

# Minutes

## Lyon County School District Board of Trustees

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A meeting of the Board of Trustees of Lyon County School District was held on May 26, 2026, at 6:30 PM at Fernley Intermediate School, 320 Hwy 95A South, Fernley, NV 89408.

### 1. CALL TO ORDER

President Hendrix called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

### 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Legal Counsel Carolyn Renner.

### 3. WELCOME OF GUESTS

President Hendrix welcomed everyone.

The Board members in attendance included:

President Tom Hendrix

Clerk Dawn Carson

Trustee Elmer Bull

Trustee Kallie Day

Trustee Darin Farr

Trustee Sherry Parsons

Trustee James Whisler

Student Representative from FHS Alauna Escartin

Executive Cabinet members in attendance included:

Superintendent Tim Logan

Deputy Superintendent Stacey Cooper

Executive Director of Operations Harman Bains

Executive Director of Human Resources BillieJo Hogan

Executive Director of Special Services Rachel Stewart

Executive Director of Education Services Heather Moyle

Executive Director of Education Services Jim Gianotti

Guests and staff included Skyler Tremaine, Carolyn Renner, Margaret Heim, Blake Cooper, Farrah Alexander, Steve Henderson, Tammie Moniz, Shaun McMackin, Kent Jones, Shawn Romero, Virginia Richardson, Michelle Trousdale, Jamie Henderson, Jennifer Bluhm, Ryan Cross, Cory Sanford, Huey Stone, Rachel Croft, Jerri Kerns, Anna Bruher, Duane Mattice, Amber Cross, Stephanie Coplan, Erin Korf, Bridget Perez, Amber Cross, SRO Kristopher Zmak, Dan Slentz, Eric Nelson, Brian Nelson.

### 4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Trustee Bull made a motion to approve the agenda as presented.

Trustee Farr seconded.

With no further discussion, the motion carried 7-0.

## 5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Trustee Farr made a motion to approve the minutes of the last meeting as written.  
Trustee Parsons seconded.  
With no further discussion, the motion carried 7-0.

## 6. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS

President Hendrix recognized incoming Fernley High School (FHS) Student Body President Alauna Escartin. She updated the board on events happening at the high school, including orientation for incoming students, a Fernley Intermediate School (FIS) field day with 6th graders' activities, prom around the corner, spring athletics, and recent elections for student council.

Trustee Parsons spoke about Fernley athletics, sour dough bread from Dayton High School (DHS), and different track events. She noticed the road was graded at the Dayton schools and suggested adding benches around the pit. She felt the Mr. FHS contest winner did an excellent job giving advice to incoming freshman: to take your time, enjoy the experience, and go out of your way to make friends.

Trustee Day spoke about the "We the People" event at Dayton Elementary School (DES), the Student Absenteeism Advisory Board (SAAB), and the Trade Fest at Silver Stage High School (SSHS). She attended the DHS volleyball championship, participated in a district podcast, and presented the Silver Stage Nighthawk Voices of Tomorrow for their work during a meet the candidates night.

Trustee Farr spoke about the Silverland Middle School (SMS) leadership class who provided breakfast to thank teachers, and teacher appreciation at Fernley Elementary School (FES). He gave recognition coins in appreciation to Dolan Auto Group for their significant donations to our schools over the years. He spoke highly of Ms. Ferguson's FHS drama class performance.

Trustee Bull attended Dayton site visits and Yerington High School (YHS) senior presentations. He attended the Yerington track meet with many schools competing, and participated with the Lion's Club who donated burgers and hot dogs for the athletes. He spoke about SVS and Yerington baseball and the State Championship.

Clerk Carson spoke about the last days of school and finals, wishing everyone a strong finish to the year.

President Hendrix visited DHS classes including Special Education classrooms. He commented on open doors propped open and spoke on the safety of the schools. He attended a grand opening for a business in Silver Springs with SSHS students in attendance, sharing his opinion that students need to be in school learning and not at grand openings for businesses. He went to the Veterans Memorial Day Event.

## 7. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

## 8. ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE

The board members read notes of gratitude written by students across the district.

## 9. SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

Superintendent Logan congratulated Alauna Escartin for being elected as the FHS incoming Student Body President. He extended his thanks to FIS for hosting our meeting, and he spoke on the anticipation of the awards nights, activities and graduations coming up. He announced that about 60 of our district's seniors will receive an associates degree from dual

enrollment with WNC, and he introduced FIS incoming Principal Reema Pulsifer. Rachel Croft was given time to present information on the National Board of Teachers, and she recognized Jerri Kerns, pinning her with this prestigious award. Jerri and multiple LCSD teachers have gone through this rigorous training and professional development and are recognized as leaders among their peers.

#### 10. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

Public comment was made by Patrick Billings, SSSH Social Studies teacher. He shared his 21 years of experience working with many different administrators to foster the teaching environment in LCSD. He spoke positively about the culture and supportive environment extended to students and teachers. He shared that retention is a challenge, not because of the administrators' lack of support, but due to student and parent apathy, lack of student motivation, absences, student substance abuse, and social media addiction. His full comments are attached to the minutes.

