

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 7
BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
February 14, 2024 – 6 p.m.
Newbury Library Media Center
APPROVED 2.28.24

PRESENT: Chair Ms. Molly Sexton Read (B), Vice-Chair Mr. Robert Jerram (NH), Ms. Deborah Bell (N), Ms. Theresa Kenneson (C), Ms. Lisa Fragale (C), Ms. Mary Duran (B), Superintendent Steven K. LePage, Director of Finance & Operations Mr. James Gaskins, High School Principal Mr. Gary Franklin, Middle School Principal Mr. Fran Amara, Student Representatives: Owen Langer.
ABSENT: Secretary/Treasurer Mr. Noel Gauthier (NH), Kim Crone (N), and Student Representative Ms. Fiona Leon.

Ms. Sexton Read requested to add 2 items to the agenda:

1. Board of Education members will be meeting in Executive Session to deliberate about the teacher termination hearing.

MOTION BY Ms. Kenneson, seconded by Mr. Jerram, to **APPROVE** the BOE to meet in Executive Session in deliberation of the teacher termination hearing, as presented: **AYE:** Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Ms. Kenneson, Ms. Duran, Ms. Fragale. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** Ms. Bell. **MOTION PASSED.**

2. Reexamine the timeline of the Superintendent's review in advance of the budget presentation.

MOTION BY Mr. Jerram, seconded by Ms. Kenneson, to **ADD** the discussion of the timeline of the Superintendent's review to this February 14, 2024 agenda, as presented: **AYE:** Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Ms. Kenneson, Ms. Bell, Ms. Duran, Ms. Fragale. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

CALL TO ORDER: Ms. Sexton Read called the Regular Board of Education meeting to order at 6:15 p.m.

PUBLIC PORTION: None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION BY Ms. Bell, seconded by Ms. Fragale, to **APPROVE** January 10, 2024 Regular Board of Education Meeting, as amended: **AYE:** Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Ms. Bell, Ms. Fragale. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** Ms. Duran, Ms. Kenneson. **MOTION PASSED.**

MOTION BY Mr. Jerram, seconded by Ms. Duran, to **APPROVE** January 31, 2024, Special Board of Education Meeting, as presented: **AYE:** Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Ms. Duran, Ms. Kenneson, Ms. Fragale. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** Ms. Bell. **MOTION PASSED.**

REPORTS

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT OWEN LANGER

Mr. Langer communicated that Maddie Topa became the leading NWR7 basketball scorer over all girls and boys with 1467 points. Ms. Topa broke the record at NWR7, which has been standing for over 28 years. Ms. Topa is only a high school junior! In school events, course selection began for freshmen, sophomores and juniors. Some new courses are the History of Rock and Roll course and the UConn EMT training course. The Model UN has a chance to participate in several conferences in participation with Lewis Mills High School and Clark University. Mr. Langer read Ms. Leon's report, due to Ms. Leon having a conflict at this meeting. Ms. Leon communicated that the swim team had a Swim-a-Thon fundraiser. The swim team swam as many laps as they could in one hour and ended up raising over \$10,000.00. This money is being donated to a past member of the team and a friend of the coach who is battling cancer. On Feb. 3rd, it was the Winter Student Council's semi-formal as well as the co-op ice hockey game in honor of Marcus Rogers. Theatre is currently rehearsing for the Mary Poppins the Musical. The choir had 5 students make All-State.

MIDDLE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL FRAN AMARA

Mr. Amara and Mr. Franklin welcomed Robin Waring, Library Media Specialist, to complete her presentation to the Board of Education.

HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL GARY FRANKLIN

Mr. Franklin and Mr. Amara welcomed Robin Waring, Library Media Specialist, to complete her presentation to the Board of Education.

Ms. Waring's Library Media Presentation is attached for a complete view of the happenings and vision of the Library Media Center. Ms. Waring began by presenting a background of herself. She then proceeded on explaining the importance of libraries. This entailed a

progression into 6 aspects of Library Media and how these 6 items are evolving the NWR7 Library Media Center. These six facets are (1) Reading Promotion, (2) Course Collaboration, (3) Research, (4) Professional Learning, (5) Building Community, and (6) Physical Space. Brief discussion followed.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

