



Lewiston–Altura Public School District  
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*Gwen Porter, Superintendent*  
*Dave Riebel, PreKdg – 5 Principal*  
*Cory Hanson, 6-12 Principal*

**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 Porter**  
**May 11, 2026**

**Meeting Agenda Item Notes**

**Board Meeting Guest Speakers** Gary Lovitz and Luke Pfothauer from InGensa will present project updates and this will be followed by action items for the Board regarding project work. Julie will also be present during this portion of the agenda to answer any budget questions.

Lewiston City Administrator Ragini Varma will also be speaking to the Board on topics of mutual interest.

**Asbestos Abatement Bids** On the agenda are three sets of bids for asbestos abatement as part of the facility projects. The extent of the asbestos in both schools is more than was originally anticipated but it obviously something we have to comply with. The bids would address needs at both schools. Not included in these bids are additional abatement for the B-Gym and the Elementary Gym in the Summer of 2027. Julie, Luke, Gary, Finance Committee members and I have discussed the overall project budget and making sure that these abatement costs are covered, as well as the many other needs.

**Demco Furniture Quotes** A few months ago, we interviewed three different school furniture suppliers to assist us with the selection and purchasing of furniture. We selected Demco, and they have provided us many options and designs, while also working with the recommendations of the ISG architects on coloring. The principals and I have gone through their recommendations a few times and taken time to be selective and have eliminated many items that we felt were too costly or unnecessary. On the agenda, are their quotes which total \$369,497.05. (There will be an estimated deduction of @ 30,000 for elementary library shelving that are already part of the general contractor's bid.) The project budget has a line item of \$350,000 for furniture.

The furniture included in these quotes includes elementary library shelving, tables, chairs and a few 'soft' pieces of furniture; elementary and HS staff room furniture; elementary and HS office furniture; HS science classroom tables and chairs (two classrooms); Tech Ed and Ag Ed classroom tables and chairs; heavy duty shelving for wood storage; choir room chairs.

In addition, the Cardinal Foundation has already received grant funding for most teachers to receive a new chair in the fall. I am also working with the Cardinal Foundation to hopefully get grant approved for each elementary classroom to get at least one new large classroom rug.

We will also be purchasing a wrestling mat (\$11,250) and gym pads (\$5000).

**CTE Welders and Welding Tables** Mr. Stoppelmoor and Dr. Hanson have done much research on the best and affordable welders and welding tables for the new CTE classroom. The agenda includes a recommendation to purchase 10 welders (\$27,979.70) and 10 welding tables for up to \$15,285. A local business has expressed that they may be willing to provide the welding tables at a reduced rate. This action item would enable us to pursue this important equipment with a maximum.

**Achievement and Integration 2026-2029 Renewal** We need to renew our Achievement and Integration Plan for 2026-2029. Our first year was highly successful with Student Success Liaison Mercedes Bustain making enormous strides with our non English speaking parents in regards to building relationships, assisting them with understanding and access school services, translation and trust with school staff. She also had two parent meetings for these parents which were very successful. She also did much work directly with students and their teachers to help facilitate communication and problem solving. We will miss Ms. Bustain as she has resigned to pursue work in the Rochester area more in alignment with her career goals. We are hoping to hire a replacement soon.

**November 2026 School Board Elections:** The School District will have school board elections on November 3, 2026. Three current members' (Baer, Daley, Kreidermacher) four-year term will end in December 2026. The filing period (re-election or for new candidates) will be July 14 – July 28<sup>th</sup>. The resolution calling for the election is on the agenda.

We will be advertising that individuals may sign up to be a school board candidate at the Elementary Conference Room July 14-17, 20-24, 27 from 9:00am – 1:00pm; and July 28<sup>th</sup> 8:00am – 5:00pm. Thank you to Shelly Pringle for working these summer hours to facilitate this important process.

**Tiny Robot** The Finance Committee with Dan Buege and Activities Director Ryan Eppen have spent much time assessing the need (or not) to purchase a Tiny Robot. A Tiny Robot is able to be programmed and paint football, softball, baseball field lines with minimal human assistance. This would replace our current line painter that needs replacing and requires manual operation and uses much more paint than what the Tiny

Robot requires. The football field is particularly labor intensive and time consuming. We currently most often rely on volunteer coaches to do this essential task and that is not a sustainable option. The Committee spoke with the Tiny Robot sales representative on the phone. A demonstration was held last week that was impressive on its ease and accuracy! The total cost of the robot is \$33,990 which includes the technology needed, training and \$2,000 worth of paint. Julie recommends this funding can be taken from capital funds.