Bridget Perez, a veteran teacher, served as an LCSD teacher leader and served on the state's Teacher Recruitment & Retention Committee. She addressed a statement made at the last meeting that teachers are leaving due to administrators driving them away. With her experience she shared that this is a nationwide issue and the causes are complex, varying from stress, burnout, and student behaviors, making more money elsewhere, and mental health issues. Teachers are responsible for more than instruction and LCSD provides supportive leadership. Publicly blaming one group damages morale. Her full comments are attached to the minutes.

Principal Amber Cross addressed President Hendrix's concern about SSSH students being at a business opening. She explained that the leadership students were invited off campus during their lunchtime for the opportunity to accept a check from the new business. She also spoke to comments made by Trustee Whisler at the April meeting, suggesting that teachers are afraid of their administrators, that teacher shortage is an internal problem rooted in a "good ol'boy system" and that administrators do not follow policy and sweep things under the rug. She gave her arguments against these comments, gave examples of the honest motivation and dedication shown by administrators, and shared factual, legitimate reasons that staff leave. Her full comments are attached to the minutes.

Assistant Principal Stephanie Coplan reflected on the professional encouragement and support she received as teacher and as assistant principal, by the leadership at LCSD. She plans to share the collaborative mentorship she was given and will continue to foster the educators she will serve in Smith Valley as principal. She says this is not a unique experience in LCSD and it is concerning when the board bases their opinions on the perceptions of a few. She recommended that they visit the schools directly. Her full comments are attached to the minutes.

Principal Duane Mattice spoke as President of the Lyon County Administrators Association (LCAA) to address the board's characterization that LCSD has a retention problem. He shared data suggesting that LCSD shows stability in comparison to other districts. Data shows our teaching staff is made up of 10% newer, less experienced teachers. Therefore, about 90% of LCSD teachers are experienced educators that have chosen to remain. Teacher attrition has decreased statewide since the implementation of SB231 benefits. Long-term substitutes are a statewide reality, though stats show LCSD vacancies are lower than other districts. He spoke on Critical Labor designations as a proactive retention tool, useful when administrators have a small pool to choose from. He encouraged focusing on the positive initiatives that celebrate the stability growing in the district. His full comments are attached to the minutes.

Principal Jamie Henderson shared her thoughts on accusations made by Trustee Whisler at the previous board meeting. She pointed out a lack of professionalism by board members during open meetings and violations made to board policies that are intended to govern board conduct. Her full comments are attached to the minutes.

FHS Principal Ryan Cross addressed the attack on administrators at the previous meeting through inaccurate and unformed statements by Trustee Whisler. FHS staff retention rate was at 97% last year which show that the claims about administrative failures are not based on facts. He pointed out the lack of adherence to board policies on the Code of Conduct and Oath of Office, and the use of open meetings to air personal grievances. He offered non-competitive salaries as one cause for the recruitment challenges. His full comments are attached to the minutes.

Erin Korf commented on the increasingly negative and unproductive criticism directed at administration during open meetings that undermines the positive environment needed to support school communities. The comment that teachers are afraid to report or have discussions with administrators may be true for a few but not the majority. She spoke on the unprofessional attitude the board has shown in meetings in front of stakeholders. She encouraged constructive comments that are respectful, factual, and focused on solutions. Brian Lee, with the Nevada Certified Education Association, spoke on teacher retention as a longstanding problem across the counties in Nevada. He asserted that LCSD has an exemplory record for supporting teachers with professional development. He referred to recent comments made by trustees as discourteous and unprofessional. He stated that this was contrary to the long standing practice that administrators are not disciplined in public by board members, but in private by the superintendent. He cited Open Meeting Law and NRS 241.033 all employees entitled to advanced notice when speaking of character, alledged misconduct, or professional competence. The board's comments demoralized the staff members and violated the spirit and letter of the law. He asked that the board comply with regulations going forward.

Eric Nelson resident offered information for agenda item 22, internet technology. He shared his experience in internet vulnerability, offered the basics on white list or black list systems for protection, and suggested layered tiers of access, maybe teachers could have full access, and tier it down. There are companies can create the lists and update them as they are created.

**11. CONSENT AGENDA (FOR POSSIBLE ACTION):** Per LCSD Board Policy BDD:

Board Meeting Procedures, all matters listed under the consent agenda are considered routine and may be acted upon by the Board of School Trustees with one action and without discussion. During this meeting, any member of the Board may request that an item be removed from the consent agenda, discussed, and acted upon separately.

Trustee Farr made a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented.

Trustee Bull seconded.

With no further discussion, the motion carried 7-0.

A. Trustee Questions & Answers: This information will be posted after 12:00 pm the day of the board meeting if questions are asked. No questions were asked.

B. Request for Early Graduation/HSE (confidential)

C. Personnel Reports

D. Travel

E. District Financial Report  
Vouchers# 1328, 1329, 1335, 1334, 1341, 1340, 1348, 1347.  
Total \$2,721,043.96

12. ACCEPTANCE OF DONATIONS

Trustee Parsons made a motion to accept the donations made to the schools.  
Clerk Carson seconded.  
With no further discussion, the motion carried 7-0.

13. FY2026-27 BUDGET - PUBLIC HEARING

A. OPEN BUDGET-PUBLIC HEARING:

Conduct public hearing on the FY 2026-27 tentative budget to provide citizens with the opportunity for input and comment on the district's proposed budget.

President Hendrix opened the public hearing for discussion. There was no comment.

