G.7.b.

BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 29, 2025 – 6:30 P.M.

The Board of Education of the L'Anse Creuse Public Schools district convened a Regular Board Meeting on Monday, September 29, 2025 at 6:30 p.m. at the Harry L. Wheeler Community Center and Administrative Offices, located at 24076 F.V. Pankow Boulevard, Clinton Township, Michigan.

A. Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance, Roll Call

Mr. Al Doss, Vice President, called the Regular Board Meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Roll Call

Present:
Mr. Al Doss, Vice President
Mrs. Sharon Ross, Secretary
Mr. John Da Via, Treasurer
Mr. Jeffrey Cyprus, Trustee
Mrs. Sandra Hernden, Trustee
Mr. Shane Sellers, Trustee

Absent:
Mr. Adam Lipski, President

Also Present:
Mr. Keith Howell, Superintendent
Ms. Lisa Montpas, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction
Mr. Michael Van Camp, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources
Mrs. Kathy Konon, Assistant Superintendent for Business & Operations
Mrs. Nancy Supanich, Director for Special Education
Dr. Tony Sedick, Director for Elementary Education
Dr. Major Mickens, Director for Community Education and Student Services
Mr. Brandon Streng, Director for Technology
Mr. Patrick Ward, Director for Operations
Employees and Patrons of the District

Mr. Doss stated a request was received to add a closed session to agenda item F. Student Expulsion pursuant to Section 8(1)(b) of the Open Meetings Act to consider the dismissal, suspension, or disciplining of a student if the public body is part of the school district, intermediate school district, or institution of higher education that the student is attending, and if the student or the student's parent or guardian requests a closed hearing.

B. *Approval of Agenda for the September 29, 2025 Regular Board Meeting

Motion by Mr. Cyprus, supported by Mrs. Hernden, to approve the September 29, 2025 Regular Board Meeting Agenda with the following change:

- Adding a closed session to item F. Student Expulsion

Yes: All
No: None
Motion carried.

C. Presentations

C.1. Spring All State Player Recognition

Mr. Howell introduced Harmonie Cain, a sophomore at L'Anse Creuse High School – North, who was named to the Michigan High School Tennis Coaches Association Division 1 All-State team. She is the only L'Anse Creuse tennis player to receive this state-level honor, which is awarded by a board of coaches from across Michigan who recognize the top players in each division. Her coach, Mr. John Broder, thanked the district for prioritizing the new tennis courts at the high schools in the recent bond issue. He recognized Harmonie for her outstanding achievements in tennis, including an impressive record of 18 wins and 2 losses, which set a school record. She played number one singles, earning the title of the league's most valuable player and a spot on the Macomb County Dream Team. Harmonie was presented with a certificate for her All-State honors, and appreciation was expressed for her supportive family.

C.2. National Qualifying Dance Teams

Mr. Howell introduced the Crusader Varsity and JV Dance teams, as well as the L'Anse Creuse Middle School Dance team, who earned a bid to the NDA National Championship on February 14-16, 2026 in Orlando, Florida. A total of 26 dancers will represent their teams, schools, and the district on the national stage. Their coach, Ms. Alyssa Duche expressed gratitude for the opportunity to lead the new competitive dance program along with her sister, Ashley, which includes five teams. She stated that three teams qualified for Nationals after attending the UDA Dance Camp in July and they're excited to represent L'Anse Creuse. The coaches thanked everyone for their support and encouraged the dancers to continue making the community proud.

Mr. Doss called a break at 6:40 p.m. The meeting reconvened at 6:45 p.m.

D. Hearing of School District Patrons

Kevin Hausner, parent in the district, expressed concerns about the lack of air conditioning at LCHS and Middle School-Central during volleyball games. He highlighted the importance of air conditioning for student safety, particularly in relation to heat illness. He stated a need for the district to prioritize student health and requested an explanation for the current situation.

Jody Lesinski, resident in the district, raised concerns about a teacher's comments made in social media, which he believes violated district policies regarding employee conduct and ethics. He questioned the Board's response to this situation, and expressed disappointment at the perceived lack of action taken to address the issue.

