



Independent School Dist. No. 857
100 County Road 25
Lewiston, MN 55952
(507) 523-2191

Gwen Carman, Superintendent
Cory Hanson, High School Principal • Dave Riebel, PK - Elementary Principal

Building A Caring, Adaptable, Respectful, Determined, Successful Community of Learners

Belief Statements (internal operations- beliefs to drive decisions):

- **LIFELONG LEARNERS:** We believe in the value of education for all ages.
- **ACCOUNTABILITY:** We believe we are accountable for our actions and outcomes.
- **COMMUNITY CENTERED:** We believe our schools are the central hub of our community and essential for building strong communities.
- **ADAPTABLE:** We believe in being responsive to an ever-changing world.
- **RESPECTFUL:** We believe in everyone's right to safety, respect, and dignity in our schools.
- **DIVERSE:** We believe in fostering the value of each other's individual differences, perspectives, and life experiences.
- **STUDENT FOCUSED:** We believe that we are all responsible for the success of students.

Goals

1. **STUDENT SUCCESS:** Provide all students with the education they need for success: academically, emotionally, and socially.
2. **EFFECTIVE STAFFING:** Hire, maintain, train and support staff to be as effective as possible.
3. **FINANCE:** Be financially healthy and sustainable.
4. **FACILITIES:** Have facilities that are safe, modern and conducive to 21st century education.
5. **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:** Engage with parents, community members and business owners.

Superintendent's Report to the School Board

Respectfully Submitted by Gwen Carman

May 12, 2025

Meeting Agenda Items Notes

CEU Committee This committee was inadvertently left off when you appointed Board members to committees in January. This Committee is coordinated by Mari Jo Starks and is the committee responsible for approving teachers' CEUs for licensure renewals. They typically meet remotely 3 times/year at 3:15pm. Mari Jo will send out the meeting dates in September.

Resolution Regarding Financing of Solar Panel Projects Julie and I have been working with Ehlers (Jodie and Shelby) on strategies for financing the solar panel projects with minimal cost and a strategy to address 'worse case scenario' of the state or federal grants not being paid as we have been told they will, or not being paid on a timely basis. In July, we will need to start paying invoices for the panels and installation. We can then request reimbursement from the State for which we have an approved contract. For the federal grant, after the panels are producing energy we can fill out the necessary paperwork and the 30% rebate will come at the end of your fiscal year. We have been assured that is still the law and the rebate is in effect. Of course, even with these assurances, it is responsible for us to do what we can to avoid the estimated entire \$848,386 being paid by the General Fund and being 'on hold' for reimbursement.

The proposed resolution would enable the district to utilize the interest earnings from the building referendum funds for these initial payments. Then when grant reimbursements are received, those funds could be used for the building projects. While we would not be earning building bond interest in this scenario, we also are not paying interest for the financing.

As of Friday morning, I am waiting for the Resolution to be send to me from our attorney and Ehlers. I will add it to the agenda packet when I receive it.

FY25 Amended Budget Julie will present a final FY25 budget that will reflect anticipated year end revenues and expenses. She will be present at the meeting, though needs to leave as soon as she can. On the Attachment you will see that she is showing a Projected End of Year Fund Balance of \$352,690 (4%).

The **June 2024** Unreserved Fund Balance was **\$423,586 (5.65%)**. (On Dr. Laager's Comparison Chart)

To accurately compare the June 2024 balance to what Julie is projecting, we need to add:

\$352,690 (Unassigned Fund Balance) + \$381,753 (Assigned Funds – which includes funds for Vehicles, Instructional Technology, Facilities/Capital, Technology, Curriculum) = \$734,443.

June 2025 Projection: \$734,443/\$8,815,884 (Total FY25 General Fund Expenditures) = **8.3%**

F26 Budget Discussion This agenda item will be an opportunity to review the current planned adjustments, and for the Board to provide direction on additional adjustments you would like administration to incorporate in the FY26 budget that will be presented in June.

Agreement for St. John's School to Become a Site The Agreement essentially provides for the St. John's Food Service program to be a 'site' under our Food Service program. The agreement specifies the details. St. John's supports the Agreement, pending the Board's approval.

Cardinal Foundation Supporting Elementary Field Trips Thank you to the Cardinal Foundation for approving up to \$10,500 to cover expenses for elementary field trips. Thank you to the PLAY Group who has also budgeted \$500 for this purpose, which if approved by them, the CF will pay up to \$10,000. The district will invoice the CF for the individual trips.

OTHER ITEMS

Support Staff and Transportation Staff 2025-2027 Handbooks I would like to schedule a meeting with the Board representatives and Julie to discuss the next two years' Handbooks. Board representatives are Dan Kreidermacher, Sara Daley and Luke Miller.

