



# LAKE CENTRAL

## FIRST SEMESTER NEWSLETTER

### PATHWAYS TO EXCELLENCE

BIBICH ■ CLARK ■ GRIMMER ■ HOMAN ■ KAHLER ■ KOLLING ■ LCHS ■ PEIFER ■ PROTSMAN ■ WATSON

*LCHS Public Relations Interns contributed to this newsletter. Send any ideas or questions to Hannah Kosinski at [printerns@lcscmail.com](mailto:printerns@lcscmail.com)*



### Red 4 Ed is About More than Teacher Pay

After spending the day at the State House with educators from across Indiana, I drove home with an even greater appreciation for the Lake Central School Community. While an abundance of districts across our state are struggling to find certified teachers and to increase academic and social emotional supports for the children they serve, our community has provided the resources necessary for us to do so!

While the main theme covered by media related to nearly stagnant teacher wages in many parts of

Indiana, that is far from the only issue of concern to public school educators. Excessive testing, unfair accountability initiatives, the lack of consultation with educators in the field on important school issues, and the lack of transparency regarding Indiana's support of private schools and virtual charter schools were also raised by the teachers who participated in the rally.

As to testing, it is believed by many that the costs associated with the design and administration of these assessments could be better used to support student learning. The I Read 3 alone costs between \$8-10 million to administer and most students below grade level have already been identified as struggling readers by their teachers. Furthermore, they are receiving reading support long before receiving a non-passing score on this test.

Many teachers also continue to share their concerns with the anxiety produced for all students by our culture's infatuation with administering a multitude of standardized tests. At the very first Indiana School Boards Association conference I attended in 2010, a veteran school board member from southern Indiana shared his concern with the excessive testing in our state by saying, "No cow ever got heavier by weighing her." Many teachers as well as educational experts nationwide agree with that wise school board member that we are spending too much instructional time and money testing our children.

Educators at the rally also shared their frustration with what appears to be a continued effort to ignore the opinions of rank and file educators. When the State Board of Education (SBOE) was preparing to vote on the new graduation pathways in December of 2018, hundreds of practicing educators attended the hearing to share concerns about the model. Despite acknowledging the lack of detail in the proposals, the SBOE passed it anyway. Now, the SBOE is considering expanding the requirements for graduation to ensure that every student meets at least 2 pathways. We educators are asking why our state is considering a plan that will only potentially impact non college bound students but we are not getting answers. It is time for our leaders to listen to and engage in meaningful dialogue with the true experts, practicing educators!

The general assembly should also acknowledge that the main reason Indiana public school funding has not kept up with spending in surrounding states is due to the significant amount being sent to private schools through "school choice scholarships" and to fund virtual charter schools. Why not be transparent and share the actual growth in spending on vouchers and money sent to online schools?

The Red 4 Ed rally was designed to help make citizens of our state aware of the impact on public schools of eleven years of public policy making in Indianapolis. It was a great start but it is now time for others in our state besides our dedicated educators to ask the hard questions of our elected officials.

*Dr. Larry Veracco, Superintendent of the Lake Central School Corporation*



## Grimmer: Our Kids, Our Future

*By: Jade Mehok, Senior at LCHS*



On Tues., Nov. 19, teachers from all over Indiana met up in Indianapolis to protest teachers stagnant wages. One of the goals of the teachers is to have their paychecks increased. Teachers help

all of us, they taught us and will continue to teach our kids, siblings and loved ones. Lake Central schools showed their support by decorating the school in red and staff wore red in spirit.





## Peifer: Buddies Not Bullies

*By: Claire Faberbock, Senior at LCHS*

Organized by Miss Colgrove, a fourth grade teacher, students at Peifer have been asked to participate on the spirit days of Anti-Bullying Month. Students were encouraged to participate in themed days that help raise awareness for the trouble of bullying among students. Some days included making encouraging signs to put outside of the classrooms, making leaves for the

school's unity tree, a random act of kindness day, and even an orange out. Throughout the two weeks that these events were held, students and teachers worked hard to create door decorations for each classroom that would be judged at the end of the festivities. The winning classroom was then rewarded with ice cream to celebrate their creativity and participation in this good cause.



