July 2023

LCSC Communicator

Regional News, Views, and Information

LAKES COUNTRY Service Cooperative
Together we achieve

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

MOORHEAD HIGH SCHOOL CAREER ACADEMY PREPARING STUDENTS FOR CAREERS OF THE FUTURE

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

CPC ANNOUNCES NEW PARTNERSHIP WITH MASA

SELF DEVELOPMENT DAY FOR WOMEN IN EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP WITH SWEL

PRACTICAL LEADERSHIP BUILDING ENGAGED TEAMS WITH LISA NEGSTAD

STORM DRAIN STENCILING PROJECT AIMS TO REDUCE WATER POLLUTION

ULEN-HITTERDAL PUBLIC SCHOOL NAMES NEW DEAN OF STUDENTS

WEST CENTRAL MINNESOTA COMMUNITIES ACTION HEAD START

THE YOUTHS OF PELICAN RAPIDS

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EDUCATION-
Electronic Edition
www.lcsc.org



continued on next page...

PREPARING STUDENTS FOR THE CAREERS OF THE FUTURE

Have you driven in or out of Moorhead via Interstate 94 in the past three years? If yes, you may have noticed that the former SAMS Club building has undergone a remarkable transformation. The once-large retail space now boasts a bold orange M and serves as the home of the Moorhead Career Academy.

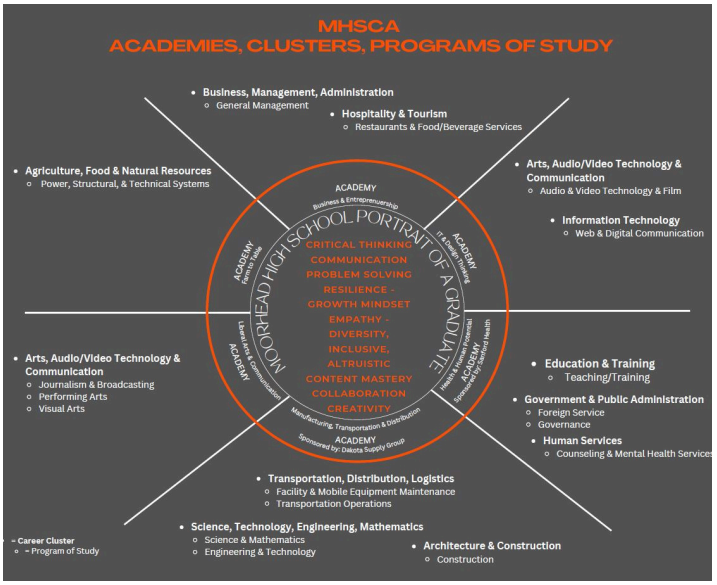
The Principal of Moorhead High School, Josh Haag, shared that the project is a crucial aspect of the District's strategy to accommodate the increasing number of students in their district. Haag has been a resident and professional in Moorhead for over a decade.

Source: Josh Haag, principal, Moorhead Highschool, Tom Dryburgh, Moorhead High School Career Academy Community Outreach Coordinator, ISD152.org
Author: Mary Phillipe, LCSC's Communications Generalist

Upon assuming the role of high school principal, the school had close to 1,400 students. Presently, 500 students are enrolled in Kindergarten, and the class of 2024 has 450 students projected to graduate. With an anticipated graduating class of nearly 600 students in 2025, Moorhead Public Schools is taking steps to prepare for future enrollment growth. The Career Academy has been in operation since the fall of 2021, and a new high school is currently under construction, with a plan to open the mid-school year in 2023-24. As they considered the future of the school district, during their decision-making process, the planning team visited Bismarck to tour their career academy. After reflecting on their experience during the ride back, they decided that building an academy for their students was necessary.

What is the most common statement Principal Haag hears from parents?

"I wish I could have taken this class in high school."



With a comprehensive, expansive list of program options, the Career Academy is helping to shape the future of education. The Career Academy offers a variety of study programs such as Business & Entrepreneurship, Information Technology & Design Thinking, Health & Human Potential, Manufacturing, Transportation & Distribution, Liberal Arts & Communications, and Farm to Table. The Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) program in Health Sciences has experienced rapid growth, with enrollment increasing to 95 students for the upcoming fall semester. Most recently, 60 students completed the CNA program. Healthcare providers in the area are pleased with the growing interest in Health Sciences among students, as this will help alleviate the current shortage of healthcare employees. Due to the program's significant growth, the Academy is now hiring a full-time staff member to support the Health Sciences programs.



