

the **LAKESHORE** *Light*

GROUNDING IN TRADITION. COMMITTED TO EXCELLENCE.



AN EXTRAORDINARY INVESTMENT IN LAKESHORE'S FUTURE!

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A joint newsletter from Lakeshore Public Schools & Lakeshore Excellence Foundation
highlighting the fantastic things happening in the school district.



Greg Eding

SUPERINTENDENT'S LETTER

FROM VISION TO ACTION: BUILDING THE LAKESHORE EXPERIENCE

As we begin another school year at Lakeshore Public Schools, I am excited about the work taking place across our District and the continued evolution of our strategic plan. While strategic planning is important, the real measure of a plan is how it shapes the experiences of our students, staff, families, and community.

Last spring, we took an important step in that process by revisiting Lakeshore's mission, vision, and core values. This work was not completed in isolation. Survey and focus group feedback helped inform a workshop facilitated by the Michigan Association of Superintendents & Administrators, where teams worked collaboratively and used a consensus process to identify the ideas that best represent who we are and who we aspire to be as a district.

The result is a **vision** that places every student at the center of our work:

**Lakeshore — a place where
ALL means ALL...**

All students **Belong**.

All students achieve **Excellence**.

All students are **Prepared** for
their life beyond Lakeshore.

Our updated **mission** further defines that commitment:

“Cultivating a caring community where every learner is challenged to achieve their highest academic and personal potential.”

With our core **values** being the foundation for our work. Integrity is the C.O.R.E. of everything we do:

Connections

Opportunities

Readiness

Expectations

These words are intended to be more than statements on a website or posters in our buildings. They provide a lens through which we can evaluate our decisions and ask a simple question: Are we creating a Lakeshore experience in which every student belongs, has opportunities to succeed, and is prepared for what comes next?

Learn more about our strategic plan using this QR Code or visit:

<https://rb.gy/uod6y4>



Starting the Year Differently

An example of this work in action can be seen in how we welcomed our youngest learners this year.

We began that process last spring with our **Young Fives & Kindergarten Little Lancer Kick Off**. Rather than having a child's first meaningful interaction with school occur on the first day of classes, incoming students had an opportunity to spend time with our Young Fives and Kindergarten teachers participating in activities similar to those they would experience in the classroom. At the same time, parents met with principals to learn more about their school and our programs. Teacher observations and information gathered during these sessions also helped inform placement recommendations for students.

We then continued that transition through **Little Lancer Welcome Week** as part of the beginning-of-the-year experience for our youngest students.

These changes may seem small compared with a districtwide strategic plan, but they represent exactly what we want our mission and vision to look like in practice. For a four- or five-year-old entering school for the first time, **belonging matters**. Connections with teachers matter. A comfortable and successful transition matters. And for parents sending a child to school for the first time, those relationships and experiences matter as well.

As we look ahead to the 2026–27 school year, our commitment remains clear. **We will continue looking for ways to improve the experience of our students, support the people who serve them each day, and strengthen our partnership with the Lakeshore community.**



NEW STAFF MEMBERS

Please join us in giving a warm welcome to our new staff throughout the District!



Jacob Scott

Lakeshore alumnus Jake Scott brings extensive operations management and leadership experience to his new role as **Director of Operations & Maintenance**.



Elise Von Koenig

Lakeshore alumnus Elise Von Koenig brings a decade of local teaching experience and joins us as an **8th grade History Teacher** at **Lakeshore Middle School**.



Margo Ross

Holding degrees from Western Governors University and Trine University, Margo Ross joined **Stewart Elementary** last fall as a 4th grade teacher after previously teaching third grade in Elkhart, and this year is teaching **Special Education**.



Jessica Cribbs

Bringing prior teaching experience from a local school, Jessica holds degrees from Valparaiso University and Central Michigan University. She joins us as a **High School Math teacher**.



Brent Turner

With bachelor's and master's degrees from Huntington University as well as teaching experience in Indiana *and* locally, Brent Turner joins Lakeshore as a **6th grade Social Studies Teacher** at **Lakeshore Middle School**.



Trevor North

A Western Michigan University and National Louis University graduate, Trevor North is starting his education career as a **High School English teacher**.



Fox Squires

Michigan State University graduate Fox Squires is beginning his teaching career as the new **High School History teacher**.



Kristen Coffin

Returning to Lakeshore after serving as a Special Education Paraprofessional from 2012 to 2021, Kris will teach **Special Education** split between **Hollywood and Stewart Elementary** schools.



Aubrey Neeser

Huntington University graduate Aubrey Neeser joins **Hollywood Elementary** as the school's new **Art Teacher**.



Carly Vadney

Experienced educator Carly Vadney, who holds two degrees from Michigan State University, returns to **Stewart** as a **1st Grade Teacher** after previously teaching there for ten years.



Natalie Fultz

Indiana University South Bend Master's graduate Natalie Fultz joins the District as **Stewart's Special Education Social Skills Behavior Teacher**.



Lindsey Simmons

Central Michigan University graduate and former district substitute teacher Lindsey Simmons joins as a **4th grade Teacher** at **Stewart Elementary**.



David Boelcke

Lakeshore alumnus and former local business owner Dave Boelcke joins the **High School** as a part-time **HVAC Teacher**.