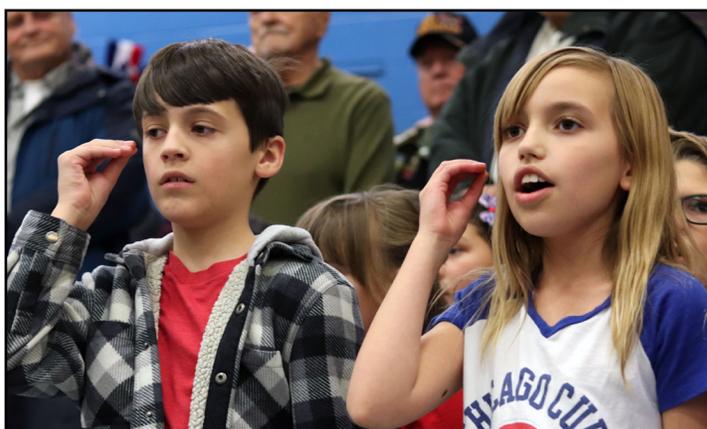


# Lake Central Corporation Honors Veterans



Lake Central School Corporation hosts programs for family and friends of students and staff as well as community members. These services take place the days around Veterans Day and consist of unique programs to each of our

ten schools to honor the heroes who have fought for our country. Many students host breakfasts and have a musical performances produced by the students. Lake Central would like to thank all of our veterans for their sacrifice.





With so much going on in a school district the size of ours and with life, work and a family it can be hard to keep up with the number of events going around the school corporation. Here's what's coming up within the next few weeks.

12/20-1/6:  
Winter Break  
No School

1/17-18: LC  
Middle School  
Honor Band

1/20: School  
Board Meeting

1/20: Martin  
Luther King, Jr.  
Day No School

1/22: Incoming  
Freshman  
Parent  
Information  
Night

## LCHS Veterans Day Ceremony

*Story By: Hannah Kosinski, Senior at LCHS*

Starting at 6 a.m. on Friday, Nov. 8, students of History Club arrived at Lake Central High School to put the final touches on the 5th annual Veterans Day ceremony. Students from History Club had been planning and decorating weeks in advance.

"I [wanted] to help because I really feel like we should do something honoring our veterans, and I think we should be prepared to just show how much we care for these people that fight for us and let us be here today. It was a good time setting up and letting us honor them," Alex Mantis (10) said.

Alumni attend the ceremony as well. Many veterans who partake in part of the ceremony have graduated from Lake Central themselves and come back to help out with the day's events.

"What's special about Lake Central's Veterans Day ceremony is that it's student-run. They actually take the time to honor the veterans and the people who have come from the school and everyone from the area. It's a really special event that makes everyone

remember to give back. It's awesome. This wasn't here when I went to LC, so I was able to be a part of this right when I got out. I was part of the first color guard, and just coming back is just a really warm feeling," Brandon Cole, Alumni, said.

Mr. Patrick O'Donnel, a Vietnam Veteran, was the ceremony's keynote speaker. O'Donnel spoke about the importance of freedom and the people who fight for it, while also thanking all of those who have given the ultimate sacrifice for our country. His speech instilled patriotism and nationalism in the crowd.

"I enjoy the students, I enjoy talking to [them] and teaching them about liberty and freedom and what sacrifices our veterans have made in order to keep those liberties and keep freedom alive here in the United States of America. I will try to continue and advocate for the veterans, because the veterans of our country deserve everything we can give them," O'Donnel said.

*contd. on page four*



*Rebecca Gromala*  
*Director of Student*  
*Services*

### **Lake Central Special Education Transitions Smoothly After Dissolving Cooperative**

Lake Central School Corporation previously partnered with the School Town of Munster to provide special education services through the West Lake Special Education. The relationship between the two districts began in the 1970s. At the time, the cooperative relationship made sense economically because it allowed the districts to share services for a small population of students. The population of students with special needs in both districts increased over the years. Currently, Lake Central School Corporation serves around 1450 students with special needs. Additionally, all specialized programs for student were housed within Lake Central School Corporation. In 2016, Lake Central administration made the determination that it no longer made financial sense to participate in the cooperative and gave notice to

*contd. on page four*

Along with the members of History Club, Mr. Paul Volk, Art, helped with the decoration of the school for the program. Volk helped set up red, white and blue lights as well as tribute portraits of POWs and MIAs of the surrounding area. Volk and student volunteers also arranged the American flags in the school's Perpetual Art Garden.

"I added the visual elements to the oral interpretation and story of war," Volk said.

On the day of the ceremony, the students were encouraged to invite a veteran in their life to have breakfast with them prior to the ceremony. Many students were able to bring grandparents, parents and all other loved ones into the school to eat with them and sit together during the ceremony.

"I like how the school does the Veterans Day ceremony to honor the

*contd. from page three*  
veterans' sacrifice. Shout out to Papa Shefts for doing his duty, I love him," Dimitri Nassenstein (12) said.

