



THE LINK

TO THE LAWRENCE COMMUNITY

AUGUST 2025



LIS Students to Explore the Future Through Virtual Reality Thanks to LTEF Grant

Thanks to a generous grant from the Lawrence Township Education Foundation (LTEF), students at Lawrence Intermediate School (grades 4–6) will soon have the opportunity to explore a wide range of career paths through immersive virtual reality (VR) simulations.

The grant, titled “LIS Career Exploration VR Simulations,” brings cutting-edge Transfr VR headsets and tools to LIS, allowing students to experience hands-on simulations of real-world jobs in a variety of industries. From healthcare and construction to technology and the arts, this program offers students a chance to “try on” careers they might not otherwise encounter.

This initiative addresses the important goal of providing equitable access to career exploration and college readiness opportunities, especially for students from underrepresented groups. By engaging students with interactive and personalized experiences that align with different learning styles and interests, the program supports a stronger sense of belonging and connection to their education.

Research shows that intermediate school is a critical time for students to begin forming ideas about their future. Through this program, students will be encouraged to reflect on their interests, values, and strengths—laying the foundation for more informed and confident decision-making in the years to come.

Many children grow up with a limited view of available career options, often shaped by what they see at home or in the media. This grant gives LIS students the chance to broaden their horizons and discover possibilities they may never have considered before.

We are grateful to LTEF for making this innovative program possible and for continuing to support initiatives that empower our students and prepare them for a bright future.



Honoring Milestones: LTPS Celebrates Every Step of the Journey

At Lawrence Township Public Schools, we believe that every step in a student’s educational journey deserves recognition. Each transition, from early childhood through high school, marks an important milestone—and we take great pride in celebrating those moments with joy, meaning, and community.

This spring, that spirit of celebration was on full display. Our PreK students marked their first major milestone with charming graduation ceremonies that filled rooms with songs, smiles, and proud families. As students prepared to leave elementary school, third-grade “clap outs” gave them a memorable sendoff, with students and staff lining the halls to cheer them on to the next chapter. Sixth graders celebrated the end of their intermediate school years with a festive parade and a picnic in the park, where they enjoyed games, treats, and time to make lasting memories with friends and teachers.

Eighth graders closed out their middle school experience with a special farewell celebration at Rider University—an event filled with laughter, reflection, and anticipation for high school. And of course, the culmination of the year came with the high school graduation ceremony at the Cure Insurance Arena, where the Class of 2025 was honored for their achievements, perseverance, and growth.

At LTPS, we understand that student success is not just about reaching the end—it’s about celebrating the journey along the way. These events reflect our deep commitment to honoring the hard work and growth of our students at every transition point. Each phase is a reason to celebrate, and we are proud to walk alongside our students as they move forward, step by step, with pride and purpose.



Behind the Scenes in the Summer: LTPS Prepares, Plans, and Builds for the Future



Even during summer break, Lawrence Township Public Schools (LTPS) is anything but quiet. While July often brings images of beach days and backyard barbecues, the district is buzzing with activity as staff members work tirelessly to ensure the upcoming school year begins smoothly, safely, and successfully.

Across the district, preparations are underway on multiple fronts. Safety remains a top priority, and this summer, the

LTPS leadership team has been engaged in intensive emergency preparedness training. The sessions include CPR, First Aid, EpiPen administration, and Stop the Bleed instruction, as well as practice for the district’s reunification plan in the event of an off-site evacuation. While these measures are precautions we hope never to use, they reflect the district’s unwavering commitment to keeping students and staff safe.

Summer also brings opportunities for students to continue learning. Programs such as Extended School Year (ESY), instrumental music lessons, and the Eagles program—designed for multilingual learners—are in full swing. These initiatives ensure that students have access to enriching educational experiences even when regular classes are not in session.

Educators, too, are taking advantage of the season to grow and collaborate. Professional development sessions are helping teachers refine their skills and plan curriculum for the year ahead. In addition, preparations are underway for the August New Staff Induction program, which will welcome new educators into the LTPS community and provide them with the tools they need to succeed from day one.

Behind the scenes, other essential work continues at a steady pace. Custodial teams are deep-cleaning every classroom, hallway, and common space—waxing floors, repairing fixtures, and making sure every building shines for the first day of school. The technology department is equally busy, preparing devices, upgrading classroom tools, and ensuring that systems are ready to support teaching and learning across the district.

These efforts underscore a simple truth: LTPS is more than a district—it’s a community dedicated to ensuring that every student and family feels safe, supported, and seen. Even during the quiet days of summer, that mission drives everything we do. Together, we are LTPS. This is us.