Rodrigo De Grau Amaya

Holding a Master's Degree from Western Michigan University and years of teaching experience in southwest Michigan, Rodrigo De Grau Amaya joins us as the **High School Spanish teacher**.



Sean McNeely

Grand Valley graduate Sean McNeely is starting his teaching career as Lakeshore's new **7th Grade Social Studies Teacher** at **Lakeshore Middle School**.

HOLLYWOOD ELEMENTARY

STARTING THE SCHOOL YEAR BY TEACHING POSITIVE BEHAVIORS

At Hollywood Elementary, the school year is off to a great start as teachers and staff focus on more than academics. They are also intentionally teaching students the behaviors and skills they need to be successful learners and members of the school community.

Rather than simply telling students what they should or should not do, Hollywood teachers are finding creative, engaging, and hands-on ways to help students understand the reasons behind expectations and practice positive behaviors in meaningful ways.

One example can be found in Mrs. Butcher's first-grade classroom, where students are learning a new way to stay engaged during transitions: "BORED games."

Everyone has heard of board games, but these first graders are learning that being bored doesn't have to mean becoming disruptive or off-task. Throughout the school day, there are times when students may need to wait in line or transition from one location to another. Mrs. Butcher recognized these moments as opportunities to teach students how to manage their time and behavior in a positive way.

Students are learning six simple "bored games" that they can play quietly while they wait. The activities use their hands, fingers, or eyes and



require students to concentrate while maintaining the quiet hallway expectations.

Visual posters in the hallway remind students of their choices and show them how to complete each activity. To make the learning even more engaging, students who demonstrate the activities successfully may have their pictures added to the posters as "experts," giving them an opportunity to model positive behavior for their classmates.

In another classroom, students explored the importance of thinking before speaking through the book ***My Mouth Is a Volcano!*** by Julia Cook. The lesson focused on controlling the urge to blurt out and understanding how interruptions can distract classmates and interfere with the person who is speaking.

To bring the lesson to life, students participated in a hands-on activity involving toothpaste. Working together, they attempted to put toothpaste back into its tube after it had been



squeezed out. The students quickly discovered that once the toothpaste comes out, it is nearly impossible to put it back in.

The lesson provided a memorable connection: just like toothpaste, once words leave our mouths, we cannot take them back. Students learned the importance of pausing, thinking, and choosing their words carefully before speaking.

These are just two examples of the many ways Hollywood teachers are starting the school year by explicitly teaching expectations and providing students with opportunities to practice them.

Whether students are learning how to navigate a hallway quietly, manage moments when they are waiting, listen respectfully, or think before they speak, the goal is the same: teach students the skills they need to be successful.



Positive behavior is not something staff simply expect students to know. It is something they intentionally teach, practice, reinforce, and celebrate. By making expectations engaging and meaningful, teachers are helping students begin the school year with the tools they need to Love, Laugh, Learn, and Lead for Life.

ROOSEVELT ELEMENTARY

FOSTERING INDEPENDENCE & CONFIDENCE: LET GROW AT ROOSEVELT

At Roosevelt, we believe that education extends beyond textbooks and traditional lessons. That is why we are proud to introduce **Let Grow**, an initiative designed to foster resilience, confidence, and real-world problem-solving skills in our students.

The premise of *Let Grow* is simple yet powerful: when trusted with independence, kids step up.

Through the **Let Grow Experience**, students are given the opportunity to choose a unique, age-appropriate assignment—to go home and do something new on their own, without parent/guardian assistance. Whether it's walking to a neighbor's house, cooking a basic meal, running a household errand, shopping for a few grocery items or organizing their own homework station, students are encouraged to stretch their boundaries and take initiative. Once they participate in an activity they are able to summarize that activity on a leaf and add it to our **Let Grow Forest** in the hallway.



In addition, our school supports unstructured, mixed-age time through an **after school Let Grow Play Club** called **Camp Let Grow**, where students lead their own activities, navigate social dynamics, and resolve minor conflicts without adult intervention—with staff serving strictly as watchful supervisors.

By encouraging small steps toward independence, we help students transition from passive learners to self-directed, resilient individuals. Parents often notice an immediate boost in their child's pride and capability, while teachers see improved focus, agency, and grit in the classroom.

Together, Roosevelt families and educators are giving our children the space they need to explore, practice life skills, and discover just how capable they truly are.

We look forward to seeing our students grow in confidence—one independent task at a time! For more information about the Let Grow movement—check out LetGrow.org.



POSITIVE BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTIONS & SUPPORTS (PBIS) KICK-OFF ASSEMBLY

We recently held a PBIS kick-off assembly to introduce our school-wide initiative focused on building a safe, positive, and predictable learning environment for every student.

PBIS is an **evidence-based** framework that emphasizes proactive guidance over reactive discipline. **Rather than focusing solely on negative behaviors, PBIS actively teaches clear behavioral expectations, celebrates positive choices through encouragement and reinforcement**, and uses data to continuously tailor support for our students.

During our kick-off assembly we revisited our expectations throughout the building, introduced new staff and our 2026-2027 Student Leadership Team! We were able to celebrate students who have been making positive choices by drawing out Roosy Reward tickets. Students were then able to visit the book vending machine sponsored by our Roosevelt PTO.



