

Lakeland Joint School District #272

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Report to the Board

Jake Massey, Interim Superintendent

August 19, 2026

Trustees,

Thank you for your attention to my longer than usual report this month. With the beginning of the school year, there is a lot happening! **Please see the update about our insurance situation near the end of my report.**

Around the District:

Things are picking up speed as we count down to our first day of school. We're very excited to welcome students back on September 8th!

My focus for the year with staff and community is *stability*. You'll hear me talk about this at our back to school breakfast, and all of our district-wide efforts this year will help solidify the great systems and support the incredible people we have in LJSD.

Principals and office staff are back in their schools and our new Student Information System, Qmlative, is up and running. There will be plenty of hiccups with the new system, and we're grateful for the support of our IT department and admin assistants and office staff who are navigating the change. School office staff are busy getting students registered and enrolled.

The remaining staff, including teachers, will be back on Monday, August 31st. We hope the trustees will join us for our annual **Welcome Back Breakfast on the 31st at 8:00 at the Lakeland High School Commons.**

I'm also very excited to report that our school projects are coming along on-schedule. John Brown, Lakeland Middle School and Lakeland High School will be ready for staff on the 31st!

Planning for 2026-27:

As of Friday, August 12th, our district enrollment is 4,582 students. This number does not include any of our pre-school students who may enroll at Twin Lakes Elementary. Our current expected enrollment of 4,582 is only short of last years' enrollment by about 75 students. We

expect our enrollment number to continue to increase slightly each week as we get to the beginning of the school year.

Because our enrollment is on-target, our staffing projects are on-target as well. As we do annually, the principals will meet with me to review class sizes and discuss any staffing needs. We do expect to see some larger-than-normal class sizes in elementary, and may need to move staff to address unexpected growth in some schools. We continue to balance maintaining reasonable class sizes with the reality that we need to right-size our staffing to our budget.

As discussed in the last board meeting, I look forward to the first meetings of our revamped Long Range Facilities Planning Committee and Strategic Planning Committees! We've received interest in participation in both of these groups, and I look forward to working with our community to gather input and thoughtfully plan for the future.

Other Updates:

We have *not* been able to obtain an additional School Resource Officer (SRO) through Rathdrum PD for Lakeland Middle School, so we will look at our applicant pool for Armed District Safety Specialist (ADSS) sooner than anticipated. To support Lakeland Middle, Rathdrum PD will make sure there is a presence at the school until we are able to find an in-house ADSS. We are grateful for their partnership and support.

We are monitoring the insurance shortfall that is impacting all 80+ school districts who are participants in the Idaho School Benefit Trust (ISBT). To recap, ISBT notified districts in July, a month after budgets were published, that due to a shortfall of funds, districts may be required to cover up to one month's costs for insurance premiums.

For LJSD, that's *about* \$580,000. While ISBT is still working with Blue Cross and others to discuss other possible solutions, it appears we will be responsible for paying this amount. It is important to note that our office presented, and the board approved a balanced budget in June. This *massive and unexpected expense* unfortunately will directly impact our fund balance. **It's also important to note that we do not plan to pass on any costs of this shortfall to our employees.**

To prevent this from happening in the future, ISBT is going to a "fully insured" model with Blue Cross. Still, we will be exploring other options for insurance outside of the trust for the future.

As always, it's a pleasure to serve the students and staff of the Lakeland Joint School District.

Respectfully submitted,

Jake Massey