

connectionsmag.com

A community magazine for Antioch, Lake Villa & Lindenhurst

CONNECTIONS

Living and learning in northwestern Lake County

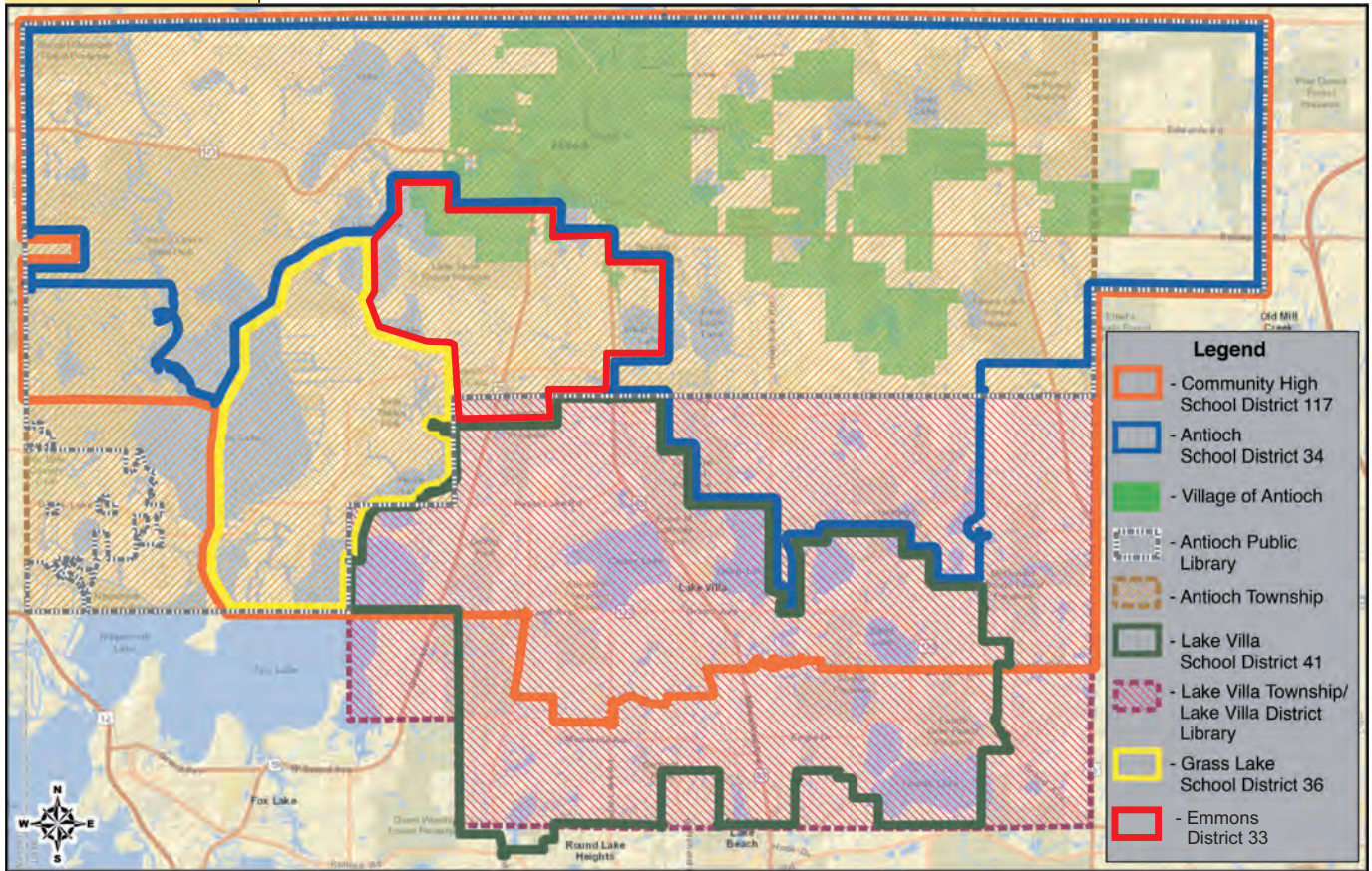
INCLUSION WEEK

THE BIG GAME

Lakes Eagle Pals took on the Sequoit Sidekicks to celebrate a week about community, support and having fun together

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SUMMER 2025

**AREA MAP**

Connections, a quarterly magazine in publication since 2015, is a collaborative effort among several taxpayer-supported organizations to keep residents informed about news and events in Antioch, Lake Villa, and Lindenhurst. We appreciate your feedback. Please send comments or questions to connections@chsd117.org.



Events are generously sponsored by Raymond Chevrolet-Kia

Antioch's Taste of Summer Festival New Date - New Carnival!

May 29-June 1, 2025
4 Days of Music, Food, Rides, & Shopping
Visit AntiochChamber.org

Wizards Weekend Day Saturday, June 14, 2025

Wizards of ALL Ages
Magical Moments - Diagon Alley
Marauder's Experience
Scavenger Hunts, & More
KIDS - School of Magic

The Wall That Heals July 17-20, 2025

**Vietnam Veterans Memorial Replica
& Mobile Education Center**
Open 24 hrs, closes 2 pm Sunday
Tim Osmond Sports Park

Mayors' Cup Golf Outing Friday, August 22, 2025

Northern Illinois
Fox Lake Country Club
Public Welcome!
Visit AntiochChamber.org
Title Sponsor: Raymond Chevrolet Kia

Visit AntiochChamber.org for Information & Tickets



Oakland's 'Girls Who Code' Club Empowers Students

ANTIOCH CCSD 34

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DETAILS

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Grand Opening of Vern Thelen Park

I am deeply honored to continue serving as your Antioch Township Supervisor. Running for office is never easy, and I'm sincerely grateful for the trust and confidence you've placed in me. I also want to warmly welcome our newest Trustees, Mark Haufe and Aron Petty, and thank returning Trustees Kris Shepard and Bruce Goeckner for their continued dedication. Together, we're looking ahead to an exciting term filled with opportunities to serve and strengthen our community.

On March 23rd, we celebrated a major milestone with the Grand Opening of Vern Thelen Park on Rena Avenue! This vibrant new space features pickleball courts, basketball, volleyball, and a playground—offering something for everyone. With lighting for evening recreation, the park is already becoming a gathering place for residents of all ages. It's been incredible to see neighbors coming together to enjoy this new community asset.

We're also excited to announce the launch of our new website: antiochtownshipil.gov. Created with residents in mind, the site offers a more accessible and user-friendly experience. From meeting schedules and township services to news, resources, and volunteer opportunities, it's a one-stop hub for staying connected and informed. We're especially proud of how this platform strengthens communication between residents and township leadership, promoting transparency and responsiveness. I encourage you to explore the site and make it part of your regular connection to township happenings.

Thank you for the continued opportunity to serve. It's a privilege to be part of such a committed and caring community.

God Bless Antioch and the USA,
Tom Shaughnessy
Antioch Township Supervisor



ANTIOCH TOWNSHIP SCHEDULE OF SENIOR EVENTS

July - September 2025



Antioch Township

Monday Movie Series for Seniors

Location: Antioch Movie Theatre, 378 Lake Street

Time: All movies start at 10 AM (Theatre opens at 9:30 AM)

July 21: Driving Miss Daisy

August 11: Top Gun

Sept 15: The Glass Bottom Boat

Walking Club - Lake County Forest Preserves

Our preserves are beautiful...exercise and spend quality time outdoors with friends while walking in a peaceful and natural setting. Please check the Walking Club flyer for forest preserve location.

2nd & 4th Wednesdays through October

Time: 9 AM

Location: Lake County Forest Preserve

Gianni's Café & Opera in Focus

Start the day with a family style luncheon at Gianni's Café in Palatine. We will enjoy sausage and peppers, salad, penne vodka pasta, chicken parmigiana, Giannis broccoli and cannoli for dessert. Following lunch, experience a unique show at Opera in Focus...see a puppet and opera stage production of Fiddler on the Roof. A demonstration of the operation of the puppets and a tour of the highly technical backstage will follow the performance.

