

# Catoctin District Newsletter

February 2024

*The views contained herein reflect the views of the individual School Board member who is the publisher of this newsletter and may not reflect the views of the Loudoun County School Board and/or Loudoun County Public Schools.*

## Kari's Corner

I am honored to be your Catoctin District School Board representative for the next four years. I'd like to share a little bit about myself so that constituents in our district will feel comfortable reaching out to me to ask questions, share ideas, and seek solutions for issues and challenges in our schools.



I've lived in Virginia for the last 38 years, 30 of them here in Loudoun County. My wonderful husband and I now live in Lovettsville with our foxhound Simon and our horse Winslow, and in our spare time we enjoy volunteering at local historical sites. We have been blessed with four sons, seven grandchildren, and three great grandchildren who bring us great joy!

I make no secret of my passion for Special Education, and I have worked with special needs individuals most of my life. My beloved sister Bunny was born with Down syndrome, and she inspired me from an early age. Although she passed in 2010, she has been a defining influence on my life and my career. From volunteering at summer programs as a child to my many years in the classroom and developing living and work skills programs, helping the special needs community has been a tremendous privilege for which I am so grateful.

My priorities on the school board are special education (no surprise!), resolving constituents' concerns with policy 8040, working with local law enforcement on drug prevention in our schools, and giving our teachers the support they need. I was assigned to several committees, and I look forward to the work we will be accomplishing. I am chair of the Student Behavior and Accountability Committee and serve on the Student Services Committee, Specialized Programs and Centers Committee, and Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC), as well as the board representative to the Virginia School Board Association. I will be holding office hours at Purcellville

library on the last Thursday of each month, and you can always reach me via email at [Kari.Label@lcps.org](mailto:Kari.Label@lcps.org) or through Let's Talk!

---

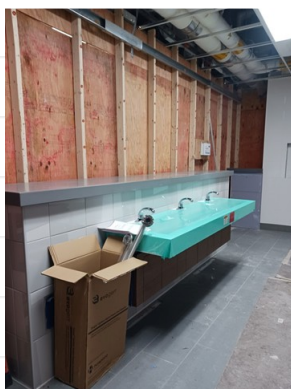
## Updates

The past several months have been incredibly busy with training, workshops, meetings, and events. I had the privilege of attending the Hillsboro Charter School family fun night, a Legislative Breakfast at the Academies of Loudoun, and a listening session with Dr. Spence at Woodgrove High School. Last month, Ms. Donohue and I met with Sheriff Chapman to discuss our concerns about the escalating drug use in our schools. Combining efforts with law enforcement, teaching students about the impact of drug use, and bringing awareness to our community are pivotal steps we need to take in order to prevent substance abuse. LCPS held another informative fentanyl awareness event at Woodgrove last week in collaboration with the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office. The LCSO shared important information about what they are seeing in our county and their efforts combating the fentanyl crisis, and LCPS Student Assistant Specialists (SAS) shared helpful tips for parents as well as important resources like the ones below. Please take a moment to learn more, and share this information with others.

<https://www.lcps.org/Page/236279>

<https://songforcharlie.org>

Dr. Rashid and I also met with Woodgrove principal Dr. Sam Shipp to view progress on the pilot program bathrooms and discuss safety concerns. There will be a total of three stalls, one of which is ADA compliant, and a light outside the stalls will indicate when they are in use. The construction is scheduled to be complete by March, and we will be checking in to see how the new bathrooms are working out once they are open for use. The pictures below show the sink area that will be open to the hallway, and two of the floor-to-ceiling enclosed stalls.



---

## Community News

### Tragedy in Sterling

The heartbreaking news from Sterling last week has weighed heavily on all of us. My thoughts and prayers are with the Brown family and all of the first responders who were injured in the gas

explosion, and we thank you for your service and sacrifice for the community. Here is a [message of support](#) from the Superintendent.

**Two LCPS Students Compete for American Idol**

Two of our incredibly talented LCPS students will be competing for a spot on American Idol this season! I wish [Lillian Hackett](#) of Lovettsville and [Sela Campbell](#) of Leesburg the very best of luck, we will be cheering them on from home here in Loudoun!

**LCPS Teachers Honored**

I want to congratulate two of our amazing LCPS educators who are being [honored](#) for going above and beyond to create compelling history lessons that inspire and engage their students! Erik Sassack, an eighth grade civics and economics teacher at Blue Ridge Middle School, received the 2024 Civil Rights and Civil Liberties Excellence in Teaching Award. Laura Brown, a history teacher at Belmont Ridge Middle School, will be receiving the 2024 Betsy Barton Teacher of the Year Award. We are so lucky to have such talented and dedicated educators working in our schools.

---

**Upcoming Events**

School board meetings are every 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month at the administration building, located at 21000 Education Ct. in Ashburn. Committee meetings are held certain days of each month, and all meetings and events can be found on the LCPS calendar link below.

**February**

February 26  
Student Behavior and Accountability Committee meeting 6:00-7:30 PM

February 27  
4th Tuesday School Board meeting 4:30-10:00 PM

February 29  
Office hours at Purcellville library 7:00-8:30 PM  
Community listening session with LCPS Superintendent at Loudoun Valley HS 7:00-8:30 PM

**March**

March 5  
Student Holiday  
Specialized Programs and Centers Committee meeting 3:30-4:30 PM

March 6  
Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) meeting 6:00-8:30 PM

March 12  
2nd Tuesday School Board meeting 4:30-10:00 PM

March 18  
Student Behavior and Accountability Committee meeting 6:00-7:30 PM



March 21

Student Services Committee meeting 5:30-6:30 PM

March 25-29

Spring break

**LCPS Calendar**

**My Contact Page**

**My Facebook Page**

A button has a clean look to it, and gives you more space to share a summary or set of directions with your readers. You can write an eye-catching headline, too :)



**Erin Dunbar**

Erin is using Smore to create beautiful newsletters