Michael Lynch, teacher, spoke about the need for the community to focus on state-level funding issues affecting public education in Michigan. He explained that the state has not kept up with inflation in school funding, which has led to budget cuts and challenges for the district and others. He urged the community to engage with legislators to advocate for better funding for schools, highlighting that a significant portion of the district's budget is dependent on decisions made in Lansing.

Mr. P., resident, requested the removal of a teacher from the upcoming homecoming events due to her recent comments on social media. He asked the district to address these comments, emphasizing the need for accountability and adherence to the district's no bullying policy and called for a public denouncement of this kind of behavior.

Kristin Carson, parent in the district, raised concerns about hearing that a teacher expressed her political views in the classroom. She questioned the appropriateness of this if it's happening and requested clarification on how the district plans to address it. She also criticized the district's curriculum, expressing disappointment in the quality of education she feels her student received compared to her previous school district and questioned recent changes in curriculum standards.

Kelly McDevitt, teacher and president of the L'Anse Creuse Education Association, highlighted the collaborative efforts of middle school English Language Arts teachers who have been working with district instructional coaches to enhance programming across the district. She praised their commitment to improving educational standards, emphasizing the importance of collaboration and respect among educators in fostering a positive learning environment for students. She expressed gratitude for the dedication of the middle school ELA staff and coaches, reinforcing that professionalism and teamwork are essential for achieving student and district goals.

Selena Torres, resident, read a letter on behalf of her mother, Bridget, to address the board about her brother, a student at MSN, who tragically died by suicide at the age of 11. She emphasized the need for systemic changes to prevent bullying and ensure student safety, calling for the implementation of an anonymous reporting tool, mandatory anti-bullying training for staff, and increased access to counselors. She urged the district to take more steps to create a supportive environment for all, highlighting the importance of addressing bullying and protecting children.

Alysia Childers, resident, expressed concern about curriculum being introduced in lower elementary grades that she believes promotes ideology rather than basic academic skills. She stated that parental rights in education are important, and that schools should not impose ideological questions on young children without parental knowledge and consent. She urged the Board to focus on subjects like literacy and math, and believes there should be a return to traditional education that prioritizes academic development over ideological discussions.

E. Superintendent's Report

E.1. District Update

Mr. Howell stated he typically doesn't address patrons, but wanted to praise the bravery of Ms. Torres who shared a letter about her brother with the community earlier in the meeting and assured her that their family's concerns are being heard.

He also stated that discussions about individual staff members would follow established protocols to protect the rights of all parties involved. He stated that the Board would be going into closed session to review a legal opinion on the matter, which is the appropriate setting for that discussion. Additionally, he expressed his view in general on the distractions caused by social media, particularly Facebook, and emphasized the importance of direct communication with school administrators and teachers when there is a question or concern.

Lastly, he thanked recently retired Director for Operations, Don Gratton, for his hard work and many contributions to the district, stating his appreciation for the opportunity to work with him. He wished Mr. Gratton the best on his well-deserved retirement.

E.2. Bond Update

Mr. Howell introduced Sam Esser of Barton Malow and Ms. Vicki Smith of Partners in Architecture. Mr. Esser provided a construction update stating that work on the ball fields and tennis courts is progressing on schedule, with completion expected this fall. The tennis courts have had concrete poured and perimeter fencing installed, while turf has been laid at the baseball and softball fields at High School North. Upcoming tasks include preparing the tennis court surfaces for painting, installing backstop netting, and completing dugouts and press boxes, with additional work on pool renovations planned for spring.

Ms. Smith also provided updates on various construction projects, stating the pool filtration project at High School North has been successfully completed, with plans for a similar upgrade to the pool at LCHS next summer. The pavement replacement is nearing completion, with minor adjustments still being made. Upcoming projects include interior and exterior upgrades for four schools, electrical upgrades, and the installation of turf for playgrounds. In addition, updates to drinking fountains and hydration stations are planned, and bids for the mechanical controls upgrades project will be voted on later in the meeting. Roof replacements are mostly finished, and new band instruments are on order, with a band trailer expected to arrive in the spring.

Mr. Streng provided a technology update highlighting three main projects currently underway. First, the district is working on upgrading the sound systems to integrate PA and classroom audio into a single system, which will include emergency alert features that allow teachers to notify the main office quickly. Second, there are plans for a comprehensive overhaul of the security camera system, replacing all existing cameras with high-definition, IP-based models to enhance safety and functionality. Finally, the district is also focusing on upgrading the interior fiber optic network to improve speed and reliability, with plans for implementation extending into 2026.