STEWART ELEMENTARY

HARVEST COLOR RUN

On Friday, October 2, the Stewart PTO hosted the Harvest Hustle Color Run for our students and their families. This **annual fund raising event** included face painting, food trucks, crafts, interactive community exhibits, and a color run where our students thoroughly enjoyed turning their white "Color Run" T-shirts into green, blue, purple, and pink painted works of art!

Key Club members and parent volunteers manned the paint sprayers and enjoyed spraying shirts as much as the kids enjoyed being sprayed!

The PTO is proud to report they met their goal of raising \$12,000!

These donations will help fund:

- Classroom supplies and curriculum resources

- Field trips and enrichment opportunities
- Special school traditions like Fun Day and the Stewart Family Breakfast
- Stewie Steppers (lunch time walking club)
- And, of course, helping our favorite mascot, Stewie Neutron, stay ready for school spirit!

Our PTO and family volunteers work hard to make sure Stewart Elementary is a special place for our students.



POSITIVE BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTIONS & SUPPORTS (PBIS) AT STEWART

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is a school-wide framework used to create a positive, predictable, and safe learning environment for every student.

At Stewart, our PBIS system is built around the acronym PRIDE, and our students do an amazing job showing PRIDE in every corner of our building!

When students are caught demonstrating these positive behaviors, any staff member can reward them with a **POP Ticket**. Twice a month, students can visit the PBIS POP Shop to spend their tickets on fun items

STEWART FAMILY PRIDE				
PERSEVERANCE	RESPECT	INTEGRITY	DEDICATION	EMPATHY
WE IGNORE OUR "QUIT BUTTON" WHEN SOMETHING IS HARD.	WE TREAT PEOPLE AND THINGS WITH KINDNESS AND CARE.	WE DO WHAT IS RIGHT, EVEN WHEN NO ONE IS WATCHING.	WE TRY OUR BEST TO SHOW IT MATTERS.	WE UNDERSTAND FEELINGS AND HOW OUR ACTIONS AND WORDS HAVE POWER.

or special experiences, such as: lunch with Mrs. McGovern, lunch and games with Mrs. Galloway, Lego Lab with Mrs. Fetke, or serving as a Specials Teacher "Helper".

In addition to the POP Shop, we host a **monthly Star Student Lunch** to celebrate students who consistently demonstrate our monthly PRIDE focus trait. We are so proud of our students' commitment to making Stewart a great place to learn!

LAKESHORE INTERVENTION TIME

On October 12, **all three Lakeshore Elementary Schools introduced Lakeshore Intervention Time (LIT), a program designed to maximize every student's literacy potential.**

LIT is a structured "walk to read" program that provides targeted, flexible instruction tailored directly to student needs. For 25 to 35 minutes each day, students move into specialized instruction groups focused entirely on language arts growth.

Because learning is not a one-size-fits-all journey, LIT ensures that every student receives exactly what they need at their specific developmental level:

Strengthening Foundation: Students who need additional practice with basic concepts participate in targeted skill-building activities to solidify their foundation.

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Extending Learning: Students who have mastered basic concepts engage in enrichment activities designed to challenge, extend, and deepen their reading and writing capabilities.

Preparation & Collaboration

Delivering individualized instruction requires extensive coordination and behind-the-scenes groundwork. Teachers, interventionists, paraprofessionals, and coaches spend significant time reviewing student data, assessing their learning needs, and then planning lessons aligned with those needs.

Together, certified teaching staff and educational paraprofessionals create a rich, collaborative learning environment. This team-teaching approach ensures small group sizes, focused feedback, and a smooth routine when students transition to their LIT areas each day.

Through thoughtful planning, data-driven grouping, and collaborative teaching, the LIT program ensures every student builds the skills, confidence, and passion needed to become a stronger reader and writer.

5TH-GRADERS BEGIN THEIR MUSICAL JOURNEY AT ANNUAL INSTRUMENT FITTING

New sounds are filling our elementary school halls as 5th-grade students take on an exciting milestone: joining the school band!

Students recently had the hands-on opportunity to explore a variety of instruments—from the flute, clarinet, and saxophone to the trumpet and trombone. Guided by music director Mr. Grapis and specialist instructors, each student tested mouthpieces and fingerings to discover the instrument best suited to their posture, breath control, and personal interest.

Finding the right instrument is key to building confidence, and a lifelong love

for music. Our team carefully evaluates each student's comfort and natural fit to set them up for a fun, successful first year in band.

We are grateful our students have this opportunity, and we're so proud of the enthusiasm they brought to their fittings. We can't wait to hear the amazing music they'll make together this year!



LAKE SHORE MIDDLE SCHOOL

ANNUAL POETRY SLAM



Pictured from L-R: Makenzie, Amelia, and Elizabeth

This spring, **eighth graders** took part in the Annual Poetry Slam, where they wrote and recited a poem to their class. Students voted for their top three choices within each hour, and then middle school staff chose the top three poems.

This year's top poets are **Amelia Plummer** with first place for **"Infestation,"** **Makenzie Hartley** with second place for **"The Lively Night,"** and **Elizabeth Simons** with third place for **"View."**

Congratulations to these poets, and thank you to our Poetry Slam judges and to Forever Books in St. Joseph for providing prizes to the winners!

