

La Harpe Community School District #347  
**LA HARPE SCHOOL BOARD News Release – April 2017 Organizational Meeting**



*Caption: Pam Campbell, Nate Butler, and Dave Mershon were recognized for their years of service on the La Harpe School Board. Each retiring member was presented a gavel with plaque stating their number of years. Appreciation was expressed, photos were taken, and celebratory cake was enjoyed.*

The La Harpe school board meeting was held in the district library on April 25, 2017 (rescheduled from April 18). Newly-elected members Brian Brown, Lacey Covert, and Ryan Johnson were present, Bob Shutwell was visiting. The current board consisting of Nate Butler, Pam Campbell, Dustin Detherage, Bobi James, Dave Mershon, and Cindy Wear (Darren Spangler was absent) approved the consent agenda and payment of the bills. Elected members were administered the Oath of Office and the new board selected Bobi James as president and Cindy Wear as vice president. Dr. Olson mentioned Board Committees which will be appointed at the May meeting. A Committee of the Whole will meet at 6:15 prior to the regular meeting to discuss Board policy updates. Meetings will continue to be held on the third Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the school library. Pam Campbell, Nate Butler, and Dave Mershon were recognized for their years of service on the La Harpe School Board. Retiring members were each presented a gavel with plaque stating their number of years. Appreciation was expressed, photos were taken, and celebratory cake was enjoyed. The new Board accepted Joanna Wright's retirement letter, and hired the following coaches for the next school year: Baseball head coach Ryan Hopper with Peyton Porter as assistant, Junior High boys' basketball head coach Ryan Hopper with Matt Melvin as assistant, 5<sup>th</sup>6<sup>th</sup> grade boys basketball head coach Rod Shipman, 5<sup>th</sup>6<sup>th</sup> grade volleyball coach Lila Gittings, and Track head coach Grant James with Courtney Rude as assistant. All coaching assignments are approved by both Dallas and La Harpe school boards. The Board approved the preliminary 2017-18 school calendar, scheduled the FY 2017 Budget Amendment Hearing for 7:15 p.m. June 20, 2017 in the school library. Paid meal prices were raised 10¢ for the coming school year due to rising costs of the school lunch program. Athletic co-op membership in the Illinois Elementary School Association was renewed.

Superintendent Olson reported the State payments that have been vouchered but are still awaiting payment. Special Ed, Transportation and Early Childhood payments are about 6 months behind. Olson alerted the Board that based on what has already been expensed; we may have received our only payments for this fiscal year. Reatha Owens, Field Services Director for the School Board Association requested La Harpe host the Fall Western Division Dinner. It will be held October 24<sup>th</sup>. La Harpe District last hosted one of these events in 2010. Joint Annual Conference will be held in Chicago on Nov. 17-19 with registration beginning the first week of June. Dr. Olson described the workshops, school tours and other events of the conference and encouraged members to consider whether they would like to attend. Dr. Olson gave new board members mandatory training information including OMA, PDLT and PERA workshops. Brown, Johnson, and Covert plan to attend the all-day training sponsored by the state school board association which will fulfill all of their requirements. Completion certificates are filed in the office and board member trainings are posted on the school website when completed.

Principal McKeown asked for board members willing to pass out certificates at 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Promotion. James, Johnson and Detherage will assist. McKeown reported that our Scholastic Bowl team hosted by Dallas won first place in the Hancock County Tournament, and gave a track update. Elementary parent-teacher conferences were well attended. Congratulations were extended for the 17 first place ribbons and 1 second place ribbon earned by Mrs. Mencil's music students at the recent Solo & Ensemble Contest. Mrs. Byers and her 2<sup>nd</sup> grade class led a recent school-wide morning meeting. Pre-K and Kindergarten spring screening was completed. Mencil mentioned the 7<sup>th</sup> grade trip to historical sites in Springfield, 8<sup>th</sup> grade PSAT test at Illini West, and Easter parties were cancelled due to the second emergency day in April. PARCC testing took nearly a month to complete due to the lengthy time required for many of the components. Junior high students attended a Hancock County Task Force assembly on opioids at Illini West. Illini West band students gave a very good presentation to the 5<sup>th</sup> -8<sup>th</sup> graders to "drum up business" for future high school bands. An FBI app with safety information that may interest parents has been posted on the laharpeeagles.com website. Prin. McKeown included Mrs. Bailey's STEM (Science Technology Engineering & Math) project for the Board to view. Familiar fairy tales were used in an activity designed to utilize critical thinking and scientific reasoning skills in a very motivational way with her 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade students. McKeown attended a principal's meeting at the ROE and completed an Administrator Academy, and teachers had meetings on the Every Student Succeeds Act, unit plans, and curriculum maps. McKeown discussed the pending requirement to update the district Title I Plan, for which she attended a webinar. McKeown continues working with teacher groups, looking at scope & sequence for all subjects, discovering gaps, and finding materials to use in bridging these gaps with the end goal of having State standard-coordinated materials in the teacher's hand at every grade level. This is a time-consuming, but vital task as textbook companies have been unable to keep up with so many recent changes in the standards. McKeown has met with teachers on every subject except science and have chosen some materials. Board members were provided some of the Math and Writing scope and sequence information and McKeown mentioned that the new Chrome books for junior high language arts are working out great!

La Harpe School Board meetings are held at 7:00 p.m. on the third Tuesday of each month in the school library. Agendas and approved minutes are posted on the website at laharpeeagles.org.