

The Board of Education of LaHarpe Community School District #347 held a Regular School Board meeting on 19 May 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, Walker and Deitrich. Principal Ryan Hopper and Board Secretary Liz McCarter were also in attendance.

Visitors in attendance: Laura Jones, Niki Pence, Todd Fox and John Quigle

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

A Moment of Silence was observed.

Public Comment: None

Business Items:

A motion was made by Detherage with a second by Gebhardt to add exception 10 in the Agenda. . Roll Call: Blythe- yes; Burt – yes; Detherage – yes; Dowell – yes; Gebhardt – yes; Deitrich – yes; Walker – yes. Motion Carried 7 – yay, 0 – abstain, 0 – nay, 0 – Absent: Motion Carried: 7-0.

A motion was made by Blythe with a second by Deitrich to approve the items on the Consent Agenda: Amended agenda, Athletic Co-Op Meeting minutes – April 13, 2026, Regular Minutes from April 21, 2026, and Special Meeting Minutes from May 7, 2026, financial reports, payment of bills, deletion of closed session recordings older than 18 months, and FOIA requests. Roll Call: Blythe- yes; Burt – yes; Detherage – yes; Dowell – yes; Gebhardt – yes; Deitrich – yes; Walker – yes. Motion Carried 7 – yay, 0 – abstain, 0 – nay, 0 – Absent: Motion Carried: 7-0.

Board Policy Update:

Detherage stated this is the 2nd and final read on the policy updates.

A motion was made by Detherage with a second by Blythe to approve the policy updates as presented. Roll Call: Blythe- yes; Burt – yes; Detherage – yes; Dowell – yes; Gebhardt – yes; Deitrich – yes; Walker – yes. Motion Carried 7 – yay, 0 – abstain, 0 – nay, 0 – Absent: Motion Carried: 7-0.

Reports:

Board Committee: None

Board Member:

Detherage stated that he reached out to the park board about possibly using the field in between the golf cart shed and the adjoining property for parking. Dowell asked Detherage why we need it. Detherage stated he was just checking to see if they would consider it. He stated they said yes but the school would be responsible for graveling it. Detherage said he checked with someone and it would take about \$4,000 to gravel that. Walker stated in the lot we currently use if the direction people park is changed it would create space. Gebhardt stated this had all been discussed but it was decided to wait until after construction was done. Dowell stated that there is free parking not far away at the ball fields and it seems like a waste to spend money to gravel someone else's property.

Blythe asked about the status of the solar panels. Detherage stated they are not on yet. Michael has reached out to them and they are waiting on the proper switch. Burt asked if we have any money invested

in this. Detherage stated that we do not. Detherage stated that it is projected that solar will cover 80% of the electric bill. Dowell stated she has had community members inquire about when the greenery is going around the outside of the panels. Detherage stated that he talked to several community members and greenery was not mentioned. He said what was mentioned is the chain link fence. Dowell stated one community member that lives right around there stated that he was told trees or shrubs would be put up to hide the panels.

Principal:

Hopper gave a huge thanks to Mrs Huston, Courtney Painter, Niki Pence, Joe Hincks and Joe Atkinson for putting together a music program. He stated that it went over really well and he was so appreciative that they took the initiative to do this. Mr. Hopper stated that Field day was a huge success. He stated that Mrs. Pence with some help from her family went all out. He stated that Aimsweb Testing is being completed for the Spring. He said that Teacher Appreciation was May 4-8. He said the PTO, the HOPE group, Fortress bank and many other community members chipped in to make this a huge success. He stated that the staff loved it and they were so appreciative. He also said that the Junior High students will be helping to place flags for Memorial Day on the graves. He said a community member said it is getting harder to find volunteers to do this each year so the Junior High may be taking that over. He said PTO did a summer send off and it went over really well. They had to move everything inside because of the weather but staff and student's enjoyed the day.

Athletic Director:

He stated that track had 14 athletes advance to the State Competition. 12 were from LaHarpe. The brought home 10 medals. He stated that all schedules are complete for the 26/27 school year.

Transportation:

Hopper stated that everything is running smooth. The new hire has been working hard to complete all the necessary items to begin driving.

Board Action: A motion was made by Gebhardt with a second by Deitrich to adjourn to closed session at 6:18pm to discuss items pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1)(10) The appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees, specific individuals who serve as independent contractors in an educational setting, or specific volunteers of the District, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee, a specific individual who serves as an independent contractor in an educational setting, or a volunteer of the District to determine its validity & 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(21) Discussion of minutes of meetings lawfully closed under this Act, whether for purposes of approval by the body of the minutes or semi-annual review of the minutes as mandated by Section 2.06. Roll Call: Blythe- yes; Burt – yes; Detherage – yes; Dowell – yes; Gebhardt – yes; Deitrich – yes; Walker – yes. Motion Carried 7 – yay, 0 – abstain, 0 – nay, 0 – Absent: Motion Carried: 7-0.

A motion was made by Gebhardt with a second by Deitrich to adjourn the closed session at 7:31pm. (voice vote)

Blythe left the meeting at 7:31pm.

A motion was made by Walker with a second by Dowell to return to open session at 7:33pm. (voice vote)

The meeting was called to order at 7:34pm.

A motion was made by Dowell with a second by Burt to approve the closed session minutes from April 21, 2026 and May 7, 2026. Roll Call: Blythe- absent; Burt – yes; Detherage – yes; Dowell – yes; Gebhardt –

yes; Deitrich – yes; Walker – yes. Motion Carried 6 – yay, 0 – abstain, 0 – nay, 1 – Absent: Motion Carried: 6-0.

A motion was made by Detherage second by Gebhardt to adjourn the May 19, 2026 board meeting at 7:34pm. (voice vote)


Board President


Board Secretary

6-23-26
Date Approved