Infestation

by Amelia Plummer

*When examining the world around
I see a sordid sight
Of suffering and consequence
That comes with daily life*

*We slap ourselves with labels
Our instincts say to fight
Arguments are fun
Entertainment wrapped in strife*

*We ruin what we have
And still we pursue more
To taint with our destruction
Pollute straight to the core*

*We curse and lie and steal
Stare at the flames and laugh
We wall off all emotions
To keep ourselves detached*

*This hopeless world we live in
Will it ever change?
Would we have to start again
To escape the pit of rage?*

*Is anybody safe?
Is anyone a fan?
Of this never-ending
Never changing
Selfish world of man*

LAKESHORE HIGH SCHOOL

FROM SCHOOL TO CAREER: HELPING STUDENTS FIND THEIR PATH

For **Kendall Steinbrook**, helping young children learn has made a future in teaching feel real. For **Mitchell Zuhl**, his job has helped confirm what he wants to do and encouraged him to keep learning after graduation.

Both are gaining that experience through Lakeshore High School's **School to Career program**, which connects students with paid, supervised work during part of the school day. They attend classes, then head to work where they build skills, explore careers and learn what it means to be counted on.

The idea is simple: earn while you learn. Also known as work-based learning, the program connects learning at school with job expectations.

Helping make these opportunities possible is School to Career Coordinator **Tonya Jahnke**. Through her work with local employers, students, and families, Mrs. Jahnke helps students find opportunities that connect to their interests and goals.

"We can't provide the same experiences that employers and businesses can offer," she said.

Students begin with a career assessment. Mrs. Jahnke then matches their strengths and interests with the work they do. **Lakeshore students are gaining experience in fields that include education, sales, the trades, culinary and food service.**

Her work continues once students begin their jobs. She works to meet state requirements, stays in touch with employers, holds students accountable and partners with parents to help students be successful. A great deal happens behind the scenes to make these experiences meaningful.

For Kendall, that growth began with her work in an early childhood center, helping young children with lunch, basic life skills and manners, phonics, counting and colors. Her experience will soon include work at **Blossomland Learning Center**. These opportunities are helping her explore a future in elementary or special education.

"The kids are so excited to learn," Kendall said. "I love watching them grow and develop their personalities. It is so rewarding to watch that happen, and I knew then that I wanted to be a teacher."



Learning about children's social and emotional development at school is important. Working with children gives Kendall a chance to see that learning in action and better understand what it means to be a teacher.

"It is a great opportunity to explore what I want to do in the future," she said of the program. "It allows me to grow into the adult I want to become."

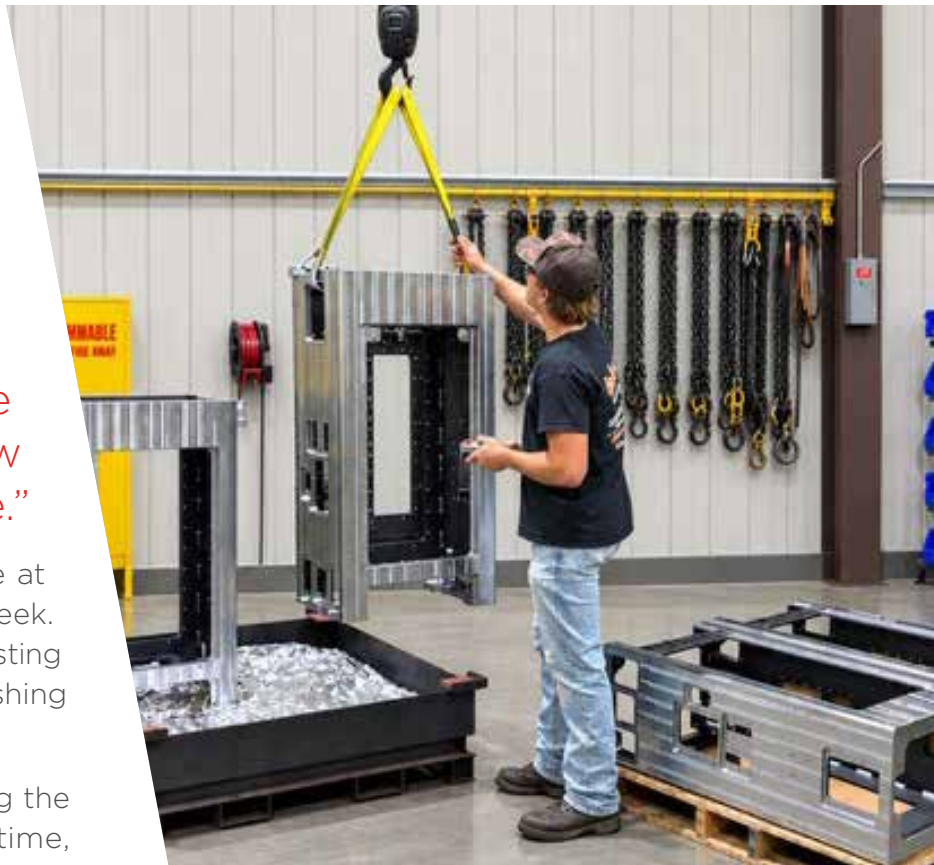
Senior Mitchell Zuhl is building his future at **Tech Nickel**, where he works 15 hours a week. His work includes oiling, packaging and blasting parts as part of the preparation and finishing process.