Date: Wednesday, July 9

Location: Motorcoach bus departs at 10 AM from the Township Center, 1275 Main Street

Return approximately 4:30 PM

Cost - R: \$75 NR: \$80

Ice Cream Social

Here's the scoop...cool off with ice cream and all of your favorite toppings. Enjoy entertainment featuring everyone's favorite, Edizon!

Date: Thursday, July 17

Location: Township Center, 1275 Main Street

Time: 1:30 PM

Cost - \$5

Always...Patsy Cline

Drury Lane Theatre, Oakbrook

Featuring 27 of Patsy Cline's biggest hits, this is the ultimate love letter to one of the most celebrated and influential performers of the 20th century. Lunch prior to the show will include a salad, your choice of Roasted Salmon or Three 2-oz Petite Filets, and Cheesecake for dessert.

Date: Wednesday, July 23

Location: Motorcoach bus departs at 10:00 AM from the Township Center, 1275 Main Street

Return approximately 5:30 PM

Cost - R: \$115 NR: \$125

Port of Blarney Lunch

Boat Tour & Blarney Island

Enjoy lunch at the Port of Blarney followed by a private tour of the Chain o' Lakes. Don't worry...the boat has a cover to block the direct sun. We will also make a stop on the island. Feel free to stick around until 6 PM to watch the boat races or you can take the shuttle back to the Port anytime that you're ready. You won't want to miss this fun day of the "Key West of the Midwest."

Date: Thursday, August 7

Location: Meet at 27843 W Grass Lake Road at 2:00 PM.

Cost - R: \$35 NR: \$40

Remember When...

Nostalgic Humorist Todd Hunt will lead us down memory lane with stories of simpler times. Remember when there was just one flavor of Cheerios (no Honey Nut, Apple Cinnamon or Chocolate Peanut Butter)? Humans answered the phone (no voice mail maze)? Crazy fads like pet rocks and mood rings? Enjoy photos and remembrances of TV shows and favorite childhood candy (whatever happened to Walnettos?) and vintage cringe-worthy ads (Clorox Toothpaste and candy cigarettes "Just like Dad!").

Root Beer Floats will be served.

Date: Tuesday, August 19

Location: Township Center, 1275 Main Street

Time: 1:30 PM

Cost - \$10

Magic Meadows Alpacas & Crandall's Restaurant

Travel to Wonder Lake for a private visit at this unique alpaca farm. You will have the opportunity to learn about alpacas and enter the enclosure to feed the girls, while gazing into their large, soft eyes. Following our visit, enjoy Crandall's Famous 2-piece Broasted Chicken Lunch in Hebron. We will travel via Township Bus so seats are limited unless you would like to drive and meet us at both locations!

Date: Tuesday, August 26

Location: Township bus departs at 10:00 AM from the Township Center, 1275 Main Street

Return approximately 2:30 PM

Cost - R: \$40 NR: \$45

Oklahoma!

Fireside Theatre

It's an American classic! This bright, brassy, boisterous musical comedy is filled with colorful costumes, breathtaking dancing, side-splitting humor, and a musical score featuring such hits as "People Will Say We're in Love," "Surrey with the Fringe on Top," and the rousing title number "Oklahoma!"

Date: Friday, September 12

Location: Motorcoach bus departs at 9:30 AM from the Township Center, 1275 Main Street

Return approximately 5:30 PM

Cost - R: \$100 NR: \$110

Cut out below & sign up now!

Antioch Township Event Registration

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gianni's Wed 7/9 R: \$75 / NR: \$80 | <input type="checkbox"/> Ice Cream Social Th 7/17 \$5 | <input type="checkbox"/> Patsy Cline Wed 7/23 ___Roasted Salmon ___Petite Filets R: \$115 / NR: \$125 | <input type="checkbox"/> Blarney Th 8/7 R: \$35 NR: \$40 ___Cheesburger ___Monster BLT ___Chicken Wrap | <input type="checkbox"/> Remember When Tues 8/19 \$10 | <input type="checkbox"/> Magic Meadows Tues 8/26 R: \$40 NR: \$45 | <input type="checkbox"/> Oklahoma! Friday 9/12 R: \$100 / NR: \$110 ___Chicken ___Florentine ___Baked Almond ___Cruised Cod ___Beef Short ___Ribs |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|--|

Total amount of payment

\$ _____

All payments must be received 14 days before event

Please make checks payable to:

Antioch Township

1275 Main Street

Antioch, IL 60002

Attn: Renee Mehring

Registrant Details

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zipcode: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

(Please note: Antioch Township Residents will have first availability)

For information and to check availability contact Renee Mehring at 847-395-3378.



New Superintendent Appointed at Grass Lake School District 36

After careful consideration, Dr. William Newby has announced his decision to retire as Superintendent of Grass Lake School District 36 following the 2025-2026 school year. Dr. Newby has dedicated over 9 years of service to District 36, leaving a lasting impact on the school and community. He has been a pillar of strength and vision for the district, guiding it through numerous challenges and spearheading significant improvements. His leadership, vision, and unwavering commitment to providing the best educational experience for Grass Lake School District 36 students will always be appreciated.

At the January 21, 2025, Board of Education meeting, Dr. Ryan Wollberg, the current principal of Grass Lake School, was appointed Dr. Newby's successor. Dr. Wollberg will officially take on the role of Superintendent effective July 1, 2026, following Dr. Newby's retirement. Since joining Grass Lake School in 2023, Dr. Wollberg has demonstrated exceptional leadership, a deep understanding of the district, and a passion for education. His expertise in school leadership, community engagement, staff development, curriculum design, and financial management makes him an outstanding choice to lead Grass Lake School District 36 forward.

Over the next year, Dr. Newby and Dr. Wollberg will work closely to ensure a seamless transition. There is great confidence that under Dr. Wollberg's leadership, Grass



Dr. Wollberg (left), Albus (Grass Lake School therapy dog), Dr. Newby (right).

Lake School District 36 will continue to thrive and uphold its mission to nurture and empower students to explore, achieve, and excel.

Grass Lake School & the Senior Center Meet

The 5th and 8th grade students found new connections and relationships through a year long engagement with the Antioch Senior Center. As part of a PBL component this year, students were tasked with finding a way to connect outside of the school. After brainstorming and reaching out, a connection to the Senior Center was created. This has allowed the students to meet and participate in an intergenerational program that has benefited both groups. A highlight for both was the project the students undertook to interview a senior and then create a memory book of their interview. It was an experience that filled both the interviewer and interviewee with curiosity about each other in addition to joy connecting with each other. The hope is that this opportunity will continue and broaden giving students and seniors ways to make new friendships.





Project Based Learning Showcase Resembles A Living Museum Created by Kids

Students in 6th grade created and shared a museum-like space for the Spring 2025 Project Based Learning Showcase. One of the fourteen projects on display answered the PBL Driving question, “How did the ideas and achievements of Ancient Greece influence the way we live, govern, and think today?”. This museum quality display captured the curiosity and interest of students from PreK- 8th graders. This was a place where opportunities to look back in time and see and touch items that explored everything from games, warfare, food, religious beliefs and governmental issues. These “museum spaces” were set up throughout the building and students spent two days visiting and learning. A snapshot of these interesting and thought provoking topics about everything from how to hatch chickens to seeing stories shared through stop motion and a Foley artist, learning about the cost of college and using math to create magic. PBL has enriched our curriculum and students are engaged in higher level thinking, problem solving and connecting with other students in the role of teacher and learner.

PBL Focus on Community for 2025

PBL (Problem/project based learning) has been an integral part of the Grass Lake School foundation. It began four years ago with the embedding of these strategies and practices. After four years of professional development and practice, the staff has continued to grow into a PBL driven school. Each year, two Showcases have taken place, with the purpose being not only the sharing of the classroom products, but the applied learning of the PBL process. This year has been a connection to the community. The year began with our first day back to school with a bus trip around the “island” that Grass Lake School serves as well as a tour and introduction to downtown Antioch businesses and amenities that are in the Village. Finally, the staff went on the water, with a tour to “see” the island and learn more about the history and environmental features that are unique to the Chain of Lakes. This served as the stepping for thinking and connecting their products to community: defined as the classroom, the building, the surrounding communities and beyond.



Please Mr. Postman, Look & See — Is There a Letter Waiting For Me?

