



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

April 8, 2024

Meeting Agenda Items Notes

HS Trips: Mr. Hamilton and Mr. Wilmes will share highlights from their recent trip to Disney. Mr. Scheck will be asking for Board approval for another trip to Washington, D.C. in June 2025.

MCA Testing Data and Information 3rd grade teacher Mr. Schmalz and MS Math Teacher Mr. Brent Olson will present information regarding the preparation they provide students and our data results.

School Forest Parcels A discussion item will be the 20 and 40 acre parcels of land the district owns that is designated officially as School Forest property. If the district sold this property, it could be a 2024-2025 revenue source that could potentially be spread out and used over 2-4 years. As we have FY25 needed budget adjustments, this could provide needed revenue.

Attached to agenda you have communications from Winona County Recorder Bob Bambenek and Winona County Assessor John Conway about the property. Also included are the deed transfers from 1957 and 1958. The district has utilized the property sparingly over the past several years for academic purposes. Farmer’s Park and Whitewater State Park are more frequently destinations for outdoor education for students. It is possible we could pursue a joint powers

agreement with Winona County to have Farmer's Park designated as our 'School Forest.' This would enable the district to receive educational information and support from the MN DNR.

2024-2025 General Fund Budget Adjustments Attached is an updated budget adjustment document. At the last meeting, I was asked to develop adjustments that did not include a possible \$150,000 in donations. Without that donation, the current estimates are approximately \$196,000 short of the recommended \$751,000. Page 5 has additional possibilities for consideration. We can discuss these at the meeting.

OTHER ITEMS

Support Staff & Bus Driver Handbooks Daniel, Sarah, Sara, Julie and I met and discussed the Handbooks. We have invited staff that are work under these Handbooks to meet with us on April 15th to have input on possible changes in the 2024-2026 Handbooks.

Minnie Wright Scholarship Committee Please remember that these reviews need to be done by May 1st.

Katie Ketchum April 23rd L-A alumni Katie Ketchum has been serving as the MN FFA President. This is an extraordinary honor for her and our L-A FFA program. Katie will be concluding her term in April and she will be speaking at a ceremony in St. Cloud April 23rd. It would be important to have a strong representation from our district present to honor her and her accomplishments. Please let me know if you as a Board member, would be interested and willing to attend this.

Reminder: The Lewiston Chamber of Commerce will be meeting on Wednesday, April 17th at noon at the Rec Café. These are opportunities to interact with Lewiston business owners.

Elementary K-5 Music Concerts will be held in the gym on Thursday, May 23rd. K-2 (9-9:30am); Gr 3 & 5 (10:00-10:30am); 5th grade Band Instruments (10:40-10:55am); Grade 4 "The Incredible Westward Movement" (1-1:45pm)

Meeting with Wanek Foundation on April 3rd Career and Technical Education (CTE) is an important component of the work with do with students, and also a priority for the Ron and Joyce Wanek Foundation. We have been working for several months with the Foundation and meeting separately to develop a vision for our PK-12 CTE and programming. Attached to your agenda is the document we shared with three representatives of the Wanek Foundation on April 3rd and outlines how we can strengthen what we are currently doing in this area. We specifically discussed with the representatives the possibility of working with them for funding for the renovation cost for our CTE classrooms, a 2000 square foot addition construction costs and/or the tools, educational support materials and curriculum to support the learning for our students. They are going to take our potential request to their Board and we are awaiting feedback from them.

Thank you to Dave Pringle, Dave Riebel, Cory Hanson, Craig Porter, Mike Schell (SSC), Luke Pfothenauer, Shelly Van Den Heuvel for being part of this important meeting and many site visits and meetings prior. Thank you also to Mr. Stoppelmoor and Mr. Acord for being part of our visit to the CTE classroom spaces.

Task Force Meetings We had our first meeting on March 26th and will meet again on April 17th. At the meeting, we can discuss thoughts about the meeting and priorities for the April 17th meeting. I am working with the InGensa staff on the agenda and planning. We are also planning for community meetings May 1 (Altura) and May 8th (Lewiston).

Possible Solar Panel Project I am continuing to work with Solar Connections, Inc and exploring financing options (Minnwest Bank, People's State Bank, Solar connections) for a possible solar panel project. As you know, if we pursue a project at the elementary and/or high school, energy savings would ultimately (4-5 years) cover the district's upfront costs. Note that the elementary project costs may be slightly adjusted. We will have

this on the May 13th Board agenda as the Board will need to make a decision regarding pursuing a grant application in June.

High School:

Total Project Cost: \$428,260

Solar for Schools Grant: \$214,130 (State Grant- 50%)

30% Elective Pay: \$128,478 (Federal Grant – 30%)

District Cost: \$85,652 (20%) (We will need to finance \$214,130 as it may take up to a year to receive the 30% Federal Grant amount).

Elementary School:

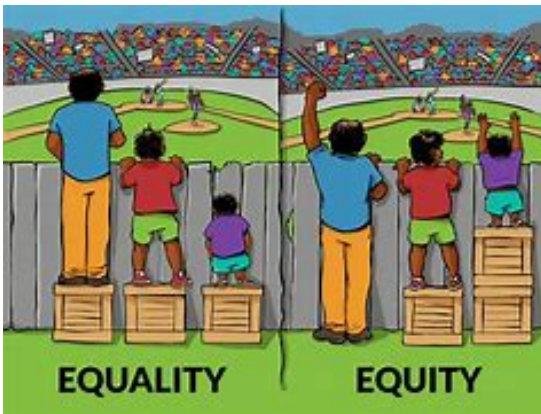
Total Project Cost: \$350,244

Solar for Schools Grant: \$175,122 (State Grant- 50%)

30% Elective Pay: \$105,073 (Federal Grant – 30%)

Remaining Balance: \$70,049 (We will need to finance \$175,122 as it may take up to a year to receive the 30% Federal Grant amount).

Total Potential Financing= \$382,252 (District Total Costs \$155,701 plus interest). Electric bill savings would be an estimated \$50,000-\$60,000 annually.



A reminder of the importance of considering equity in the work we do. Every student deserves our best and what s/he needs to achieve.