Mr. Howell also introduced Mr. Pat Ward, the new Director for Operations, noting that it was his first day in the role. He stated he was looking forward to working with him, mentioning that he had already participated in several meetings and is quickly getting up to speed.

Discussion was held about setting a date for the Superintendent Evaluation and the date of October 6 at 6:00 p.m. was set.

F. Student Expulsion

****Closed Session** – Motion to enter closed session pursuant to Section 8(1)(b) of the Open Meetings Act to consider the dismissal, suspension, or disciplining of a student if the public body is part of the school district, intermediate school district, or institution of higher education that the student is attending, and if the student or the student's parent or guardian requests a closed hearing.

Motion by Mr. Sellers, supported by Mrs. Hernden, to enter into Closed Session at 7:36 p.m.

Roll Call Vote
Yes: Sellers, Hernden, Da Via, Ross, Doss, Cyprus
No: None
Motion carried.

Motion by Mr. Cyprus, supported by Mr. Sellers, to reconvene to Regular Session at 8:13 p.m.

Roll Call Vote
Yes: Cyprus, Sellers, Da Via, Doss, Hernden, Ross
No: None
Motion carried.

F.1. *Recommendation for Expulsion of Student #0392

Motion by Mr. Sellers, supported by Mrs. Hernden, to approve the Resolution for Expulsion of Student #0392 as presented.

Yes: All
No: None
Motion carried.

G. ** Consent Agenda

Please note: Unless removed from the Consent Agenda, items identified within the Consent Agenda will be acted on at one time.

G.1. Budget Report *(No report this month due to audit)*
G.2. Payment Registers
G.3. Purchases *(None this month)*
G.4. Summary of Investments & Wire/ACH Transfers
G.5. Employment Recommendations
G.6. Student Travel Requests
G.7. Board Meeting Minutes
  G.7.a. August 18, 2025 Combined Committee of the Whole/Regular Meeting
  G.7.b. September 8, 2025 Board Workshop Meeting
  G.7.c. September 15, 2025 Committee of the Whole Meeting

Motion by Mr. Cyprus, supported by Mr. Sellers, to approve the Consent Agenda items with the following amendments:

- Item G.6. Student Travel Requests: Change one of the dates in the document to 5-4-2026 (inadvertently marked as 2025)
- Item G.7.a Board Meeting Minutes for August 18, 2025: Move this item to the next regular meeting in October for an amendment to correct a mathematical error on a document submitted related to a bus purchase.

Roll Call Vote
Yes: Cyprus, Sellers, Da Via, Ross, Hernden, Doss
No: None
Motion carried.

H. Business Office

H.1. *John R. Armstrong Performing Arts Center – Proposed Rental Rate Adjustment

Motion by Mr. Sellers, supported by Mr. Cyprus, to approve the John R. Armstrong Performing Arts Center – Proposed Rental Rate Adjustment as presented.

Yes: All
No: None
Motion carried.

No questions or discussion.

I. Operations

I.1. *Macomb/Oakland Fuel Consortium Recommendation

Motion by Mr. Sellers, supported by Mr. Cyprus, to approve the Macomb/Oakland Fuel Consortium Recommendation as presented.

Yes: All
No: None

Motion carried.

No questions or discussion.

J. Bond

J.1. *District Wide Controls Upgrade

Motion by Mr. Sellers, supported by Mr. Cyprus, to approve the District Wide Controls Upgrade as presented.

Yes: All
No: None
Motion carried.

No questions or discussion.

K. Other Matters

K.1. Letter to Prosecutor

There is no update or activity regarding Mrs. Hernden's complaint.

K.2. *Board Policy & Operating Procedures Recommendation – 2nd Reading

Motion by Mr. Sellers, supported by Mr. Da Via, to approve the Board Policy & Operating Procedures Recommendation as presented.

Yes: All
No: None
Motion carried.

Discussion followed.

L. Hearing of School District Patrons Follow-up

Alysia Childers, resident, stated she believes there is a climate of hostility and division in the community and the country, particularly from a teacher's comments on social media. She stated she feels this undermines trust between families and schools, creates an unsafe environment for students, and violates district policies and standards for educators. She stated educators should be modeling critical thinking.

