

LAURENS CENTRAL SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

WHAT'S INSIDE...

Superintendent's Letter2	
Budget Legal Notice	
School Counseling News4	
Key Club News4	
All-County at Unatego5	
Suess Week at LCS5	
Crop News5	
Science News6	
5th Grade News6	
Girls Varsity Basketball7	
LTA News7	
News from Share & Shine8	
April Menu9	
Spam-A-Lot 10	
Head Lice Reminder & Tips11	
Hygiene Backpack Program11	
March Calenar of Events 12	



Thank you to POMP for sponsoring this issue of the *Leopard's Tale*.

Upcoming Budget Dates

COMMUNITY BUDGET MEETING Tuesday, April 22, 2025, 7:00 p.m. Multi-Purpose Room (MPR)

BUDGET HEARING Tuesday, May 6, 2025 7:00 p.m. Multi-Purpose Room (MPR)

ANNUAL BUDGET VOTE Tuesday, May 20, 2025, 12:00 —8:00 p.m. Room 115

SAVE the **DATE**



Pre-Kindergarten

If you have a child that will be turning four years old on or before December 1, 2025, please contact Lindsey Gifford at 607-432-2050 ext. 2100 so that we may place your child on the Pre-Kindergarten list for the 2025-2026 school year.

Kindergarten

If you have a child that will be turning five years old on or before December 1, 2025, please contact Lindsey Gifford at 607-432-2050 ext. 2100 so that we may place your child on the Kindergarten list for the 2025-2026 school year.

From the Superintendent

I hope this message finds you all well. Fingers crossed that the recent stretch of warm weather we have seen continues!

We are getting closer to having our budget finalized for the 2025-2026 school year. At the time this article is being written we still have not received a "one house" budget from the State Legislature and no agreement has been reached with the Governor. The Board of Education will make a final decision on a tax levy increase when we are given more solid numbers by New York State, but is always cognizant of the desire to keep taxes as low as possible for our residents while still sustaining our staff and programs for students. Our "tax levy limit" calculated by New York State is 8.2%, but I assure you that the Board of Education and I have no intention of remotely approaching that percentage with the proposed tax levy that we present to the public.

At the present time our anticipated budget for 2025-2026 is \$12,202,584. This represents a 3.39% budget increase from 2024-2025, which is a smaller increase than the 5.96% increase from 2023-24 to 2024-2025. This is not the proposed tax levy increase, it is simply the proposed increase in our budget from the current year to 2025-2026.

We are also finalizing the scope of the capital improvements project that we hope to have on the ballot in May. This project would address many of the issues documented in our state-mandated Building Condition Survey.

Here are some of the more important items that we plan to address:

- 1. Replacement of the main parking lot;
- 2. Renovation of Room 213 to create an elementary science room;

- 3. Replacement of the fire alarm system;
- 4. PA system upgrades in the 2007 section of the building;
- 5. Replacement of three main Heat Recovery Units and other HVAC work within the building;
- 6. Replacement of the elementary playground;
- 7. Replacement of scoreboards in the gym and at the Factory Grounds soccer field;
- 8. Replacement of some kitchen equipment and the fire suppression system in the kitchen;
- 9. Replacement of the heating system at the bus garage.

At the present time the total cost of the project is estimated at \$11,515,000. Between state aid (85.7% of project costs) and the use of \$950,000 from our capital reserve fund created in 2009 there will be no additional tax impact on residents for this project. More information will be available when I present our budget to the public at the community budget meeting on Tuesday, April 22 and the mandated budget hearing on Tuesday, May 6. Both of those meetings will be held at 7:00 p.m. in our multipurpose room.

I would like to wish our spring sports teams good luck as they begin practices and to our winter guard program as they conclude their show season! I look forward to seeing you at the Drama Club production of *Spamalot* and other events that our amazing students are participating in!

Sincerely,

William F. Dorritie, SuperintendentNem



Seuss Week at LCS

March was Read Across America Month! From March 3 through 7, Elementary students at LCS celebrated Dr. Seuss, and his birthday on March 2, with different Dr. Seuss themed dress-up days.