Student Cafeteria and Commons Area

Haag stated, “When evaluating the courses they would like to offer their students, it has to pass the criteria for being a high demand, high wage, and high skill career.” Haag was also excited to share that they have returned the Agriculture and Aviation programming to the Academy. Both programs have been absent for over 30 years. “We live in an agriculture community,” said Haag. Our Academy has the opportunity to provide programming to support the needs in our region.”
During my visit to the Academy, Tom Dryburgh, the Community Outreach Coordinator for the Moorhead Career Academy, provided a tour and expressed his excitement about the programming being developed for Moorhead students. As I explored the impressive facility, I saw room after room of engaging and hands-on programming available to students. Dryburgh informed me that students are eager to attend and spend part of their time at the high school and the remainder at the Academy. They have the option to use their own transportation or utilize District transportation. The only minor inconvenience Dryburgh mentioned was the short travel time required to get to the Academy's location.
When inquiring about the future programs at the Academy, Dryburgh shared that Mechatronics will be incorporated into their curriculum. Mechatronics is a fast-growing field and an important aspect of the manufacturing industry. “Nowadays, many industries prefer using robots over manual human labor for assembly purposes,” said Dryburgh. “However, we still need people to repair the equipment and for operation.”
Located on the second floor of the building, the Area Learning Center (ALC) students now have access to art classes, a gymnasium, and additional courses previously unavailable in their former location. The center can accommodate 100-125 students during the day and 60 students during evening classes designed for employed students or those needing extra credits to graduate.



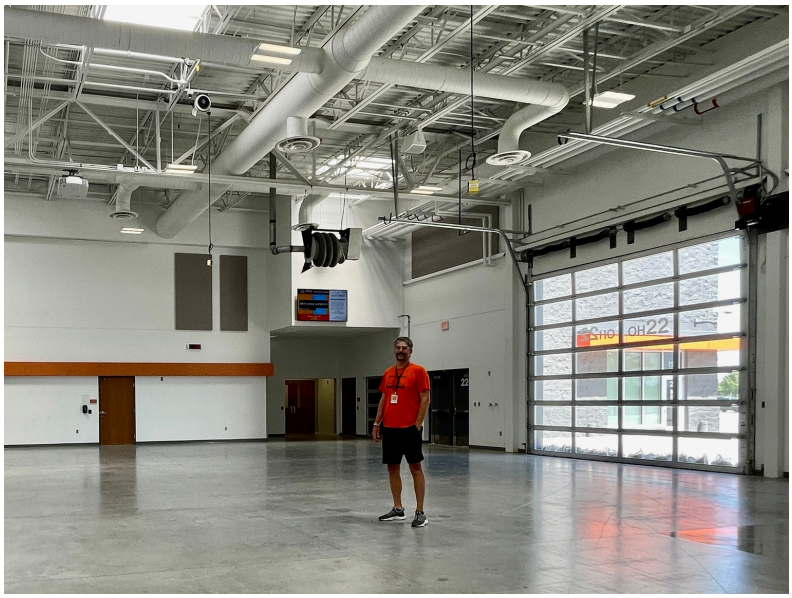




Community Outreach



As the Community Outreach Coordinator, Dryburgh dedicates much of his time to establishing strong relationships with local community partners. This involves collaborating with businesses keen on joining programming initiatives and participating in job fairs, which are organized in the large multi-purpose room at the entrance of the Academy. The design of this area includes spacious doorways, top-notch air quality control mechanisms, and ample electrical infrastructure. These features enable the seamless placement of simulators and bulky equipment, making it ideal for hosting job fairs. By offering authentic hands-on experiences, students can gain valuable insights that aid them in making informed decisions about their future careers.



Moorhead Career Academy is very focused on the future of its students and helping them discover their interests and passions. By partnering with local businesses and industry leaders, they also provide their students with real-world experiences and connections that can lead to local job opportunities and a more robust local workforce—ultimately bridging the gap between education and employment and contributing to the long-term success of both students and local employers.