B. CLOSE BUDGET - PUBLIC HEARING

President Hendrix closed the public hearing.

14. **(For Possible Action)** Discussion and possible action to provide district administration further direction on the LCSD FY2027 tentative budget and/or approve it as the LCSD FY2027 final budget. This item is being presented by Executive Director of Operations Harman Bains and Chief Financial Officer Lilliana Camacho-Polkow.

The 2026-27 Budget was presented.

Trustee Farr made a motion that the Board approve the final budget for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027.

Trustee Day seconded.

With no further discussion, the motion carried 7-0.

15. **(For Possible Action)** Discussion and possible action regarding the LCSD 5 Year Capital Improvement Plan. This item is being presented by Executive Director of Operations Harman Bains and Chief Financial Officer Lilliana Camacho Polkow.

5 year CIP was presented as needed to match the budget. Changes were mainly in bond projects.

Trustee Bull made a motion that the Board approve the 5 Year Capital Improvement Plan as presented.

Clerk Carson seconded.

With no further discussion, the motion carried 7-0.

16. **(For Possible Action)** Discussion and possible action regarding the Boys and Girls Club of Mason Valley and partnership with the 21st Century after-school program. This item is being presented by BGC CEO Travis Crowder and Director of Development Nick Beaton.

Nick Beaton and Travis Crowder, from the Boys and Girls Club (BGC) of Mason Valley spoke on the partnership between LCSD and the BGC. Mason Valley has close to 1300 participants almost daily. The club and organization supports families in building leadership in kids. Currently they are developing of the Dayton Early Learning Center for infants to preK age children and planning a new clubhouse campus and early learning center in Silver Springs. Grants are needed as well as continuous collaboration with the school district. Transportation has been a challenge, as it is with the schools. No child is turned away. They work with families to fund programs. It costs approximately \$40 for a week to feed one child. However it is still the lowest in the state.

The board appreciated the presentation and shared thoughts on the benefits the club brings to families and kids.

No motion was made.

A break was taken at 8:10 PM.

The meeting was called back to order at 8:30 PM.

17. **(For Possible Action)** Discussion and possible action regarding the Guaranteed Maximum Price for the Yerington High School and Silver Stage High School Single Point of Entry Projects. This item is being presented by Executive Director of Operations Harman Bains.

The Guaranteed Maximum Price was presented for the YHS and SSSHS Single Point of Entry projects. Both projects came in on budget and Pellet Construction is ready to start once approved.

The Silverland Middle School project will be done by our staff. The bid came in much higher than anticipated and the district is confident that our team has the knowledge, talent and ability to do it at a significantly lower cost.

Trustee Farr made a motion that the Board approve the Guaranteed Maximum Price of \$195,572.13 for the Yerington High School and \$283,372.01 for Silver Stage High School Single Point of Entry projects.

Trustee Bull seconded.

With no further discussion, the motion carried 7-0.

18. **(For Possible Action)** Discussion and possible action regarding a contract with Chartwells as LCSD Nutrition Services Management Company for the 2026-27 school year. This item is being presented by Executive Director of Operations Harman Bains.

Chartwells requires annual approval for the 5 year contract. Chartwells has been a great partner, increasing participation, like breakfast in the classroom allowing more kids to eat meals, which essentially leads to higher reimbursements.

President Hendrix made a motion to approve the annual renewal of the 5-year contract with Chartwells as Lyon County School District food service management company.

Trustee Farr seconded.

With no further discussion, the motion carried 7-0.

19. **(For Possible Action)** Discussion and possible action regarding the catered dinners provided prior to regular LCSD school board meetings. This item is being presented by Board Member James Whisler and Executive Director of Operations Harman Bains.

Trustee Whisler questioned the practice of catered dinners before the board meetings for the trustees and staff who attend. He feels it is not unreasonable for people to get their own dinner. He reasoned that the district is making cuts, is short-staffed, and staff are overworked.

The trustees discussed the renegotiated cost of board meeting dinners, achieving an approximate 70% savings and reducing the annual expense to about \$1300. While the Board agreed with contributing to expense cuts, most decided to continue providing the meals for practical reasons, as some members cannot go home before meetings.

President Hendrix made a motion to approve the continuation of board dinners at the newly negotiated rate effective June 2026.

Trustee Far seconded

There were further comments about the value in the opportunity to sit down together. Some

offered to pay for their meal if needed. Regarding the staff, they are hired by Chartwells and often times their schedule is flexed to accommodate longer days.

With no further discussion, the motion carried 5-2. Trustees Parsons and Whisler opposed.

20. **(For Possible Action)** Discussion and possible action regarding the Memorandum of Understanding for LCSD and the Silver Springs Mutual Water Company. This item is being presented by Executive Director of Operations Harman Bains.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Silver Springs Mutual Water Co.

(SSMWC) was put together as a result of a water use audit. SSMWC found that the district uses more water than it owns in water rights in the Silver Springs area. It addressed specific wells and water being used for each well. Through the MOU unused water rights will be dedicated elsewhere to cover the deficit. SSMWC will conduct a 2-year water audit to capture more accurate and current data. Modernizations and upgrades at the school campuses, like swamp coolers being replaced with efficient HVAC systems, will show there is less deficit than previously shown.

