



Lake of the Woods School ISD #390

September 28, 2026 @ 6:00 PM

Finance Workshop & Working Session - ITV Room

Working Session:

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

**Lake of the Woods School
Board Report
Scott Fitzsimonds, Superintendent's Board Report
September 28, 2026**

1. Enrollment

- a. Current K-12: 410 / PK: 19
- b. Last year K-12: 424 / PK: 18

2. Facilities

- a. North Loop specifications are being drawn up by Widseth following input from the Facilities & Transportation committee.
 - i. 14ft drop off lane with 11ft east and west bound lanes
 - ii. Turnaround circle at east end
 - iii. Sidewalk extending around the building to the sidewalk at door #7
 - iv. Add gate to road that continues around the school at the circle
 - v. Clear signage and paint for traffic control
- b. VFD's were installed week of 9/14 by Lavalla
- c. Drop down power (retractable cord) will be put in for the POS desk for the lunch line due to removal of the floor outlet.
- d. Rainy River Refrigeration came out to assess and advise in regard to the HVAC on the west side of the building.
- e. SFM Safety Grant - We are applying for a SFM Safety Grant for approximately \$1,800.

3. Food Service

- a. Milk cooler: The old milk cooler is not maintaining temperature. This has been an issue since 2019 as reported by kitchen and maintenance staff. It needs to be replaced, and we are ordering a new one at a cost of approximately \$4,200. It will be paid for out of the Food Service fund balance.

4. MnMTSS Team (Mulit-Tiered Systems of Support)

- a. We had professional development on 9/23 in the morning, then completed assessment and planning items in the afternoon. The focus was on district systems and support for instruction and learning.

5. Substitute Pay

- a. Administration is recommending that we adjust our substitute pay rates to reflect changes in the base rates due to contract settlements. It has been at least two years since any non-certified rates were updated. We propose a non-certified sub rate at \$1.00 less than step 1 for a given position other than bus driver. This change would be effective October 1, 2026. Any future adjustments to our substitute pay rates would be reviewed in June of each year with any changes going into effect on the start of the new fiscal year on July 1.
- b. Current Rates
 - i. Teacher (full) \$165.00
 - ii. Teacher (half) \$82.50
 - iii. Asst. Cook \$14.47
 - iv. Para/Secretary \$16.24
 - v. Custodial \$16.22
 - vi. Assistant Mechanic \$16.22

vii.	Secretary	\$16.24
c.	Proposed Rates	
i.	Teacher (full)	\$170.00
ii.	Teacher (half)	\$85.00
iii.	Asst. Cook	\$17.07 (26-27 base rate \$18.07)
iv.	Para/Secretary	\$18.23 (26-27 base rate \$19.23)
v.	Custodial	\$18.24 (26-27 base rate \$19.24)
vi.	Assistant Mechanic	\$18.89 (26-27 base rate \$19.89)
vii.	Secretary	\$18.23 (26-27 base rate \$19.23)

Lake of the Woods School
Board Report
Shelby Nosan, PreK - 12 Principal's Board Report
September 28, 2026

1. Pick-Up & Arrival

- a. Pick up/ drop off systems in place
- b. We have a list of adults who will be bringing kids who may arrive late

2. Homecoming

- a. Homecoming coming along
- b. Mindy Castillo taking charge of the group - dodgeball and hallway decorating Sunday 9/27
- c. Homecoming week 9/28-10/2- coronation 7th hour on Monday 9/28

3. Shout Outs

- a. Shout outs to all the staff for helping to follow through on current policies, documenting reports, and building relationships with students, as well as the students who have been respectful in our interactions.

4. Policy

- a. Thank you to families and community members who are also working hard to adapt to our policy enforcements and communicating positively and effectively with us all.

**Lake of the Woods School
Board Report
David Pederson, Pool Coordinator Board Report
September 28, 2026**

1. Pool Update

- a. Summer update
- b. Staffing

2. Birthday Party Fee Proposal

- a. Propose a fee for hosting birthday parties
- b. Potentially \$1425 increase in revenue

3. Lifeguard retention wage scale proposal

- a. Student lifeguards: \$15.00 starting wage with a \$0.50 raise per year (with stipulations)
- b. Adult lifeguards: \$17.00 starting wage with a \$0.50 raise per year (with stipulations)

Proposal: Birthday Party Facility Fee

Purpose

To establish a modest **\$25 Birthday Party Facility Fee** for birthday parties held at the school pool. The proposed fee would help offset the additional facility use, staff time, cleaning, and administrative responsibilities associated with hosting private birthday parties while maintaining an affordable option for community members.

