



LAKE OF THE WOODS
School

Lake of the Woods School ISD #390
April 27, 2026 @ 6:00 PM
Finance Workshop & Working Session - ITV Room

Working Session:

- 1. Citizen's Forum**
- 2. Finance Review Workshop**
 - a. Business Manager (Todd Netzke)
- 3. Reports:**
 - a. Board Committees
 - b. Superintendent (Scott Fitzsimonds)
 - c. PreK-12 Principal (Mary Merchant)
 - d. Pool Coordinator (David Pederson)
- 4. Adjourn**

**Lake of the Woods School
Board Report
Scott Fitzsimonds, Superintendent's Board Report
April 27, 2026**

1. Student Count

- a. As of 4/17/2026: 420 K-12, + 16 PreK
- b. Last Month: 422 K-12, + 16 PreK

2. Construction/Renovation

- a.

3. Superintendent Eval

- a. Evaluation materials provided
- b. Formal eval to be conducted at June Board meeting (closed session), summary to be presented in regular session that evening.

**Lake of the Woods School
Board Report
Mary Merchant, PreK - 12 Principal's Board Report
April 27, 2026**

- 1. MCA Testing**
 - a. In progress
- 2. Kindergarten Round-Up**
 - a. April 20, 2026
- 3. Prom**
 - a. April 25, 2026
- 4. Northern Division MASSP Principals Meeting**
 - a. April 29th in Thief River Falls
- 5. North Star Electric Safety Demonstration**
 - a. April 30th for grades K-3
- 6. Band Concert**
 - a. May 29th, 7 p.m. in the Auditorium
- 7. Choir Concert**
 - a. May 6th at 7 p.m. in the Auditorium
- 8. MHS Induction and Scholarships**
 - a. May 13th, 6 p.m. in the Auditorium
- 9. Elementary Field Trips**
 - a. Elementary Field Day, May 14th
 - b. Big Bog, May 12th and 13th
 - c. Kay-Nah, Chi-Wah-Nung, Barwick Canada, 5th grade, May 19th
- 10. Senior Trip**
 - a. May 15-16, cities
- 11. Athletic and Academic Awards**
 - a. Monday, May 18th, 8:30 a.m. in the Auditorium
- 12. Graduation Practice**
 - a. Wednesday, May 13th, 10:00 a.m. in Main Gym
 - b. Graduation Ceremony, May 22nd 6 p.m. in Main Gym
 - c. Board Members to give out diplomas _____
- 13. Last Day of School, May 22nd**
 - a. Elementary Assembly 10 a.m. in the Auditorium
 - b. High School Assembly 11:15 a.m. in the Main Gym
- 14. Band/Choir Trip**
 - a. June 2-7, Memphis/New Orleans
- 15. Summer School and Summer Camp**
 - a. June 2-12 for High School and Elementary

Lake of the Woods School
Board Report
David Pederson, Pool Coordinator
April 27, 2026

Good evening, and thank you for the opportunity to provide an update on the pool program and the progress that has been made since I stepped into this role in September.

When I began in my role as pool coordinator, I identified three primary goals I hoped to achieve.

First, I wanted to create renewed energy and visibility around the pool — to make it feel active, welcoming, and engaging. My goal was for the pool to be more than a facility people use occasionally, but a place the community actively chooses to visit. That meant maintaining consistent scheduling, improving communication, and promoting open swim and program opportunities so families and community members clearly understand what is available to them. One surprising thing I learned about the usage of the pool, is how many patrons use the pool from across the border in Canada.

Second, I wanted to assess our staffing needs and strengthen our lifeguard team — including recruiting adult lifeguards. This goal was intentionally tied to the first. By increasing participation and pool traffic, we could demonstrate real demand and meaningful staffing need. Increased usage helps attract candidates who are looking for consistent hours and a strong team environment.

Recently, we hosted a lifeguard training course at our facility. We had **4 students and 3 adults** complete the course, and we will begin onboarding them in the coming weeks. In addition, we reached out to neighboring communities — Roseau, Warroad, and International Falls — and invited interested candidates from those areas to participate. One of the Lifeguard Candidates attended from Warroad.

Hosting a lifeguard training course can be costly if minimum enrollment numbers are not met. By collaborating regionally, communities can rotate hosting responsibilities while still providing consistent training opportunities for prospective lifeguards. This approach helps control costs, strengthens regional partnerships, and ensures that individuals across our area have access to certification opportunities.

Third, I wanted to identify underserved or underrepresented groups in our community and intentionally develop programming to welcome them into the facility. In January, we introduced senior-specific swim times on Monday and Wednesday afternoons. This created a quiet and comfortable, low-pressure environment and expanded access to a group that previously had limited targeted programming. The response has been encouraging, and senior programming has brought individuals to the pool who had not previously used the facility. Usage has increased each month that senior swim has been active.

We are already seeing measurable results from these efforts. Open swim participation has increased overall, with both December and January setting all-time monthly attendance records. That growth reflects the impact of consistent scheduling, improved outreach, and targeted programming.

Our morning adult lap swim, which begins at 5:00 a.m., averages 6–10 participants per session, three times per week. Water aerobics remains strong, averaging 14–15 participants twice per week.

I would like to recognize my predecessor, Lisa Beckstrand, for her many years of dedication to the pool. Her meticulous record-keeping allows us to confidently report these attendance records, and she has been a valuable resource as I've navigated historical questions and past practices.

Another important focus of mine has been strengthening community partnerships.

We hosted the Baudette Fire Department and their junior firefighter program for a cold-water rescue training session late last fall. This allowed them to practice in a controlled environment while reinforcing the pool's role as a community training asset — not just a recreational space.

Additionally, our staff has begun developing a closer working relationship with local EMS personnel. During our January in-service training, we invited the Lake of the Woods ambulance crew to observe and collaborate as lifeguards practiced backboarding scenarios involving suspected cardiac or pulmonary arrest and head, neck, and spine injuries. Joint training like this helps align response expectations and build strong working relationships with emergency responders.

As participation increases, safety and preparedness remain central priorities. Growth is only positive if supervision, response readiness, and staff training grow alongside it — and that continues to be a consistent emphasis.

The pool also plays a significant role in directly supporting our students. We have welcomed approximately 200 elementary physical education classes in grades K–5 to the pool on Fridays throughout the school year. High school physical education students in grades 6–9 participate in week-long swim units twice during the year, representing an additional 100–150 students utilizing the facility.

We also collaborate with the Special Education team by incorporating swimming into students' IEPs. This year, six individual special education students have participated in swim programming. Most of these students swim 4 days a week.

In addition, we recently relaunched the Bear's Swim Club, with 10 students in grades 3-5 . The season concluded with an in-house swim meet, which was a great opportunity to celebrate their progress. We are actively looking at ways we can improve the program in the future, including assessing when the best time of the year to run would be.

Looking ahead, my focus has already shifted toward summer swim lessons. We have numerous students already signed up for group swim lessons. Meanwhile we are continuing to build momentum through targeted programming, outreach, staff recruitment, and strengthened community partnerships. The goal is to support increased usage responsibly and safely while continuing to grow the pool's impact within the district and the broader community.

I appreciate the board's continued support of the pool and its programs. The facility is an increasingly active and connected community resource, and I am proud of the progress being made.

Thank you. I am happy to answer any questions.