

# USD 444 September school board meeting

by Marsha Heinly  
Board Clerk

The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Education of Unified School District 444 was held in the Little River Jr./Sr. High School Conference Room at Little River on Wednesday, September 9, 2026. Board members present were: Mark Frick, Trevor Rolfs, Susan Rome, John Tietjens, Andy Wills, Jason Wohletz, and Wade Wright. Also present: Superintendent Brent Garrison, Clerk Marsha K. Heinly, Principals Randy Hendrickson and Jon Paden.

President Andy Wills called the meeting to order at 6:30 a.m.

Agenda:  
2026-2027 Budget Hearing

a. The Building Needs Assessment and State Assessments for the district were reviewed with the board by Superintendent Brent Garrison, Principals Randy Hendrickson, and Jon Paden. It was shared with the board what programs are being utilized in the buildings to meet the needs of all students.

b. Superintendent Brent Garrison reviewed the proposed 2026-2027 Budget with the board and those patrons in attendance and answered any questions they had.

c. Susan Rome moved to adopt the 2026-2027

budget as published. Second by John Tietjens. Motion carried. Yes--7 No--0

d. Mark Frick moved to adopt Resolution No. 27-112 Local Option Percentage for the 2026-2027 budget year at 32.4%. Second by Trevor Rolfs. Motion carried. Yes--7 No--0

(The Budget Hearing closed at 7:09 a.m.)

Trevor Rolfs moved to approve the agenda as presented.

There were no patrons' comments.

Jason Wohletz moved to approve the consent agenda as presented. Second by Trevor Rolfs. Motion carried. Yes--7 No--0

•Minutes of the August 12th regular meeting and the August 26th special meeting

•Approval of Clerk/Treasurer's reports

•Consideration of new hires (licensed and/or classified) and resignations

•Approval of the High School STEM programs grant from Tulsa Foundation

Brad Crump, Technology Director, submitted a written report with updates on the commons exterior door, southwest gym exterior doors, Apptegy Rooms, MacBooks, and the Rocket Alumni and Awards interactive board.

Principals Randy Hen-

drickson and Jon Paden submitted written reports.

Superintendent Brent Garrison reviewed the EMC property insurance renewal from Raleigh Insurance Agency.

The enrollment information for the 2026-2027 school year as well as an updated 5-year projected enrollment was reviewed by Superintendent Brent Garrison.

Superintendent Brent Garrison shared information regarding the shortage of substitute teachers and the challenges it brings, and made a recommendation to increase the daily substitute teacher pay to \$125.00 and the long-term substitute teacher pay to \$135.00 for the 2026-2027 school year.

Trevor Rolfs moved to approve the EMC property insurance renewal from Raleigh Insurance Agency in the amount of \$142,017. Second by Wade Wright. Motion carried. Yes--6 No--1

(Susan Rome abstained.)

John Tietjens moved to appoint Mark Frick as the 2026 Delegate Assembly Board Representative at the KASB Convention in November. Second by Trevor Rolfs. Motion carried. Yes--7 No--0

Mark Frick moved to approve the engagement letter from SSC CPAs, P.A. to conduct the 2025-

2026 audit. Second by Wade Wright. Motion carried. Yes--7 No--0

Report by Superintendent Brent Garrison included:

•Bus Drivers

No executive session was necessary for Negotiations.

Trevor Rolfs moved that the Board and Superintendent Brent Garrison go into executive session to discuss non-elected personnel pursuant to non-elected personnel exception under KOMA and the open meeting will resume in the Little River Jr./Sr. High School Conference Room at 8:20 a.m.

Second by Mark Frick. Motion carried. Yes--7 No--0

(Executive session from 8:10 a.m. to 8:20 a.m.)

No action was necessary for the above executive session.

No executive session was necessary for Matters affecting a student.

Mark Frick moved to increase the daily substitute teacher rate to \$125.00 and the long-term substitute teacher rate to \$135.00 for the 2026-2027 school year. Second by Trevor Rolfs. Motion carried. Yes--7 No--0

Susan Rome moved to adjourn the meeting. Second by John Tietjens. Motion carried. Yes--7 No--0 (The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 a.m.)