Want to know more about the Moorhead High School Career Academy and its vision for the future? Visit their website at www.isd152.org or contact Tom Dryburgh, Moorhead High School Career Academy Community Outreach Coordinator, at 218.284.6544.

FROM THE

Executive Director

"Learning, Leading, and Innovating
to Achieve Vibrant, Inclusive Communities."



Jeremy Kovash
Executive Director

At Lakes Country Service Cooperative, we live by our mission: “We Advocate for Strong Communities Through Service and Leadership.” We believe that our communities are defined in many ways, not just by the city or location where we live but by communities of thought and inspiration. We believe that bringing members together who care about ALL students and ALL individuals can make us great. We believe in the strength of collaboration and the collective whole.

We are excited to welcome two new Superintendents to our region this school year. Megan Myers joins Parkers Prairie and Justin Dahlmeier moves into the leadership role in Osakis. We believe also that we can learn much from our new members and look forward to working with them as well.

We hope you enjoy this edition of The Communicator. Together We Achieve.



> “The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members.”
> *-Coretta Scott King*

COOPERATIVE PURCHASING CONNECTION
announces new partnership

Source/Author: *Jane Eastes, Executive Deputy Director, Lakes Country Service Cooperative*

Cooperative Purchasing Connection (CPC) is excited to announce a new partnership with the Minnesota Association of School Administrators as they launch the CPC Online Marketplace!

The CPC Online Marketplace offers access to a wide range of products and services, including books, office supplies, technology, facility maintenance, and transportation, allowing you to conveniently find facility and classroom-related products to meet your district purchasing needs in one place.

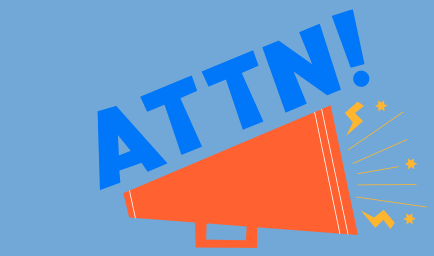
The CPC Online Marketplace will save you time by eliminating the need for time-consuming bids and multiple price quotes. You'll be able to find quickly and easily the legally compliant and competitively solicited contracts all in one place, streamlined so you can get the best value for your organization!

All CPC contracts can be found on Express, and you can place your order directly through many of the sites. Express allows you to do a general search across contracts or search for a single vendor directly, ensuring you will see the negotiated price. Best of all, Express can be integrated into your business office software such as SMART or Skyward. We recommend checking with your business office to see if your school is integrated with Express.

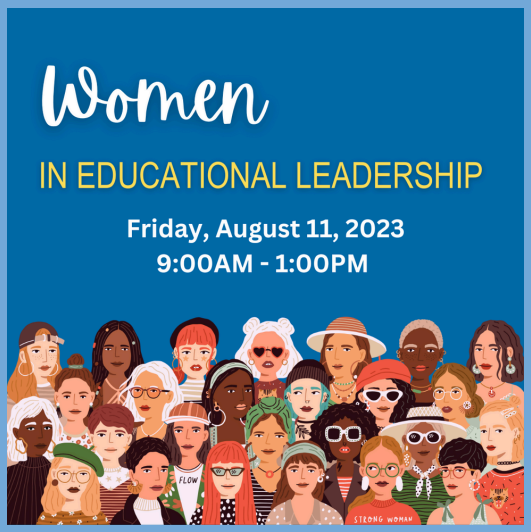
We invite you to explore our CPC Online Marketplace hosted on the MASA website at www.mnasa.org/cpc-online-marketplace. To access the full features of the online marketplace, you must log into your CPC Express Online Marketplace account.

For a quick tour or assistance logging in, please contact Jerome at jevans@cooperativepurchasing.org, or Julia, at jdangerfield@cooperativepurchasing.org, or call 1-888-739-3289





ALL WOMEN IN EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP POSITIONS!



Lakes Country Service Cooperative is hosting a day of self-development for you. Join us for a chance to connect, share ideas, learn, and grow together. The event will begin with SWEL (Society of Women Educational Leaders), followed by a light lunch, networking, and a chance to identify future connections. We are excited to be hosting this event and would be delighted to see you there!