State Budget Updates: Superintendent LePage discussed briefly about the Governor's proposed midterm adjustment to the biennium approved state budget. Superintendent LePage explained that he will be testifying at the Legislative Office Building tomorrow, February 15, 2024. Superintendent LePage will be joined with Mr. O'Brien, the Department Chair and Teacher of the NWR7 Agricultural Education team. Mr. O'Brien will also be taking several student officers to the Legislative Office Building. All will attend the Education Committee press conference at 1:15 p.m., and Superintendent LePage will testify before the Legislative Appropriations Committee later in the day. Superintendent LePage registered and prepared his statement in coordination with the School Finance Project legal team. Superintendent LePage stressed that he hopes his testimony adequately conveys NWR7's concerns and needs, and urges the legislature to enact and continue implementing HB 5003. HB5003 implemented a number of positive changes to education funding, and the Governor's proposed adjustments undo many of the intentions for funding in this bill.

Educator Diversity Plan: Superintendent LePage conveyed that the Educator Diversity Plan Requirements being developed per legislative requirements, must be approved and submitted by March 15, 2024. Superintendent LePage will share the plan when completed and present it at the March Board of Education meeting for approval.

Reduction of Food Waste in the NWR7: Superintendent LePage communicated that he had a meeting with Kristin LaMesa-Hamzy, the Cafeteria Manager, Mr. Andrew O'Brien and Barbara Domack from Ag Ed to discuss options in reducing the food waste in the cafeteria. The meeting discussed possible ways of composting, animal feed, donation to shelters, etc. Superintendent LePage will keep the BOE posted on the progress. Brief discussion followed.

DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND OPERATIONS

2024-2025 Budget: The budget presentation will be presented by Superintendent LePage on February 28, 2024. Mr. Gaskins explained it has been a challenging budget process due to the unanticipated special education outplacements, the medical renewal which is much higher this year, and most of all, the State Legislature's influxes of budgets, and underfunding of budgets are making this process difficult.

Gym Floor Update: The gym floor in the auxiliary gym needs some attention. NWR7 had repairs completed on this floor by going with the most "cost-effective" process to repair the flooring issues, within the insurance company's advice. The repairs basically did not fix the entire issue, so Mr. Gaskins is in the process of setting up a meeting with the contractor, the insurance company, Mr. Keith Boyle and Superintendent LePage. Brief discussion followed.

Transportation Contracts: 2025 is the last year of the transportation contracts. Mr. Gaskins expressed through communication with other school districts, that the increases for negotiations and bidding for the transportation contracts are much higher than anticipated. Some factors for this increase are personnel and driver pressure, labor costs, and fuel.

Security Grants: Mr. Gaskins is working on the security grants mentioned previously at BOE meetings. Mr. Gaskins explained how there were three security grants in the past, and NWR7 was only awarded one grant. He expressed that they are reviewing all grants again, trying to improve on what was submitted in the past. The applications for these grants will be submitted when the window opens for submission.

OLD BUSINESS

Updates: None

BOE Goals: No Updates

NEW BUSINESS

Timeline of Review of the Superintendent: Transparency of the Superintendent's review and salary line item was adopted by the BOE approximately 4-5 years ago to complete each January, so the transparency of the Superintendent's salary is current in the budget process. The BOE, this year, will complete the review later in the year, because Superintendent LePage is a new Superintendent to NWR7. For this 2023-2024, the Superintendent's review will be thoroughly discussed by the BOE in late April 2024. Brief discussion followed.

MOTION to move into **EXECUTIVE SESSION** to discuss the teacher termination hearing. Ms. Bell exited the meeting at 7:12 p.m. Superintendent LePage and Mr. Gaskins exited the meeting at 7:12 p.m.

MOTION BY Mr. Jerram, seconded by Ms. Kenneson, to **MOVE** the BOE into **EXECUTIVE SESSION** in deliberation of the teacher termination hearing, as presented: **AYE:** Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Ms. Kenneson, Ms. Duran, Ms. Fragale. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

The Board entered into **EXECUTIVE SESSION** at 7:13 p.m.

The Board exited **EXECUTIVE SESSION** at 7:30 p.m.

MOTION by Ms. Fragale, seconded by Mr. Jerram, to **ADJOURN** from **EXECUTIVE SESSION** without taking action, as presented. **AYE:** Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Ms. Kenneson, Ms. Duran, Ms. Fragale. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

CORRESPONDENCE

None

OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC TO SPEAK ON AGENDA ITEMS

None

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Ms. Fragale, seconded by Mr. Jerram, to **ADJOURN** at 7:30 p.m. **AYE:** Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Ms. Kenneson, Ms. Duran, and Ms. Fragale. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

The next regularly scheduled BOE Meeting will be Wednesday, February 28, 2024, which entails the 2024-2025 Budget Presentation.