Monday—The Cat in the Hat Hat day

2

Tuesday—Great Day for Up Dress your best!

Wednesday—Wacky Wednesday Wear wacky and/or mismatched clothing

Thursday—There's a Wocket in my Pocket Wear clothing with pockets (Cargo pants, shirts with pockets)

Friday—Would you Rather be a Bullfrog? Dress up as what you would rather be (would you rather be . . . a cat, a doctor, a butterfly.)

LAURENS CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING, BUDGET VOTE, BOARD ELECTION, BUS/VEHICLE PURCHASE, CREATION OF CAPITAL RESERVE FUND, AND CAPITAL PROJECT

NOTICE is hereby given that a public budget hearing of the qualified voters of the Laurens Central School District, Otsego County, Laurens, NY, will be held in the MPR at the Laurens Central School Building located at 55 Main Street, Laurens, NY 13796 in said District, on May 6, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.

NOTICE is hereby given, that the annual meeting of the qualified voters of the Laurens Central School District, towns of Laurens, et al, Otsego County, NY, will be held at the Laurens Central School located at 55 Main Street, Laurens, NY 13796, in the said District on Tuesday, May 20, 2025. Voting will take place between the hours of 12:00 and 8:00 p.m. at which time the polls will be opened to vote by ballot (either machine or paper) on the following Propositions:

- 1. To adopt the annual budget of the School District for the fiscal year 2025-2026, and to authorize the requisite portion thereof to be raised by taxation on the taxable property of the District.
- 2. To elect one (1) member of the Board for a five-year term commencing July 1, 2025, and expiring on June 30, 2030, Incumbent, Margaret Wikoff.
- 3. To authorize the Laurens Central School District to undertake the acquisition of one (1) sixty-five (65) passenger school bus with the total cost not to exceed \$178,657.78 for the purpose of transporting students to both regular and special programs. The source of funds shall be the District's Bus Reserve Fund.
- 4. To allow for the creation of the District's "2025 Reserve Fund" (the "Fund"), with the ultimate amount of the Fund to be \$3,000,000 and the probable term of the Fund to be ten (10) years, in order to allow the District to manage its purchases for the District's programs as in the past, as well as allow for any remaining funds in the 2009 Reserve Fund to be transferred to the newly created Fund.
- 5. To authorize the Laurens Central School District to undertake a district wide capital project consisting of: the reconstruction and renovation of, and the construction of improvements and upgrades to, various District buildings and facilities (and the sites thereof) to implement various health, safety, accessibility and code compliance measures and various other measures included and generally described in (but not to be limited by) the Project Plan that was referred to in the public notice of the vote on this proposition (the "Project"), and to expend therefor, including for preliminary costs and costs incidental thereto and to the financing thereof, an amount not to exceed the estimated maximum cost of \$11,515,000; (b) the Board

is authorized to expend toward such Project \$950,000 from the District's Capital Reserve Fund; (c) a tax is hereby voted in an amount not to exceed \$10,565,000 to finance the balance of the estimated maximum cost of the Project, such tax to be levied and collected in installments in such years and in such amounts as shall be determined by the Board; (d) in anticipation of such tax, obligations of the District are hereby authorized to be issued in an aggregate principal amount of not to exceed \$10,565,000, and a tax is hereby voted to pay the interest on such obligations as the same shall become due and payable; and (e) New York State Building Aid funds expected to be received by the District are anticipated to offset a substantial part of such costs, and such funds, to the extent received, shall be applied to offset and reduce the amount of taxes herein authorized to be levied

NOTICE IS HEREBY FURTHER GIVEN that an Environmental Assessment Form has been completed for the Project, which is an unlisted action under the State Environmental Quality Review Act ("SEQRA"), a thorough review of the Project's potential environmental impacts has been undertaken, it has been found that the Project will not result in a significant adverse impact on the environment, and a reasoned elaboration of the SEQRA review and findings has been provided in a Negative Declaration.