LTPS Expands “Cardinal Kids” Free Preschool Program Across the District



Serving More of Our Youngest Learners Than Ever Before

Lawrence Township Public Schools is proud to share exciting news about the continued growth of our Cardinal Kids preschool program, thanks to the Preschool Expansion Aid (PEA) from the state of New Jersey. As we prepare for the 2025–2026 school year, we are significantly increasing access to free, full-day

preschool for families across the district.

In the 2024–2025 school year, LTPS operated 8 preschool classrooms with 110 students enrolled, including children with IEPs. “Thanks to (Superintendent) Dr. Klim prioritizing this goal, along with expanded state funding, the district will more than double that number in the coming school year,” said Egnita Pardo, LTPS Early Childhood Supervisor.

This year, Lawrence Township will operate 17 PEA classrooms, serving approximately 255 students. In addition to these classrooms, LTPS will continue to have three Preschool Disabled classrooms, providing high-quality, individualized instruction for young learners who need additional support in their learning and development.

This year, we’re also excited to announce the addition of Lawrence Day School (LDS) to our roster of preschool sites. This partnership helps us fulfill a key requirement of the PEA program: establishing “community provider” partnerships to expand access beyond our in-district school buildings. By working with local providers like LDS, we are better able to meet the diverse needs of families across Lawrence Township, while helping a local business thrive.

Here’s how classrooms will be distributed in 2025–2026:

- Lawrenceville Elementary School (LES): 4 classrooms
- Slackwood Elementary School (SWS): 3 classrooms
- Eldridge Park School (EPS): 3 classrooms
- Ben Franklin Elementary School (BF): 2 classrooms
- Lawrence High School (LHS): 1 classroom
- Lawrence Day School (LDS): 4 classrooms

“This expansion brings LTPS closer to our ultimate goal: serving 90% of our “total universe” of age-eligible preschool students in Lawrence — a number that equals approximately 475 children,” Pardo said. The “total universe” refers to all 3- and 4-year-olds residing in the district.

For the 2025–2026 school year, we anticipate being able to serve 54% of that 90% target, which means we’ll be reaching more than half of our entire preschool-aged population — a critical milestone in our ongoing commitment to early childhood education.

Stay tuned for more updates as we continue to grow this vital program and give more Lawrence families access to high-quality, developmentally appropriate learning experiences from the very start.

NOW HIRING PRESCHOOL TEACHERS

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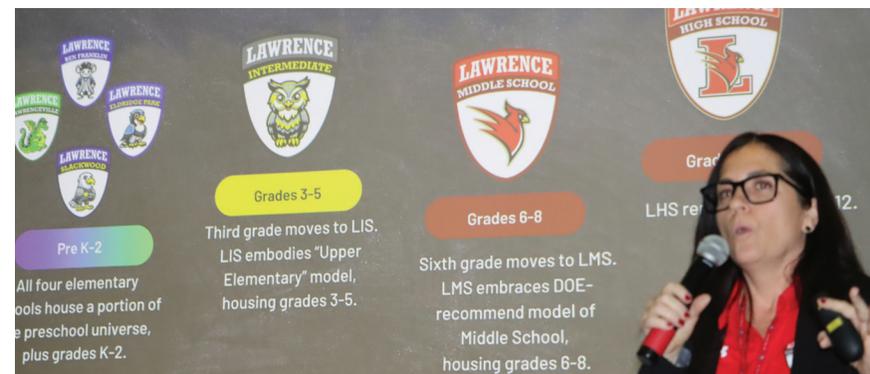


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Congrats to our LHS Senior Athletes on “Signing Day” Spring of 2025



From Left to Right: Mahmoud Ali - Carnegie Mellon - Football. Emma Dobkin - Rowan University - Softball. Peyton Valentino - Eastern University - Softball. Platon Trofimchuk - Stockton University - Soccer. Beckham Dipierro - NJIT - Diving. Tala Howe - TCNJ - Diving. Triston Jusino-Lansing - Mississippi College - Track and Field



Community Forums Planned to Guide Referendum Projects

We are deeply grateful to the Lawrence Township community for your overwhelming support in passing the LTPS Referendum to renovate and expand our 75-year-old Lawrence Middle School. This transformative project will not only modernize learning spaces but also allow us to welcome 6th grade students to the Middle School once construction is complete. The district is now working closely with architects and design teams to map out the construction timeline. One of the first major projects will be the renovation of the LMS auditorium—a space that serves as a hub for student performances, assemblies, and community events. We are committed to involving our community every step of the way. Throughout the 2025–2026 school year, LTPS will host a series of community conversations focused on project design and planning. Please save the date for our first session, which will take place on Wednesday, October 15 in the LMS Auditorium. More details will be shared as the date approaches. Thank you again for investing in our schools, our students, and the future of Lawrence Township.