Respectfully submitted,
Diane Barrett
Board Clerk


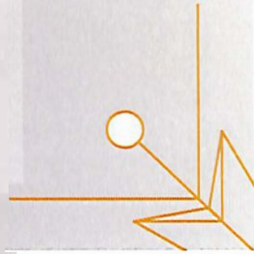
Northwestern LMC

*Building a student-centered collaborative
hub for the NWR7 Community*



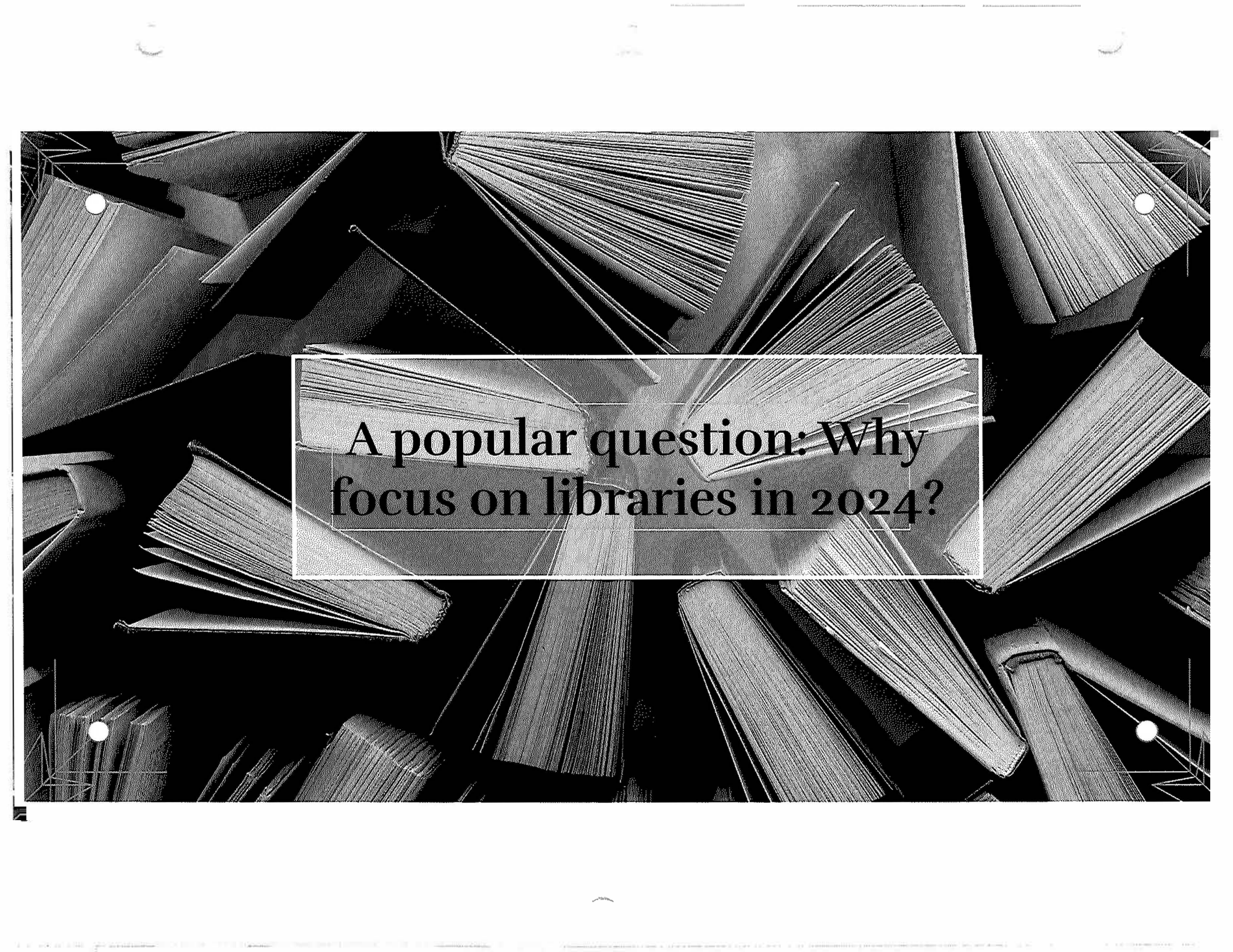


A little about myself:

