

LANCASTER SCHOOL BOARD PROCEEDINGS

The Lancaster School Board met in regular session on Wednesday, February 11, 2026, at 7:00 p.m. in the Supt. Office. The following members were present: Lacey Lupien, Matt Nordin, Justin Peterson, Jim Scalese, Brittany Swenson and Mike Whitlock. Also present were Superintendent Nicole Thompson, AD/Dean Mark Bernstrom, Teacher Rep. Taylor Langen, Kittson County Enterprise reporter Jack Waters, and Mendy Coffield.

Chairperson Nordin called the meeting to order and took roll call.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by those in attendance.

On a motion by Swenson, second by Whitlock, the agenda was approved as presented.

On a motion by Peterson, second by Scalese, the consent agenda was approved as presented.

*The minutes of the January 21, 2026, regular meeting were approved.

*Trial Balance Month-End Balance: \$1,805,285.75.

*Payroll EFTs in the amount of \$151,860.50.

*Monthly bills for the regular and activity account in the amount of \$49,827.71.

*Check numbers 44361-44396.

*Credit Card EFTs were \$13,949.03.

*Electronic Funds Transfers (EFTs) in the amount of \$184,088.53.

*The Budget Comparison and Treasurer's report was reviewed.

The School Bus Purchase Rotation was reviewed; no new buses are needed at this time.

The \$40,000 CyberSecurity Grant that Supt. Thompson acquired was discussed. Items such as cyber insurance, Securely software, upgrading the key-pads, camera and converting to door faubs are all qualifying expenses.

The Capital Project Fund Account has now grown to \$73,000. This fund is a tax-deductible option for donors.

On a motion by Whitlock, second by Swenson and carried: WHEREAS, Minnesota Statute 123B.02, Subd. 6 provides: "The board may receive, for the benefit of the district, bequests, donations, or gifts for any proper purpose and apply the same to the purpose designated. In that behalf, the board may act as trustee of any trust created for the benefit of the district, or for the benefit of the district, or for the benefit of pupils thereof, including trusts created to provide pupils of the district with advanced education after completion of high school, in the advancement of education."; and WHEREAS, Minnesota Statutes 465.03 provides: "Any city, county, school district or town may accept a grant or devise of real or personal property to maintain such property for the benefit of its citizens in accordance with the terms prescribed by the donor. Nothing herein shall authorize such acceptance or use for religious or sectarian purposes. Every such acceptance shall be by resolution of the governing body adopted by a two-thirds majority of its members, expressing such terms in full."; and

WHEREAS, every such acceptance shall be by resolution of the governing body adopted by a two-thirds majority of its members, expressing such terms in full; THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the School Board of Lancaster Public School, ISD 356, gratefully accepts the following donations as identified below:

Donor	Item
American Legion	
Gambling Funds	\$1,000
MSHSL	

Foundation grant	\$365
Fred Wilebski	\$60,000
J. Wilson Mem Run	\$10,000
Ottertail Rebate	\$30,240

The vote on adoption of the Resolution was as follows:

Aye: Lacey Lupien, Matt Nordin, Justin Peterson, Jim Scalese, Brittany Swenson and Mike Whitlock.

Nay: None

Absent: None

Whereupon, said Resolution was declared duly adopted.

Math interviews were conducted the previous week with four candidates via Zoom. None of the candidates appeared to be a good fit for Lancaster School.

Superintendent Thompson presented information from Laura McNeill regarding her proposal to teach online math, technology, and CIHS courses for the 2026-27 school year. McNeill and Thompson discussed staffing needs and determined that grades 7-10 would require an in-room monitor, while college courses would not. If the grades 4-6 cybersecurity program proceeds as planned, classroom teachers would already be present during that time.

McNeill requested reimbursement for a Zoom Professional subscription (\$150) and repayment of 50% of two airline tickets. Any additional materials needed will be covered by McNeill or are already available in her classroom.

On a motion by Swenson, second by Peterson, and carried: Be It Resolved, that the Board of Education of Independent School District 356, approves the 2026/27 Teacher Contract with Laura McNeill, as presented.

