



LAWSON R-XIV School District

307 W. Moss

P.O. Box 157

Lawson, MO 64062

District Office (816) 580-7277 Fax (816) 296-7723

November BOE Meeting

The Board of Education held its monthly meeting on Wednesday, November 19, 2025. Below is a summary of key business items, updates, and discussions. For the complete agenda and supporting documents, visit the [Paperless Board Meeting](#) link.

November Board Spotlight

Items For Discussion:

MUSIC – 2026 Renewal Assessment: The Board approved renewing its district insurance policy, including property, general liability, and workers' compensation, with the Missouri United Insurance Council for 2026. Our 2026 renewal is (\$248,839), a \$14,183 or (5.7%) increase over our 2025 renewal. Our 2026 renewal has returned to a more manageable annual increase after the past 2 years of considerably higher increases: 17.75% in 2025 and 27.46% in 2024. Indicators suggest we will see a flattening of rate increases over the next two years as economic strains ease. The unknown that will have the most significant impact moving forward is the rate of large claims linked to weather-related events and other acts of God.

Items For Information

2026-2027 Salary & Benefits: Dr. Stephenson provided the Board with an overview of the ongoing work related to salary and benefits for the 2026–2027 school year. He intends to bring a formal recommendation to the Board for consideration in December. Current projections include adjustments to how longevity is compensated and applied within salary schedules, along with proposed increases of 4.59% to certified base pay, 5.26% to certified master's pay, and 4.59% to classified base pay.

Vocational Facilities: Planning (Ag Education): Dr. Stephenson provided an update on the ongoing planning for district vocational facilities and shared schematic design images and wording for a proposed April 2026 bond election. The Board will review the proposed plans and ballot again in December, when they plan to take formal action on these items. If the board approved, the bond would go to the voters for approval of a \$3,000,000 No Tax Rate Increase Bond to construct agricultural mechanics and construction laboratory spaces, complete the asphaltting of the home stadium parking lot, and replace various windows and flooring within the middle school.

PreK Update: Southwest Elementary Principal Mrs. Christina Cross updated the Board on the continued growth of our Preschool Program. The program continues to excel, and our students are experiencing exciting growth. The program is currently serving 50 students ages 3 and 4. The classroom teachers and paraprofessionals continue to embed new learning opportunities daily. The district is continuing to evaluate expanding the program to serve more students. Information related to enrollment for the 2026-2207 will begin going out to families in January 2026.

District Comprehensive Literacy Plan: Building Administrators updated the Board on the work being conducted to finalize a comprehensive Literacy Plan aligned with Missouri's updated literacy expectations to strengthen reading and writing outcomes for all students. The plan, once completed, will establish consistent districtwide expectations for instruction, assessment, interventions, and progress monitoring to ensure every student receives high-quality, evidence-

based literacy support. A draft will be presented to the Board once initial components are finalized.

Cooperating School Districts of Greater KC – Legislative Update The Board was updated on the district partnership's efforts to actively advocate for public education as an engaged member of the Cooperating School Districts of Greater Kansas City (CSDGKC). Through this partnership, we collaborate with regional leaders to support legislative priorities that strengthen Missouri's public schools, promote equitable funding, and protect local control. Our involvement ensures that the needs and perspectives of our community are represented in statewide conversations, and it reinforces our commitment to supporting high-quality educational opportunities for all students. A complete list of priorities associated with our affiliation can be found on the Paperless Board Meeting link.

Virtual Learning / AMI – Update: Since spring 2025, we have been working together to establish plans for virtual learning during bad weather. Over the next few weeks, principals will collaborate with teachers to ensure students understand appropriate expectations for virtual learning. Our aim is not to create extra stress for families when AMI days occur, but to help keep a sense of normalcy in school routines and expectations. This information will be shared with parents and the community in the first week of December.

Annual Performance Report (APR) The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) has released the 2025 Annual Performance Report (APR) scores for all districts. Lawson R-XIV earned an APR score of 88.5%, the highest the district has received since Missouri adopted MSIP 6 standards in the 2021–22 school year. This represents a 5.1% increase from 2024 and reflects continued progress and sustained academic growth. Student data also shows a 7.8% increase over 2024, highlighting meaningful gains across grade levels and subject areas. Dr. Stephenson will provide a follow-up report once the state releases the full District Grade Card on December 1, 2025. The report will be shared with the Board at the December 17 meeting.

Superintendent Update: Dr. Stephenson updated the Board on various topics relevant to the district's success, which can be viewed using the provided paperless board meeting link.

Closed Session Announcements:

Retirement – Effective End of the 2025–2026 School Year

The Board of Education extends heartfelt congratulations and best wishes to Mrs. Lynn Smithmier as she formally announced her intention to retire at the conclusion of the 2025-2206 school year. Mrs. Smithmier's years of service, dedication, and care have left a lasting legacy in our school community and will undoubtedly be missed.

Additional Announcements:

Next Regular BOE Meeting is Wednesday, December 17, 2025

Board Candidate Filing starts on Tuesday, December 9, 2025, and continues through Tuesday, December 30, 2025 (Candidate Filing information is posted on the District Website).