Facility Renovations Planning Updates

1. The High School C Gym will be refinished Oct 10-31. This will allow the week of Nov 3-7 to install new bleachers and be ready for basketball.
2. Bids for tuck pointing and other exterior repair work will be opened May 29th. This will be done Summer of 2025.
3. ISG is scheduled to be here May 21st to show initial designs for the renovations. Staff will provide input and there may be additional revisions. If you would like to see them on May 21st, please let me know what time works best for you.

College/Career Readiness – Local Business Partnering: We will have a second meeting on May 15th at 3:30pm. The goals of this meeting will be to discuss the business' spring 2025 visits with students and discuss continued strategies to expand PK-12 students awareness of career options and emphasizing the 'soft skills' students and employees need to be successful.

May 2025 News from the Nest Is at the printer and should be in mailboxes by the end of the week. As we discussed, Dr. Hanson and I collaborated on an informational piece re PSEO that will be included in this issue.

Facts and Myths About High School Students Earning College Credits

MYTH: MN High Schools students cannot earn free college credits in High School.

FACT: MN High School sophomores, juniors and seniors that meet certain academic criteria may have the option to earn free college credits.

MYTH: PSEO is the only option and the best option for students to earn free college credits.

FACT: Lewiston – Altura High School students can earn free college credits by taking concurrent courses (students take a high school class with LAHS teachers and earn both high school and college credits), *CLEP*, Articulated classes and Advance Placement courses and do not require students to leave LAHS. Post Secondary Enrollment Option (PSEO) is also an option for students.

MYTH: College credits are free for students/families and result in no loss of revenue for the school district.

FACT: PSEO enrollment results in– a significant loss of revenue for the district. The School District pays the colleges for concurrent courses, but these costs are significantly less than the loss of revenue the district incurs from PSEO enrollments.

MYTH: PSEO classes are more rigorous than our high school courses.

FACT: Many times, students choose PSEO because they are easier and require less time than advanced high school classes. This has a negative impact on a student's overall readiness for more difficult college classes after high school.

Most PSEO classes are fully online and have minimal ‘live’ face to face interactions with an instructor or peers. While this allows for student schedule flexibility enabling them to work during the school day, students miss out on engaging instruction, being part of the high school culture and environment, and daily school leadership opportunities. These important experiences have a significant role in promoting the student’s readiness for college or career success after high school graduation.

MYTH: Students are taking PSEO for courses not offered at LAHS.

FACT: Up to ½ of PSEO courses taken are offered at LAHS. LAHS offers 29 college credits through concurrent courses: Agriculture (6), Choir (6), Math (8) and Speech/Language Arts (9). We also offer Advanced Placement Calculus and Statistics, in addition to articulated credits.

MYTH: PSEO does not require high school staff to support PSEO students.

FACT: Even though PSEO results in a significant loss of revenue, high school staff must facilitate the students' PSEO scheduling, provide a tech device and a school space for PSEO students to take their online courses.

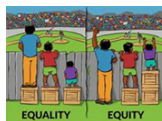
Online PSEO courses require a tremendous amount of maturity and self-discipline. When a student is struggling with or failing a PSEO course, LAHS staff cannot support or tutor them as we do for LAHS concurrent students. Instead, the PSEO student needs to rely on working with their college counselor or instructor, or the campus writing/help center. When a student fails more than one PSEO course, the student is no longer on track to graduate from high school on time and must make immediate plans to make up that course credit. This becomes the responsibility of the student and district, not the college.

Please contact LAHS Principal Cory Hanson if you have any questions about students' options to earn college credits in high school. He can be reached at chanson@lewalt.k12.mn.us or 507-522-3232.

END of YEAR The end of the school year is so busy with so many concerts, special activities and programs, and also student assessments. Thank you to the principals, office staff, food service, transportation team, teachers and paraprofessionals for managing all the changes in routines, and providing students an enriching and celebratory end of school year. 5th Grade Graduation is May 29th, and HS Graduation is May 30th.

L-A Actual Enrollment Numbers																	
	ECSE	VPK	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total Students	ADM
March 1 2025	33	23	38	26	36	38	25	39	38	38	37	55	58	48	56	588	634.9
April 1 2025	33	23	38	26	36	38	25	39	38	38	37	55	58	48	56	588	634.9
May 1 2025	33	23	38	26	36	38	25	39	38	38	37	55	58	48	56	588	634.9
May 29 2025																0	0

Enrollment Projected for FY 2026																	
	ECSE	VPK	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total Students	
Actual Students	35	20	27	38	26	36	38	26	39	38	38	37	55	57	48	558	602.6
St. John's												6				6	7.2
SILO												1				1	1.2
Rollingstone									3							3	3
Other									1							1	1
Open Enrolled PreK moving to K																0	0
Open Enrollment Other																0	0
All District Numbers																569	615



Equity is important in all our decision making.