Director Bains commented that the SSMWC has been great to work with. He shared options for saving water at the facilities like replacing fields with AstroTurf.

Clerk Carson made a motion to approve the Memorandum of Understanding between Lyon County School District and the Silver Springs Mutual Water Company authorizing the dedication of 34.416 acre-feet annually from Permit No. 63258 to SSMWC through the Nevada Division of Water Resources.

Trustee Bull seconded.

Trustee Parsons asked where the water was coming from. It was explained that one well was being under utilized and would be repurposed to decrease the deficit of other wells.

She was concerned that the district may be giving away too much should enrollment change. She is not in favor of giving water away.

With no further discussion, the motion carried 6-1. Trustee Parsons opposed.

21. **(For Possible Action)** Discussion and possible action regarding the Memorandum of Understanding for LCSD and Walker River Little League. This item is being presented by Executive Director of Operations Harman Bains.

The MOU between Yerington's Walker River Little League (WRLL) and LCSD was brought forward for approval for the benefit of both organizations. Background information was given regarding the City of Yerington who donated Booth Parr Field a few years ago. After discussion, both wish to memorialize their shared understanding regarding the installation of upgraded lighting and ongoing field use, prioritizing access LCSD and WRLL athletic programs. WRLL raised the funds for the improvements through private community donors and sponsors. It is a significant gift to the school district and community.

Trustee Bull made a motion that the Board approve the Booth-Parr Field Lighting Replacement and Shared Use Memorandum of Understanding between Lyon County School District and Walker River Little League.

Trustee Farr seconded.

With no further discussion, the motion carried 7-0.

22. **(For Possible Action)** Discussion and possible action regarding the level of internet access as well as improved options to measure and control internet access that students, teachers, administrators, and employees have. This item is being presented by Executive Director of Operations Harman Bains.

The district internet filtering systems, primarily using Google Safe Search and Content Keeper, were discussed, with the explanation that while no filtering system is perfect, they use both whitelist and blacklist approaches to manage internet access while protecting students. The discussion revealed some concerns from students about internet restrictions potentially slowing down research and limiting access to necessary educational content. The board discussed internet safety measures and content filtering, focusing on the current use of Bark and other monitoring tools. Teachers and administrators receive daily alerts and weekly reports with data showing student activity. Teachers talk to students about safe internet use, and students lose computers or privileges when caught misusing them. They reviewed the process for unblocking specific websites with principal approval and examined the challenges they face with the constantly changing material on the internet. Go Guardian is being piloted in LyOnline distance ed and results are promising. The discussion highlighted the limitations of blacklist approaches and explored the potential benefits of a whitelist system, though no specific action items were decided upon. The board generally acknowledged that effective internet safety requires a unified approach involving software tools, teacher supervision, digital citizenship training, and parental involvement. No motion was made.

23. **(For Possible Action)** Discussion and possible action regarding LCSD Board Challenge/Recognition Coins and their issuance, guardrails, and guidelines. This item is being presented by Board Member James Whisler.

The Trustees discussed the use of district recognition coins and who should have the authority to award them. Trustee Whisler expressed support for allowing administrators, cabinet members, and staff to use the coins but emphasized the importance of preventing misuse. President Hendrix referenced draft guidelines and sought input on who should be authorized to distribute coins and who should be eligible to receive them, including staff, students, and community members who go above and beyond. The nomination form provides justification for each award. They agreed that allowing too many people to distribute coins could diminish their significance.

Superintendent Logan shared that approximately 30 coins have been awarded this year and he recommended that administrators and cabinet members submit nominations to the Board to disburse. He suggested advance notice for practical reasons and potential HR considerations. Formal guidelines for the process will be drafted for future Board review. No motion made.

Public Comment was made by FES Principal Jamie Henderson suggesting that principals may not be comfortable giving out that type of gift as it could create unintended division. Their staff nominate staff and students, and they see value in their own system.

24. **(For Possible Action)** Discussion and possible action regarding LCSD Policy IK: Grading, Interventions, Course Exemptions, Class Ranking as a first reading. This item is being presented by Executive Director of Education Services Heather Moyle.

Revisions to Policy IK: Grading, Interventions, Course Exemptions, Class Ranking were brought forward to better prepare students with a tiered approach in the grading system. Grades K-4 maintain the standards-based 4-point proficiency scale. Grades 5- 6 will be graded with a hybrid model using traditional letter grades, A-F, calculated under categories connected to a set of specific standards. Grades 7-12 will use the traditional letter grade model, each tied to course point ranges and values. Section 10 of the Administrative Regulations has a revision to class rank with honors. It specifies the time at LCSD during

high school for those eligible for honor status.

Clerk Carson made a motion that the Board approve the revisions to LCSD Board Policy IK: Grading, Interventions, Course Exemptions and Class Ranking as a first reading.

Trustee Day seconded.

With no further discussion, the motion carried 7-0.

25. **(For Possible Action)** Discussion and possible action regarding LCSD Policy JO: Student Education Records as a first reading. This item is being presented by Executive Director of Special Services Rachel Stewart.

Revisions to Policy JO: Student Education Records represent changes in distributing student identification records to 3rd parties due to the passing of Assembly Bill 6. The main groups affected are local groups and athletic leagues that want address information to advertise services and activities.