AND FURTHER NOTICE is hereby given that a copy of the statement of the amount of money which will be required to fund the School District's budget for 2025-2026, exclusive of public monies, may be obtained by any resident of the District during business hours during the 14 days preceding the date of the annual meeting and election, and on the date of the election at the Laurens Central School main office or district office (except Saturday, Sunday, or holidays).

AND FURTHER NOTICE is hereby given that petitions nominating candidates for the office of member of the Board of Education shall be filed with the Clerk of said School District at her office in the Laurens Central School, not later than Monday, April 21, 2025, between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Each petition shall be directed to the Clerk of the District, and shall be signed by at least 25 voters of the District, and must state the name and residence of the candidate. The petition must also identify the specific seat for which the candidate is running, including the name of the incumbent, and the length of the term of office to be filled. Candidates may be nominated for only one vacancy.

AND FURTHER NOTICE is hereby given that the applications for absentee ballots will be obtainable between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, except holidays, from the District Clerk. Completed appli-

continued on next page

continued from previous page

cations must be received by the District Clerk at least (7) days before the election if the ballot is to be mailed to the voter, or the day before the election if the ballot is to be picked up personally by the voter at the District Office. Absentee ballots must be received by the District Clerk not later than 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, May 20, 2025.

A list of persons to whom absentee ballots are issued will be available for inspection to qualified voters of the District in the office of the District clerk between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. during each of the five days prior to the election, except Sundays, and said list will be posted at the polling place at the election. Any qualified voter present in the polling place may object to the voting of the ballot upon appropriate grounds for making his/her challenge and reason therefore known to the Inspector of Election before the close of the polls.

AND FURTHER NOTICE is hereby given that the applications for early mail ballots will be obtainable between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, except holidays, from the District Clerk, no earlier than 30 days before the election. Completed applications must be received by the District Clerk at least (7) days before the election if the ballot is to be mailed to the voter, or the day before the election if the ballot is to be picked up personally by the voter at the District Office. Early mail ballots must be received by the District Clerk not later than 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, May 20, 2025.

A list of persons to whom early mail ballots are issued will be available for public inspection in the office of the District clerk between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. during each of the five days prior to the election, except Sundays, and said list will be posted at the polling place at the election. Any qualified voter present in the polling place may object to the voting of the ballot upon appropriate grounds for making his/her challenge and reason therefore known to the Inspector of Election before the close of the polls.

AND FURTHER NOTICE that military voters who are qualified voters of the School District may apply for a military ballot by requesting an application from the District Clerk at (607) 432-2050, or pweir@laurenscs.org. For a military voter to be issued a military ballot, the District Clerk must have received a valid ballot application no later than 5:00 pm on April 25, 2025. In a request for a military ballot application or ballot, the military voter may indicate their preference for receiving the application or ballot by mail, facsimile transmission or electronic mail.

AND FURTHER NOTICE is hereby given, that any proposition that is required to be included for vote shall be submitted in writing by means of a petition signed by at least 25 qualified voters, stating the residence of each signer, which proposition shall be filed with the Clerk not later than April 21, 2025, unless a greater number of days is required by statute. Any proposition shall be rejected by the Board of Education if the purpose of the proposition is not within the powers of the voters or where the expenditure of monies is required for the proposition, and such proposition fails to include the necessary specific appropriation.

Pamela J Weir, District Clerk Laurens Central School March 20, 2025

April 2025 School Counseling Office News

IMPORTANT DATES

4/11... 3rd Quarter ends

- 4/18 .. Registration deadline for May 3rd SAT exam
- 4/28 .. 3rd quarter report cards will be distributed
- 4/3 SAT exam
- 5/22 .. Registration deadline for the June 7th SAT exam
- 5/9 Registration deadline for the June 8th ACT exam
- 6/7 SAT exam
- 6/14 .. ACT exam

CLARK SCHOLARSHIPS

Clark Scholarship award letters will be sent in late March/early April. If your child is a recipient of a scholarship, a thank you letter should be written to Mr. Gary Kuch, Director of the Clark Foundation Scholarship Office. Seniors will receive more information from Mr. Lisi about required interviews sometime in April or early May.