But you’re humming that song- but why? The Second Graders at Grass Lake School were engaged in the classroom to learn about the location of their home on Google earth. Once that was relevant to them the students began asking a variety of questions that resulted in better understanding how we can communicate with each other. This became a natural transition to learn about the mail service which led to the art of communication through letter writing. After engaging in several discussions and the realization that writing was both a dying art and exciting all at the same time, the students asked if they could start a school mail service. This PBL initiative has been a full year opportunity for everyone in the building to become more connected and connected with a real life situation that requires problem solving and creative solutions. Students solicited names for the “streets”, created routes, landed on scooters for mail service, designed their uniform, mode of sorting and delivery, mailbox locations and receptacles to create standards for addressing and mailing letters. Service is up and running, safety measures are in place for safe scooting in the building and every person has access to the mail- rain or shine! These second graders have also thought ahead and have a plan in place to pass the baton to the next second grade mail deliverers. Paying it forward through the mail.



Staff Role Models of Our D117 Portrait of a Graduate!

This feature, the second of a quarterly series, focuses on exceptional District 117 educators who truly embody our D117 Portrait of a Graduate. This edition features six staff members who all received Lake County Educator of the Year nominations! I was honored to sit down and interview each of them and learned how, through their unique approaches and dedication, they serve as shining examples of the competencies we aim to instill in all of our students by the time they graduate!

Vikki Ecker

Nominated for School Administrator

A pillar of LCHS since its second year, Mrs. Ecker has taught nearly every math course and built the field hockey program over her 20 years at Lakes. Her teaching aligns seamlessly with thinks critically, as she challenges students to consider why an answer works. She regularly asks, “What told you that?” and “What do we know about this problem?”—guiding students to “examine and challenge assumptions in making decisions based on a thorough understanding of authentic evidence.”

Her classroom is also a place of courage. She reminds students that “mistakes are part of the process,” encouraging them to take risks by presenting answers, even if they are incorrect, and learning from the mistakes made. In doing so, she lives out the competency where students “advocate for self and others in a socially responsible and empathetic manner” as well as models it herself. She encourages students to trust their intuition and not be afraid to take risks as they learn, often asking them what they think will happen as they work through a problem to anticipate solutions.

Mrs. Ecker’s room is buzzing with collaborative energy, too. She uses the “Building Thinking Classrooms” model, where students get out of their seats and use dry-erase markers to write on whiteboards and even windows to solve problems together. Through these practices, they “actively listen to discover mutual understanding,” transforming math into a team sport.

Hannah Kramer

Nominated for Early Career Educator

Ms. Kramer, a passionate teacher of U.S. History and AP U.S. History, as well as sponsor of Sequoia Senate and member of the Democracy School Committee, has made

ACHS her home for the past three years. She is deeply rooted in the competencies is emotionally intelligent and is courageous.

In her classroom, she fosters an environment that is both safe and brave—“a place where students feel seen, heard, and supported to take risks,” she says. This reflects her dedica-

tion to is courageous, which encourages us to “create, monitor and reflect upon ambitious goals” and “advocate for self and others in a socially responsible and empathetic manner.”

Ms. Kramer also focuses on growth mindset, especially around writing. Rather than pressuring students to be “right,” she helps them grow—an embodiment of thinks critically, where students are asked to “consistently improve the quality of one’s own thinking by skillfully analyzing, assessing, and reconstructing.”

And when it comes to collaborates, she’s intentional: “Learning to collaborate with classmates prepares students to work with strangers in the real world,” she explains. Through group projects, discussions, and student travel trips to D.C., London, and Paris, she’s creating real-world-ready graduates!

Erika Marino

Nominated for Educational Support Personnel

Mrs. Marino has served as the receptionist at Lakes since 2021 where she is an ambassador to everyone visiting Lakes and the communication hub of the school! Her role is multifaceted and includes preparing documents and materials, managing transportation for field trips, and the huge project of planning and managing all of the logistics for our commencement ceremony for graduation every year. She also authors the daily student bulletin that is famous for not only its rich information of everything a student would need to know for dates and activities at Lakes, but also for its inspirational quotes that lead the bulletin every morning!

Her work also exemplifies emotionally intelligent. From managing field trips to handling unexpected parent visits, she embodies “self-regulation, motivation, and resiliency” as she navigates a constant flow of interactions. As she puts it, “No two days are the same, and that’s what I love.” Visitors are sometimes coming to school to address a stressful situa-



tion with their student so it is important for her to embody self regulation and resilience as she maintains a customer service approach to each new guest.

She emphasizes our Portrait of a Graduate competency of communicates as it is crucial to her role as the first point of contact for the diverse individuals that come to Lakes every day. She is constantly helping visitors redirect, connect, or solve problems. Mrs. Marino shared that she is “proud to be part of the positive culture at Lakes which is a direct result of the amazing students and staff”. Mrs. Marino is a model of the welcoming, empathetic culture of Lakes Community High School!

Matt Marino

*Nominated for Classroom
Diverse Learner Teacher*

Mr. Marino has taught students at ACHS for five years after a long career in Chicago where he served as the first Deputy Chief of Workforce Development at the Chicago Park District. He also has an amazing biography of diverse life experiences that are too many to list here, including a tenure in the Peace Corps in his 30s where he was assigned to the Fiji islands where he trained teachers and wrote the curriculum for the Physical Education classes at the Fijian College of Advanced Education. His teaching centers on helping students “discover who they are and how to thrive in the world,” going far beyond textbooks.

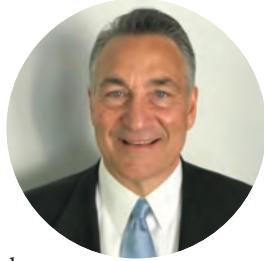
The communicates competency is central to his approach. He believes in building community within his classroom, saying, “Students need to feel like they’re part of a family.” He supports “articulating ideas effectively using clear and concise oral and written communication” by creating consistent opportunities for students to express themselves each day.

He also leans heavily into thinks critically, especially when helping students build independence. He encourages them to delay seeking help until they’ve truly grappled with a problem—supporting the definition: “Leverages curiosity to identify and solve problems while taking intellectual risks.” As he puts it, “I’ll always be there when they really need me, but they grow more by working through it first.”

Jim White

*Nominated for Student
Support Personnel*

With 21 years of experience at ACHS, Mr. White has made an impact both in the classroom and on the court. As a longtime head basketball coach, current golf coach, and school psychologist, he lives the is emotionally intelligent competency: “Practices responsible decision-making and considers impact on others; builds



and sustains strong, healthy relationships with peers and adults.”

Mr. White frequently meets with students during tough days, encouraging them to “repair it the next day,” guiding them to build better relationships and take ownership of their actions. “I always tell them it’s about learning how to grow from mistakes, not avoiding them,” he says. That belief also ties directly to is courageous, as he urges students to “be comfortable being uncomfortable,” especially when it comes to learning and self-reflection.

Perhaps most powerfully, Mr. White embodies collaborates, which asks us to “actively listen to discover mutual understanding by providing and receiving feedback.” In his work as a school psychologist, he collaborates with staff across departments, athletics, and activities to provide wrap-around support for students. He recalls one former student who faced enormous challenges at home and struggled with peer relationships. Years later, that student returned to say, “You never gave up on me. You were like a father figure.” The student shared that his entire life trajectory was changed by Mr. White!

Christine Zucker

*Nominated for Classroom
High School Teacher*

Ms. Zucker has been an educator for more than 15 years, teaching in New York, Missouri, and now at LCHS for the last six years, where she teaches social studies with a specialty in AP Human Geography and coaches cross country and indoor and outdoor track. She was a state champion track athlete in high school and competed as a Division I athlete at the University of Kansas! Her approach is rooted in is courageous, where she supports students to “build confidence and be willing to take risks” in writing, presenting, and discussion.

She’s also a powerful advocate for embraces diversity, creating lessons that explore colonialism, indigenous peoples, and cultural history. Her curated bulletin boards—like the one celebrating Women’s History Month—help students “actively work to develop empathy for others” and “find opportunities to embrace and affirm one’s authentic self.”