Date: Friday, August 11, 2023
Time: 9 AM - 1 PM
Location: Lakes Country Service Cooperative
1001 East Mount Faith
Fergus Falls, MN 56537
Registration Fee: $25





Join us for an in-person Practical Leadership training session, led by professional trainer Lisa Negstad, and you'll learn about various tools to "Build Engaged Teams." This training event is organized by Lakes Country Service Cooperative in partnership with Sourcewell and the Association of Minnesota Counties.

In today's complex and uncertain work environments, high-functioning teams are essential. To achieve effective teamwork and collaboration, it's important to cultivate these skills and give them regular attention. Our workshop focuses on developing shared leadership among team members and provides concrete tools for improving collaboration.

A LEGENCE Company

PLANNING SIMPLIFIED

When it comes to planning, we know it's challenging to look ahead 10, five, or even two years. Our team is passionate about making planning simple and helping people like you plan for the future.

To help with this challenge, ICS has developed a new planning tool called Capital Improvement Planning 360. This comprehensive tool, in close collaboration with our team, helps provide our clients with accurate, comprehensive, and simplified plans for capital improvement and deferred maintenance needs. Our team wants to make planning easy, efficient, and accurate.



FOR MORE INFORMATION, CHECK OUT THIS LINK OR REACH OUT TO KAREN KLEIN, COOPERATIVE ACCOUNTS MANAGER, AT KAREN.KLEIN@ICS-BUILDS.COM OR 651-728-1880.

STORM DRAIN STENCILING PROJECT AIMS TO REDUCE WATER POLLUTION

Once the snowy streets gave way to melting and concrete in mid-May, National Honor Society (NHS) students Sloanne Petersen and Abigail Strege put their talents to work stenciling "SAVE THE LAKE" near storm drain inlets around Lake Alice. This project is designed to warn residents that dumping in storm drains pollutes lakes, rivers, bays, and streams. The City of Fergus Falls sponsored this project to reduce pollution caused by snow melting and rain as it moves over and through the ground, picking up pollutants along the way (nonpoint source pollutants).

Much pollution in area streams and lakes comes from ordinary, everyday materials, like household chemicals, fertilizers, pesticides, gasoline, used motor oil, antifreeze, and litter. These substances are washed by rainwater from our streets, yards, driveways, and parking lots into storm drain inlets. Contrary to what many people think, these storm drains don't lead to wastewater treatment plants. They carry untreated stormwater directly into area lakes and streams.



The stenciled message **SAVE THE LAKE** reminds citizens not to dump waste into storm sewers or contribute more pollutants to ordinary stormwater runoff by littering, over-fertilizing, or sweeping yard debris into the street. "Every citizen has a role in preventing pollution," said Matt Harrington, Municipal Storm Water Manager for the City of Fergus Falls. "Storm drain stenciling has been used successfully to reduce nonpoint source pollution. These projects work because they get government, volunteer groups, and businesses working together to solve a common problem."

Deliberate dumping of hazardous materials into storm sewers makes the pollution problem worse. Motor oil is often dumped down storm drains, yet just one quart can ruin the quality of 250,000 gallons of water. Oil and other hazardous substances should be recycled; dumping them is illegal in Fergus Falls.

Thank you to SCR for donating the stencils and to Abigail and Sloanne for selecting this project as part of their National Honor Society (NHS) volunteer work. Elizabeth Abrahams is the high school advisor for NHS.

Source/Author: *Jean Bowman, Communications Manager, City of Fergus Falls*



ULEN-HITTERDAL PUBLIC SCHOOLS
NAMES NEW DEAN OF STUDENTS

Source/Author: *Therese Vogel - Ulen-Hitterdal Public School*

TED CRITCHLEY

Ulen-Hitterdal (UH) School recently announced that Ted Critchley would become the new Dean of Students starting on July 1st. He comes to UH with a depth of educational experience.

After graduating in 1994 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Social Science from the College of St. Scholastica with an emphasis on secondary education, he taught high school social studies for many years. In 2007 he earned a Master of Arts in Education from Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, emphasizing teaching and learning.