**Track Maintenance** The high school track is in need of maintenance to address cracks and normal wear. The cost is \$79,990. This cost would be taken from LTFM funding. This is the lowest quote of three that were solicited.

**Prime Foodservice Vendor Bid for the Southeast MN United Food Service Cooperative** Thank you to Food Service Director Vickie Speltz and Business Manager Julie Grant for their leadership in facilitating a comprehensive bid solicitation process for the Cooperative that has 12 southeastern MN school district. Performance Foodservice submitted the recommended proposal. Vickie will be at the meeting to discuss.

## **Additional Updates**

**FY 2026 and FY2027 Budget** Neither of these are on the agenda. Both will be on the June agenda. I anticipate we will be on track to reach the \$200,000 budget adjustment target for FY27.

**Superintendent Gruen Visit** Mark will be here on Thursday, May 14th. He is available to have lunch with Board members @ noon at The Heartland Country Club. Please let me know if you would like to meet him there. We can't have more than 3 board members. He is also meeting with Dave, Cory, Gary and Dave (InGensa) and me during the day.

**2026-2027 Individual Work Agreements and Teacher Contracts** The Business Office has been working diligently to give every staff member 2026-2027 Work Agreement (unlicensed staff) or Contract (teachers). It has been many years since the office staff have been able to do these in the spring. The Board Chair and Clerk will need to sign these also. Please plan to do these on May 18<sup>th</sup> or 19<sup>th</sup>.

**Lewiston and Altura Area Business Meeting** We had another positive meeting with area business representatives on April 30<sup>th</sup>. Thank you to Mary Anne Benke, the Bluff Country Collaborative Coordinator, who organized our February 26<sup>th</sup> gr. 5-12 Career Fair and provided us survey and data about the Fair at this meeting. The businesses who attended provided important feedback also and were very encouraging to continue having the Fair in future years, with a particular emphasis on juniors and seniors and possible ways to also invite parents. We also reviewed the high school's Personal Skill Grading which was an outcome of our initial business conversations (more concerned about employability skills vs certificates or specific tool/machine mastery). We also updated them on the plans for the CTE area classroom and work spaces.

**Summer School Board Meeting Location Change Reminder:** The summer meetings on June 8<sup>th</sup>, July 13 and August 10<sup>th</sup> will be held City of Lewiston Council Meeting Room due to the construction and that the HS Library will generally be inaccessible to the public.

**TODAY**  
A publication of Minnesota Rural Water Association

**MRWA 2026 Water Week Poster Contest Winners**  
Page 18

**1st Place**  
picture (left) was drawn by Blakelyn Docker, 4th grader from Lewiston-Altura Elementary School, Lewiston, MN

**2026 MRWA Technical Conference Photo Recap**  
Pages 50-53

**RURAL WATER STRONG**  
2025

**Enrollment**

Grade Level	May 29, 2025	Sept 4, 2025	April 1, 2026	May 1, 2026	Anticipated Sept 14, 2026	Estimate Sept 2027
<b>Kdg</b>	38	29	27	28	26	39
<b>1st</b>	26	39	38	39	27	26
<b>2<sup>nd</sup></b>	36	28	28	28	38	27
<b>3<sup>rd</sup></b>	38	36	36	36	28	38
<b>4<sup>th</sup></b>	25	41	40	39	36	28
<b>5<sup>th</sup></b>	39	29	26	26	40	36
<b>6<sup>th</sup></b>	38	44	43	43	27 (+1)	42 (+2)
<b>7<sup>th</sup></b>	38	36	36	36	44	27
<b>8<sup>th</sup></b>	37	39	39	39	36	44
<b>9<sup>th</sup></b>	55	45	43	43	51 (+12)	39 (+3)
<b>10<sup>th</sup></b>	58	55	52	52	43	51
<b>11<sup>th</sup></b>	48	58	58	58	52	43
<b>12<sup>th</sup></b>	56	48	49	49	58	52
<b>Total</b>	<b>532</b>	<b>527</b>	<b>515</b>	<b>516</b>	<b>506</b>	<b>492</b>

*Equity is important in all of our decision making.*