The teacher behind the success of the Veterans Day ceremony is the committed Mr. Tom Clark, Social Studies. He has been serving the high school as well as his country for many dedicated years. Clark helps organize all of the students in History Club, and some NHS students, to work together to prepare the school, arrange the events, find people to participate as well as speak and all of the other little details that go into making the ceremony great. Clark and his officers of the History Club work hard every year to make the Veterans Day ceremony a reality for all to enjoy.

"I'm very proud, proud of the students and staff for putting [the program] together to honor the veterans. It made us all feel so good as veterans that people care. I saw leadership in the students like I've never seen before," Clark said.





## LCHS: A Trip to The Capital

*By: Hannah Kosinski, Senior at LCHS*

*contd. from page five*  
the School Town of Munster that they would be withdrawing. The districts had three years to plan and the cooperative officially dissolved as of June 30, 2019.

Throughout the planning process our goal was to ensure minimum impact on our Lake Central students and staff. We continue to provide high quality services to our students while striving to meet the needs of the diverse learners in Lake Central. Several experienced, high quality teachers who were previously teaching in Munster transferred to our Lake Central buildings. Our special education administrative team is now building-based to provide increased support to all students within the district. Exiting the cooperative contributes to our mission of treating all students and staff as members of the Lake Central community. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your student's special education services or needs, please do not hesitate to contact me at [rgromala@lcschool.com](mailto:rgromala@lcschool.com) or 365-8507.



Students from the Publications and Student Media class traveled to the District of Columbia for the annual JEA/NSPA National High School Journalism Convention. Students were able to compete in contests and attend learning sessions to improve their skills. Lake Central's Magazine,

Scout, ranked fifth in the nation for Best of Show. In addition to learning, the students were able to tour the historic monuments, such as the Lincoln Memorial, Washington Monument, World War II Memorial, Capital Building among others of the city and visit the Newseum.



## Protsman: Operation: Learning

*By: Grace Bentkowsky, Senior at LCHS*

The transition into first grade can be overwhelming for some, so the teachers at Protsman made sure it was smooth for students and families by holding their First Grade Boot Camp.

"The demands of first grade curriculum are hard, and we wanted to help the parents out at home" Melissa Dillard, first grade teacher, said.

Students and parents participated in a "mission" that included games, classroom skills, and an obstacle course. The goal of the camp is to be able to apply these activities at

home.

"We wanted to make it easy for parents to adapt any game at home into a learning game," Dillard said.

The boot camp came about with the help of a grant and the first grade team. The team worked together to create games that engaged parents and students while talking about the importance of learning at home.

"When we work as a team and collaborate with parents, the students are much more successful," Dillard said.





## Kahler: WISE Learning

*By: Hannah Kosinski, Senior at LCHS*



The Women In Science and Engineering, or W.I.S.E. Club, from Lake Central High School came to Kahler to do science experiments and teach the seventh-grade science classes. The experiments included DNA, dry ice, oobleck, trivia, plants, elephant

toothpaste, polymer leak-proof bags and steel wool. The seventh-graders were able to learn about fun experiments and the science behind what makes them work. The high school students also encouraged the girls to join W.I.S.E. when they get to high school.



## Bibich: Champions of Spelling

*By: Kiley Szatkowski, Senior at LCHS*



A huge congratulations to the 2019 Bibich Spell Bowl team on their 1st place finish at the local Elementary Spell Bowl competition held at Kahler. Team members included: Mariah Benain, Yianni Boufis, Kya DeVries, Jacob Forystek, Maribella Grgic, Phoebe Lapko, Matthew Mansour, Austin Maslanka, Julia Oar, Olivia Post-

ma, Isabella Saxsma, Nina Tomich, and Rowan Wojno. The Spell Bowl coaches are Miss O'Rourke and Miss Snow. The team spelled 45 out of 56 words correctly. Perfect rounds go to Maribella Grgic and Jacob Forystek. Nearly perfect rounds go to Rowan Wojno. The team also placed 5th overall in their class at state.



## Kolling: Mystery Day in Room 58

*By: Brenna Sealy, Junior at LCHS*

Mrs. Kristi Blankenship hosted Mystery Day in her classroom to make up for a rained out field trip. Her fourth grade class was scheduled to go on a field trip to Indiana Dunes, but it was rained out. The solution to this problem was a classroom flip.

"I started the idea for Mystery Day as a backup because I was quite certain our class trip to the Dunes would get rained out. The more I searched for ideas, the more it developed. This concept of 'flipping' your classroom is something I have read about online, but never fully attempted with decorations and everything. I have always wanted to try. As this idea grew in my head, I realized I could make this a flip and really go all out." Mrs. Blankenship said.