Ted has been a professional educator for the past 29 years, serving diverse school districts and communities. His most recent teaching positions involved high school social studies in Roseville, Fargo, and Perham districts. The Dean of Students position at UH will be his first administrative position. Ted looks forward to this opportunity while pursuing his principal licensure through Saint Mary's University.

Sports, especially basketball, has been an important component for Ted in the past 29 years. He recently coached the Minnesota State Community and Technical College men's basketball team. In addition to the Dean of Students position at UH, he will serve as the head boys' basketball coach for the Norman County East/Ulen-Hitterdal Titans!

In having a couple of different opportunities to observe the UH staff and students, Ted is looking forward to working with such committed staff and students. "Both times, I have been so impressed with their work ethic and approach to education. I am excited to join this team to assist in whatever manner allows for the best quality educational experiences for all."

Ted enjoys the outdoors in his free time, whether hiking, at the lake, walking his dog, or simply doing yard work. He enjoys being outside and staying active with his family. He and his wife Stephanie have four children, Kobe, Carson, Kora, and Calvin.

Ulen-Hitterdal School and the community welcome Ted and his family to the area!

WEST CENTRAL MINNESOTA COMMUNITIES ACTION HEAD START

Source/Author: *Melissa Whittemore, Head Start Supervisor West Central Minnesota Communities Action*

ENSURES PRESCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN HAVE ACCESS TO FUN AND SAFE EQUIPMENT

Now that warmer weather has finally arrived, the Brandon-Evansville Elementary School playground in Brandon is the place to be. Through a partnership with West Central Minnesota Communities Action Head Start, a variety of climbing equipment was recently added to the playground. Equipment includes a pup tent climber, log hop and crawl, and butterfly climbers. Melissa Whittemore, Head Start Supervisor, says, “The additions to the playground ensure that preschool-age children have access to fun and safe equipment that meets their developmental needs. It also provides children with opportunities to learn and explore through play. It was a privilege to partner with the district to make these exciting changes happen!”

Linda Saari, Early Education Coordinator, says, “As much as it is Head Start’s 58th birthday, our Head Start partnership truly makes it everyone’s birthday. For another example of this, Head Start has also collaborated with Brandon-Evansville to set up the new nature playground that is out in the Early Ed Courtyard area.





This year we also worked together with our kindergarten teachers and Connie Fields from the Douglas County Early Childhood Initiative to find ways to improve our kindergarten transition process. "We are thrilled to be able to have our early childhood programs team together with West Central Minnesota Communities Action Head Start,” said Saari.

West Central Minnesota Communities Action Head Start is an early childhood program that has been dedicated to supporting families and strengthening communities in the region for over 50 years. This includes providing comprehensive birth to five services in 14 communities across seven counties in west central Minnesota. Head Start continues to be a vital resource for families, with an unwavering belief that every child has the opportunity to succeed.

Through collaboration and partnership, West Central Minnesota Communities Action is making a significant difference in the lives of children and families in Douglas County and across the region. The program’s dedication to equity is a testament to the important role that early childhood education and support services play in building strong and resilient communities. For more information, visit wcmca.com/headstart or call 800-492-4805.

THE YOUTHS
OF PELICAN RAPIDS

Source: Staci Allmaras, Director, Western Lakes Regional Center of Excellence
Author: Mary Phillipe, LCSC's Communications Generalist



Our mission is to lift the YOUTH voices of Pelican Rapids as valued members of the community. We want to see ourselves in the spaces, activities, and events of Pelican Rapids to continue amplifying the power of the YOUTH'S voices to transform our future in the community.

A group of young individuals with a long-term vision for a youth center and short-term goals to arrange monthly activities for teens and young adults in the Pelican Rapids community came together one step at a time. "The Youths" is a group of adolescent and teen students from Pelican Rapids, consisting of individuals from diverse cultures and backgrounds. The Youths was established during the summer of 2022 as a response to the Minnesota Student Survey results that revealed a need for a sense of belonging among students who were not involved in sports or school activities. Nearly half of the student enrollment in Pelican Rapids comprises students of color. This group meets once a week, uses their voices in decision-making spaces, arranges activities, and is learning civic leadership skills.
The Youths have already made waves in the Pelican Rapids community, attending multiple city council meetings to introduce their mission of having a voice in community decision-making processes regarding their demographic.