Along with those tasks, Mitchell is learning the expectations of a job: showing up on time, working with others and doing his part. "Getting paid while in high school and learning new things, which allows me to be more valuable," he said of the program's benefits. The experience has reinforced his career interest. After high school, he hopes to pursue a degree "to be more valuable to the company."

For students, a job can confirm a plan or help them realize another direction may be a better fit. Mrs. Jahnke sees value in both.

Exploring a field now helps students make decisions before investing time and money in more schooling.

"The skills they are learning are transferable to other careers even if it isn't something they want to pursue professionally," she said.



The program also comes with responsibility. Students need to keep up with school *and* meet work expectations. Leaving campus for a job is a privilege. Students need to be ready for that commitment.

Our local employers play an important role. They give students a chance to contribute, learn from others and experience the expectations of a career. Mrs. Jahnke sees the impact when she visits for evaluations. **"I love how excited they are to talk about our students and what they have added to their business," she said.**

"Ultimately, our goal is to prepare students for what comes next," said Principal Jerry Holtgren. Mrs. Jahnke's work and the support of local businesses are helping Lakeshore students do just that. Through these experiences, students are earning a paycheck, building confidence and gaining a clearer sense of their next steps.



J.C. Anderson

LAKESHORE EXCELLENCE FOUNDATION

TWO MILESTONES. ONE BIG CELEBRATION.



The evening of October 6, 2026, will go down in the history of the Lakeshore Excellence Foundation (LEF). That evening, we celebrated at Watermark's Solarium **the recruitment of 44 new Lancer Leaders and announced a \$750,000 major project commitment.** Never before, in one calendar year, have two such positive actions taken place.

44 New Lancer Leaders!

The heart and soul of the LEF organization are its Lancer Leaders! Because the LEF is a fundraising organization dedicated to the Lakeshore Public Schools, **Lancer Leaders make an annual contribution of at least \$1,000.** Lancer Leaders are our core and most consistent donors. They truly understand the huge educational funding gap that exists between the State of Michigan funding for Lakeshore and the funding required for an excellent education. They also recognize the gap that exists between Lakeshore's funding and 85% of the other public schools that receive more per-student funding.

I continue to marvel at the recruitment number of 44 new Lancer Leaders this year. **Never in our history have we been so fortunate to have this kind of reception to our recruitment!** These 44 new Lancer Leaders compare to our base group of 50-55 Lancer Leaders. Each year we



have tried to recruit, but the result has often been a net addition of 2-3. And some years, with families leaving the District, we may have a net reduction. So, to almost double in size this year is unheard of! We appreciate the confidence that these individuals and families are showing in the LEF's ability to manage their contributions for the betterment of the education at Lakeshore.



LEF Commits \$750,000 to Four Major Projects

It is always a great time for the LEF to announce new major projects. By definition, a major project spans multiple years to complete and any major project announcement represents a significant time investment that has already taken place. Superintendent Greg Eding works with his staff to develop a series of projects for discussion with the LEF's Executive Committee. The project details are formatted to match the required information and after a couple of meetings, the Executive Committee and Superintendent Eding are ready to review the projects with the full LEF Board. As a result, all major projects have full LEF Board approval and support.

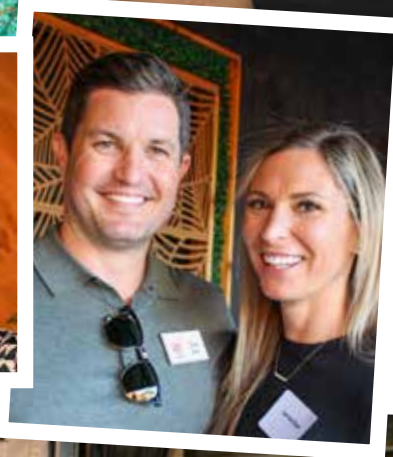
Our "continuous fundraising" approach, versus the prior sequential project approach, results in significantly more major projects being completed in any given time span. This is the positive; however, the challenge is always raising the money being committed to the projects. For example, only approximately \$200,000 is currently on hand of the \$750,000 being committed. I am confident, especially with 44 new Lancer Leaders, that we will attain this needed funding.

These 4 projects will benefit every Lakeshore student and teacher! That is our target... impactful projects. You can learn more about them on **page 19**.

Hopefully, you now understand why we had a lot to celebrate on October 6th!

Sincerely,

J.C. Anderson
Chair, Lakeshore Excellence Foundation



If you'd like to learn more about the LEF or consider becoming a Board member, please visit our website at LEFonline.org or call me at 269-921-2513.

2026 LEF BOARD MEMBERS

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Chris Mason
Andrew Robinson
Bill Scaletta
Lewis Scott
Tina Vaught

WELCOME NEW TRUSTEES



Josh Frazee, a lifelong Southwest Michigan resident and proud Bridgman High School graduate, and his wife, Cassie, are both licensed Real Estate Brokers and own and operate The Shore Real Estate Group on John Beers Road in Stevensville. Their family is deeply connected to the Lakeshore community; their children attend Hollywood Elementary, where Cassie also serves as PTO President.

