MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF LA HARPE SCHOOL DISTRICT #347 IN THE PD ROOM ON AUGUST 24, 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, Deitrich, Dowell, Gebhardt, and Walker. Also present were Interim Superintendent Grimm, Principal Hopper, and Board Secretary McCarter. Visitors in attendance were Laura Jones and John Amschler.

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:

- The Board expressed their appreciation for a great start to the 2026-2027 school year.
- The undefeated baseball team was praised.

APPROVE AGENDA:

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

> Roll Call Blythe – yes; Burt- yes; Dowell – yes; Deitrich – yes; Gebhardt – yes; Detherage – yes; Walker – yes. Motion Carried 7-0.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC:

Public comment was heard by Amy Simmons regarding Science Olympiad. Public comment was also heard by John Amschler regarding an inter-district program he is working to establish on enhancing.

CONSENT AGENDA:

There were no items on the consent agenda this month.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

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

D. Regular Meeting, July 27, 2026
E. Closed Session, July 27, 2026

> Roll Call Blythe – yes; Burt- yes; Dowell – yes; Deitrich – yes; Gebhardt – yes; Detherage – abstain; Walker – yes. Motion Carried 6-0.

PAYMENT OF BILLS:

Motion was made by Gebhardt with a second by Walker to approve the payment of the August Bills as presented, as well as the approval of the August Fund Balance Report, and the Approval of the July District Financial Report.

Roll Call Blythe – yes; Burt- yes; Dowell – yes; Deitrich – yes; Gebhardt – yes; Detherage – yes; Walker – yes. Motion Carried 7-0.

ACTION ITEMS:

A. Approval of Proposed Revisions to Board Policies, Administrative Procedures and Exhibits – 2nd Reading and Adoption.

a. 2:70-E - Checklist for Filling Board Vacancies by Appointment
b. 2:120-E3 - Resolution to Appoint a Delegate to the IASB Delegate Assembly
c. 2:220-E1 - Board Treatment of Closed Meeting Verbatim Recordings and Minutes
d. 2:220-E3 - Closed Meeting Minutes
e. 2:220-E5 - Semi-Annual Review of Closed Meeting Minutes
f. 2:220-E8 - School Board Records Maintenance Requirements and FAQ's
g. 2:230 - Public Participation at School Board Meetings and Petitions to the Board
h. 3:70 - Succession of Authority
i. 4:110-AP2 - Bus Driver Communication Devices; Pre-Trip and Post-Trip Inspection; and Bus Driving Comments
j. 4:170-AP1, E2 - Accident or Injury Form
k. 4:170-AP1, E2 - Memo to Staff Members Regarding Contacts by Media About a Crisis
l. 4:170-AP2 - Routine Communications Concerning Safety and Security
m. 4:170-AP4 - National Terrorism Advisory System
n. 4:175 - Convicted Sex Offender; Screening; Notifications
o. 4:180-AP1 - School Action Steps for Pandemic Influenza or Other Virus/Disease
p. 5:20-AP - Sample Questions and Considerations for Conducting the Internal Harassment in the Workplace Investigation
q. 5:40 - Communicable and Chronic Infectious Disease
r. 5:40-AP - Communicable and Chronic Infectious Disease
s. 5:70 - Religious Holidays
t. 5:100-AP - Staff Development Program
u. 5:110 - Recognition for Services
v. 5:130-AP - Email Retention
w. 5:140 - Solicitations By or From Staff
x. 5:185-AP - Resource Guide for Family and Medical Leave
y. 5:220-E - Unsatisfactory Performance Report for Substitute Teachers
z. 5:240 - Suspensions
aa. 5:270-E - Notice of Employment
bb. 6:60-AP1, E2 - Resources for Biking and Walking Safety Education
cc. 6:70 - Teaching About Religions
dd. 6:70-AP - Teaching About Religions
ee. 6:80 - Teaching About Controversial Issues
ff. 6:120-AP4 - Care of Students with Diabetes
gg. 6:190 - Extracurricular and Co-Curricular Activities
hh. 6:235-E4 - Online Safety Resources (Renamed)
ii. 7:30 - Student Assignment and Intra-District Transfer

jj. 7:60-AP1 - Challenging a Student's Residence Status
kk. 7:60-AP2 - Establishing a Student Residency
ll. 7:60-AP2, E1 - Letter of Residence from Landlord in Lieu of Lease
mm. 7:60-AP2, E2 - Letters of Residence to Be Used When the Person Seeking to Enroll a Student is Living with a District Resident
nn. 7:60-AP2, E3 - Evidence of Non-Parent's Custody, Control, and Responsibility of a Student
oo. 7:80 - Release Time for Religious Instruction/Observance
pp. 7:130 - Student Rights and Responsibilities
qq. 7:190-E1 - Aggressive Behavior Reporting Letter and Form
rr. 7:189-E4 - Acknowledgment of Receiving Student Behavior Policy and Student Conduct Code
ss. 7:200-E1 - Short Term Out-of-School Suspension (1-3 Days) Reporting Form
tt. 7:240-AP1 - Code of Conduct for Extracurricular Activities
uu. 7:330 - Student Use of Building - Equal Access
vv. 7:330-E - Application to Establish Non-curriculum Related Student Groups That Are Not School Sponsored and Request for Free Use of School Premises for Meeting
ww. 8:10 - Connection with the Community
xx. 8:70 - Accommodating Individuals with Disabilities

There was no additional discussion on any of the proposed revisions.