Trustee Farr made a motion that the Board approve the revisions to LCSD Board Policy JO: Student Education Records as a first reading.

Trustee Parsons seconded.

With no further discussion, the motion carried 7-0.

26. **(For Possible Action)** Discussion and possible action regarding the following LCSD policies as a second and final reading. No changes were made to these policies after the first reading. Any member of the Board may request that a policy be removed and discussed and acted upon separately.

A. LCSD Policy GBBP: Information Technology

B. LCSD Policy DA: Fundraising

Trustee Farr made a motion that the Board approve the second and final readings of Policies GBBP: Information Technology and DA: Fundraising.

Trustee Parsons seconded.

With no further discussion, the motion carried 7-0.

27. **(For Possible Action)** Discussion and possible action regarding the LCSD 2027 Board of Trustees Meeting Schedule. This item is being presented by Superintendent Tim Logan. Trustee Bull made a motion that the Board approve the meeting LCSD Board meeting schedule for 2027.

Clerk Carson seconded.

With no further discussion, the motion carried 7-0.

28. **(For Possible Action)** Discussion and possible action on agenda items for future board meetings and/or information item requests, including a summary by the superintendent. This item is being presented by Board President Hendrix and Superintendent Tim Logan.

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, June 23, 2026, at the PLC in Silver Springs. Agenda items may include the following:

Trustees Farr announced the SMS Green Team event scheduled for Thursday, 6-8 PM.

Go Guardian

NASS iNVest

Superintendent Evaluation

DPP

Policies

29. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

No comment was made.

30. ADJOURN:

The meeting adjourned at 10:46 PM

The notice for this meeting was posted on May 19, 2026, at Lyon County School District Administrative Office, Lyon County School District websites (<http://www.lyoncsd.org>) and the Nevada Public Notice Website (<http://nv.gov>) in accordance with NRS 241.020 (3)(b).

Lyon County School District Statement of Nondiscrimination and Accessibility

*The Lyon County School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, disability or age in any of its policies, procedures, or practices, in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (pertaining to race, color, and national origin), Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and any other pertinent statute or requirement. This non-discrimination policy covers admission, access, treatment, and employment in the district's programs and activities, including occupational education. For information regarding opportunity policies, or the filing of grievances, contact your school principal.*

*The Lyon County School District is pleased to provide accommodations for the handicapped or disabled. Members of the public who are disabled and require special accommodations or assistance at the meeting are requested to notify the administrative assistant to the superintendent and board of trustees, in writing at 25 E. Goldfield Avenue, Yerington, Nevada 89447; e-mail at [mheim@lyoncsd.org](mailto:mheim@lyoncsd.org); or by calling (775) 463-6800 ext. 10034, at least one week prior to the meeting.*

Good Evening,

I would like to clear up some misconceptions regarding the struggle with teacher retainment. My name is Patrick Billings, and I have been a social studies teacher at Silver Stage High School for the past 21 years. I have been lucky enough to have worked under many amazing school leaders including my current administration, Mrs. Amber Cross and Mrs. Stephanie Coplan.

I have worked with my administration to develop data supported instruction, which included how to unwrap standards to build student centered learning intentions. From that, we built success criteria to increase rigor and support real world application in order to foster challenging and meaningful learning. We improved grading policies, increased tutoring days, and parent engagement. My principal saw my confidence and ability grow as I became a teacher leader to mentor new and struggling teachers.

When Mrs. Cross took over two years ago, she continued these highly successful initiatives and brought her own positive culture to our school. She has worked tirelessly to make a smooth transition for staff and students. She has built a loving and supportive educational culture that puts students first. We have monthly pep rallies to increase school spirit and field trips for perfect attendance and ACT growth. Our principal and vice principal are constantly present in the halls, lunch, and classrooms to provide support to teachers and positive interactions for students.

My Administration's positive attitude shines in our school and makes SSHS a better place. I know I can always go to both Mrs. Coplan and Mrs. When I have student concerns, lesson ideas, or stress in my life, they treat us like real people and work to always care for their staff and build us up.

All of this is to say that while teacher retention is a problem, it is not due to lack of administration support. In my opinion, lack of teacher retention is due to high levels of student apathy, obstinate student attitudes during assignments, a lack of curiosity and motivation, as well as high levels of chronic absenteeism. SSHS has dropped their rate by 18% by focusing on positive rewards and field trips for perfect attendance. Substance abuse by some students, problems created with social media addiction, and a lack of societal respect for education and teachers.

We have great things going on at Silver Stage High School. The majority of students are good but these are real problems. I love my job but teaching is not easy. Work to fix these problems and you may retain more teachers.

Good evening. My name is Bridget Perez, and I am a veteran teacher in the Lyon County School District. I have served as a teacher leader for the past five years, and I also served on Nevada's state teacher recruitment and retention committee.

I would like to address a recent statement suggesting that teachers are leaving primarily because site administrators are driving them away.

Teacher shortages are not unique to Lyon County. Nevada has struggled with educator recruitment and retention for many years, especially in rural districts, and this is a nationwide issue affecting schools across the country.

Through my work both locally and at the state level, the causes consistently identified are much broader and more complex than any single factor. These include compensation, housing costs, workload, burnout, increasing student behavior challenges, and competition from careers outside of education.