Finally, Ms. Zucker is committed to communicates. She urges students to speak up for themselves and advocate when needed, even when it’s uncomfortable. This helps them “initiate and sustain meaningful conversation acting with empathy and respect in a variety of settings.” She holds high expectations for her students and her athletes, but always emphasizes that we pursue these high expectations by making mistakes and learning from them, so we can always be getting better!

Jeff Feucht, Ed.D.

*Superintendent
Community High School District 117*



THE FAST LANE TO THE FINISH

A Season of Celebration & Reflection

As we dive headfirst into the whirlwind that is May, it's clear that the end of the school year is anything but quiet. From packed auditoriums to community-wide acts of service, the final weeks of the academic year remind us just how special this time is, especially as we celebrate the accomplishments of the Class of 2025.

One shining example of the exceptional student talent at Antioch Community High School was this spring's student production of *9 to 5: The Musical*. Every note sung, line delivered, and scene changed reminded us of our students' creativity and commitment—not only to the stage but also to the classroom and the athletic fields. With each of the four sold-out shows, we hope that all who attended left with the same pride we felt watching our students perform with heart and excellence.

On April 29, we turned our attention to the future by welcoming student leaders from Emmons, Grass Lake, and AUGS for the ACHS Middle School Leadership Conference. The energy and ideas these young leaders brought with them were inspiring and clearly indicate that our future is in great hands. Read more about it in the ACHS Activities section of this newsletter.

That same spirit of leadership was evident earlier in the month when our senior class participated in our first-ever ACHS Senior Day of Service on April 10. Whether volun-

teering at Habitat for Humanity, Bernie's Book Bank, or the Antioch Traveling Closet, our seniors demonstrated what it means to give back. Their compassion and dedication impacted the community and reminded us all what true leadership looks like.

And of course, on May 7, we honored those same seniors once more during Senior Recognition Night. This evening of celebration highlighted the academic achievements, perseverance, and character of a remarkable group of students who have provided ACHS with four fantastic years of memories.

In a month defined by its fast pace, we find countless reasons to slow down and appreciate the journey. These final weeks are a powerful reminder of what it means to be a Sequoit—talented, driven, compassionate, and community-minded. To the Class of 2025: Thank you for all you've given to ACHS. We're proud to honor your legacy.



Once a Sequoit, always a Sequoit,

Mike Berrie

Principal

Antioch Community High School



LEADERSHIP DAY | ACHS

ACHS Hosts Inaugural Middle School Leadership Day

On April 29, Antioch Community High School proudly hosted its first-ever Middle School Leadership Day, a meaningful and inspiring event aimed at empowering the next generation of leaders. The idea was sparked by ACHS student Colin Fisher, whose vision for a day of connection and service was fully supported by Student Council sponsor Ms. Emily Parris.

Thanks to their efforts, over 50 middle school students from Antioch Upper Grade School, Grass Lake, and Emmons School were welcomed to ACHS for a day filled with leadership-building activities and community service projects.

Throughout the day, students participated in hands-on activities designed to foster teamwork, empathy, and a sense of giving back. Highlights included creating blankets to donate to Penny's Purpose and making heartfelt cards for children in local hospitals, acts of kindness that had a real impact and



brought smiles to many.

The event, hosted by the ACHS Student Council, was a huge success and showcased the power of student initiative, collaboration, and community engagement. It was a truly awesome day, and we are already looking forward to making it even bigger and better next year!



THEATRE | ACHS

‘9 to 5: The Musical’ Production Sells Out

Antioch High School’s recent production of “9 to 5: The Musical” was nothing short of extraordinary. With most performances nearly sold out, our community packed the auditorium to experience the energy, talent, and heart our students poured into every scene.

From the moment the curtain rose, the audience was transported into the world of workplace hijinks, friendship, and empowerment. The set design was nothing less than stunning, every detail brought the story to life with creativity and precision. The cast delivered performances that were both powerful and heartfelt, showcasing not only strong vocal talent but also impressive acting chops that captivated

everyone in attendance.

The student pit orchestra played a crucial role in keeping the momentum going. Their musicianship provided the perfect foundation for each musical number, adding depth and vibrancy to the entire production.

This show was a true testament to the incredible talent that exists within the walls of Antioch Community High School, not just among the performers, but also the directors, crew, musicians, and all who supported the production behind the scenes. “9 to 5: The Musical” reminded us of the magic that happens when passion, hard work, and creativity come together. Bravo to everyone involved!

DAY OF SERVICE | ACHS

Seniors Volunteer for Day of Service

On Thursday, April 17, many ACHS seniors took part in the first-ever Day of Service. This event provided students with the opportunity to go out into the community during the school day to locations such as Habitat for Humanity in Kenosha, Fill-A-Heart in Lake Forest, Antioch Traveling Closet, Bernie’s Book Bank, Oakland Elementary School, Hillcrest Elementary School, and Petty Elementary School. In addition, many seniors served their community by making hundreds of cards for veterans, children, and senior citizens as well as blankets for Penny’s Purpose. This was an incredible day for the Sequoit Community, as everywhere our students went, we heard the same thing: “Thank you so much for doing this. Your students are so respectful and amazing!”

The ACHS Democracy School Committee, made up of ACHS staff and students, conceived of this idea in the Fall of 2023 and spent the better part of two years planning for it. Math teacher and committee member, Allison Herrmann,



led these efforts and invested countless hours of time and organization to make this event successful. In addition, this event could not have happened without the support of ACHS administration, teachers, and support staff. From chaperoning student groups to securing buses to providing substitute teacher coverage, it was a Sequoit village effort. We look forward to making this an annual tradition and helping our students experience the joy of giving back to their community.

Spring Greetings!

With the end of the school year in sight, we have reached a bittersweet season. This is the time we get to celebrate many of the accomplishments our students have been working towards, yet we will also say, “Good-bye” to our seniors as they leave the Nest.

May 2nd was Celebration Day at LCHS, which commenced with the Senior Celebration Assembly and culminated with an hour of “being a kid” including bouncy houses, food trucks, a cultural fair, performances by our Fine Arts students, a school-wide Rock-Paper-Scissors competition, many booths with activities from our clubs and sports, and MORE. In the spirit of celebrating our 20th anniversary, we added two new recognitions for our seniors. The Troy Parola Award was created to honor the impact left by Lakes Community High School’s first athletic director, Troy Parola. Troy was one of the foundational pieces of our school, and every Lakes athletic accolade over the years can be traced back to Troy’s work and influence. We are proud to recognize these senior student-athletes who embody Troy’s vision: Jia Singh, Bryan Memenga, and Brayden Thornton. For Activities, the Mark Ring Award highlights the impact left by Lakes Community High School’s first activities director,

Mark Ring. Mr. Ring’s passion for creating an inclusive, welcoming environment for all students at Lakes has left an indelible mark on Lakes’ clubs and activities. Mr. Ring was an original Eagle who fiercely advocated for our clubs and activities until his retirement last year. In honor of his legacy, we are proud to give this award in his name to Ellie Lill for her unwavering dedication to the German Club.



Also in May is Teacher Appreciation Week from the 5th through the 9th. I believe every adult in the Lakes Community High School staff is a teacher and am most grateful for the opportunities they provide to our Eagles to become their best selves with experiences to Live, Learn, and Lead. In this season of celebration, please join me in honoring our LCHS staff, the Class of 2025, and all LCHS Eagles!

With Gratitude and Eagle Pride!

Jori Bowen

Principal



INCLUSION WEEK | LCHS

Inclusion Week & The Big Game

Lakes Community High School had a blast celebrating our first-ever Inclusion Week March 10-14! The week featured spirit days, trivia about disabilities and inclusion, a visit from therapy dogs to highlight mental health awareness, and Mrs. Wheelchair Illinois, Libby Deichsel, spent time with our Learning Opportunities classes sharing her story.

We capped off the week with our very first Big Game on March 14, where the Lakes Eagle Pals took on the Sequoit Sidekicks. The energy was amazing, and it was a perfect way to celebrate a week all about community, support, and having fun together. We are so proud of how hard our Eagle Pals played and how our Lakes students supported them! Mrs. Wheelchair Illinois Libby Deichsel and Miss Lindenhurst, Emma Quane, were our special guests for the event. We are very excited to keep this tradition going!