Current Activity & Financial Impact

During the past 12 months, the pool hosted approximately **57 birthday parties**.

These parties generated approximately **\$2,000** in pool admission revenue.

Implementing a \$25 facility fee for each birthday party would have generated an additional \$1425.00 in revenue for the pool.

This represents approximately a **70% increase in revenue generated specifically through birthday-party activities**, without requiring a significant increase in the cost to individual participants..

Rationale

Birthday parties represent a different level of facility use than a typical open-swim visit. Parties generally involve larger groups, coordinated use of pool and surrounding spaces, additional staff interaction, preparation and cleanup, and increased administrative responsibilities.

The proposed fee would recognize these additional costs while keeping the charge modest and predictable.

The fee would:

- Help offset additional cleaning, supplies, and facility-use costs.
- Recognize the additional staff and administrative responsibilities associated with birthday parties.
- Provide a small additional source of revenue to support pool operations.
- Maintain an affordable option for families and community members.
- Establish a simple, consistent fee that is easy for pool staff to administer.
- Ensure that users hosting private/group events contribute toward the additional resources required to accommodate those events.

The intent is **not to discourage birthday parties or significantly increase their cost**, but rather to establish a reasonable facility-use charge that helps the pool recover a portion of the additional costs associated with these events.

Proposed Language

Birthday Party Facility Fee

A \$25 Birthday Party Facility Fee will be charged for each birthday party hosted at the school pool.

The fee is separate from applicable pool admission or party-swim fees and applies to the reservation/use of the pool facility for a birthday party.

The Birthday Party Facility Fee is a flat fee per party, regardless of the number of participants.

The fee is intended to help offset the additional facility, cleaning, supply, and administrative costs associated with hosting birthday parties.

All other existing pool rules, admission fees, scheduling requirements, and facility-use policies remain in effect.

Recommendation

Approve implementation of a **\$25 Birthday Party Facility Fee**.

Based on the previous 12 months of activity, the fee is projected to generate approximately **\$1,500 in additional annual revenue** while keeping the additional cost to families modest and directly tied to the additional use of the facility.

Requested Action: Approve the establishment of a \$25 Birthday Party Facility Fee for birthday parties held at the school pool.

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Proposal for a Lifeguard Longevity Wage Structure

Presented to: Lake of the Woods School Board

Presented by: David/Sam

Date: September 2026

Purpose

The purpose of this proposal is to establish a longevity-based wage structure for our lifeguards that recognizes experience, encourages employee retention, and supports the continued development of a dependable and qualified lifeguard staff.

The district currently employs lifeguards at a uniform rate of **\$15.00 per hour**, regardless of length of service or experience, whether a student or an adult. While this provides a consistent starting wage, there is currently no financial incentive for lifeguards to remain with the district beyond their initial employment.

Because lifeguarding is a safety-critical position requiring specialized certification and ongoing training, retaining experienced guards is beneficial to both the pool program and the district.

Current Staffing Situation

The pool currently employs **seven student lifeguards and four adult lifeguards (soon to be two adults)**.

Lifeguard availability varies considerably throughout the school year because employees participate in athletics, extracurricular activities, academics, and other commitments. Realistically, approximately four student guards may be regularly available during a given sports/activity season.

Individual guards generally work approximately **8–20 hours per month**, depending on their availability and the needs of the pool.

This creates a unique staffing environment in which retaining experienced employees is particularly valuable. A guard who remains with the district provides continuity and experience that cannot be immediately replaced when a new employee is hired.

Proposed Longevity Wage Schedule

I recommend establishing the following wage progression:

Length of Service	Student Hourly Wage
New Lifeguard	\$15.00
After 1 year	\$15.50
After 2 years	\$16.00
After 3 years	\$16.50

Length of Service	Adult Hourly Wage
New Lifeguard	\$17.00
After 1 year	\$17.50
After 2 years	\$18.00
After 3 years	\$18.50
After 4+ years	\$19.00

Longevity increases would be based upon continuous service with the district as a lifeguard and maintaining required certifications and satisfactory employment standing.