Many professionals with the same degrees and qualifications teachers hold can make significantly more money outside of education while facing far less daily stress and fewer behavioral challenges. That reality matters.

Teachers today are managing far more than instruction alone. Across the country, educators are dealing with increasing classroom disruptions, chronic absenteeism, mental health concerns, and behavioral issues that make the profession more demanding than ever before.

Leadership absolutely matters. Strong administrators can create positive school cultures and help teachers feel supported. Poor leadership can certainly contribute to teachers leaving. But reducing a statewide and nationwide crisis to a single cause oversimplifies the problem and creates unnecessary division.

Most teachers and administrators in this district are working extremely hard under difficult circumstances because they care deeply about students and

this community. Publicly blaming one group for a complex issue damages morale at a time when collaboration is needed most.

If we truly want to recruit and retain high-quality teachers in Lyon County and across Nevada, then we must focus on meaningful solutions: competitive compensation, teacher support and mentoring, improved working conditions, addressing student behavior challenges, and restoring respect for the teaching profession.

The question should not be who to blame. The question should be how we work together to make Lyon County a place where excellent educators choose to stay.

I have researched this topic in-depth and would love to share more with you.

Thank you for your time.

Good evening, Mr. President, Trustees of the Board, and community members. My name is Amber Cross and am the principal at Silver Stage High School.

I want to address comments made by Trustee Whistler at last month's board meeting in Dayton. Trustee Whistler stated that Lyon County can't keep teachers because "all the teachers he talks to are afraid of their administrators," and that our teacher shortage is an internal problem rooted in a so-called "Good Ol' Boy system." He further claimed that 80% of the issues are at the District Office, and only 20% are at the school sites.

As a high school principal, I must address these claims directly and honestly.

First, the greatest impact a leader has on a school is at the site level—where students learn, teachers teach, and families engage every day. While district leadership sets the vision and provides support, it is principals and teachers who build the culture, relationships, and trust that keep great educators in our schools. I see this every day at Silver Stage High School.

Mr. Whistler also accused administrators of not following policy and "sweeping things under the rug." I take offense at this—not for myself alone, but for every administrator who has stood in the gap for their students and staff. I have waited outside my school for the police after a bomb threat, never hesitating to be the first line of defense for my students and teachers. I have accepted the responsibility that comes with being principal, including risking my own safety if it means protecting my school community. These are not the actions of someone avoiding responsibility.

Teaching is a calling. Unlike the parents Mr. Bull referenced who discouraged their children from becoming teachers, I encouraged my own daughter to become a teacher, because I believe it is the most impactful, difference-making profession there is. Every day I work with educators who put in countless hours, who endure disrespect and frustration, and who still show up with love for our students and community.

When the board, who represent all taxpayers—including myself, my family, and my colleagues—publicly criticize and blame those of us in schools, it is not just disheartening. It is damaging to the culture we are trying to build, and it discourages the very people we need most: our teachers and staff.

I want to share the real reasons teachers leave my school:

- One was promoted—we helped her grow to reach her potential.
- One was a teacher intern, replaced by a licensed teacher.
- One got a job four miles from his house to avoid the daily grind of I-80 traffic.

These are not the symptoms of an internal problem—they are the realities of life and career growth. They are the results of leaders investing in and supporting their staff.

Viktor Frankl, a Holocaust survivor, said, “Love is wanting to uncover the potential in others.” That is why I am a principal. My mission is to find the strengths in my students, my teachers, my parents, and my colleagues—and help them shine. I do this every day, at every level. I love my people.

For those trustees who have visited and walked my school, thank you. My staff and students truly appreciate being recognized for their hard work. For those who have not, I respectfully invite you to come and see the positive and supportive environment we work so hard to create.

I am proud to be a leader in Lyon County. I stand with my fellow administrators and teachers, who fight for kids, support each other, and do the hard, rewarding work of education every single day. I ask the Board to join us in that mission, not tear us down.

Thank you.

Stephanie Coplan 5/26/26

As I prepare to step into the role of principal of Smith Valley next year, I would like to take this opportunity to share some reflections and insights from my time here in Lyon County. My journey in education has been profoundly shaped by the remarkable administrative support I received—support that not only empowered me as a classroom teacher but also encouraged my professional growth and pursuit of further learning.

During my tenure as a middle school teacher, the encouragement and resources provided by our administration were instrumental in allowing me to access extra learning opportunities for myself and my students. With that support, I was able to earn my NISL (National Institute for School Leadership) certification, as well as complete my administration degree, both of which were made possible with unwavering guidance from Amber, Erin, and other leaders in our district. Their mentorship modeled the collaborative and student-centered approach that I now strive to bring to my own leadership.

I can say with complete sincerity that I was happy and fulfilled as a classroom teacher in Lyon County. That sense of satisfaction came from daily experiences with students, strong collegial relationships, and a shared commitment to educational excellence. Now, as I transition into my own principalship, my focus is on supporting all teachers in managing their classrooms effectively and ensuring that each and every student receives the high-quality educational experience outlined in the Lyon County Student Bill of Rights and Portrait of a Learner. My goal is to build on the strengths of our staff and to foster an environment where every educator feels valued and empowered, so that every child can thrive.