SPRING BREAK | LCHS

Lakes Eagles Take Flight: From New Orleans Jazz to Normandy Shores

Over Spring Break, 74 students, teachers and chaperones from the Lakes Music and Theatre Departments traveled to New Orleans, Louisiana, for 5 days of artistic enrichment, performances and sightseeing. Some of the highlights were: Jazz Band's performance on Jackson Square, the Choir performance in St. Louis Cathedral, a band performance at the WWII Museum, workshops for band, choir and theatre at Loyola University (New Orleans), attending a cooking class and dinner at the New Orleans School of Cooking, a dinner cruise on the Natchez Steamboat and a swamp tour, complete with gators!

A big thanks to all the community members, parents and administration that supported this trip for our students and staff.

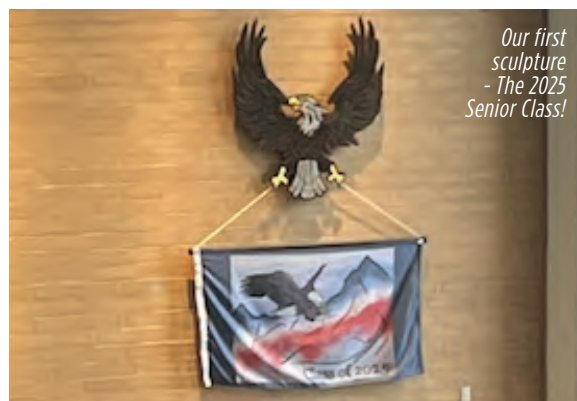
Also during spring break, many Lakes students had an adventure of a lifetime, traveling to Paris, Amsterdam, and Normandy! They explored powerful pieces of history at the Anne Frank House and the Dutch Resistance Museum, and walked along Omaha Beach, where they reflected on the events of D-Day. In Paris, they topped off the trip — literally — with a visit to the top of the Eiffel Tower, taking in the stunning city views. It was a week full of learning, laughter, and memories they'll never forget!

INCLUSION WEEK | LCHS

Twentieth Anniversary Sculpture Unveiled

To celebrate 20 years of LCHS, we have commissioned Don Rambadt, the local artist who created our eagle sculpture at the main entrance, to design four unique flag holders for the Commons. Each class flag will be displayed with a steel eagle representing the four stages of an eagle's development, similar to the four years our high school students experience. The four metallic eagles with progressively changing plumage will represent our LCHS Eagles and how they significantly change through their four years in high school.

The first sculpture was unveiled at our Celebration Day on May 2, 2025, but we will need funding for the next three sculptures. If you would like to contribute to this permanent recognition of our 20th anniversary, please contact Principal Jori Bowen at jori.bowen@chsd117.org or 847-838-7260.



Our first sculpture - The 2025 Senior Class!

RELIGIOUS FORUM | CHSD117

Freshmen Visit Houses of Worship for Religious Forum

In early April, freshmen at both Antioch and Lakes spent the morning visiting local houses of worship as a part of their Social Studies curriculum. All freshmen students are required to take either Global Studies or Advanced Placement Human Geography, and both courses teach the major world religions as a part of understanding the culture and history of people groups around the world. Additionally, the Illinois State Social Studies standards include Religious Studies as a required element of high school Social Studies instruction in the state.

In an effort to increase student awareness and understanding of the richness of cultures and people in our own community, three years ago we began taking students to visit two different houses of worship to supplement their study of world religions. This year, students visited Antioch United Methodist Church, St Raphael's Catholic Church in Lake Villa, Lakeland Church in Gurnee, the Hindu Mandir in Grayslake, the Sikh Religious Society in Palatine, the Islamic Foundation North's Mosque in Libertyville, and/or Congregation Or Shalom in Vernon Hills. While at the local houses of worship, students had a chance to interact with faith leaders, ask questions about their religious traditions and beliefs, and see examples of cultural and religious architecture.

This event has become a part of the freshman experience



at both ACHS and LCHS and is a much-anticipated activity each year. Students report a greater appreciation for different cultures and religions after visiting these places and appreciate the opportunity to experience something that they otherwise may not have. Each year, the local faith leaders are very complimentary of the D117 students and are impressed by their questions and respectful behavior. We are so grateful to the D117 administration and our community faith partners for working with us to foster greater understanding and respect for all people in our community.

COMPETITIVE ACTIVITIES | LCHS

Competitive Activities See Success at State

Lakes Competitive Activities are on a roll in their State series this year! Chess, Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA), D117 Winterguard, Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA), Math Team, and eSports Rocket League and Mario Kart 8 Teams all qualified for spots at their State competitions second semester.

Chess kicked off our State successes in February, coming in 48th out of 128 teams and beating last year's 122nd place finish.

In March, FBLA saw two members qualify for Nationals; congratulations to freshman Shrey Patel and Senior Mitch Crevier who performed well enough to represent Lakes' FBLA team at their National Convention in Anaheim this June. The winning streak continued in March, with the D117 SWinterguard taking first place in the AA Scholastic Brubaker Divisions for the second year in a row at the Midwest Color Guard Circuit Championships.

FCCLA sent four competitors to their State convention in April. Riley Bell-Nance competed in the Charcuterie event and Gisele Muzones, Brayden Hoffinan, and Kaitlyn Saten-



stein competed in Decorated Cakes. All competitors medaled and Kaitlyn brought home the first place Most Outstanding award for her Chicago Bears cake.

Blake Salbilla qualified for the Illinois Council on the Teaching of Mathematics State Competition in April and took 45th out of 162 in Pre-Calculus.

Lastly, Lakes eSports competed on May 3 at State, coming in with a top 10 finish for Mario Kart and a top 15 finish for Rocket League.



ATHLETICS | LCHS

Josie Larson Becomes First Female Wrestling State Champion

Girls Wrestling

Since the last issue of Connections was published, Lakes wrestling, led by Coach Mark Stave, has continued to make history. On March 1st, **Josie Larson** became the first state champion female wrestler in Lakes' history! Josie's season was dominant from start to finish. She ended the season with a perfect record of 29-0. Of those 29 victories, 29 came by pinfall. Of her 29 pins, 27 of those took place in the first period, including a :41 pin in the state finals! The entire Lakes community is proud of Josie for her historic success and wish her nothing but the best at Sacred Heart University, where she will continue her academic and athletic career.



Crevier's third-place high jump finish. Makayla Williams-Brock led the way on the track, with a third-place finish in the 100 meter dash, and a fourth-place finish in the 200 meter dash!

Girls Soccer

Girls Soccer has had a tremendous season thus far. After starting the season 2-2, Coach Kevin Kullby's Eagles are in the midst of an eight-game winning streak, in which they outscored their opponents 38-3! Lakes has secured the #1 seed in the sectional, and are poised for state series success. They begin their quest for a deep run in the playoffs in the Lake Forest regional in late May.

Baseball

Baseball is having another very strong season, led by Coach Chris Hoffman. The team had a great spring break trip to Missouri and will play a total of three games at Wintrust Field, home of the Schaumburg Boomers baseball team, throughout this season. The Eagles won 12 in a row in April and are contention for the conference title with a current record of 16-5 (8-1 in the NLCC). We are looking forward to an exciting end of the regular season!

Girls Softball

Girls Softball, led by Coach Bill Hamill, is improving as the season goes on. Halfway through this year, their record is 7-8 overall (2-4 in the NLCC). The ladies have played well against some very high-quality opponents, and are looking forward to the postseason. Lakes will have home field advantage, as we are hosting regionals on 5/27, 5/28, and 5/30.

Boys Lacrosse

Boys Lacrosse is in the midst of another solid season. Coach Ryan Strach's team has a record of 7-4, and they have won five games in a row. With two weeks left in the regular season, the team is looking forward to finishing up the conference schedule and focusing on the state series. We have been fortunate to be able to add full-length junior varsity games this season, and the future continues to look bright for Lakes lacrosse.