The idea was slowly being brought up to the students day by day. More and more elements of the room would be shown, and the students got more and more excited to find out what the day will bring.

"I teased the kids about it daily as I hung up sheets of Zombie Scab stickers and other little hints as to what we were doing. By the last day, our room was filled with caution tape, and they were so excited." Mrs. Blankenship said.

Students could not wait to go back to school the night before Mystery day.

"I had one mom tell that her child wanted to go to bed early so school would come sooner. Two of [the students] woke up super early today to get to school. They were excited all day. It was amazing," Mrs. Blankenship said.

There were six academic stations with mini lessons hidden inside. The stations included: brains, eyeballs, human femurs, worms, witch fingers, and witch nails. The stations had elements of writing, reading, math, science, social studies, and brain development within them.

"They had to dig to find their task cards and any additional components of their task. They had no clue how much they were learning." Mrs. Blankenship said.

The students were having a bunch of fun doing all of the stations and learning along the way.

"It was even more successful than I imagined. The students were excited, engaged and actually totally forgot they were learning. This was a lot of work to create a memory that I hope will always be a special memory of their final year in elementary school." Mrs. Blankenship said.





# A Semester in Photos





## The 2020 Census and Public Schools

As I sat in a conference in Indianapolis earlier this fall, the speaker mentioned the importance of families taking the time to complete census forms when they are sent out in March. The statistics regarding how many residents remain uncounted each decade were shared and, as those numbers sunk in, it became clear how important census participation is for equity in government spending and accurate representation at the federal level.

The United States will recognize April 1, 2020 as Census Day. This will kick off the process of attempting to get every person living in our country counted. Accurate data is very important for a variety of reasons.

First of all, the statistics are used by the federal government to allocate billions of dollars in federal funds. A recent publication from the Indiana K-12 Complete Count Committee stated that \$883 billion will be distributed to individual states based on census results. This year, it is estimated that over \$1 billion will be allocated to K-12 programming in our state. In my opinion, this is a really good reason to make sure all of our children are counted.

We not only deserve to receive our “fair share” of federal support but also need to be sure that congressional seats are awarded properly based on state populations.

For the first time ever, the census may be completed online. If as a nation we are committed, this could eliminate the nearly 1 in 5 children that were undercounted due to a failure to return the form in the 2010 census.

I don't know how participation will be encouraged elsewhere, but felt it worthwhile to share with our families some of the reasons we need strong high involvement in our community. We hope all of our community members will fulfill their civic duty in April of 2020!

On behalf of our school district, I want to wish all of our families a happy holiday season. We hope you are all able to take a break, and that you get a chance to relax and spend quality time with your loved ones!

-Dr. Larry Veracco, Superintendent of the Lake Central School Corporation

## Red for Ed

“I'm only in this for the money,” said no teacher ever. The same holds true for the Red for Ed movement: it's not just about teacher pay. When teachers stand up for themselves, they are standing up for their students, their schools and their communities. Indiana teachers are working in a state where the number of emergency teaching permits has gone from 859 in 2011 to 3,812 in 2018, where the number of college students enrolling in teacher prep programs has dropped over 50% in the last decade, and where we rank 51st in the nation for teacher salary increases over the last 15 years. Students are over tested and over stressed. Public schools are not treated as a priority. Teachers are required to hold and maintain professional licenses which demand continuing education and a constantly evolving understanding of the education system and how to best meet our students needs; on top of those requirements, teachers are now being forced to spend 15 hours outside of the classroom in an externship. Our legislators have simply thrown their hands up in the air and asked, “What can we do?” On November 19th, I had the privilege of standing with over 20,000 educators from around the state and emphatically providing our state government with an answer. The rally was an opportunity for teachers to stand up against unfair policies, practices, and procedures which do nothing to help our students. Students deserve better. Teachers deserve better. Indiana deserves better.