This structure would allow a newly hired lifeguard to enter at the current \$15.00/hour rate while providing a predictable pathway for experienced guards to earn additional compensation.

Financial Impact

The financial impact of the proposed structure is expected to be relatively modest because lifeguards work a limited number of hours each month.

With seven current lifeguards working an estimated average of 15 hours per month, the program would account for approximately: **1,080 lifeguard hours annually.**

For perspective:

- A \$0.50/hour increase across 1,080 hours = approximately **\$540 annually**
- A \$1.00/hour increase across 1,080 hours = approximately **\$1,080 annually**
- A \$2.00/hour increase across 1,080 hours = approximately **\$2,160 annually**

Actual annual costs would depend upon the number of guards reaching each longevity level and the number of hours worked.

Because the proposed increases occur gradually over multiple years, the full financial impact would also be phased in over time.

Rationale

1. Why a separate wage for students and adults?

Adult lifeguards are tasked with being the “senior” guard on duty. They are responsible for making judgement calls and taking leadership in the event of an emergency. Adult guards are tasked with directing other lifeguards in emergency and operational issues, handling difficult patron interactions, enforcing the rules, managing angry parents, etc. The adult lifeguard also takes responsibility for making sure opening/closing procedures are completed appropriately.

2. Retention of Trained Employees

Lifeguarding requires specialized training and certification. Once an employee has become familiar with pool procedures, facility operations, emergency protocols, and the expectations of the pool program, retaining that employee provides value beyond the hourly wage.

A longevity wage structure provides employees with a tangible reason to remain with the district.

3. Recognition of Experience

A lifeguard with several years of experience brings a different level of knowledge and confidence to the position than a newly certified employee.

Experienced guards understand:

- Opening and closing responsibilities
- Emergency response expectations
- Patron behavior and common issues
- Pool rules and enforcement
- Facility-specific procedures

The proposed wage structure recognizes that additional experience.

4. Reduced Recruitment and Training Burden

Turnover requires the district to repeatedly recruit, certify, orient, and train new employees.

Retaining experienced guards reduces the frequency with which the district must rebuild its staffing base.

Even when a new employee is ultimately needed, experienced guards can help provide informal mentoring and support to newer members of the staff. (developing leadership skills)

5. Development of a Stronger Lifeguard Program

A stable core of experienced guards creates an opportunity to develop a stronger overall staff.

Rather than having an entirely new group of guards each year, the program can retain experienced employees who understand the facility and can help newer guards learn district expectations.

This creates a natural progression from:

New Guard → Experienced Guard → Mentor/Leader

6. Supports Recruitment as Well as Retention

A longevity structure also provides a recruiting advantage.

Prospective employees can see that the district offers more than a starting wage. There is a clear opportunity to increase compensation through continued service and experience.

This is particularly important when competing with other employment opportunities available to high school students.

Local Comparison

A discussion with neighboring schools/pools gives the following wage structures for each school. Each school has their own staffing challenges as well.

Lake of the Woods - \$15.00

International Falls - \$16.72

Warroad - \$15.00

Roseau - \$14.25

Recommendation

I recommend that the Lake of the Woods School District establish the following Student and Adult lifeguard longevity wage schedule

STUDENT WAGE SCALE

\$15.00 — Starting wage

\$15.50 — After 1 year

\$16.00 — After 2 years

\$16.50 — After 3 years

\$17.00 — at age 18

ADULT WAGE SCALE

\$17.00 - Starting Wage

\$17.50 - After 1 year

\$18.00 - After 2 years

\$18.50 - After 3 years

\$19.00 - After 4 years

Conclusion

The district's pool program depends upon having qualified, dependable lifeguards available to safely serve students, staff, and community members.

A longevity wage structure provides a simple and predictable way to recognize experienced employees while encouraging them to remain part of the program.

The proposed structure represents a relatively small financial investment while providing potential benefits in employee retention, staffing stability, reduced turnover, and the continued development of an experienced lifeguard team.