Community involvement and giving back are extremely important to Josh and his family. He believes strong schools are a foundation of a strong community, and is honored to serve on the LEF Board, helping support opportunities for Lakeshore students, teachers, and families. He also serves on the boards of Berrien County Cancer Service and The Real Help Foundation.

Josh believes that investing time, energy, and resources into the community creates a stronger future for the next generation. Outside of real estate and community involvement, his favorite role is being a husband and dad. In his spare time, he enjoys driving his golf cart around the neighborhood, traveling, and spending time with Cassie and their three daughters, Ella, Nora & Layla.

Chris Mason joined the LEF Board to help drive local educational excellence and support the vibrant community where he lives and works. As a proud 2008 Lakeshore graduate, serving on the board provides him a meaningful way to leverage his leadership experience to directly impact the local school system and give back to the Lakeshore community.



Chris is a Co-Founder of Watermark Brewing Company, Solarium, and Depths Society Golf, and has served as an elected Trustee for the Village of Stevensville since 2016. He graduated from Anderson University with a Bachelor of Arts in Marketing Communications & Consumer Behavior. Deeply involved in regional leadership, Chris serves on the Government Affairs Committees for both the Michigan Brewers Guild and the SWM Regional Chamber. His extensive philanthropic initiatives include organizing events like the SWM Polar Plunge and the Watermark Golf Classic, which benefit numerous regional nonprofits.



UNLOCKING THE FUTURE

A \$750,000 INVESTMENT IN LAKESHORE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

FOUR BOLD PROJECTS. ONE SHARED PURPOSE.

Creating safer schools, stronger teaching, inclusive opportunities, and a permanent home for innovation.

Grades 3-12

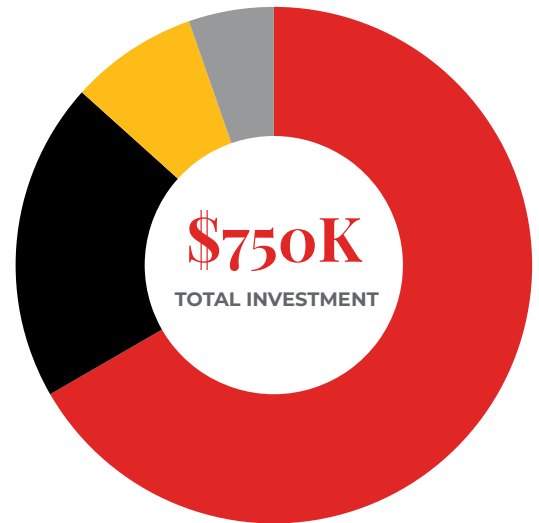
students and teachers
impacted districtwide

210

classrooms with
emergency kits

4

major projects
approved



WHERE THE INVESTMENT GOES



\$500K

LEF Robotics & Professional Development Center

A dedicated robotics hub with a FIRST competition field, design and meeting space, a home for LEGO League, and flexible training space for educators. Target opening: 2028-29.



\$150K

Program Training for Professionals

Three years of focused professional learning in literacy, math, behavior systems, technology, and computer science - strengthening classroom practice for all Lakeshore students.



\$60K

Unified Sports at Lakeshore

Inclusive athletics bring students with and without intellectual disabilities together to build belonging, leadership and friendships. The first-year goal is to launch at least one program with 20 or more participants.



\$40K

Emergency Classroom Kits

Standardized preparedness supplies in 210 classrooms across the district, supporting safety, communication, first aid, and sanitation during lockdowns, severe weather, and other emergencies.

BECAUSE OF YOU, BOLD IDEAS BECOME REAL OPPORTUNITIES.

AN EXTRAORDINARY INVESTMENT IN LAKESHORE'S FUTURE

**Whirlpool Community Charity Golf Event Presents
Lakeshore Excellence Foundation with \$350,000**



The Lakeshore Excellence Foundation recently received an extraordinary \$350,000 contribution from the Whirlpool Community Charity Golf Event - an investment that will create meaningful opportunities for Lakeshore students, educators and the greater community.

Now in its 23rd year, the annual event brought together more than 800 golfers at six Southwest Michigan courses and raised \$3 million for youth-serving organizations and local public schools. Since its creation in 2004, the event has raised approximately \$40 million and now benefits more than 15,000 young people each year.

The \$350,000 gift provides vital resources to further the foundation's mission: acquiring and distributing funds for Lakeshore Public Schools programs and projects that enhance, enrich and supplement learning opportunities for students, staff and the community.

"This remarkable contribution reflects the very best of our community," said J.C. Anderson, Chairman of the Lakeshore Excellence Foundation. "Whirlpool, its suppliers, sponsors,

participants and volunteers understand that investing in education is an investment in our collective future. Their generosity allows the LEF to think boldly about what is possible for Lakeshore students and educators. We are profoundly grateful for their continued confidence in our mission."

The Whirlpool Community Charity Golf Event's impact extends far beyond a single day on the golf course. Their contribution will support LEF's continuing work with Lakeshore Public Schools to identify projects and programs with the potential to make the greatest difference across the district. From innovative classroom experiences and technology to professional development and major districtwide initiatives, LEF investments help Lakeshore reach beyond what traditional school funding alone can provide.