Girls Track and Field

The team concluded the indoor season with a 4th place finish at the indoor conference meet. Led by Coach Christine Zucker, the team continues to improve as the season progresses, and are looking to peak in the state series. The team placed 7th at the Lake County Invite on 5/1, led by Julia Blasinski's first-place finish in the pole vault and Mallory

Boys Tennis

Boys Tennis has tallied a record of 6-4, and has seen success in both individual and team play. The Eagles hosted the "Spirit of the Northwest" Tournament on April 21st, where they placed 3rd as a team. On April 26th, the very competitive Lakes Invitational took place, and the team played well again. Nathan Popov at #1 singles, and the duo of Dhruv Patel and Baasim Ahktar at #1 doubles, led the way at both tournaments. Antioch will host the NLCC Tournament on 5/15 and 5/16 at the District 117 Tennis Complex, and Coach Bryan Plinske will have the team ready to go for the IHSA sectional, which will take place at the District 117 Tennis Complex on 5/23 and 5/24.

Boys Volleyball

Boys Volleyball currently has a record of 11-12 (5-2 in the NLCC). Coach Greg Bruns' team placed 7th in the Lake County Tournament at Grant over Easter weekend. The boys continue to improve each match, and are looking forward to making a solid run in the state series. Regional pairings have not yet been determined.

Boys Track and Field

Upon finishing the indoor season with a 4th place finish in conference, the Eagles had a tremendous outdoor season. The team placed 2nd in conference, as well as 2nd in sectionals. Coach Jacob Buddell's Eagles competed well at the Deerfield Invite on 5/2, tying for 6th place overall. Highlights from Deerfield include: Ammaar Ahmed (4th, 100 meter dash, 2nd 200 meter dash), Drake Callear (5th, 400 meter dash), Porter Cramond, Jimmy Shearrer, Russell Thomas, and Sahib Dharni (5th, 4 x 200 meter relay), Matthew Powley, Aiden Hauca, Reese Mock, and Rheese Rieb. Jordan Phelan led the way in the field events, with a second-place finish in the discus and a first-place finish in the shot put!

FINE ARTS | LCHS

Fine Arts Senior Standouts

Congratulations to all of our Fine Arts students for an outstanding year, but especially to these seniors! Through their dedication, artistry and leadership, they

have each made a powerful contribution to the Fine Arts Department in D117. All the best toward your future artistic endeavours.



**LAKES VISUAL ARTS
STUDENT OF THE YEAR**
Gisele Muzones



**LAKES PERFORMING ARTS
STUDENT OF THE YEAR**
Adelina Guzman



**ANTIOCH VISUAL ARTS
STUDENT OF THE YEAR**
Morgan Vo



**ANTIOCH PERFORMING ARTS
STUDENT OF THE YEAR**
Julia Johnson



JAZZ NIGHT | LCHS

Jazz Night Featured D117 Alumni Jonah Schumow, Josiah Jackson & Tony Broniec

ATHLETICS | ACHS

Sequoits Enjoy Strong Spring Athletics

Boys Wrestling

The Antioch Boys Wrestling team delivered a powerful performance this winter, sending six athletes to the IHSA Class 2A State Tournament: Owen Shea (215 lbs), Chase Nobiling (144 lbs), Gavin Hanrahan (126 lbs), Dom Garcia (150 lbs), Ben Vasquez (175 lbs), and Marcus Macias (165 lbs). In a fitting finale to Head Coach Wilbur Borrero's impactful tenure, four Sequoits earned all-state honors. Seniors Gavin Hanrahan (3rd place) and Ben Vasquez (5th place), junior Chase Nobiling (4th place), and sophomore Dom Garcia (4th place) showcased the strength and depth of the program. Congratulations to Coach Borrero and the entire wrestling program on a memorable season!



overall, has shown flashes of promise with Northern Lake County Conference victories over North Chicago and Round Lake.

Girls Track and Field

Antioch Girls Track and Field has continued its tradition of excellence this spring with standout performances across events. After capturing the NLCC Indoor Championship, the Sequoits carried that momentum into the outdoor season, securing a third-place finish at the NLCC Outdoor Meet.

Senior high jumper Sydney Walker, a County and Conference champion, remains a top contender for state qualification as she continues to dominate her event. Multiple relay squads have rewritten the record books, highlighting the depth and speed of this year's roster.

Baseball

Under the leadership of Head Coach Frank Fracek, the Antioch Baseball team is building toward a strong finish with a current record of 15-9 overall and 6-5 in the Northern Lake County Conference. The Sequoits took their talents south during spring break, returning from Missouri with three well-earned victories that helped fuel their midseason surge. Currently holding third place in the NLCC standings, Antioch enters the final stretch with two critical series remaining.

Softball

With a decisive 7-1 win over Grant on May 8, the Antioch Girls Softball team has mathematically secured the Northern Lake County Conference championship.

This year's squad is anchored by standout senior and University of Minnesota commit Claire Schuyler, who has been exceptional at shortstop. Junior second baseman Sam Hilner has consistently delivered at the plate, posing a threat to opposing pitchers all season. Freshman first baseman Tanner Ludwig has emerged as a breakout contributor, combining defensive reliability with a powerful bat. Behind the dish, senior catcher Addie Webb continues to provide steady leadership and remains the heartbeat of the team.

Boys Lacrosse

The Antioch Sequoits Boys Lacrosse team, led by Head Coach Pat Swanson, enters the final stretch of the regular season with a 7-6 record. It's been a year marked by growth and grit for a young roster navigating the highs and lows of competitive play.

Girls Soccer

With just two regular season games remaining, the Antioch Sequoits Girls Soccer team is working to hit its stride at just the right time. Head Coach Maddie Lyon's squad, currently 5-11-1

Boys Tennis

Under the direction of Head Coach Jamie D'Andrea, the Antioch Boys Tennis team is sharpening its focus as it prepares for the upcoming NLCC Conference Tournament and IHSA Sectional competition. Senior leaders Cade Ternes and Matt Behrens have been instrumental, bringing energy, leadership, and a competitive edge to the courts.

Boys Volleyball

The Antioch Sequoits Boys Volleyball team has made a powerful statement this spring, establishing itself as a rising force in Northern Illinois. Led by dynamic senior standouts Ryan Jilly, Brian Vo, and Ethan Espinoza, the Sequoits rattled off an impressive 13-game winning streak through April and early May, showcasing both skill and chemistry on the court.

Antioch's momentum was further highlighted by back-to-back tournament championships at the Elgin and Waukegan Invitational events. After a competitive battle with conference leader Grayslake Central, the Sequoits now sit tied for second in the NLCC alongside Lakes.

Boys Track and Field

The Antioch Boys Track and Field team, guided by Coaches Brian Glashagel and Chris Bailey, has turned heads this spring with an explosive combination of speed, strength, and standout performances. Senior Brandon Marks captured the Lake County Championship in the 300-meter hurdles, cementing his place among the area's elite hurdlers.

The 4x100 relay team continues to be one of the top-ranked squads in the region, bringing consistency and competitiveness to every meet. In the field events, senior high jumper Ademide Adegboyega has emerged as a major contender, routinely clearing 6 feet 5 inches and positioning himself for a state berth.

From the desk of Superintendent Borowiak

Celebrating Excellence in Education

Antioch CCSD 34 is proud to celebrate Amy Smith, a fifth-grade teacher at Oakland Elementary School, who was recently honored as the Lake County Regional Office of Education's Early Career Educator of the Year. This award recognizes educators who demonstrate excellence, innovation, and a commitment to student success early in their teaching careers.

Amy's dedication, positivity, and engaging approach to learning have made a lasting impression on her students and colleagues. Her ability to foster a classroom environment where students feel seen, supported, and empowered has earned her this well-deserved recognition, and we couldn't be more thrilled for her.

In addition to Amy's achievement, several other outstanding D34 educators and staff members were nominated for the 2025 Lake County Educator of the Year Awards. These individuals represent the heart of our schools and the commitment to excellence that defines our district:

- **Elementary Teacher:** Kim Reagle, 5th Grade Teacher, Hillcrest Elementary School
- **Middle School Teacher:** Kelly Weidemann, 6th Grade ELA Teacher, Antioch Upper Grade School
- **Diverse Learning Teacher:** Jen DeShaier, Special Education Teacher, MKM Early Learning Center
- **School Administrator:** Joe Koeune, Principal, Antioch Upper Grade School
- **School Support Personnel:** Sheila Caruso, Library Media Assistant, Oakland Elementary School

- **Educational Service Personnel:** Andrea Jordan, Paraprofessional, W.C. Petty Elementary School

We also extend special recognition to Lisa Luoma, School Psychologist, and Elisa Holtman and Kara Leitza, district Social Workers, who were selected as guests of honor for their exceptional work supporting students' mental health.