SUMMER CAMPS & PROGRAMS FOR KIDS AND TEENS IN NEW YORK STATE

Another great site is *www.newyorksummercamps.com*. New York State has more summer programs than any other State in the nation!

There are also many other local summer day and sleep away camp opportunities for school age children in our area! The following is only a partial listing. We are fortunate to have such a variety of experiences for school age children.

4-H Camp Shankitunk, YMCA day camp experiences, SUNY Oneonta and Hartwick College day camps, CANO art day camps, Delaware-Otsego Audubon Summer Youth Programs, Bright Hill Literacy Center for the Arts summer workshops, NYS DEC summer camps.



All-County at Unatego

Laurens Central School students Madison James, Lucas Hendrich, Jenna Czarnecki, Aalivah Conklin, Mia Whiteway, Hera Baker, Vivian Miller, Zaida Carney, Zeke Mulkins, Nadia Oliver, Jason Czarnecki, Haven Bodor, Hannah Weiss, and Ryleigh Williams participated in the 2025 All-County festival, which took place on February 28 and March 1 at Unatego Junior/Senior High School. Jason played saxophone in the junior band, Madison (Flute), Jenna (Trumpet), and Lucas (trombone) played in the elementary band, Hannah, Haven, and Ryleigh sang in the Senior Chorus, and Aaliyah, Mia, Hera, Vivian, Zaida, Zeke, and Nadia sang in the elementary

chorus. The high school students were chosen to participate by a committee within the county according to their submissions to the recorded NYSSMA solo festival, while the elementary students were chosen by a committee of music teachers in Otsego County. Way to go!



The members of LCS Key Club would like to thank all those who donated at the February 8 American Red Cross blood drive. Nineteen units were collected. In this time of shortages in the blood supply every unit helps. Thank you once again.

Key Club News

On Wednesday, March 5, members of the Key Club participated in training with Dr. Li Luo, from Hartwick College, to be volunteers for the VITA Tax Program held on March 28. Members that received the training were *Lucie Benada*, *Mallory Kovacs*, *Arianna LeBeau*, *Kendall Capraro*, *Courtney McCarthy*, *Ashlynne Maier*, *Alicia Stevens*, *Brooke Mann*, and *Libby Cox*. *Alicia Stevens* also completed training for a higher level certificate. Thank you to all the Key Club members who volunteered to help with this program.

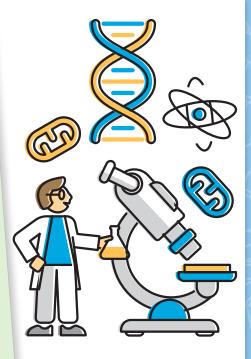
\circ \circ \circ SCIENCE NEWS

Congratulations to Owen Carbonara, LCS 7th grader for being accepted to attend the Appalachian STEM Academy at Oak Ridge - Middle School

The Appalachian STEM Academy in Oak Ridge Tennessee hosts a one-week, residential, hands-on science academy focusing on math, science, and technology, presenting a unique opportunity for students to work in small collaborative teams with experienced teachers to utilize current technology to solve a problem. The small team approach provides an opportunity to collaboratively tackle a real-world issue and propose a solution to the issue through a hands-

on, inquiry-based approach.

In addition to the science activities, each day will include group sessions where students will be given the opportunity to apply what they have learned from the day's events. This builds a better understanding of the day's science activities and allows students to apply their knowledge in a hands-on approach to science.



5th Grade News

The 5th grade recently finished reading My Side of the Mountain! This is a book about a boy who runs away to the Catskill Mountains to try and live alone in the wilderness. During his time alone in the woods, he creates many recipes using only the natural resources available to him. We thought it would be a fun idea to have a feast featuring some of his recipes. The menu was as follows:

- Acorn pancakes with maple
- syrup
- Blueberry jam
- Nuts and Berries
- · Venison Stew
- Sassafras tea (root beer)

Some students were very adventurous and tried everything, many went back for seconds!