- ★ Veteran Teacher: 20 years of classroom experience
 - ★ Department Chair: 12 years of educational leadership experience
 - ★ History Education, Administration, and Library Media Specialist Certification
 - ★ The skills and dispositions to take the Northwestern LMC to the next level
 - ★ **Vested Interest: A local community member & parent**
- 
- 

A little about myself:

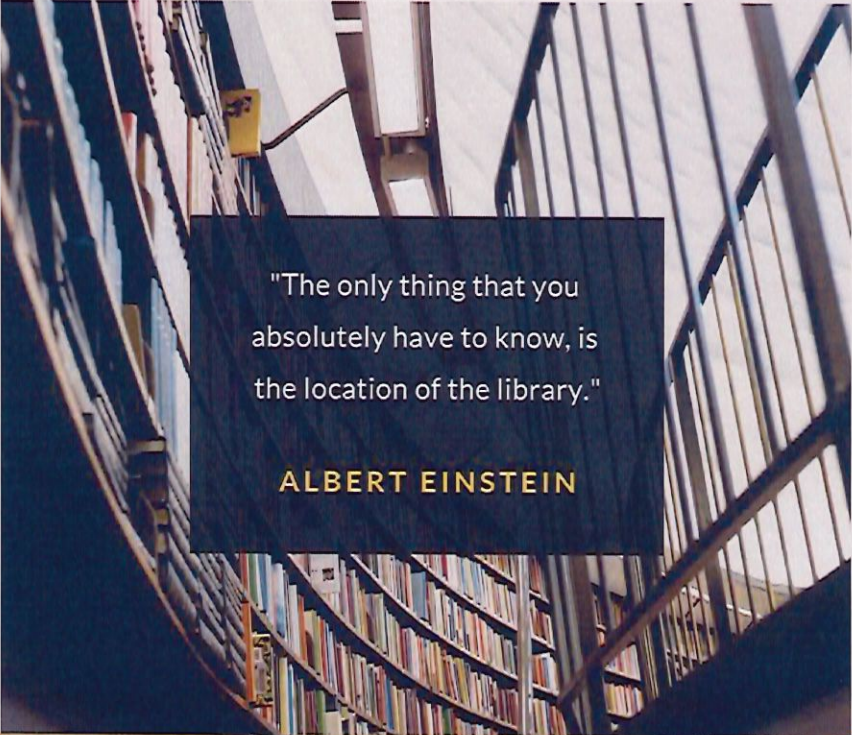




A popular question: Why
focus on libraries in 2024?




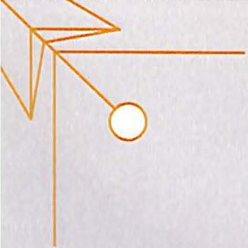
The Importance of Libraries



"The only thing that you
absolutely have to know, is
the location of the library."