It is important to note that my positive experiences are not unique. I believe, and have witnessed firsthand, that the majority of teachers and staff across the county share this same sense of satisfaction and commitment. It is therefore concerning when the board bases decisions or statements on the perspectives of a small group, yet refers to these views as representing the majority. If there is ever a question regarding teacher job satisfaction, I would encourage you—rather than relying on secondhand reports or singular conversations—to visit our schools, walk our halls, and speak directly with our dedicated educators and staff. The reality of our positive and collaborative school culture is best seen and felt in person.

Thank you for your continued support of our schools, teachers, and students. I look forward to working together to make Lyon County an even better place to learn and grow.



Lyon County Administrators Association

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**To:** Lyon County School District Board of Trustees

**From:** Lyon County Administrators Association

**Date:** May 1, 2026

**Subject:** Data-Driven Analysis of Teacher Retention and District Stability

Dear Members of the Board,

Recent discussions have characterized the Lyon County School District (LCSD) as facing a "major retention problem." While we must remain vigilant in supporting our educators, a closer examination of the 2024–2026 data suggests that LCSD is actually demonstrating significant stability during a period of unprecedented statewide labor challenges.

To ensure our policy decisions are based on the current reality rather than hyperbole, I would like to highlight the following facts:

#### **High Staff Experience and Stability**

A true "retention problem" is marked by a revolving door of inexperienced staff. However, LCSD's current data tells a different story. Our percentage of inexperienced teachers (those with less than three years of experience) stands at approximately 10.3%. This is notably lower than many neighboring districts and the statewide average. This indicates that roughly 90% of our teaching force is composed of experienced educators who have chosen to remain in Lyon County classrooms.

#### **Positive Impact of Strategic Investments**

Since the implementation of SB231 and subsequent salary adjustments in 2023, Nevada has seen a 30% reduction in teacher attrition statewide. Lyon County has been a beneficiary of this trend. While we still face vacancies, the data shows that the rate of teachers leaving the district has stabilized significantly compared to the 2021–2022 period. We are no longer seeing the mass exodus that characterized the post-pandemic years. Money talks.

#### **Contextualizing Vacancy Rates**

While the district currently utilizes approximately 38 long-term substitutes, it is critical to view this number in the context of the statewide crisis. Nevada currently faces over 2,000 vacancies. With LCSD representing roughly 3% of the state's student population, our vacancy share is disproportionately low. Furthermore, the "Critical Labor Shortage" designation for 2026–2028 is

a proactive retention tool—it has allowed us to keep 26 veteran educators in our system who would otherwise be lost to retirement.

### **Recruitment vs. Retention**

The data suggests that LCSD does not have a "culture or retention crisis," but rather a "recruitment challenge" shared by every rural district in the nation. Our current staff are staying at higher rates than in previous years; our challenge lies in attracting new candidates to fill the gaps created by natural retirements and growth. It should also be pointed out that the overwhelming majority of candidates that apply for current openings do not have credentials and are often not even currently in the country. Administrators have a very small pool of applicants to choose from.

In conclusion, it is the position of the LCAA that labeling our current status as a "major retention problem" risks demoralizing the 90% of our staff who have remained loyal to the district and may inadvertently harm our recruitment efforts. The facts show a district that is successfully weathering a national labor shortage and maintaining a more experienced workforce than the state average.

We encourage the Board to continue focusing on competitive recruitment and morale-boosting initiatives that celebrate the stability we have worked so hard to achieve.

Sincerely,  
Duane Mattice, President  
Lyon County Administrators Association



## Fernley Elementary School

Home of the Wolves

450 Hardie Lane

Fernley, NV 89408

775-575-3420

[www.fes.lyoncsd.org](http://www.fes.lyoncsd.org)

School Counselor

Jamie Henderson  
Principal

Jennifer Bluhm  
Assistant  
Principal

Ryan Shea

Members of the Board,

My name is Jamie Henderson, Principal of Fernley Elementary. I am addressing comments made by Trustee Whisler during the April 28th open meeting.

As a veteran educator of 21 years I've poured my heart and soul into my roles. I currently have one open position at FES and 92% of my staff rated me highly effective. I refuse to acknowledge I'm not doing my job effectively. I am frustrated by the unprofessionalism and lack of factual basis in comments aimed at Lyon County Administrators last month. Using an open meeting to report hearsay, engage in slanderous attacks, use unprofessional language, and blindly accuse administrators of violating policy is abhorrent. These actions violate items in Board Member Code of Conduct policy BBF.

Trustee Whisler shared a concern from an employee regarding a student at a Fernley middle school and expressed frustration with Admin stating, "Reports are never filed, reports get buried, that's what I'm hearing and policies are never followed." This defamatory statement is grounded in hearsay and violates BBF item 10, which requires confidentiality of student information, and item 12 which mandates representing interests of the entire community. The employee sharing confidential information and Trustee Whisler reporting such information during open meeting is deeply concerning. After Principal Bumgardner spoke to these comments, he stated, "I'm not singling anyone out and it's not a personal attack." Trustee Whisler specifically referenced the middle school Administration in Fernley, which violates policy BBF item 14: Present personal criticism of district operations to the superintendent, not to the board in open meeting.

Trustee Whisler continued making blanket statements regarding staff retention, claiming: "This is why teachers aren't coming here. One, students; two, administration at all levels in every school aren't doing what they are supposed to". Making such claims violates BBF item 3 and creates divisiveness. Your role is to listen and work with the Superintendent to find solutions. I anticipated proposed solutions after you stated, "Let's focus on fixing the problems at hand", but I heard none.

