



LAWSON R-XIV School District

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July 2026 BOE Meeting

The Board of Education held its monthly meeting on Wednesday, July 15, 2026. Below is a summary of key business items, updates, and discussions. For the complete agenda and supporting documents, visit the [Paperless Board Meeting](#) link.

Key Business Items

Surplus Equipment: The Board deemed the following equipment surplus for sale: Grizzly Model # G9729 LATHE (including toolbox with bits and other accessories). The lathe will be replaced with a CNC machine; the new equipment will allow for fabricating parts by removing or cutting out material. This will enable the teaching of another real-world skill and expand the opportunity for the competitive robotics team to design and construct parts for their annual competitions.

End of FY26 Budget Items #1 & #2: The Board approved the submission of the 2025-2026 Annual Board Secretary Report (ASBR) and Transportation Report. Both are annual procedures conducted in July. and are reconciled through the district's annual independent audit

BOE Meeting Date Change: The Board approved moving its August business meeting from Wednesday, August 19, 2026, to Wednesday, August 24, 2026. The date change was made to avoid a conflict with Back-to-School Events on the evening of Wednesday, August 19, 2026.

Key Updates

Spring 2026 Bond Update: The Ag Learning Lab project remains on schedule for release to competitive bidding in mid-August. Planning has commenced for equipment needs for the workshop space, along with securing state and federal grant funding to facilitate equipment acquisition.

School District Finance Update: Dr. Stephenson provided an update on the Lawson R-XIV School District's financial position as the district closed Fiscal Year 2026.

A summary of the presentation is as follows: The district concluded the fiscal year in a strong financial position, with a combined operating reserve balance of 55.63% in Funds 1 and 2. Maintaining healthy reserves is an important component of the district's long-term financial strategy, providing stability during periods of economic uncertainty, fluctuations in state funding, and unexpected operational needs.

As the district begins Fiscal Year 2027, the administration will continue its conservative budgeting approach while focusing resources on the priorities that matter most: supporting student learning, attracting and retaining high-quality staff, maintaining district facilities, and ensuring safe, effective learning environments for all students.

Despite ongoing challenges, including reductions in certain state funding sources and increasing operational costs, the district remains financially sound due to years of responsible planning and careful stewardship of taxpayer dollars. Every budget decision continues to be guided by the district's Strategic Plan and a commitment to providing exceptional educational opportunities while protecting the long-term financial health of the Lawson R-XIV School District.

Superintendent Update: Dr. Stephenson provided the Board with an update on the district's State Preschool Grant. As part of Governor Mike Kehoe's line-item vetoes to the Fiscal Year 2027 Missouri state budget, the district was notified that the Preschool Classroom Grant we have received over the past two school years has been reduced. This will result in an approximate \$50,000 reduction in state grant funding for the 2026-2027 school year.

Dr. Stephenson explained that when the district expanded our preschool program, we did so with the understanding that grant funding might not be permanent. For that reason, we intentionally developed a long-term sustainability plan to allow the program to continue even if the grant ended.

Beginning this school year, the expanded preschool program will be funded by blending the preschool grant and allowable Preschool Average Daily Attendance (ADA) revenue. While this funding will replace a significant portion of the lost grant dollars, current enrollment projections indicate the district will still face an estimated \$25,000 funding gap.

Although the loss of this grant presents another financial challenge, it is one we anticipated and planned for. Our commitment to providing high-quality early childhood education remains unchanged, and we will continue to make thoughtful financial decisions that support our students while being responsible stewards of taxpayer resources.

Announcements:

- New Student Enrollment – Thursday 8/13/26 at 9am (HS Commons)
- HS Cardinal Flight Night - Tuesday 8/18/26 at 6pm
- District Convocation - Wednesday 8/19/26 at 9am (SPAC)
- MS Open House 8/19/26 at 6pm
- Elem. Open House - Thursday 8/20/26 at 6pm
- First Day of School - Tuesday, August 25, 2026
- Next Regular BOE Meeting - Wednesday, August 26, 2026