A motion was made by Dowell with a second by Blythe to approve the proposed policy revisions as presented.

Roll Call Blythe – yes; Burt- yes; Dowell – yes; Deitrich – yes; Gebhardt – yes; Detherage – yes; Walker – yes. Motion Carried 7-0.

APPROVAL OF THE DISTRICT THREAT ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES:

There were no significant changes to the safety plans besides evacuation plans due to the construction.

Motion was made by Gebhardt with a second by Detherage to approve the minutes of the District Threat Assessment Committee that was held on Monday, August 3, 2026 as presented.

Roll Call Blythe – yes; Burt- yes; Dowell – yes; Deitrich – yes; Gebhardt – yes; Detherage – yes; Walker – yes. Motion Carried 7-0.

APPROVAL OF REQUEST TO PURCHASE CRISIS GO STUDENT SAFETY APPLICATION:

The total three-year cost for the app will be $8,102. It is noted that our area school partners and the Hancock County Sheriff's Department will all be using Crisis Go this year. There was discussion about the features of Crisis Go and how it would be utilized by staff in the event of an emergency. There was also discussion about the process of onboarding new staff and the importance of getting them trained at the beginning of every year.

A motion was made by Dowell with a second by Blythe to approve the quote from Crisis Go for their Safety I Response core safety and emergency response platform for a period of three years at a total cost of $8,102 payable over three years (year 1= $3,838), (year 2 = $2,132), (year 3 = $2,132) as presented.

Roll Call Blythe – yes; Burt- yes; Dowell – yes; Deitrich – yes; Gebhardt – yes; Detherage – yes; Walker – yes. Motion Carried 7-0.

APPROVAL OF THE DISTRICT BULLYING POLICY:

This policy must be reviewed annually. The policy was reviewed and no major changes were made.

A motion was made by Gebhardt with a second by Walker to approve the District Bullying Policy as presented.

Roll Call Blythe – yes; Burt- yes; Dowell – yes; Deitrich – yes; Gebhardt – yes; Detherage – yes; Walker – yes. Motion Carried 7-0.

APPROVAL OF THE DISTRICT WELLNESS POLICY:

Some changes were made to the wellness policy we had in place. The plan must be reviewed and updated every three years. It was discussed that the school is in the process of securing Epi Pens and Narcan to keep at the school. The district is also working on a plan for staff and students who have food allergies.

A motion was made by Detherage with a second by Walker to approve the District Wellness Policy as presented.

Roll Call Blythe – yes; Burt- yes; Dowell – yes; Deitrich – yes; Gebhardt – yes; Detherage – yes; Walker – yes. Motion Carried 7-0.

APPROVAL OF DISTRICT BUS ROUTES:

There was discussion about the number of students on each route and the possibility of not replacing drivers as they retire.

A motion was made by Dowell with a second by Deitrich to approve the District Bus Routes as presented.

Roll Call Blythe – yes; Burt- yes; Dowell – yes; Deitrich – yes; Gebhardt – yes; Detherage – yes; Walker – yes. Motion Carried 7-0.

APPROVAL OF THE QUOTE FOR VINYL COVE BASE REPLACEMENT FROM SAVEMORE CARPETS:

It was discussed at the previous meeting to replace this in some areas of the school. There was discussion about making sure it matches what is being put in the new addition.

A motion was made by Burt with a second by Dowell to approve the quote for the hallway cove replacement in the amount of $2,269.87 as presented.

Roll Call Blythe – yes; Burt- yes; Dowell – yes; Deitrich – yes; Gebhardt – yes; Detherage – yes; Walker – yes. Motion Carried 7-0.

ACCEPTANCE OF EIS REPORT FOR SUBMISSION TO ISBE:

Each year the school must review with their Board of Education the annual Administrator and Teacher Salary Benefit Report.

A motion was made by Blythe with a second by Gebhardt to accept the School Year 2026 EIS Administrator and Teacher Salary and Benefit Report as presented.

Roll Call Blythe – yes; Burt- yes; Dowell – yes; Deitrich – yes; Gebhardt – yes; Detherage – yes; Walker – yes. Motion Carried 7-0.