The subsequent attempt by Trustees Whisler and Parsons to recant by redirecting blame toward Cabinet is also unacceptable. Personal and professional criticism of any employees violates Board policy BBF.

Moving forward, I hope you reflect:

1. Address concerns without violating Board policies and creating false narratives, always bringing solutions to the table.
2. Our schools, staff, students, and families are not pawns in political and personal agendas. Focus on what all school stakeholders are experiencing, and not just what your supporters are pushing.
3. Professional demeanor and practices are not a suggestion. They are required by policy. As Trustee Bull stated: "I don't see that happening with our Board right now".

I am optimistic that our elected Trustees will improve their professionalism, adhere to Board policies, and serve all employees and improvement goals of our district.

Thank you,



Jamie Henderson

Ryan Cross, Principal, Fernley High School

I'm here tonight as an administrator, but also as a constituent in this district.

At the last meeting we all witnessed an attack on administrators in this district. A member of this board made some uniformed, incorrect statements to the board and to the general public in the process. I believe the term used was "Bull Crap". So, I'm here to address the "bull crap".

As the principal of the largest school in LCSD, I can tell you we had a 97% retention rate for certified staff last year. The year prior was also in the high 90s. When I talk to my colleagues, they have similar results.

As your constituent, I would like to remind you of a couple of your own policies that you as a board seem to be ignoring.

Board Member Oath of Office: Policy BBBB

During my term, I will faithfully and impartially discharge the responsibilities of the Office of School Board Member to the best of my ability.

You can't be impartial when you have already decided all administrators (or officers) are bad based on your own experiences.

Goes on to say you may:

1. Request for Information (there is a process for getting facts so you are not constantly operating on emotion)
2. Requests for Legal Opinions
3. Action on Complaints or Requests Made to Board Members (follow the process rather than making false statements in open meetings)

Board member Code of Conduct Policy BBF

3. Render all decisions based on the available facts and my independent judgment and refuse to surrender that judgment to individuals, special interest groups, agencies, or outside pressures;
14. Present personal criticism of district operations to the superintendent, not to district staff or to the board in open meeting;

No where in any of these policies does it say this office should be used as a pulpit for airing personal grievances about your own negative past experiences with authority or leadership. You represent us as a district, and operating on emotion and rumors, and being outraged by problems that are not based in fact is embarrassing.

Earlier tonight another person commented about recruitment vs. retention. We do have a recruitment problem. When it comes to pay, we are not competitive. I did my son's taxes for him last year. He worked in a skilled trade for 8 months of the fiscal year. If he worked here as a teacher, he would have to invest 4-5 years to get a degree, and then work here for 10 years *and earn a master's degree* to make what he made as a first year apprentice in 2025. Without a master's degree, he could work here for 30 years and never earn what he collected last year.

Finally, the board president needs to take control of these meetings. Some members display no decorum, no civility, and no respect for policy or other members. The conduct of board members being allowed is embarrassing and shows a complete lack of control. If I was a teacher or administrator looking to relocate to LCSD, and I watched one of these meetings, I would run the other direction. This board is dysfunctional at best. The constituents of LCSD deserve better.

Read on 5/26/26-Dear Members of the School Board,

My name is Erin Korf and I am the Principal at Silver Stage Elementary. I am here to express concern about the increasingly negative and unproductive criticism directed toward our school administration during recent meetings and public discussions. While accountability and open dialogue are essential in any educational community, repeated personal attacks and hostile rhetoric undermine the collaborative environment needed to support students, teachers, and families.

A comment stating teachers are afraid to report or have discussions with administration was made at the last meeting. While I understand this may be the perception of some, it is not the reality of many. As a board, you are a part of the leadership team. As many of us have watched the unprofessionalism and constant arguing among the board, one can only wonder if attitude reflects leadership. How can you possibly expect any group of employees to act a certain way, when you yourselves don't model it.

Stakeholders have also watched multiple, inappropriate, derogatory comments being made by board members with no action. Please take a moment to ask yourselves, had an administrator or other staff member made the same derogatory comment, would your reaction be different. If it is, wouldn't that be the definition of a "good 'ol boy" system, like mentioned in last month's board meeting. ?

School administrators carry significant responsibilities, including student safety, academics, staffing, budgeting, and compliance with state and district policies. Constructive feedback is appropriate and necessary, but criticism should remain respectful, FACTUAL, and focused on solutions rather than personal accusations or public humiliation.

When conversations become centered on "bashing" individuals rather than addressing issues thoughtfully, it creates division within the community and discourages productive participation. It can also negatively affect staff morale and distract from the shared goal of providing the best possible education for our students.

I encourage the Board to work on fostering an atmosphere of professionalism and civility during meetings and public comment sessions. Establishing and reinforcing expectations for respectful communication can help ensure that concerns are heard while maintaining dignity for everyone involved.

What we need most from the board is not only policy guidance, but also active listening, presence in our schools, and genuine collaboration with those who understand daily operations. Even during disagreements, mutual respect is essential to finding meaningful solutions and maintaining public trust in our educational system.

Thank you for listening and I hope that positive changes are in our future.