Their compassion and expertise have made a significant impact across our school community, and we are grateful for the care they provide to our students each day.

D34 is fortunate to have such an inspiring group of educators and support staff. Their dedication, creativity, and heart make a difference in the lives of students and families across our community. Congratulations to all the nominees, and especially to Amy Smith, on this well-earned recognition!

Simply put, we have an amazing team and Antioch CCSD 34!

Sincerely,
Aron Borowiak
Superintendent



AUGS Science Olympiad Team Shines at Regional Competition

The Antioch Upper Grade School Science Olympiad team put their STEM skills to the test at the regional competition, showcasing their knowledge and problem-solving abilities across a variety of scientific disciplines. Competing in events ranging from engineering challenges and cryptography to ecology and astronomy, the team demonstrated months of preparation and dedication.

Among the standout performances, Anastasia Mollison and Parker Sloan secured an impressive 4th place in the astronomy event, Reach for the Stars. Larson Fielder made a strong showing in Codebusters, ranking as the 3rd fastest competitor to crack the first of many complex ciphers.

The team also featured Tommy Amrein, Jonathan Becker, Lucas Cole, Wyatt Johnson, Amelia Lasko, Juliet Marion, Kaden Render, and Declan Sweeny, each of whom displayed exceptional effort, perseverance, and scientific expertise.

Their commitment to STEM learning and teamwork was



evident throughout the competition, and their achievements reflect the hard work and passion they have poured into their preparation.



AUGS Student Emma Egger Performs with Northshore Concert Band at Northwestern

Antioch Upper Grade School (AUGS) 8th grader Emma Egger recently had the incredible opportunity to perform with the Northshore Concert Band as part of the Lifetime of Music concert. Held at Pick-Staiger Concert Hall on the campus of Northwestern University, this prestigious event celebrates the dedication of young musicians and highlights the lifelong joy of making music.

The Lifetime of Music concert is a unique program that connects young musicians with experienced performers, granting them access to extraordinary performance opportunities beyond the classroom. Students who participate are introduced to outstanding wind-band repertoire and gain exposure to the various ways they can continue their musical journey beyond middle school, regardless of whether they choose to pursue music professionally.

The Northshore Concert Band, a highly respected ensemble with a rich history of musical excellence, provides a platform for students like Emma to showcase their talents in a professional setting. Pick-Staiger Concert Hall, located on Northwestern University's Evanston campus, is well known for its outstanding acoustics and has hosted countless performances by renowned musicians.

Emma's selection for this prestigious event is a testament to her hard work, dedication, and passion for music. AUGS and the entire school community are incredibly proud of her achievement. Congratulations, Emma, on this remarkable accomplishment!



Storytime Sparks Kindergarten Excitement at MKM Early Learning Center

Kindergarten is just around the corner, and thanks to a special visit from our elementary school principals, the future is looking bright for our Mary Kay McNeill Early Learning Center students!

Mrs. Gerritsen from W.C. Petty, Mrs. Burns from Oakland, and Mrs. Johnson from Hillcrest Elementary School recently stopped by to read to the kindergarten-bound students who will be entering their schools next year. This thoughtful visit was all about helping our youngest learners feel excited, comfortable, and confident as they prepare for the big transition to elementary school.

Each principal read a heartwarming and engaging story all about starting kindergarten that had students giggling, listening closely, and imagining the fun adventures that lie ahead. This joyful and meaningful experience helped bring the future into focus, as the principals shared slideshows filled with real-life photos of their schools, including glimpses of the kindergarten classrooms, cafeterias, playgrounds, gyms, and even the school mascots! Students lit up with curiosity as they asked questions, pointed at pictures, and imagined themselves walking through the hallways of their new schools.

By meeting the friendly faces of their future principals, students were able to start forming connections and feel welcomed before even stepping through the school doors in the fall.

With new friendships forming and imaginations soaring, our future kindergarteners are more ready than ever to begin their next chapter!



Oakland's 'Girls Who Code' Club Empowers Future Tech Leader

Seventeen fourth and fifth grade students at Oakland Elementary School are taking a bold step into the world of technology as part of the new Girls Who Code club, an exciting, nationwide initiative dedicated to closing the gender gap in tech.

Sponsored by fourth grade teacher Mrs. Newman and Instructional Coach Mr. Butler, students meet weekly to learn the foundations of computer science and coding. Through hands-on projects and engaging activities, students are gaining skills that will help them thrive in a digital world.

Girls Who Code is a free program that provides more than just access to coding education. Every participant receives a free t-shirt, notebook, and stickers, helping to foster a sense of community and pride in their shared mission. The club's foundation is built on the national organization's mission to inspire, educate, and equip girls with the computing skills needed to pursue 21st century opportunities. With a vision of achieving gender parity in computing and tech-

nology sectors, Girls Who Code is building a future where today's students become tomorrow's innovators.

Oakland's participants are already seeing the impact. "Girls Who Code makes coding fun, the coding may be the best part of the entire day," shared fourth grader Katie Fodor. "I love the actual coding part, teaching us about technology. I look forward to Girls Who Code every Thursday just for coding. It helps in more than just computer programmers because you need to code rockets, cars, buses, GPS, gaming consoles, and basic electronics everyone knows! It will help me in my job making games for YouTube, fun, and making games. Thank you for Girls Who Code and thank you for reading!"

With supportive mentors and a powerful curriculum, the Girls Who Code Club at Oakland is more than an after-school activity, it's a launching pad for creativity, collaboration, and confidence. And as these Eagles learn to code, they're also learning that the sky is truly the limit.

AUGS Students Honored for Excellence by Illinois Principals Association

Antioch Upper Grade School students, **Ellis Platzbecker** and **Ben Blau**, were recognized by the Illinois Principals Association for their outstanding achievements in school and their contributions to the community.

Ellis Platzbecker was selected for her academic excellence and her active involvement in school activities, including the Scholastic Bowl and National Junior Honor Society. A dedicated student and athlete, Ellis also competes on the Hastings Lake Stingrays swim team, demonstrating perseverance and leadership both in and out of the classroom.

Ben Blau earned recognition for his commitment to

service and strong character. In addition to being an honor student and NJHS member, Ben is actively involved in his church and youth group, and devotes time to creating comfort items for individuals in hospice care, showcasing a remarkable spirit of compassion.

These two students exemplify the values of Antioch Upper Grade School, and their accomplishments serve as an inspiration to their peers and community.



Learning Together: Student Partnerships Thrive at W.C. Petty Elementary

At W.C. Petty Elementary School leadership and learning go hand in hand, and that spirit is on full display through a growing partnership between fifth and first grade students that's making a meaningful impact.

Since February, a group of fifth grade student leaders has been volunteering their time each Friday during WIN (What I Need) time to support younger students in Dr. Walshire's first grade classroom. Whether working one-on-one or in small groups, these fifth graders assist with specific learning skills, offering both academic support and positive peer connections.

The program has quickly become a highlight of the week for the first graders, who eagerly await the chance to work with their older peers. For the fifth grade volunteers, the experience has provided a powerful opportunity to develop empathy, patience, and leadership.



What makes this partnership so special is the shared sense of community it fosters. The older students serve as role models, encouraging, kind, and invested in the success of their younger schoolmates, while the first graders benefit from the extra attention and motivation that comes with peer support.

This initiative is just one example of the remarkable community of learners at W.C. Petty, where students are empowered to grow not only as individuals but also as contributors to the success of others. It's a partnership built on trust, respect, and the belief that we're all better when we learn together.