Girls' Varsity Basketball Team Makes LCS History

Congratulations to the Laurens/Milford Lady Cats for winning the Tri-Valley Championship. This is the first Girls' Varsity Basketball team in LCS history to win the championship. Hard work, dedication, and discipline paid off. LCS and MCS are proud of you!



LTA News

The LTA (Laurens Teachers Association) wanted to introduce ourselves to parents and community members. The LTA plays a key role in supporting our educators and, by extension, the students we work with each day. The LTA is a collective group of educators who work together to ensure fair and equitable conditions in which both teachers and students can thrive. The LTA supports students in all areas of their development. We recognize student achievement at all grade levels, offer member scholarships, and sponsor school related educational activities. Monies that are raised by the LTA go back to our students in the form of scholarships and aw ards. The LTA is committed to the members, students, and families at Laurens Central School. Be on the lookout in future newsletters for more information about the LTA, our members and the things we do around our school. Recently we awarded two educational activities awards to two seniors: *Brooke Mann* and *Libby Cox* for making the All-Star Soccer team that is headed to Greece in April. Congratulations!

YOUR LTA NOMINATED BOARD:

Beverly Murch—Co-President Lori Peck—Co-President Jon Powers—Vice President Brian Roecklein—Treasurer Jennifer Lewis—Secretary

News from Share and Shine

The character trait we are focusing on for the month of April is Perseverance. The following "I can" statements can remind us how to persevere: I can give my best effort in my work, I can continue to try when something gets difficult, and I can stay focused on the task. Students who have demonstrated perseverance throughout the month of April will receive individual awards and bus awards will be presented. Classes can also win awards in their special area classes, in the cafeteria, and even for having the neatest classroom! On April 25 at 2:00 p.m. in the MPR, we will be holding a Share and Shine assembly. Parents/Guardians will receive a notice if their child will be getting an award. We hope you can join us!

If you plan to sign your child/children out after the assembly, **PLEASE send in a note or call the main office by that morning. This greatly helps us with dismissal time.

SHARE & SHINE AWARD WINNERS FOR COMPASSION.







Friday April 4th–7:00 pm

Ticket Price \$5.00 each

Saturday April 5th–7:00 pm 🎙

Tickets available early in the main office or at the door.

Head Lice Reminder and Tips

Please periodically check your child (especially in grades PK-6) for head lice. The truth is, head lice are always present, any time of year, just like colds and tummy viruses. The difference is, they're BUGS, so they're easier to SEE! You can try a once a week schedule, either while shampooing your child or during a movie, to take a little time to look for critters.



If you're not sure what you're looking for, this is a great resource *http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UrScqdN uTpc&feature=more_related*. This video will help you identify lice and their nits, and instruct you on how to get rid of them and prevent further infestations.

By the time we know children have head lice, they've already been infested for at least a few weeks, and often longer. This makes it next to impossible to try to "track down" where your child "got lice". Because lice don't jump or fly, they are most commonly transferred by the direct sharing of hair care products and prolonged head to head contact. Another common culprit is sleepovers. If your child goes to a sleepover, have them bring their own pillow and sleeping bag.

What we know about head lice has changed a lot since we were in school. This resource: *https://identify.us.com/* can answer ANY questions you might have about lice (as well as other household pests). Founder Richard J. Pollack, Ph.D. has earned many degrees in Entomology and holds a degree from Cornell University in Medical Parasitology (M.Sc.) He has served as a public health entomologist at the Harvard School of Public Health for 22 years. His informational websites at the Harvard School of Public Health were amongst the most viewed sites hosted there.

Laurens Central School Hygiene Backpack

LCS is happy to announce that our LCS Hygiene Backpack Program will continue. This will be the fourth year that we are able to assist with hygiene products for your family. If you are interested in participating, please complete the form below and have your child return it to his/her teacher. This program is 100% confidential and you may sign up at any time. If you have more than one child in the school, please only list one child's name on the student name line below. We will ensure that there are enough supplies for the entire family.

