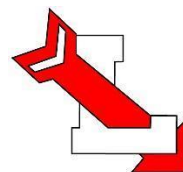


A Summary of the Regular Meeting of the Lowell Board of Education

Board Briefs



Regular Meeting of August 11, 2025

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS

One audience member made a public comment. No action taken.

MARSHA WILCOX AWARD

Vice-President Kuna and Superintendent Fowler presented Jodie Seese with the Marsha Wilcox award. This award was established by the Board of Education in 1998 to recognize members of the community for their service to community and dedication to public education.

CONSENT GROUPING

Minutes for July 14, 2025 Regular Meeting, July 14, 2025 Closed Session, and July 24, 2025 Special Meeting were approved along with the payment of bills for July and the following new hires:

Sally Smith, Board Certified Behavioral Analyst

Sunshine Berglund, Social Worker

Kenadee Berg, High School English

ACTION ITEMS APPROVED:

- MASB Certification of Delegates and Alternates (Laurie Kuna and Jennifer Dougherty)
- LESPA Contract
- Board Policy Form 7540.03 F1 Update
- West Michigan Health Insurance Pool
- CoPro+ Purchasing Consortium
- GSRP Furniture Purchase
- GSRP Gametime Playground Equipment Purchase

HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATE

Dustin Cichocki stated there currently is one teaching position to fill along with several para positions. He is continuing to recruit bus drivers and custodians. Last week administrators and secretaries participated in professional development. Mr. Cichocki has scheduled an informational session with the bus drivers to talk about insurance and retirement. August 13 is new staff orientation. August 18 is the all staff kick off with professional development and service awards.

BUDGET UPDATE

Sonia Hodge shared a utilities report with the Board that highlighted charges over time to see how the changes we make throughout the district are working. Energy audits are continuing throughout the district. The State of Michigan is still working on the budget. Mrs. Hodge stated that districts have been cautioned they may not receive the first state aid payment in October. Lowell Area Schools has a healthy fund balance to cover if this occurs. The Business Office is preparing for the audit. A new payroll person started this week.

CURRICULUM UPDATE

Steve Gough stated 9 staff members attended the PLC institute in Detroit. Fourteen hours and 45 minutes of professional learning took place. He thanked the Board of Education for supporting teachers in continued professional learning as well as the teachers who attended the conference. The administrative team met on August 5 and discussed safety, IC Messenger update, PLT calendars, etc. Open Court professional development will take place on August 22.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

One audience member made a public comment. No action taken.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Superintendent Fowler stated that athletic practices are starting. There is ongoing discussion about how and when release time Christian instruction will be handled at Lowell Area Schools. Fowler reminded all the Board has policies in place for parents to opt-out students from various curricular areas. Fowler will continue to follow the development of the Mahmoud v Taylor case. Fowler took a moment to remember Darla Palmer, 8th grade teacher who recently passed away. He is looking forward to welcoming students back on August 19.

BOARD COMMENTS

- Annie Whitlock stated that she read the 9 books that were questioned at the last Board meeting. She reminded all that policies are in place and parents can opt-out of their children reading particular books. She encouraged all parents to do their research.
- Laurie Kuna congratulated everyone involved in finalizing the contracts. She attended the Kent County Youth Fair and noted the barns named after several prominent Lowell community members as an indicator of Lowell's tradition of community involvement. She welcomed all the new teachers.
- Jennifer Dougherty and Jessica Curtis wished everyone a good school year.
- Pat Nugent thanked the administration for their work on the contracts. He stated that working together with the bargaining units is important and helpful for our district to have good relationships. He stated that the MASB legal office advised that we not summarize public comments in the meeting minute and gave the direction for the statement we currently add to the minutes.