-Ms. Allison Peda, English and Communications Lake Central High School



Photo Submitted By:  
Allison Peda

Photo By: Bryan Woolston/Reuters



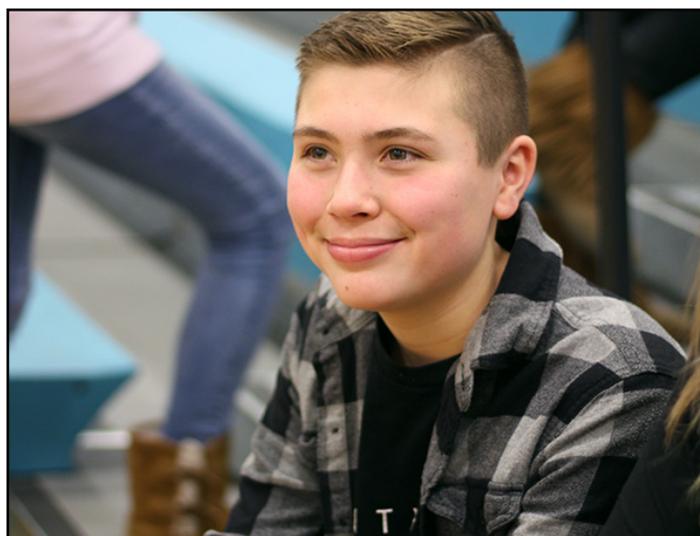
## Clark: Inspiring Young Authors

*By: Mia Martinez, Senior at LCHS*



On Tuesday, Dec. 3 a New York Times Best-selling author, Jennifer A. Nielsen visited Clark. During her visit she had breakfast with the staff, gave presentations and signed student and staff books. Nielsen gave two presentations to fifth and sixth grade as well as seventh and eighth grade. Nielsen talked

to the students about the books she's written, the process she went through to write her books and showed a trailer for one of her newly released book titled "Resistance". Students were able to ask questions at the end of the presentation to which Nielsen would respond back to the best of her ability.





# Watson: Saddle Up its Rodeo Day

*By: Jade Mehok, Senior at LCHS*



*Theresa Schoon  
Director of Primary  
Education*

## National Cybersecurity Awareness Month

Recent legislation, passed during the Spring 2019 session, has caused some confusion about Indiana's kindergarten enrollment age. Students must be five years of age by August 1 to enter kindergarten unless they are allowed early entrance based on the corporation appeal process. This has not changed. The confusion stems from the budget bill that changed the state tuition funding cutoff date for students who are not five by August 1.

Prior to the 2019 legislation, corporations did not receive state tuition support for students who were not five by August 1. This lack of funding caused many corporations, including Lake Central, to suspend the practice of allowing early entrance to kindergarten for students who were developmentally ready. The Indiana code that controlled the funding was amended in 2019 to provide state dollars for students who are five years old by October 1 for the 2020-21 school year and beyond. As a result, Lake Central

*contd. on page twelve*



On Wed., Nov. 11, Watson held their Rodeo Day. The kindergarteners dressed up as any western day figure consisting of many cowboys and cowgirls. Then all the kindergartens were rounded up into the gym to compete in mini games such as There's a Snake in My Boot.





*contd. from page eleven*

Lake Central has reinstated its early entrance appeal procedures for students who are by five years of age by October 1, 2020.

Any child who lives within Lake Central attendance areas, and turns five between August 2, 2020 and October 1, 2020 is eligible for screening to determine their developmental readiness for early entrance

to kindergarten. Parents who would like to have their child considered for early entrance, should

contact the principal of the school their child will attend. Children who are 5 by August 1 st , may enroll in kindergarten without being screened.

An informational meeting for parents of 2020-21 kindergartners will be held on February 20, 2020 in the

LCHS auditorium. Kindergarten enrollment for the 2020-21 school year will be held at each elementary on March 11 and 12, 2020. Please look for additional information on the Lake Central website in early February.

## Homan: Let's Take a Trip to the 1870's

*By: Yousef Nammari, Senior at LCHS*



Fourth grade students took a trip to the 1800 schoolhouse. In class, students learned what it was like to be in a school setting in 1872. They learned how to write on a slate using soapstone. They also learned about choral reading and cursive writing. Students read a story from a McGuffey Reader and also had a spelling bee. After, students got to play recess games

outside. One game the students loved playing was Graces and Hoops. The aim of the game is to keep the hoop upright for as long as possible, and to try different tricks. They ended their day with a short history of Schererville. The lessons are all taught by retired teachers. Mrs. Jane Dvorsak's class enjoyed this learning experience, and loved dressing the part!

## From Our Family To Yours



On behalf of the Lake Central School Corporation, we would like to say thank you for a great first semester. We greatly appreciate all of the effort and help from our Lake Central Corporation families during the year. A special thank you to our students and staff for completing a great academic semester together. A special thank you to our parents and guardians as well for all of the support we receive from you. It is such a privilege to learn and grow with our students each day. We anticipate a great second semester and are excited to see our lovely staff and students back and ready to learn. We wish you a very happy and safe holiday season with you friends and family.



—Lake Central Public Relations Staff

8260 Wicker Ave. St. John IN

Pathways to Excellence

Lake Central School Corporation