THE HYGIENE BACKPACK WILL CONTAIN:

Shampoo, toothpaste, soap, deodorant, and at times other toiletries. The backpack will be sent home with your child once a month, usually the first Monday of the month. We ask that your child return the backpack to one of the backpack boxes located in the main office or the entrance by Ms. Shean's desk.

HYGIENE BACKPACK

Student's name:

_____ Grade: _____

Number of people in family:

LAURENS CENTRAL SCHOOL Laurens, New York 13796

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Cynthia Struckle, President Thomas Francisco, Vice President Gerard Murello Margaret Wikoff Peggy Bush-Allen

SUPERINTENDENT

William F. Dorritie

BUILDING PRINCIPAL John Mushtare

EDITOR

Pam Weir

Current Resident or

POSTAL PATRON ECRWSS



- 1...... Zumba, MPR, 6:00 p.m. Village Meeting, Rm 129A, 7:00 p.m.
- 2...... VSB @ Franklin VBB vs. Margaretville @ Milford
- 3...... NO CROP Zumba, Café, 6:00 p.m.
- 4...... Monty Python's Spamalot Musical, MPR 7:00 p.m. VBB @ Windham-Ashland-Jewett
- 5...... Monty Python's Spamalot Musical, MPR 7:00 p.m. Zumba, Café 9:00 am
- 7 VSB/VBB vs. Richfield Springs @ Milford
- 8...... Track—League Meet JVSB vs. Unatego @ Laurens JVBB vs. Oxford @ Milford Zumba, MPR 6:00 p.m.
- 8-11 NYS ELA Testing grades 3, 4, 5, 8 9...... VSB/VBB @ Edmeston/Morris
- POMP Meeting via Teams, 7:00 p.m.
- 10...... JVBB @ Cooperstown JVSB vs. Canajoharie @ Milford Zumba, MPR, 6:00 p.m.
- 11...... 3rd Quarter ends Track—League Meet VSB/VBB vs. Worcester @ Milford
- 12...... Zumba, MPR, 9:00 a.m. Scouts—Pinewood Derby
- 14-18 .. NO SCHOOL—Spring Break
- 14...... VSB/VBB @ CVS/SS Booster Club Meeting, Rm 129A, 7:00 p.m. 15...... Zumba, MPR 6:00 p.m.
- 16...... BOE Meeting, Rm 115, 7:30 p.m.
- 17...... VBB @ Schenevus Zumba, MPR 6:00 p.m.

- 18...... JVBB @ Afton
- 19 Zumba, MPR 9:00 a.m.
- 21 VBB vs. WAJ @ Milford
- 22-25 .. NYS ELA Testing grades 6 & 7
- 22...... VBB vs. Stamford @ Milford JVSB @ Cooperstown Zumba, Café 6:00 p.m.
- Community Budget Meeting, MPR, 7:00 p.m. 23...... Track—League Meet
- MBB vs. Richfield Springs @ Milford 24...... Class Picture Day PreK – 6th grades
- Envirothon @ Gilbert Lake VSB vs. Franklin @ Laurens JVSB vs. Norwich @ Milford Zumba, MPR 6:00 p.m.
- 25...... Share & Shine, MPR 2:00 p.m. VBB @ Margaretville MBB vs. Edmeston @ Milford
- 26 Zumba, MPR 9:00 a.m. JVSB @ Roxbury 11:00 am Track Meet—Cooperstown Invite 2:00 pm MSB vs. Worcester @ Milford 4:30 pm
- 28...... VSB/VBB @ Worcester JVSB @ Unatego MBB/MSB @ Sharon Springs
- 29-30 .. NYS Math Testing grades 5 & 8
- 29 Zumba, MPR 6:00 p.m.
- 30 Track—League Meet JVSB vs. Marathon @ Laurens MSB vs. Richfield Springs @ Milford VBB vs. Gilboa @ Milford

*Dates and times are subject to change. Please check the calendar on the school's website for up to date information.

Non-Profit Organization

U.S. Postage PAID

Permit No. 18 Norwich, NY