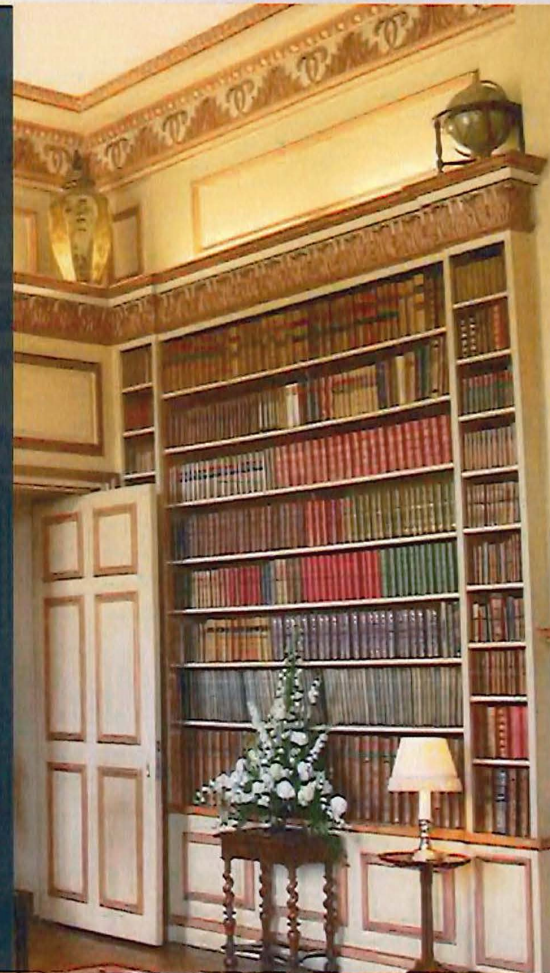
ALBERT EINSTEIN

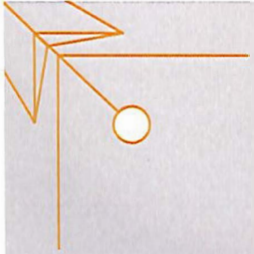




TO ASK WHY WE NEED
LIBRARIES AT ALL, WHEN
THERE IS SO MUCH
INFORMATION
AVAILABLE ELSEWHERE,
IS ABOUT AS SENSIBLE
AS ASKING IF
ROADMAPS ARE
NECESSARY NOW THAT
THERE ARE SO VERY
MANY ROADS.

—
Jon Bing



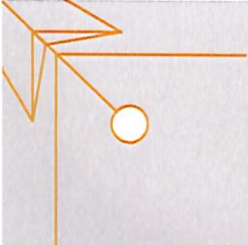


Young People ARE Reading!



83%





A Strong LMC = Increase in Student Learning

“Across the United States, research has shown that students in schools with good school libraries learn more, get better grades, and score higher on standardized test scores than their peers in schools without libraries. From Alaska to North Carolina, more than 60 studies have shown clear evidence of this connection between student achievement and the presence of school libraries with qualified school library media specialists” (NCLIS, US National Commission on Libraries and Information Science)

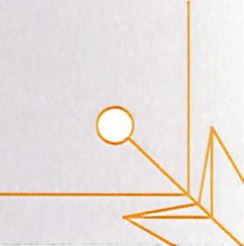





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**Reading
Promotion**

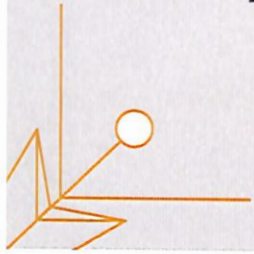
02

**Course
Collaboration**

03

Research

04




**Professional
Learning**

05

**Building
Community**

06

**Physical
Space**





01

Reading Promotion

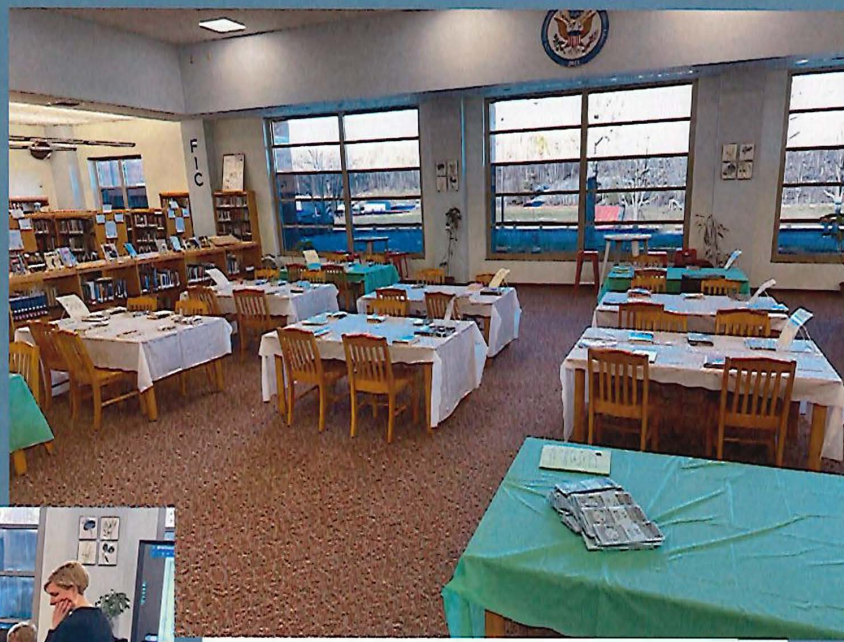
Book Tastings!



Seasonal, For Fun,
Tastings!

LINKS
(Learning
Independence
New
Knowledge &
Skills)
Students=
Party
Planners!

Book Tastings!



Course Specific
Book Tastings-
Genre Exploration,
Specific Topics etc.

