

LANCASTER SCHOOL BOARD PROCEEDINGS

The Lancaster School Board met in regular session on Wednesday, January 21, 2026, at 7:00 p.m. in the Supt. Office. The following members were present: Lacey Lupien, Matt Nordin, Justin Peterson, Brittany Swenson, and Mike Whitlock. Also present were Superintendent Nicole Thompson, Dean / Activities Director Mark Bernstrom, Teacher Representative Leah Muir, Kittson County Enterprise reporters Anna Jahaula and Jack Waters, Mendy Coffield. Absent: Jim Scalese.

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

Chairperson Nordin called for nominations for Chairperson for the 2026 calendar year. Nomination by Peterson, second by Swenson for Matt Nordin. Nordin was elected Chairperson on a final motion by Swenson, second by Peterson, and carried. UC.

Chairperson Nordin called for nominations for Vice-Chairperson for the 2026 calendar year. Nomination by Nordin, second by Peterson for Brittany Swenson. Swenson was elected Vice Chairperson on a final motion by Peterson, second by Nordin, and carried.

Chairperson Nordin called for nominations for Clerk for the 2026 calendar year. Nomination by Swenson, second by Whitlock for Lacey Lupien. Lupien was elected Clerk on a final motion by Swenson, second by Nordin, and carried.

Chairperson Nordin called for nominations for Treasurer for the 2026 calendar year. Nomination by Lupien, second by Swenson for Justin Peterson. Peterson was elected Treasurer on a final motion by Swenson, second by Nordin, and carried.

A new signature card was not needed at this time.

On a motion by Nordin, second by Peterson, and carried: Be It Resolved, that the Board of Education of Independent School District 356, appoints Mendy Coffield as District Treasurer.

The PERA Defined Contribution Benefit Plan was discussed with board members; this plan can only be taken within 30 days from the start of service date.

On a motion by Nordin, second by Peterson, and carried: Be It Resolved, that the Board of Education of Independent School District 356, acknowledges that Mike Whitlock, Board Member, has subscribed and sworn before the Board of Education his Affidavit of Official Interest for 2026.

On a motion by Peterson, second by Nordin, and carried: Be It Resolved, that the Board of Education of Independent School District 356, authorizes Nicole Thompson as Superintendent and Mendy Coffield as Business Manager to conduct financial transactions for Independent School District #356; authorizes Mendy Coffield as Business Manager to conduct Electronic Funds Transfers transactions for Independent School District #356 per the EFT Annual Authorization; approves authorized signers on the following accounts:

Petty Cash: Mendy Coffield, Heather Rodin
Main: Chairperson, Vice-Chair, Clerk, Mendy Coffield
Certificate of Deposit: Mendy Coffield, Nicole Thompson
Savings Account: Mendy Coffield, Nicole Thompson
Credit Card: Mendy

Coffield, Nicole Thompson, Mark Bernstrom, Cory Waling, Alana Scalese

On a motion by Peterson, second by Whitlock, and carried: Be It Resolved, that the Board of Education of Independent School District 356, sets the meeting location as the Superintendent Office at Lancaster School, and the medium to be digital for the 2026 calendar year.

The school board election roster was reviewed; Lupien, Scalese and Swenson are all up for re-election. More details regarding filing dates, etc. will be shared when available.

On a motion by Nordin, second by Peterson, and carried: Be It Resolved, that the Board of Education of Independent School District 356, keeps the same rates for the following per diems per meeting for the 2026 calendar year: Chairperson: \$100, Clerk: \$85, Director \$80, and approves the organizational items as described below:

Organization	2026
Mileage Rate	IRS (.725)
Meeting Schedule	3rd Wednesday of the month, 7 p.m.
Prohibited meeting dates	Follow MSBA dates and meeting restriction
Inclement weather meeting plan	Reschedule for following Wed.
School District Depository	United Valley Bank, Prime Security Bank, Border Bank, MSDLAF, Charles Schwab
Legal Counsel	Terry Morrow (MSBA), Pemberton Law
Authorized Individuals	Superintendent, Chairperson, Vice Chairperson
Official Newspaper	Kittson County Enterprise

On a motion by Nordin, second by Swenson, and carried: Be It Resolved, that the Board of Education of Independent School District 356, appoints the following committees, teams, representatives: Budget: Scalese, Peterson
Personnel: Peterson, Lupien, Scalese, Swenson
Curriculum: Nordin, Scalese
Policy: Nordin, Lupien
Activities: Scalese, Whitlock
Facilities: Swenson, Whitlock
District Leadership Team (DLT): Peterson
NWRIC: Nordin
Wellness Policy: Lupien
Safety Committee: Whitlock
MSHSL: Scalese
LEFSA: Lupien, Peterson

Supt. Thompson reviewed the School Board Handbook.