On a motion by Scalese, second by Whitlock, and carried: Be It Resolved, that the Board of Education of Independent School District 356, approves the 4-year, \$500 per year, #1 Bearcat Fan Athletic Scholarship from the Eddie Weleski Family, as presented. Coffield will get clarification on where it is the same student for 4-years or a different one each year.

The Baseball Field Project Team will meet on Thursday, February 12th; the agenda was presented.

The Dean of Students / Activities Director Report was presented by Mark Bernstrom:

- The 2nd Quarter Honor Roll was presented.

- The Triple A Lancaster Recipients, Brody Scalese and Melody Voeltz, attended the Banquet and Brody was presented with the Area AAA Award.

- Bobbi McGee advanced into the Spelling Bee in TRF and ended in 4th place! This is very good!

- The 4th grade performance, assisted by LOON, was a very entertaining musical experience.

- FCCLA will travel to the State Capital on February 16 & 17. Laura McNeill and Torey Peterson will chaperone.

- Senior High Knowledge Bowl has been doing very well this year, they have had a record number of ties, and are winding down their season; Junior High will start up soon. Their first meet is on February 19th after school in Lancaster.

- Grades 4-6 went to the City Park for a sledding party to celebrate reaching their AR goals.

- The High School Phy Ed students in grades 7-10 will be bowling in TRF on February 19th during the morning.

- Band Contest will be February 25th at Roseau; we have 12 students attending.

- The One Act Play coop completed their first "season" together with good participation numbers. The play was about graduation.

- The Winter sports teams are heading in

to playoffs with Hockey playing this weekend. GBB is currently in 3rd; BBB is in 7th. The dates have been added to the google calendar and game spreadsheet. The BBB Semi-Final game is set for a Wednesday by the MSHSL.

- Spring sports schedules are almost complete and will be shared soon for baseball. Track will be later as the Invites come in.

- Thank you to the game workers; the sports seasons would not be able to happen without their help.

The Superintendent Report was presented by Nicole Thompson:

On a motion by Nordin, second by Peterson, and carried: Be It Resolved, that the Board of Education of Independent School District 356, approves and accepts the Memorandum of Understanding between Lancaster School and Kittson County Social Services as presented. Abstained: Swenson.

On a motion by Nordin, second by Swenson, and carried: Be It Resolved, that the Board of Education of Independent School District 356, approves and accepts the Memorandum of Agreement for the Online College in the High School (OCHS) for the 2026/27 school year as presented.

On a motion by Nordin, second by Peterson, and carried: Be It Resolved, that the Board of Education of Independent School District 356, denies moving forward with the approximate \$6,500 proposal for the INBYLT Facility Assessment/Condition Assessment Program.

The LEFSA Annual Fundraiser was held last weekend and served over 130 people; a new lifetime membership was also gained. The Annual meeting for LEFSA is set for Wednesday, February 25th at the Lancaster School cafeteria.

The 26/27 school calendar was presented; the majority of the teachers preferred to start prior to Labor Day this year.

On a motion by Whitlock, second by Peterson, and carried: Be It Resolved, that the Board of Education of Independent School District 356, approves the 2026/27 school year calendar as presented. The district will start the school year prior to Labor Day per Minnesota special legislation allowing school boards to opt for an early start before Labor Day (Sept. 7, 2026) due to the late holiday. SF1336 and HF1124 allow this local flexibility for that specific year, bypassing the traditional post-Labor Day mandate, with districts required to report their decision to the Commissioner of Education.

Work will begin on developing the 2026-27 high school master schedule. At this time of year, high school teachers are asked to provide input and suggestions regarding course offerings for the upcoming school year. Superintendent Thompson will provide an update on this process in March.

The last Strategic Planning meeting is set for Wednesday, March 18, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.

The next regular School Board meeting is also Wednesday, March 18th, 2026, at 7:00 p.m.

Inclement weather date: March 25, 2026.

On a motion by Peterson, second by Nordin the meeting was adjourned at 7:52 p.m.

Matt Nordin, Chairperson
Lacey Lupien, Clerk
(February 25, 2026)