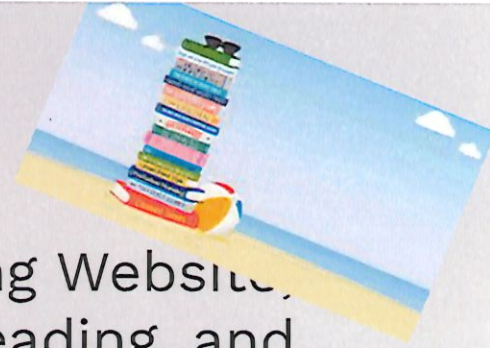


Interactive Displays/Genre Displays



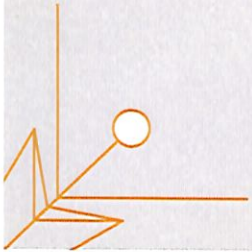


Summer Reading



- ★ *New for Summer 2024-* A Full Summer Reading Website, Reading Incentives, Course Recommended Reading, and promotion of the Governor's Challenge Lists
- ★ Speaking with all incoming 7th Graders to ensure they're knowledgeable about NWR7 Summer Reading.
- ★ Partnering with local libraries to provide resources and information to our students during the summer months

Our Goal- Prevent the Summer Slide, Partner with Parents/Families to provide summer reading suggestions, & encourage course specific interests and helpful pre-reading.

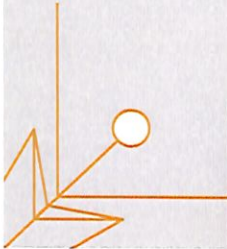




Careful Curation

- ★ Hundreds of new titles on the shelves
- ★ **Student Requests- Quickly purchased and in hands in a matter of days**
- ★ **Teacher Requests- Quickly purchased and in hands in a matter of days**
- ★ 7-12 titles are based on School Library Journal Reviews, Kirkus Reviews, Booklist, and Common Sense Media.

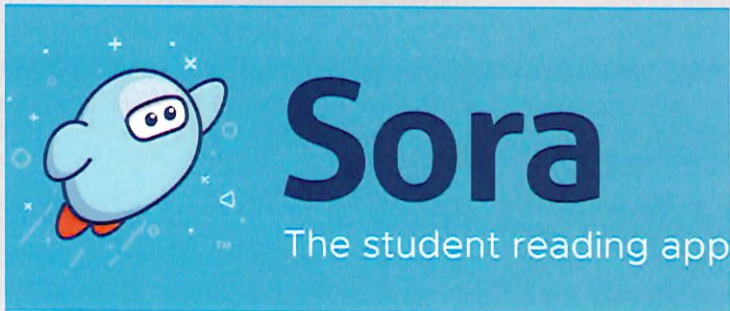
Our Goal- A representative collection that is truly in tune with our school community's needs and wants





eBooks/Audio Books

- ★ Enhancing Sora for students and staff
- ★ Purchasing popular titles or course specific titles in multiple reading formats
- ★ Finding audio services, accessible textbooks, companion texts to support classroom learning.




Our Goal- A representative collection that is truly in tune with our school community's needs and wants





Why Genrefication?

- ★ Finding books is easier, for everyone. ...
- ★ Genrefication increases browsing satisfaction. ...
- ★ Genrefication is helpful for Reluctant Readers, ESL Learners, and Neurodiverse learners...
- ★ Genrefication increases circulation.



Our Goal- Full Genrefication (organize by topic) of our fiction section to enhance the patron experience and allow students to take stronger ownership of their interests



02

Course Collaboration

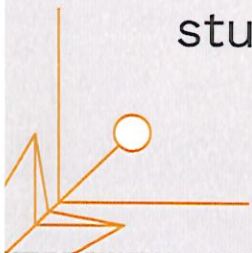


Multidisciplinary Learning Experiences

- ★ **African American/Black & Puerto Rican/Latin American Studies Course-** Work with the LMS to research project specific topics like our Black History Month Display.
- ★ **Art Department-** Installation of art projects for the enjoyment of patrons as well as displays for our art students.



Our Goal- Each month select a course to run an exhibit in the LMC incorporating research skills, presentation skills, and curation of relevant sources.





Multidisciplinary Learning Experiences

- ★ **Film Studio-** Brand new video recording studio for documentaries, student projects, etc.

