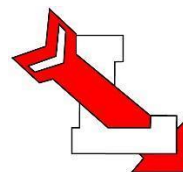


Board Briefs



Regular Meeting of October 13, 2025

STUDENT COUNCIL REPORT

Gianna Gates-Duprey reported that the first trimester is going by quickly. Over the past few weeks several events have taken place including Pink Arrow, WoodTV8 tailgate/food drive, homecoming dance, various spirit week activities and AP testing sign-up. Seniors are completing college applications, working on essays and applying for scholarships. Students are looking forward to the fall break on Monday. The unified soccer team will have a game on November 4th.

ACTION ITEMS

- Approval of minutes
- Payment of bills for September 2025
- New Hires
- Overnight Student Trips
- Gift to the District
- Mower
- Cherry Creek Elementary Fire Alarm, Access Control and Video Surveillance System

HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATE

Dustin Cichocki stated that Ada Village Pharmacy will be offering free flu shots to staff who would like one. Open Enrollment for staff will be the first two weeks in November. The Business Office is currently working with the different groups in the district to provide information on the changes to various healthcare plans. A MESSA representative will be meeting the LEA and LESPA groups to answer any questions. Final interviews are taking place for the Central Enrollment Administrative Assistant. This position will be housed in the Technology Department at the Middle School. Mr. Cichocki stated he anticipates a mid-year retirement and has one confirmed end of year retirement. He is currently working with colleges and universities to promote open positions along with social media posts, Applitrack and the district website.

BOARD COMMENTS

- Jared Blough thanked Sonia Hodge for the budget update.
- Jennifer Dougherty stated she received some really nice comments on the new band uniforms. She thanked Sonia Hodge for all the budget updates that she has presented. She attended a School Board Finance Boot Camp and already knew what they were talking about. She reminded parents that if they have questions about books that they would like restricted, just email Mrs. Beachler.
- Brian Krajewski stated that the KISD Enhancement Millage mailers appeared to be from local school districts. These mailers were customized by KISD and sent out on behalf of the local district. He urged all to vote.

BUDGET UPDATE

Sonia Hodge reviewed the attached budget documents with the Board. She reminded the Board that there are a lot of nuances that go into a State budget so the press release coming from the State will only highlight the increases. Highlights from Mrs. Hodge's presentation included:

- Planning for 25 fewer students in 2025-2026
- Surprise elimination of MPSERS 147a1 of \$252,335
- The District planned for the elimination of MPSERS 147a4 of \$1,270,225. This is due to the 5.75% decrease in the retirement rate.
- Increase in MPSERS 147g/271 of \$120,000 (\$200,000 to \$320,000)
- Increase of \$214,000 for the school year
- At Risk funding will increase by 25% however, Lowell will have a very nominal increase to our allocation partially due to the decrease in free/reduced lunch applications because free lunches are currently being served.
- Mental health and security funding will increase.
- One of the early literacy funding streams will be reduced or eliminated.
- Bilingual funding is increasing.
- Net change in revenue to the positive and decrease in expenditure for retirement.
- Per pupil increase of \$67 per pupil
- Unrestricted funds (district decides how to spend) is \$250 per pupil (based on the 24-25 school year)

CURRICULUM UPDATE

Steve Gough stated parent teacher conferences are wrapping up. The middle school leadership team is working toward a potential pilot program for tier 2 intervention similar to the high school (flex time). There have been more than a dozen schools visiting the high school to review the flex time program. Juniors will be taking the PSAT/NMSQT on Wednesday. This is a great way for students to practice and prepare for that SAT that they will take in the spring. All students will have the potential to move on to the National Merit Scholarship competition. Lowell had 6 seniors earn recognition through this process:

Audrey Latchaw, commended student recognition (top 4% in the nation)
Cooper Byrne, commended student recognition (top 4% in the nation)
Jarrett Smith, commended student recognition (top 4% in the nation)
Kenton Kolp, commended student recognition (top 4% in the nation)
Griffin Ponchaud, semi-finalist (top 1% of students in Michigan)
Anika Huhn, semi-finalist (top 1% of students in Michigan)

Curriculum Council met on October 2 to review all program and resource proposals before submission to the Board. This group discussed their role/purpose, Open Court implementation, Reveal Math and AP Biology textbooks (which will be coming to the Board for approval soon). The elementary buildings will be piloting a third grade social studies program called Social Studies Alive, which is already in place at the fourth and fifth grade level. The K-12 math vertical team met on October 6. The purpose of the vertical team is to make sure there is good alignment around the goals for all students to be proficient in reading and math and report a positive sense of belonging. The math team met to discuss plans for further implementation this year at the building level. The majority of our Novell migration is now complete, which has been a huge undertaking. Mr. Gough stated there has been a lot of discussion around libraries and library services over the past several years. Lowell has started providing buildings with information that they can include in their monthly newsletters related to the library program to make sure there is clear and accurate information about how libraries run and the policies related to them. Most of the information that will be provided is already available on our website. This information will be in smaller chunks that is easier to access rather than in large documents or FAQs. He reminded all that if anyone has concerns or questions related to any of the programs, they should reach out to the building where the student attends. Staff are always happy to work with families and answer any questions.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Five audience members made public comments. No action taken.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Superintendent Fowler thanked all for their public comment. He appreciates seeing the democratic process in action and people being able to express their first amendment rights and their open meeting rights presenting different viewpoints and opinions during the open forum. He thanked LowellArts for the new artwork in the hallways of the administration building that represents our school buildings. He congratulated the Lowell libraries for receiving the exemplary status for School Libraries in the 21st Century through the Library of Michigan. It's a great recognition of the work that's gone into making those spaces support learning. He reminded all to vote on November 4 (Kent County Enhancement Millage). This vote is to renew and restore a 9 mil levy to reduce class sizes in kindergarten, support literacy efforts and support our technology program (1:1 Chromebook initiative). Work on the high school track took place this weekend. He thanked everyone for their patience during this work. He also thanked everyone for their flexibility during the homecoming festivities at the stadium as well as adjusting the parade route due to the construction downtown. Fowler visited several classrooms and it was a lot of fun to see students' school spirit and students engaged in learning. Parent-Teacher conferences are wrapping up for Trimester 1. It is important that we engage families to talk about student learning and a great way to highlight and celebrate our students.