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Staci Allmaras, Director of the Regional Center of Excellence at Lakes Country Service Cooperative, supports the developing group and is their liaison to the Pelican Rapids City Council. She provides attentive listening and guidance only when needed. The Youths have received a $7,000 grant from West Central Initiative to work on developing their individual civic engagement skills. They are not yet a registered 501c3 with the state of Minnesota and are seeking the support of a fiscal sponsor, which will enable them to receive grants.
During their first presentation on January 10, The Youths' spokespersons requested the Pelican Rapids City Council's assistance in creating a task force to establish a center where teenagers and adolescents can safely gather. The council's response was positive and receptive. Mayor Frazier stated, "We hear your voice and appreciate you coming. That's how you are heard, by coming to the public square, and speaking and letting people know that you are here, that you have needs, and would like to see them fulfilled." Several Council members also acknowledged the Youth's voice. They expressed a desire to provide support through a small fund for community center development, helping to form a task force and assisting with grant writing recommended by The Youths' advisor, Staci Allmaras.
At the January 31st council meeting, The Youths presented a follow-up example of how the Frazee community worked together to provide a safe space for their youth. Allmaras shared that the group is exploring various grant opportunities, working on fundraising plans, developing communications and marketing, and has a long-term vision of a youth center. The next task is to form a community task force to begin strategic visioning.

"WE ARE A COMMUNITY COALITION OF YOUNG ADULTS TRYING TO BRING ALL ASPECTS OF THE COMMUNITY TOGETHER.
WE ARE COMING TO LIFT UP OUR VOICES TO BE HEARD."
- THE YOUTHS

Mayor Frazier stated about their attendance at City Council, "We are glad you are here. You are our future!" In small rural communities, the youth play a vital role in shaping the future. They bring in new ideas, energy, and talents that can help the community prosper and expand. For small communities like Pelican Rapids, The Youth can help shape their planning for future economic development.
Allmaras is pleased with the group's outreach to their community and the encouragement from the Pelican City Council Members. She expressed that her personal and professional values, beliefs, and passions are intertwined. Allmaras believes that young people possess the power to change the future for the better. "If we value their input in decision-making, create spaces where they feel valued, and help them develop as learners and leaders, our communities will positively impact outcomes for each of our young people," said Allmaras.

The Youth

touring the Frazee Youth Center



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WHY DID ALLMARAS BECOME INVOLVED WITH THE YOUTH?

Allmaras shared that in her role at Lakes Country Service Cooperative as the Regional Center of Excellence Director, she lives this out in her professional work through the LCSC mission, vision, and values and vision at the Western Lakes Regional Center of Excellence:

LCSC M I S S I O N:

"We Advocate for Strong Communities Through Service and Leadership."

LCSC V A L U E S:

Leadership: Transforming the Future for ALL

Collaboration: Together We Achieve a Culture of Learning and Growth

Service: Responsive, Innovative, Effective Solutions

LCSC V I S I O N:

"Learning, Leading, and Innovating to Achieve Vibrant, Inclusive Communities."

Western Lakes Regional Center of Excellence Vision:

Equitable school systems where all students are valued, heard, and inspired to see themselves and be themselves while on their journey to become engaged global citizens.

Also newly elected to the Pelican Rapids school board, Allmaras values the school's philosophy that education is a partnership between students, families, schools, and the community. Pelican Rapids Public Schools places a high priority on their students and ensuring community engagement. The district focuses on educating the whole child, which Allmaras appreciates.

Whether in her personal or professional life, there is a strong emphasis on developing systems that enhance outcomes for young people. Allmaras was reviewing the 2019 MN student survey data for their region when she observed patterns regarding student perceptions of caring adults in their communities. This sparked her curiosity, leading her to examine the 2022 MN student survey, which revealed similar findings. In response to the 2022 results, the executive director of the Minnesota Children's Cabinet, Erin Baily, emphasized the need for the prioritization of children, youth, and families, along with a coordinated budget and policy development across state government that advances the needs of every child and young person in our communities. Although Allmaras has used this data to work with school systems, it is not meant to be confined to public education. "It takes a village" is a well-known phrase, so let's begin discussing this matter within our community spaces," said Allmaras.