Our Goal- Fully operational newsroom, AV Studio open to students and classes

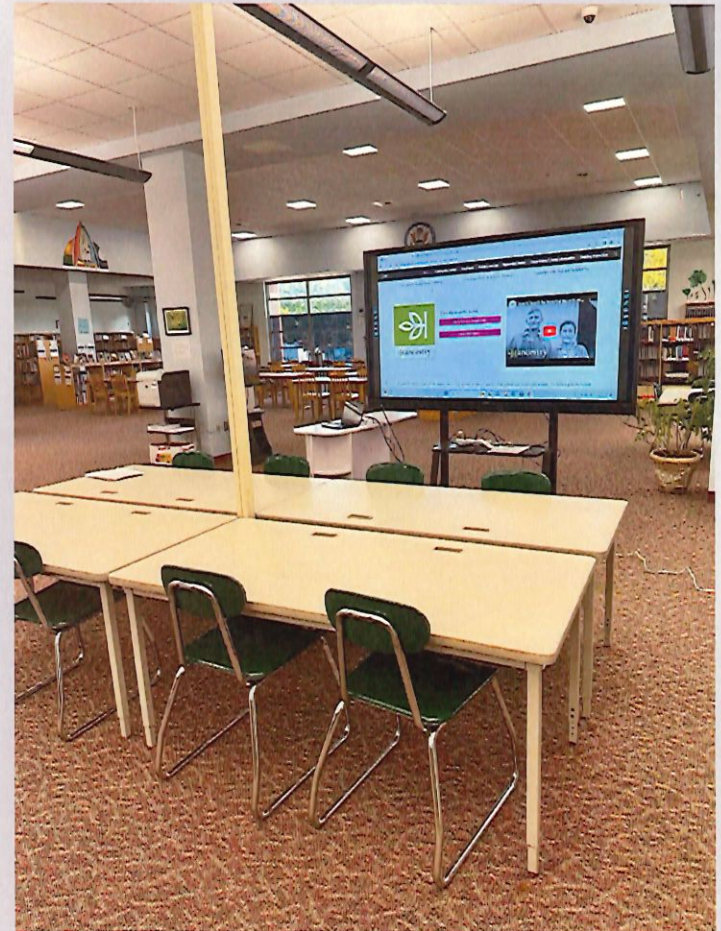
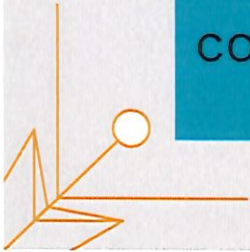




Multidisciplinary Learning Experiences

- ★ **Ancestry.Com:** Foreign Language Classes and ELA Classes are using ancestry to explore identity and heritage.

Our Goal- Develop a Genealogy Club dedicated to oral history projects, family trees, and community history.





Multidisciplinary Learning Experiences

- ★ **Mobile Library-** bringing a curated selection of books to classrooms to support student learning. I bring the check out equipment, books, and summaries, to ensure students end up with the most relevant book for them.

Our Goal- If they won't come our way, we will bring books to classrooms for our educators and students. This enhances our partnership with the classroom teacher.



Research

03

Teach Research Classes: Ag Ed, ELA, Social Studies, & MORE!

- ★ Tailor **presentations for all departments** in topic selection, database searching, outlining, Noodletools, and citations
- ★ Create presentations with **accessibility** for all students as a top priority
- ★ Work with students in the LMC on **research skills, finding sources, and citing them**
- ★ Ensure the **research tutorials** are provided to each student



Teach Research Classes: Ag Ed, ELA, Social Studies

- ★ **Beyond the Databases-** Although we pay for reliable resources, we do teach students to determine the credibility of internet sources. Providing students with outside resources, lateral reading lessons & more!





Maintaining Reliable Databases

- ★ We provide students with an awesome selection of databases and resources managed and accessed through the LMC & our brand new website



Our goal= teacher professional training to encourage **all disciplines** to use the reliability of database research for students!



Professional Learning

04

Colleague Support & Professional Learning

- ★ Ancestry.com **Training Seminars**- Taught by Ben Crusson of Beardsley Library to train staff and students alike
- ★ A **useable and accessible website** for all students/staff
- ★ Purchasing resources **immediately** for students and staff
- ★ **Grading** works cited pages for projects/papers



Our Goal- AI Training/Staff website, training sessions for databases & research tools, educator tools/support.

Building Community

05



A Community Hub

- ★ Capstone Partnership
- ★ NHS Help Desk
- ★ Highlander Transition Academy Partnership (Vocational Training)
- ★ LINKS Program Partnerships
- ★ Student Volunteers



Our Goal- Author talks, public speaking presentations, art displays, interactive activities, etc.