"Support of this magnitude has a direct and lasting impact throughout Lakeshore Public Schools," said Lakeshore Superintendent Greg Eding. "It gives our students access to opportunities and resources that would not otherwise be possible, while also supporting the educators who inspire them each day. We are tremendously thankful to everyone associated with the Whirlpool Community Charity Golf Event for making Lakeshore students part of this extraordinary commitment to young people."



We extend our heartfelt thanks to Whirlpool Corporation, the Whirlpool Foundation, participating suppliers and sponsors, event organizers, volunteers and every golfer who helped make this gift possible. Your generosity does more than fund programs. It opens doors, encourages innovation and gives Lakeshore students more opportunities to reach higher.

“The impact of this event is measured in more than dollars; it’s in the thousands of local students who have a safe place to go after school, essential educational tools and the critical life skills to thrive - both on and off the course.”

PAM KLYN

President, Whirlpool Foundation

LEF GRANTS IN ACTION

LEF Grant Helps Hollywood Students Give Back

With support from a Lakeshore Excellence Foundation grant, **Hollywood Elementary** students turned compassion into action during **Give Back Day** 2026.

Students completed more than 400 service projects benefiting at least 7 organizations and groups throughout the community!

Each grade found a meaningful way to help.

Students assembled birthday kits for children in need, created care packages for young hospital patients, made literacy kits for fellow students and prepared blankets and gifts for adults at Rising Kites and

Caring Connections. Others made treats and toys for animals at the Humane Society, thanked local police officers, bus drivers and school staff, and collected supplies for volunteers assisting with tornado recovery efforts in Three Rivers.

Several classes even took their service beyond the school walls, visiting community organizations and helping clear trails at Sarett Nature Center.

The LEF is proud to support experiences like Give Back Day, which allow students to see that they are never too young to make a meaningful difference. Through creativity, teamwork and kindness, Hollywood students demonstrated what it truly means to give back.

To view photos and learn more about the Give Back Day projects visit:

<https://linke.to/GiveBackDay>





LEF GRANTS ARE NOW OPEN

Bring your ideas to life



Foundation Project

DEADLINE: Jan 31, 2027

Proposals over **\$2,500** that benefit a broad Lakeshore constituency.



Professional Development

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Grants supporting professional learning opportunities for LPS staff.



Staff Support

DEADLINE: Jan 31, 2027

Grants up to **\$2,500** to support timely completion of projects within one year.



Patti Florian

DEADLINE: March 12, 2027

Grants supporting new educational experiences for LPS students.



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lefonline.org/grants



Celebrating 25 Years of 'Art Around Town'

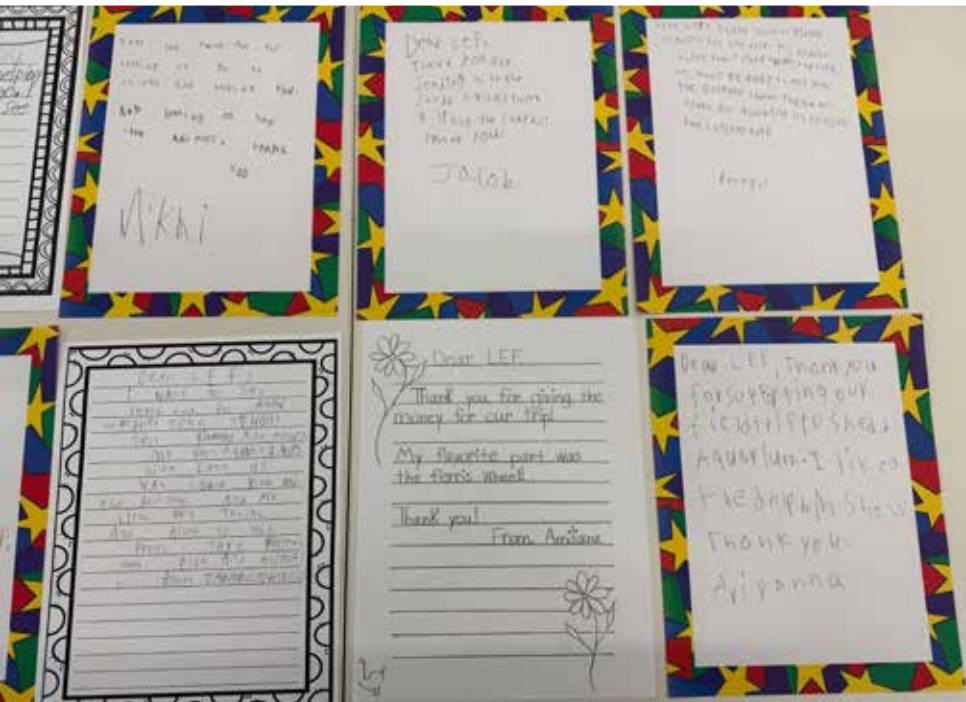
Last May, the LEF proudly recognized the creative talent of Lakeshore Public Schools students in grades K-12 through this beloved annual event. Congratulations to all of the students whose hard work, imagination, and artistic skill were on display!