Pelican Rapids is a remarkable community that embraces diversity in rural areas. While diversity is a fact of life, inclusion is a conscious decision. A group of young individuals is now leading in defining inclusiveness in their community and taking action to enhance outcomes for future generations.

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Staci Allmaras
Director, Western Lakes Regional Center of Excellence

For over four decades, the need for a space where young people can see themselves and be themselves has been a pressing topic in the Pelican Rapids community. Allmaras shared, "It's time to take action. Our youth have so much to offer, and I believe that if adults can relinquish some of their power and control tendencies, we can work together with our future leaders.
By listening and learning from them, we can provide the necessary support to enable them to lead with confidence and the assurance of caring adults by their side."
If you would like to learn more about The Youths, their mission, goals, and plans in Pelican Rapids, message them on their Facebook page at **The Youth on Facebook**.

Lakes Country Service Cooperative's

Featured Business Partner

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ORB Management is a mission-driven owner's representative and commercial real estate firm, serving non-profit clients across the region for 20 years. We equip clients with objective, experience-based information to facilitate smart decisions while navigating the acquisition, development, planning, design, and construction processes for real estate and facility projects.

We bring trusted project leadership from an objective and key coordination role - helping clients achieve their goals by optimizing the physical, functional, and financial metrics that affect the outcomes of every project.
Over the past four years alone, ORB has been engaged as the owner's representative for Sourcewell, Southwest West Central Services Cooperative, Mid-State Education District, Freshwater Education District, and the Walker-Hackensack-Akeley School District to help plan and develop seven mental health/behavioral disability learning centers (totaling more than 200,000 SF) across the region, with two more facilities in the planning stage. These facilities collaborated with multiple school districts, municipalities, Economic Development Associations, higher education, and the State of Minnesota to provide health and education services for students and adults with moderate to severe behavioral disabilities.

ORB also provides Owner's Representative services on multiple YMCAs, affordable/workforce housing, critical access hospital, and health/wellness facilities across the upper Midwest.
We have a passion for what we do and a desire to work with mission-aligned organizations that serve community needs.

ORB is ready to serve the members of LCSC and has collected feedback from clients to answer the question,

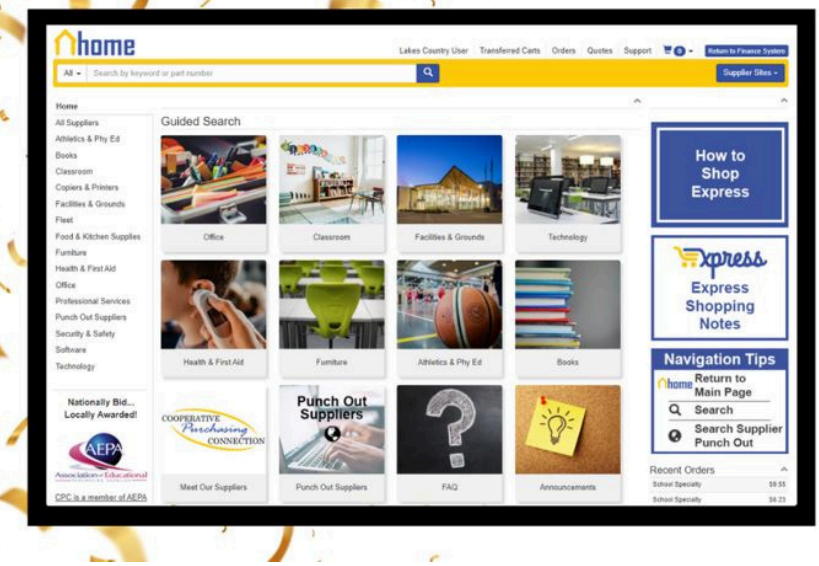


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- "Mission alignment."
- "We knew that when faced with challenges, our value-alignment would carry the day … we were right."
- "I'd trust ORB with my last nickel."
- "On a scale of 1 to 10, I'd give ORB an 11 … they could teach project management."
- "There were no surprises along the way."

Would you like to learn more about ORB and LCSC's other business partners?

Visit our website at **LCSC BUSINESS PARTNERS.**



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purchasingconnection.org

Express offers Guided Buying for our popular categories and items and an integration option for finance systems.

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- EDUCATION
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