

LA HARPE SCHOOL BOARD News Release – April 30, 2013

At the April 30, 2013 rescheduled regular meeting of the La Harpe Board of Education, the following members were in attendance: Nathan Butler, Pam Campbell, Rex Huston, Mark Irish, Darren Spangler, and Cindy Wear. Supt. Jo Campbell, Prin. Lila McKeown, and Board Sec. Jeanne Clayton were in attendance. President Wear welcomed newly elected members Dustin Detherage, and David Mershon. Coming Superintendent Dr. Ryan Olson and La Harpe Teachers Sherry Beals, Ashley Cox, Carrie Finch, Ryan Kitch, Laurie Myers, and Tori and Paul Savage were also present.

1st Grade Teacher, Sherry Beals, presented a Social Studies activity which was a compilation of facts gathered by student about Abraham Lincoln. Many related activities went into the organization, illustration, and binding of the Lincoln Facts Book Beals' class made.

1st Grade Teacher, Ashley Cox, spoke to the Board about a Bird Unit which resulted in a book of information researched by the students. Each student received a copy of the completed work.

4th Grade Teacher, Laurie Myers, mentioned units on The Titanic and Washington D.C. her students had completed. Myers listed the many historical facts and the variety of ways she teaches history in her classroom. Some examples she gave were the use of old newspapers to glean historic facts, involving guest speakers, enacting different time periods through dress and activities. Myers annually leads her students through a multifaceted study of local history using walking tours, mystery photos, and visits to the local museum, library, and cemetery with related activities to engage them.

Preschool Special Ed Teacher, Carrie Finch, shared a list of the benefits of Preschool with the Board, as well as the expectations for Preschoolers entering Kindergarten. Finch had samples of the many books made by the preschoolers including *Preschool, Preschool, What Do You See?, Apples Up On Top*, and books on Fire Fighters, the Pumpkin Patch, the Alphabet, and many other books which the preschoolers enjoy reading. Finch also shared many of the community service personnel-related trips and hands-on activities the preschoolers experience each year.

Preschool At-Risk Teacher, Tori Savage Shared examples of the monthly parent involvement programs the preschool teachers facilitate each year, such as Math and Literacy nights and the annual Zoo Trip. Savage pointed out the many donated items and grant-funded elements of the La Harpe preschool program.

Art Teacher, Ryan Kitch gave examples of an elementary lesson imagining items that would and wouldn't fit in a jar, and a junior high "door lesson" concentrating on architectural elements. Kitch mentioned the many ways he involves the art students in the community through art displays, creating logo ideas for the annual car show and decorating a themed tree for the Festival of Trees. Kitch expressed gratitude to the Board for continuing to fund art and supply the technology needs for today's classrooms.

Dr. Campbell's Superintendent's report included information about an update on pension reform legislation, a coming IASB governing meeting in Macomb, mandated Board trainings, and coming health insurance coop changes. Dr. Campbell reported on a recent Illini West-initiated transportation meeting at which the Elementary Districts were asked if they would consider Illini West providing transportation for Carthage, La Harpe, Dallas, and Illini West Districts in an effort to save money. La Harpe Board members discussed the recent steps they had taken to provide PK-8th grade busing separate from Illini West in order to minimize ride time, wait time, and bus sizes. The consensus of the Board was that they are providing the best transportation situation for their elementary students, and are not in a position financially where they have to revert to a system involving increased ride time for students. However, they are open to sharing and considering information with Illini West.

Principal McKeown mentioned the performances of the track team, Parent Teacher Conferences, Severe Weather and Tornado Drills, and Student Council-sponsored events. The Illini West play cast came for a mini performance of their high school play. Chorus and Band students attended a contest. McKeown listed the many teacher training topics covered at the recent School Improvement Day, and the potential for using online lesson planning next year.

The Board approved minutes and bills, obligated grant funds for technology purchases, renewed membership with the Illinois Elementary School Association, approved next year's school calendar, and scheduled the FY 2013 Budget Amendment Hearing for 7:15p.m. on June 18, 2013, in the school district library. The Board accepted with regrets Bob Dowell's retirement, Valeri Dittmer's resignation from Special Ed Coordinator, and Willo Carpenter's resignation from the Board of Education. A member to serve Carpenter's remaining 2-year position will be appointed at the May meeting. The Board approved La Harpe administered Athletic Coop Coaches pending Dallas approval, and approved Mark Mathew as a driver candidate.

Retiring Board members Mark Irish, Rex Huston, and Darren Spangler were each honored with a plaque. New Board members Dustin Detherage, Bobi James, and David Mershon were seated and the new Board elected President Cindy Wear and Vice President Nathan Butler. Board meetings will continue to be held in the school library on the third Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m.

To view agendas, news releases and approved minutes, please visit the school board section of the La Harpe Eagles website at www.laharpeeagles.org.