The winning works were exhibited at the **Curious Kids' Museum over the summer** before being moved into their new homes within the local businesses that sponsored each piece. Artwork will remain on display for the rest of the year before being returned to the students.

If you'd like to catch a glimpse of the complete artwork profile, visit: <https://flipbooklets.com/pdf/flipbooklets/artaroundtown#page1>

A heartfelt thank you to Jill Phenegar and Lauren Roberto for their dedication to this important project and for helping shine a spotlight on these talented young artists.





Heartfelt Thank-you Notes from Lakeshore Educators and Students Show How LEF Grants Make a Difference

Dear LEF,

Thank you for the grant to buy **butterfly kits** for the 2nd graders at Hollywood Elementary. All 53 of our students got to watch the life cycle of a butterfly by taking care of their caterpillar, watching it become a chrysalis, and finally seeing it becoming a butterfly. Then they released their butterfly into the garden. It was exciting and educational all at the same time!

Attached are thank you letters from the students.

Thank you again for your generous support.

Sincerely,

Pam McLean
2nd Grade Teacher
Hollywood Elementary

Dear LEF members:

Thank you so much for helping make our students **trip to Chicago** possible. From seeing the amazing animals at the **Shedd Aquarium** to riding the Centennial wheel at **Navy Pier**, our students had a wonderful day filled with excitement, laughter, and new experiences.

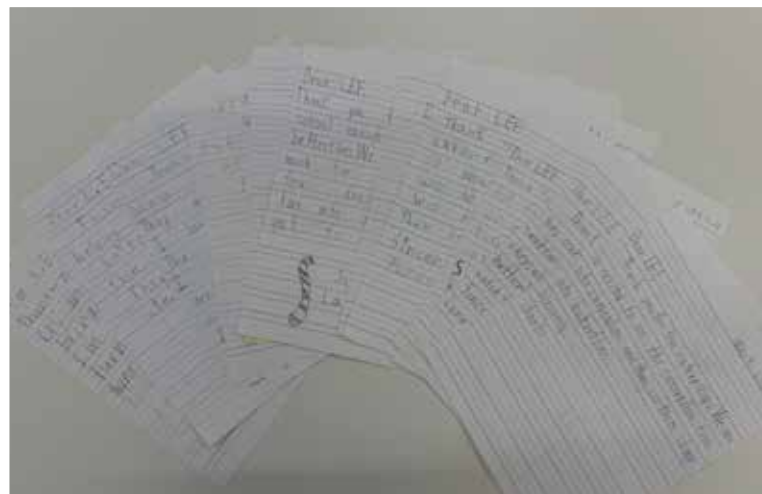
For some of our students, opportunities like this are especially meaningful. They loved being able to explore, try something new, and make memories with their classmates.

Each student has included a note sharing their favorite part of the day.

Thank you for your generosity and for believing in our students. Your support helped make a special day possible, and we are truly grateful!

With heartfelt appreciation,

Erin Kelly



UNIFIED SPORTS: BUILDING A STRONGER LAKESHORE COMMUNITY

Lakeshore Public Schools is excited to explore the development of a Unified Sports program, creating opportunities for students with and without intellectual disabilities to participate together as teammates, competitors, and friends.

“The Lakeshore Excellence Foundation has consistently looked for opportunities to invest in programs that make a meaningful difference for our students,” says Lakeshore Superintendent Greg Eding. “Their commitment to helping launch Unified Sports is another great example of that partnership. Their support will help us create opportunities for students of all abilities to build relationships and experience the sense of belonging that comes from being part of a team.”

Unified Sports uses the power of athletics to bring students together in an environment where everyone has a meaningful role.

Whether on the basketball court, soccer field, track, or in another activity, students of varying abilities can develop skills, experience teamwork and share the pride of representing their school.

But Unified Sports is about much more than athletics. **It is about belonging.** By participating side-by-side, students can build authentic friendships, develop empathy and leadership skills, challenge stereotypes, and gain a greater appreciation for individual differences. The result is a school community where every student feels valued, respected, and included.

The program directly supports Lakeshore’s strategic commitment to student success. Lakeshore leadership believes success extends beyond academic achievement. Students need opportunities to develop confidence, meaningful relationships, leadership abilities, teamwork and a strong connection to their school community. Unified Sports can help create those opportunities while enriching the experience for everyone involved.

“Lakeshore is starting the first school-sponsored Unified Sports program in Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren counties,” says Jeron Blood, Lakeshore’s Director of Student Services. “We are leading the development of an authentic environment of inclusivity and belonging in sports between students with and without disabilities. We hope that our work will positively impact our southwest Michigan communities.”

The goal is to build a sustainable program that becomes an important part of the Lakeshore experience. Start-up funding will help provide equipment, uniforms, transportation, coaching support, and opportunities for competition and special events. The district will work with students, families, educators, and community partners to identify sports and activities that provide meaningful opportunities for participation.

Ultimately, Unified Sports can help Lakeshore demonstrate a simple but powerful message: **everyone belongs on the team.** By coming together through sports, our students can help create a more inclusive, connected, and caring school community - one teammate, one friendship and one opportunity at a time.

A HUGE THANK YOU

Thank you for donating to our mission that supports the students, staff, and community of Lakeshore Public Schools!

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