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## October 2026 Community Calendar

| Sunday                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Monday                                                                                                               | Tuesday                                                                                                                     | Wednesday                                                                                                                   | Thursday                                                                                                                                                   | Friday                                                                                                                                                                                   | Saturday                                                                   |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 27<br><i>Sunday Church</i><br><i>Notices can be found on Page 2.</i>                                                                                                                                                       | 28<br><b>No School Teacher Inservice</b><br>6:30 pm Windom Sr Center<br>Coverd Dish<br>4p: JH Volleyball A @ Elyria  | 29<br>10 am-LR Library<br>Story Time<br>4 HS VB Home Mod. Quad                                                              | 30<br>HS Music District Auditions<br>4 pm Ladies Auxiliary Meeting<br>7 pm American Legion Meeting @ Legion Building        | 1<br>12 pm-LR Senior Center Lunch<br>4 HS VB vs/Inman<br>4/5 JH VB/FB @ Ell-Saline                                                                         | 2<br>7 HS FB Stafford                                                                                                                                                                    | 3<br>8:30am HS VB @ C-G Invitational                                       |
| 4<br>4 pm Country Pals 4-H                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 5<br>K-1-2 - WCT - Lyons<br>4:30 JH C VB @ Lyons<br>6 pm HS JV FB @ Sylvan Lucas                                     | 6<br>10 am LR Library<br>Story Time<br>4 pm HS VB @ Solomon Mod. Quad                                                       | 7<br>9:10 am-1 hr Late Start<br>Teachers report at 7:45 am<br>6:30-8 am Board Meeting @ LRHS<br>5:45 pm-Windom City Council | 8<br>12 pm-LR Senior Center Lunch<br>4:30pm-JRHI VB / fb @ Canton/Galva                                                                                    | 9<br>7:30 FCS<br>7pm-HS FB @ Ell-Saline                                                                                                                                                  | 10<br>8 am HS JV VB @ Ellsworth tourney<br>9am-HS VB WSL @ LR              |
| 11<br>Advisory: American Red Cross speaking to Soph, Jr, and Sr.<br>12 noon- LR Chamber of Commerce<br>4 pm, HS VB vs St. John, SR Night<br>6 pm, HS JV FB vs Ell-Saline<br>7 pm-Little River City Council<br>Columbus Day | 12                                                                                                                   | 13<br>10 am LR Library<br>Story Time<br>K-1-2 Pumpkin Patch                                                                 | 14<br>9:10 am-1 hr Late Start<br>Teachers report at 7:45                                                                    | 15<br>12 pm LR Sr Center Lunch<br>3rd grade - Abilene<br>End of 1st Nine Weeks<br>4:30 pm JH VB/FB vs Rural Vista<br>5 pm HS JV VB @ Circle Boss's Day     | 16<br><b>No School Grades PK-12</b><br><b>Teacher Work Day/ Inservice</b><br>7pm-HS FB @ Central Plains                                                                                  | 17<br>10 am-JH VB WSL Tourney @ Canton-Galva                               |
| 18<br>School Bus Safety Week - October 20 - October 24                                                                                                                                                                     | 19<br>Beginning of 2nd Nine Weeks<br>5th Starbase<br>HS VB Regionals<br>6 pm HS JV FB vs Central Plains              | 20<br>10 am LR Library<br>Story Time<br>4th grade Soil Conservation Trip Lyons<br>4 pm HS JV Scholars Bowl @ Nickerson      | 21<br>9:10 am-1 hr Late Start, Teachers report at 7:45 am                                                                   | 22<br>12 pm LR Senior Center Lunch<br>5th Starbase<br>8 am Freshmen ACT Testing<br>4 to 8 pm; WS Parent-Teacher Conference<br>Oct. 23-31: Red Ribbons Week | 23<br>Picture Retakes<br>4th grade - Water Festival - McPherson<br>7:30 FCS<br>7 pm HS FB vs Solomon Senior Night<br>PIZZA PARTY after game for HS students only-United Methodist Church | 24<br>HS Volleyball Sub-State TBA<br><br>Little River Fall Festival 11 - 3 |
| 25                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | 26<br><b>No School Grades PK-12</b><br>8 am Parent-Teacher Conference PK-6<br>12 Noon Parent-Teacher Conference 7-12 | 27<br>10 am LR Library<br>Story Time<br>4th grade - Rice County Conservation - Lyons<br>4 pm HS JV/V Scholars Bowl @ Elyria | 28<br>9:10 am-1 hr Late Start, Teachers report at 7:45 am                                                                   | 29<br>12 pm LR Senior Center Lunch<br>8:15 am Windom Fall Festival Parade<br>7 pm HS Football<br>Week 9 Bracket                                            | 30<br>7:30 FCS<br>HS VB State<br><br>Halloween                                                                                                                                           | 31<br>HS VB State                                                          |

Additions or corrections to the Monthly Calendars can be sent to The Monitor-Journal!



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