Mr. P, resident, expressed concern over the school district's financial decisions. He questioned the budgeting process for a club and stated there is a need for greater accountability regarding spending, especially for smaller purchases that lack clear descriptions.

Michael Lynch, teacher and resident, stated he had previously shared his view that students can be viewed as "customers" of the education system. He clarified that he used this comparison because education is in essence a service provided to them. He stated the importance of making budgetary decisions that prioritize student needs, noting the balance between maintaining essential positions like counselors and the impact of budget cuts on other roles. He also acknowledged the emotional challenges faced by students and teachers, encouraging parents to engage with educators to support their children.

M. ****Closed Session** – Motion to enter closed session pursuant to Section 8(h) of the Open Meetings Act to discuss material exempt from discussion or disclosure by State or Federal statute, including a written opinion of legal counsel subject to attorney-client privilege.

Motion by Mrs. Ross, supported by Mr. Sellers, to enter into Closed Session at 8:34 p.m.

Roll Call Vote
Yes: Ross, Sellers, Cyprus, Da Via, Doss, Hernden
No: None
Motion carried.

Motion by Mr. Cyprus, supported by Mr. Sellers, to reconvene to Regular Session at 9:43 p.m.

Roll Call Vote
Yes: Cyprus, Sellers, Ross, Hernden, Doss, Da Via
No: None
Motion carried.

N. Board Member Comment

Mr. Sellers thanked Mr. Doss stating he ran a wonderful meeting and that he appreciated his work. He also noted the success of the recent policy committee meeting, highlighting the productive and respectful discussions that took place. He expressed his belief that disciplinary action is warranted for the employee who commented on social media, requesting that the individual be placed on leave pending an investigation. He stated he feels she should not represent the school at the upcoming homecoming parade.

Mrs. Hernden stated she agrees with Mr. Sellers regarding a teacher's comments on social media. She stated she felt the teacher's remarks were divisive and incompatible with the district's values, questioning the decision to allow her to participate in homecoming festivities as a representative of the school community. She stated she views this as prioritizing the district's image over the safety and well-being of students and represents a failure in leadership. She said she noticed that a couple of administrators sat in the audience during public comment, and it appeared to be in support of their colleague. She called for accountability and a reevaluation of the standards upheld within the district.

Mr. Cyprus shared his positive experience at the recent homecoming events at LCHS, noting that the parade, game, and overall atmosphere were enjoyable. He also mentioned attending a previous game against Roseville and expressed hope to attend the upcoming LCHS-N homecoming events. He also corrected Ms. Hernden's assumption, clarifying that those administrators have made it known they prefer not to sit at the Board table for public comments so as not to be photographed when individuals are presenting at the podium. He stated this is their customary practice at meetings. He said he looks forward to the outcome of the due process investigation of the complaint and the report on the findings.

Mr. Da Via thanked Mr. Howell and Mr. Van Camp for their efforts in setting up the discussion that they were able to have in closed session with the attorney, Mr. Robert Schindler. He thanked Mr. Schindler for his experience in dealing with these issues over the last 20 years. He stated he would like see if there are ways that the Board can unify on some of these issues so that they can get back to doing what's best for students and he looks forward to that happening. He stated we're all children of God and he would just like us to remember that and to deal with each other as if we are.

Mr. Doss stated the importance of due process in handling complaints against staff members, noting that such matters must be addressed through proper administrative channels. Due process must be followed to protect individual rights and confidentiality, as well as to protect the district. He commended Mr. Howell and Mr. Van Camp stating he has seen nothing but integrity come out of their offices. He reiterated that the administrators who move for public comment have told him numerous times they would be moving during that portion of the meeting because they simply prefer not be photographed during presentations. He shared some positive reflections on the recent LCHS homecoming event, highlighting the contributions of teachers, volunteers, and the overall enjoyable atmosphere. He also expressed that he's looking forward to the upcoming LCHS-N homecoming parade and concluded by thanking everyone for a productive meeting

O. *Adjournment

Motion by supported by Mr. Sellers, supported by Mrs. Ross to adjourn the meeting at 9:56 p.m.

Yes: All
No: None
Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Ross

Sharon L. Ross, Secretary
Board of Education
SLR:cjg