the board on current FOIA requests.
C. 2026 Tax Levy preliminary discussion: Discussion was had regarding the tax levy, who will complete it and how it will be presented to the board.
D. Adding Softball to the List of Extracurricular Offerings: Mr. Hopper gave an update from the Sports-Co Op Meeting regarding this topic.
E. Purchase of Activity Bus: Discussion was had regarding the current activity bus we have and the need for a new one. Burt requested a cost comparison between the activity bus usage and a school bus. He also asked about insurance and the numbers for sports using a bus vs. an activity bus.
F. New Addition Storage Room and Classroom Usage Plan: Mr. Hopper discussed his plan for the classrooms. There was discussion by the board about turning a room that was previously going to be a storage room for cafeteria tables into a space that can be used by students.
G. Update on the Solar Project: Mr. Grimm updated the board on a meeting that was had with the District and the owner of the Solar Company. Mr. Grimm updated the board on the discussion he had regarding the contract concerns and the project status.
H. Proposal from Twin States: Mr. Grimm updated the board on the proposal.
I. Preliminary ISBE Accountability School Designation: Mr. Grimm updated the board on Mr. Grimm also shared information regarding this. He stated that the guidelines have changed, so our status has changed. But our percentage of students meeting or exceeding is about the same. He also talked about where we go from here. Mr. Grimm shared a School Improvement Plan Template with Mr. Hopper to use in the future.

2. No action taken at this time regarding the closed session written minutes.

The board took time to thank Mr. Grimm for his time here. They stated that he has done an amazing job and is a wealth of knowledge. They were very appreciative of his guidance and a lot of staff members have voiced their sadness over Mr. Grimm leaving. Mr. Grimm stated that he has enjoyed everyday he has been here. He voiced that he would do all he can to help in the transition. He believes La Harpe is a very special place with great staff.

FUTURE MEETING DATES AND TIME:

A. The board was reminded the next regular Board Meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 17, 2026 at 6:00pm in the PD Room.

ADJOURNMENT:

A motion was made by Detherage with a second by Gebhardt to adjourn the October 20, 2026 board meeting at 8:35pm. Majority of Ayes by Voice Vote. Motion carried.

THESE MINUTES ARE APPROVED AS WRITTEN THIS 17th DAY OF NOVEMBER, 2026.

Dustin Detherage, Board President

Liz McCarter, Board Secretary