Spring Calendar of Events

MAY

- 14** Cadet and Concert Orchestra Concert | 6:30 PM @ AUGS
- 15** Intermediate Orchestra Concert | 6:30 PM @ AUGS
- 19** Petty Bobcat Boosters Meeting | 6:15-7:30 PM @ W.C. Petty
- 20** Board of Education Meeting | 6:30 PM @ W.C. Petty
- 24-26** 8th Grade Washington D.C. Trip
- 26** No School - Memorial Day
- 28** AUGS 8th Grade Graduation | 6-8 PM @ D117 Fieldhouse
- 30** Last Day of School

JUNE

- 3** Committee of the Whole Meeting | 6:30 PM @ AUGS
- 3-July 3** Kindergarten Countdown Camp | 8 AM - 12 PM @ Hillcrest
- 3-July 3** Extended School Year | 8 AM - 12 PM @ Hillcrest
- 17** Board of Education Meeting | 6:30 PM @ Hillcrest
- 19** District Closed: Juneteenth

JULY

- 4** District Closed: Independence Day
- 15** Board of Education Meeting | 6:30 PM @ W.C. Petty

AUGUST

- 3-7** 6th Grade Warrior Academy | 8:30-11:30 AM @ AUGS
- 4** Kindergarten Screenings | 12 - 8 PM @ Hillcrest, Oakland, and W.C. Petty
- 5** Kindergarten Screenings | 8 AM - 4 PM @ Hillcrest, Oakland, and W.C. Petty
- 5** Popsicles with the Principal | 4:30 - 5:30 PM @ Hillcrest, Oakland, and W.C. Petty
- 12** Board of Education Meeting | 6:30 PM @ AUGS
- 18** Staff Inservice Day
- 19** Staff Inservice Day
- 19** AUGS Meet & Greet | 3:00-4:30 PM @ AUGS
- 19** ELC Meet & Greet | 4:00-5:30 PM @ ELC
- 19** K-5 Meet & Greet | 5:00-6:30 PM @ Hillcrest, Oakland, and W.C. Petty
- 20** First Day of School

ANTIOCH CCSD 34

CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

2025 - 2026

Mark Your Calendar!

| | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|---|
| AUG 20 First Day of School | SEPT 1 NO SCHOOL Labor Day | OCT 10 NO SCHOOL Staff Inservice Day | OCT 13 NO SCHOOL Indigenous Peoples' Day | NOV 18/20 Student/Family Conferences |
| NOV 24-28 NO SCHOOL Fall Break | DEC 22-JAN 2 NO SCHOOL Winter Break | JAN 19 NO SCHOOL MLK Day | FEB 13 NO SCHOOL Staff Inservice Day | FEB 16 NO SCHOOL Presidents' Day |
| MAR 23-27 NO SCHOOL Spring Break | APRIL 3 NO SCHOOL Board Holiday | MAY 25 NO SCHOOL Memorial Day | MAY 28 Last Day of School <small>(if an emergency delay the year)</small> |  |



Thank You Ms. Christophersen

After 16 years of service, Laurie Christophersen leaves her post as Emmons School District Board of Education president. Ms. Christophersen has not only witnessed her grandchildren's growth through the Emmons School District but has also been a participant in the evolution of the district through this period of time. Her dedication to serving the students and the broader community of Emmons has been unwavering. Here, she passes on some words of wisdom and rich institutional knowledge from her tenure on the board.

What historical changes have you witnessed in Emmons history over the past 16 years?

- The creation of a full day Kindergarten.
- Attaining and maintaining financial stability with state recognition.
- Installation of school wide air conditioning systems, providing our students a more comfortable environment for learning.
- The addition of the Ron Clark House System for students.
- Implementing board governance standards and achieving successive Board Governance Awards from Illinois Association of School Boards.
- Creation of Preschool for All program, providing opportunity for early education of young children.

What advice would you give a citizen that is considering running for a school board position?

Serving on the school board is an excellent way to connect with your community and students through this civic

engagement. It requires a good amount of time and the willingness to work as a team member, be open minded to listen to other perspectives, and have the ability to engage in discussions concluding with a group consensus. It is important to take advantage of all the resources and training for board member development. And always be able to answer:

"Do we have a policy on this topic?"



What are you most proud of from your years of service at Emmons School District?

Watching students grow from Kindergarten through Middle School by providing the means for the most important end — a well rounded student. I was always proud to sign diplomas and shake hands at the graduation ceremony.

What have you learned about civic leadership from serving on the Board of Education?

Whether large or small school district like Emmons, has the same operational requirements. The board is responsible for seeing that the district is run by highly skilled professionals. A good board/superintendent relationship is pivotal to achieving and maintaining a high performing school.

What do you hope to see as the future of Emmons School District?

Moving forward, I hope the board continues to follow good board governance practices in order for the district to continue its excellence. Essentially, I hope the board values the students and community with a strong belief in public education and educational success.

Emmons Students Make History with First-Ever School Musical

For the first time in Emmons School history, students took the stage to perform a full-scale musical, delighting audiences with a vibrant and heartwarming production of Seussical Jr from Musical Theater International. The show, a beloved adaptation of Dr. Seuss's whimsical stories, featured a cast of 25 students from grades 3rd through 8th, all of whom dedicated months of preparation and hard work to bring the characters and world of Dr. Seuss to life.

Under the direction of two passionate and talented Emmons educators, Sara Hardin and Megan Bering, students in the Emmons Drama Club transformed the school stage into a colorful, musical celebration of imagination and teamwork. With catchy songs, playful choreography, and spirited

performances, the production took the audience on a magical journey through

the Seussiverse, where elephants fly, cats wear hats, and even the smallest voice can make a difference.

The debut of Seussical Jr. marks a milestone for the Emmons School community, highlighting a growing commitment to the arts and providing students with an opportunity to express themselves in new and meaningful ways. The success of the performance has already sparked excitement for future productions, with many calling it the beginning of a new Emmons tradition.





PRESCHOOL FOR ALL PROGRAM

Play-Based Learning for Early Success

Lake Villa District 41 is proud to offer the Preschool For All (PFA) program, a play-based early childhood program designed to support the growth and development of children ages 3-5. Using the Creative Curriculum, our experienced teachers provide engaging, hands-on learning experiences that encourage exploration, problem-solving, and collaboration. The program focuses on key developmental areas such as early literacy, math, social-emotional skills, and motor

development, all in a nurturing and supportive environment.

To determine eligibility, children must participate in a free developmental screening. Screenings are held monthly and assess areas such as language, motor skills, and social-emotional development. Placement in the program is based on state eligibility criteria, ensuring children who would benefit most receive high-quality early education at no cost to families.

LAKE VILLA DISTRICT 41'S BOARD OF EDUCATION

Illinois Association of School Board Governance Recognition Recipients

Lake Villa District 41 proudly announces that our Board of Education was honored with the Illinois Association of School Boards (IASB) 2024 School Board Governance Recognition. This distinction honors school boards that demonstrate exemplary governance practices in support of high-quality public education. Additionally, our individual board members have been recognized with the Illinois Association of School Board Leader Recognition.

DISTINGUISHED ANNUAL

**Michael Conway,
Kurt Hansen, Debbie Walsh**

ESTABLISHED

Ed Liberman

LEGACY

Joanne Osmond



The Antioch Public Library District's Summer Reading Program offers patrons of all ages a fun way to track their reading – with unique incentives for kids, teens, and adults. This year's theme, **"Game On!"**, focuses on classic board games and family fun, while encouraging literacy and the use of imagination. Join us at the **Kickoff Event on Saturday, May 31st between 10am-2pm** to register for the program, and enjoy some fun passive activities throughout the building including the staff sponsored, life sized board game, "LibraryLand"!

Want to sign up? Here's how!

Visit www.apld.beanstack.com to register or scan the QR code below. Once there, scroll down and click on the "Game On! Summer Reading Program" banner and register for a Beanstack account or sign in to your existing account to join the challenge. Please feel free to call or stop in to the Library if you require additional assistance with registration.

Be sure to keep track of your daily reading and earn badges all the way through July 31st. For each badge you complete, you will be awarded tickets to enter into our prize drawings.

The program is completed once you have read 32 days.



Scan the QR Code With Your Camera Phone to Register at www.apld.beanstack.com

"Find Matty!" is Back!

Pick up a reading tracker at the Library and search for Matty the Mouse in local businesses around Antioch. When you find Matty at a participating location, you will be provided a sticker to mark off the location. For every 5 locations, you will receive a badge and ticket for prize drawings!

Bookmark Art Contest

Design a bookmark using the "Game On!" theme and submit it to the Children, Teen, and Adult departments by July 1st for a chance to get your design printed and distributed by the Library! Templates available at the Library.



ANTIOCH PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT
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