LTPS Students Take on Global Challenges in 3rd Annual World Peace Game

Thanks to a partnership between Lawrence Township Public Schools and its teachers’ union, the Lawrence Township Education Association (LTEA), 22 rising 6th-grade LIS students had the unique opportunity to participate in the famous World Peace Game summer camp. The program, which was funded through a National Education Association (NEA) grant, was run by the World Peace Game organization, the teachers’ union, and LIS staff members. The World Peace Game is an immersive self-discovery and learning experience in the form of a geopolitical simulation.

Four countries are pitted against each other as players take on the roles of prime ministers, cabinet members, arms dealers, etc. Amongst them is a wily Saboteur who secretly works to undermine world peace. Students face oil spills, food shortages, political and economic tensions, all while on the brink of armed conflict. The World Peace Game creates the space for children to connect with their own inherent wisdom, creativity, and compassion.

The World Peace Game took place in the Lawrence Middle School library from July 14-18. This was the third year the World Peace Game has come to Lawrence Township Public Schools. The organization chose LTPS as its host because of the district’s strong academic reputation and its collaborative relationship with its local teachers’ union.





Career Skills Development Program Thanks Community Partners

Students and staff from Lawrence High School's Career Skills Development Program would like to thank the community partners who have played a vital role in supporting the program throughout the 2024-2025 school year. These partnerships provide students with invaluable opportunities to develop real-world career skills, gain hands-on experience, and build confidence as they prepare for life beyond high school. The Lawrence High School Student Services Department extends sincere thanks to the following organizations for their continued partnership and support: Burlington, Home-Front, DSW, Barnes & Noble, The Brookwood Café, Pennington Quality Market, and Plato's Closet. Programs like this thrive because of the generosity and involvement of local businesses and organizations. We are deeply grateful for the positive impact these partners have on our students and their future success. In the last week of school, the students presented our community partners with certificates and tokens of gratitude, pictured here.

Are you interested in becoming a substitute teacher for Lawrence Township Public Schools?



Scan the QR code or visit ltps.org/substitute



LTPS Announces New District, LIS Administrator Positions

Lawrence Township Public Schools is proud to announce three important leadership appointments for the upcoming school year.

Dr. Alyson Fischer, Principal of Lawrence Intermediate School, will step into a new district-wide role as Director of School Counseling and Student Supports. Dr. Fischer is entering her 14th year as an administrator in LTPS and brings a deep commitment to student well-being, family engagement, and inclusive school communities. During her six years as Principal of LIS, she guided the school through the COVID-19 pandemic and spearheaded numerous impactful initiatives—including the Character Counts house system, expanded 4th grade transition supports, student-led restorative practices, and a heightened focus on mental health. Her prior leadership roles at Lawrence High School and in the district's Health, PE, and Athletics department reflect her long-standing dedication to equity, wellness, and student growth. We look forward to all Dr. Fischer will accomplish in her new position and are grateful for her continued service to our district.

With Dr. Fischer's transition, we are excited to announce that Ms. Sharin Rello has been named the next Principal of Lawrence Intermediate School. A respected member of the LIS community for more than 20 years, Ms. Rello has served as Assistant Principal since 2018 and has been a passionate advocate for supporting the whole child. She has made a lasting impact through programs like the LIS House system and peer-led intervention circles, helping to build character, reduce conflict, and foster student engagement. Her leadership is grounded in strong relationships and trauma-informed, social-emotional practices that help students thrive. Before becoming an administrator, Ms. Rello was the LIS music teacher, where she inspired students through musical theater, a district-wide jazz festival, and performances with guest artists. She has also contributed to district initiatives in curriculum, grading, character education, and equity. We are excited for all that lies ahead under her continued leadership at LIS.

We are also thrilled to announce that LIS teacher and House Leader, Ms. Tori Hart, has been named Assistant Principal of Lawrence Intermediate School. Over the past 14 years, Ms. Hart has served as a teacher, House Leader, and trusted leader within Lawrence Township Public Schools. Her work has consistently focused on building meaningful relationships and fostering a school culture where every student feels safe, valued, and heard. Ms. Hart genuinely values the relationships she's built with the LIS team over the years. As she steps into this new role, she is proud to continue to work alongside colleagues who are so deeply committed to students and is excited to grow and lead within such a supportive and inspiring school community.

We pride ourselves on growing leaders here in our district and these three appointments are examples of this vision. Please join us in congratulating Dr. Fischer, Ms. Rello, and Ms. Hart on these well-deserved appointments!



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