On a motion by Nordin, second by Whitlock, and carried: Be It Resolved, that the Board of Education of Independent School District 356, acknowledges the annual reading of the School Board Handbook, as presented.

On a motion by Swenson, second by Nordin, and carried: Be It Resolved, that the Board of Education of Independent School District 356, approves the single reading of Policy 209: Code of Ethics, as presented.

On a motion by Nordin, second by Swenson, and carried: Be It Resolved, that the Board of Education of Independent School District 356, acknowledges the location (Parent Page webpage) of the MSBA 200 series policies recommended for school board members.

On a motion by Nordin, second by Whitlock, the consent agenda was

approved as presented.
*The minutes of the December 17, 2025, regular and special meeting were approved.
*Trial Balance Month-End Balance: \$1,774,134.
*Payroll EFTs in the amount of \$139,393.09.
*Monthly bills for the regular and activity account in the amount of \$53,946.97.
*Check numbers 44317-44360.
*Credit Card EFTs were \$13,620.18.
*Electronic Funds Transfers (EFTs) in the amount of \$175,432.70.
*The Budget Comparison and Treasurer's report was reviewed.

Discussion was held on the baseball field project including estimates and field location. Supt. Thompson requested a Committee be formed to continue to move forward with the project. Peterson and Lupien volunteered to be on the committee.

On a motion by Nordin, second by Swenson, and carried: Be It Resolved, that the Board of Education of Independent School District 356, approves moving forward with the baseball project and appointing Peterson and Lupien to the Baseball Field Committee.

On a motion by Whitlock, second by Peterson, and carried: Be It Resolved, that the Board of Education of Independent School District 356, accepts the low bid from TR Glass for the demolition, building and installation of windows for the west side of the tower, in the amount of \$127,408. Other bid received: Sterling: \$129,000.

On a motion by Nordin, second by Swenson, and carried: Be It Resolved, that the Board of Education of Independent School District 356, approves the LEFSA Funding Request Application as presented.

On a motion by Peterson, second by Swenson, 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: American Legion Baseball Post #214
Item: \$1,848.33
Purpose: Baseball Field Project

The vote on adoption of the Resolution was as follows:
Aye: Lacey Lupien, Matt Nordin, Justin Peterson, Brittany Swenson, and Mike Whitlock.
Nay: None Absent: Jim Scalese
Whereupon, said Resolution was declared duly adopted.

Supt. Thompson informed the board that there are six applications for the high school math position. Interviews need to

be set up soon. Swenson offered to assist with the interviews.

On a motion by Nordin, second by Lupien, and carried: Be It Resolved, that the Board of Education of Independent School District 356, approves the lane change request by Torey Peterson from BA to MA, effective February 1, 2026.

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 3-year (2026-2029) Superintendent/Principal Contract for Nicole Thompson, 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, approves the 2-year (2026-2028) Dean of Students/Activities Director Contract for Mark Bernstrom, as presented.

Supt. Thompson presented the Curriculum Purchasing rotation for the board to review. Language Arts continues to be the focus as we work to comply with the READAct. Supt. Thompson explained the various programs, curriculum, and screening tools used.

The 4th grade will be presenting "The Elixir of Love" a LOON (Little Opera of the North) production on February 5th. This is something new and will take the place of the spring musical trip to Grand Forks.

The Dean of Students/AD Report was presented by Bernstrom:
- The second semester started on January 20th. Teachers were given a few extra days to get their grades for 2nd quarter/1st semester completed due to the storm day last week.
- Senior High Knowledge Bowl has been very successful on their meets thus far this season. Junior High Knowledge Bowl has just started practicing over lunch.
- The One Act Play performs this week: January 21st at KC auditorium, January 22nd gr. 4-12 performance, west gym, and the actual Competition is Friday, January 23rd at 5:15 p.m. Even if there is inclement weather and schools are closed, the competition will go on.
- The Spelling Bee competition took place last week and was again very entertaining. The top three went five to six rounds. Bobbi McGee will advance to the next level on February 4th
- jmc is moving to the next stage as we transition from the learning curve into real life.

The Superintendent Report was presented by Thompson:
- MLK Day was Monday, January 19th; the Teachers endured a full day of training. The morning sessions were online through the NWSC based on various topics; the afternoon was hands on Triage Training provided by US Customs and Border Patrol.
- The MSBA Convention items Thompson wishes to pursue further are: I Love You Guys (school safety), cell phones, and the Student Design Challenge that is being done at Roseau School. These items will be discussed at the final Strategic Planning Sessions on March 18th.
- The LEFSA annual meeting has been set for February 25th, and the annual fundraiser/membership date is February 7th during Frost Fest.

The next Strategic Plan work night is March 18th.

The next regular meeting is set for Wednesday, February 11th at 7:00 p.m.

On a motion by Whitlock, second by Peterson and carried, the meeting was adjourned at 8:08 p.m.

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