Physical Space

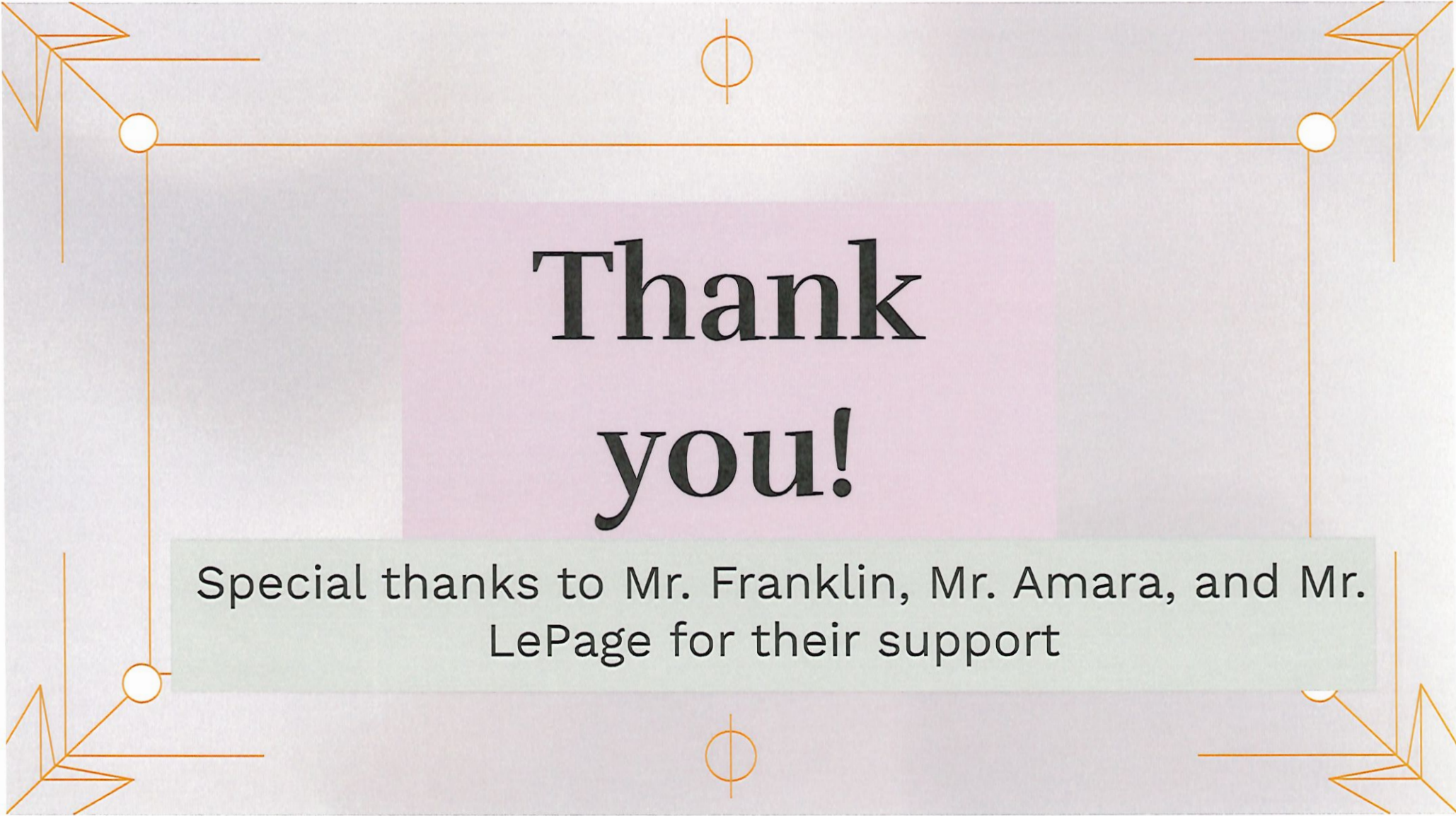
06

An inviting space for all...



★ Donations & grant funding have drastically enhanced the physical space!

Our Goal- Continue working on the space, incorporating comfortable and effective collaborative seatings as well as updated chairs.



Thank you!

Special thanks to Mr. Franklin, Mr. Amara, and Mr.
LePage for their support