REPORTS:

The Board heard a brief report from Interim Superintendent Grimm involving the closing of E Street, the possibility of providing snacks to our students in the afternoon, waiving the $70 annual fee for afternoon milk for our Kindergarten students, and investigating the possibility of hiring a morning crossing guard in order to free Michael Siegfried of this responsibility. The letter to the Parents regarding our new Cell Phone Policy. This policy is in effect immediately as discussed with the students on August 19th.

The Board reviewed written reports from Mr. Hopper regarding his activities as Principal, Transportation Director and Athletic Director.

FY2027 TENTATIVE DISTRICT BUDGET:

The Board heard a presentation on the FY 27 Tentative District Budget. The proposed budget is a surplus budget although there are certain budget pressures we will be monitoring. The tentative budget may be changed or modified between now and September 23rd when we will be presenting the "final" budget to the Board for adoption. Mr. Grimm also shared with the Board a couple of documents that track revenue and expenditures for the last five years and that show the Board what the district fund balances have been over the last five years. It is positive to note that over the last five years the district has operated with a surplus in 3 of those 5 years and as a result the district's fund balances have increased. The numbers for last year and this year will be a bit skewed due to the timing of the bond money coming into the district for the building addition and the outflow of those funds to pay for the addition.

A motion was made by Dowell with a second by Blythe to accept the tentative FY 27 Budget as presented and that it be put on display for the 30 days prior to the final adoption on September 23, 2026.

Roll Call Blythe – yes; Burt- yes; Dowell – yes; Deitrich – yes; Gebhardt – yes; Detherage – yes; Walker – yes. Motion Carried 7-0.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

B. FY 27 DISTRICT BUDGET HEARING: By consensus in a voice vote the Board approved September 23. 2026 for the FY 27 District Budget Public Hearing and set the time for the hearing at 6:00pm in the PD Room.
C. PROGRESS REPORT: The Board hear a report on the progress on the building addition, the punch list for the lobby bathroom project and an update on the boiler project. All three projects are moving forward as expected.
D. DONATION TO ILLINI WEST PTO: The board discussed a possible contribution to the Illini West Sports Booster Club for the outdoor restroom facility project in Carthage. The board will be asked to approve making this donation at the September Board meeting.
E. PROVIDING FREE LUNCHES TO STAFF: The Board regretfully decided that they would not be moving forward with the idea of providing staff members free lunch due to the expected cost of doing so to the district.

F. WAIVING ENTRANCE FEES: The Board discussed continuing to waive entrance fees for 5th-8th grade students to home events where an entrance fee is charged. The Board will be asked to vote on this decision at the September Board meeting.
G. UPCOMING BOARD ELECTIONS: The Board was given information regarding the upcoming Board Elections.
H. MANDATED REPORTER TRAINING: Mr. Grimm provided a brief Mandated Reporter Training for the board.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:

The Board identified the following items as Future Agenda Items:

1. IW Bathroom Donation
2. Waiving of Admission Fees for home events for 5th-8th grade students

CLOSED SESSION:
A motion was made by Gebhardt with a second by Detherage to adjourn to closed session at 8:05pm 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; Dowell – yes; Deitrich – yes; Gebhardt – yes; Detherage – yes; Walker – yes. Motion Carried 7-0.

Discussion was had regarding personnel matters.

A motion was made by Deitrich with a second by Blythe to adjourn the closed session at 8:36pm. Majority of Ayes by voice vote. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Dowell with a second by Burt to return to open session at 8:36pm. Majority of Ayes by voice vote. Motion carried.

Meeting was called to order at 8:36pm by President Detherage.

Roll Call Blythe – yes; Burt- yes; Dowell – yes; Deitrich – yes; Gebhardt – yes; Detherage – yes; Walker – yes. Motion Carried 7-0.

ACTION AFTER CLOSED SESSION:

A. Retirements/Leaves – None
B. Transfers – None
C. Resignation –None
D. Extracurricular Employment – Mr. Grimm recommended that the district hire Max Richardson as a Substitute Cook.

A motion was made by Gebhardt with a second by Deitrich to hire Max Richardson as a Substitute Cook.

Roll Call Blythe – yes; Burt- yes; Dowell – yes; Deitrich – yes; Gebhardt – yes; Detherage – yes; Walker – yes. Motion Carried 7-0.

E. Employment
   a. None

FUTURE MEETING DATES AND TIME:

A. The board was reminded the next regular Board Meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 23, 2026 at 6:00pm in the PD Room. The Board also affirmed the Public Hearing for the FY 27 District Budget will be held at 6:00pm in the PD Room as well.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by Detherage with a second by Deitrich to adjourn the August 24, 2026 board meeting at 8:37pm. Majority of Ayes by Voice Vote. Motion carried.

THESE MINUTES ARE APPROVED AS WRITTEN THIS 23rd DAY OF SEPTEMBER, 2026.

Dustin Detherage, Board President

Liz McCarter, Board Secretary

Approved 9/23/26