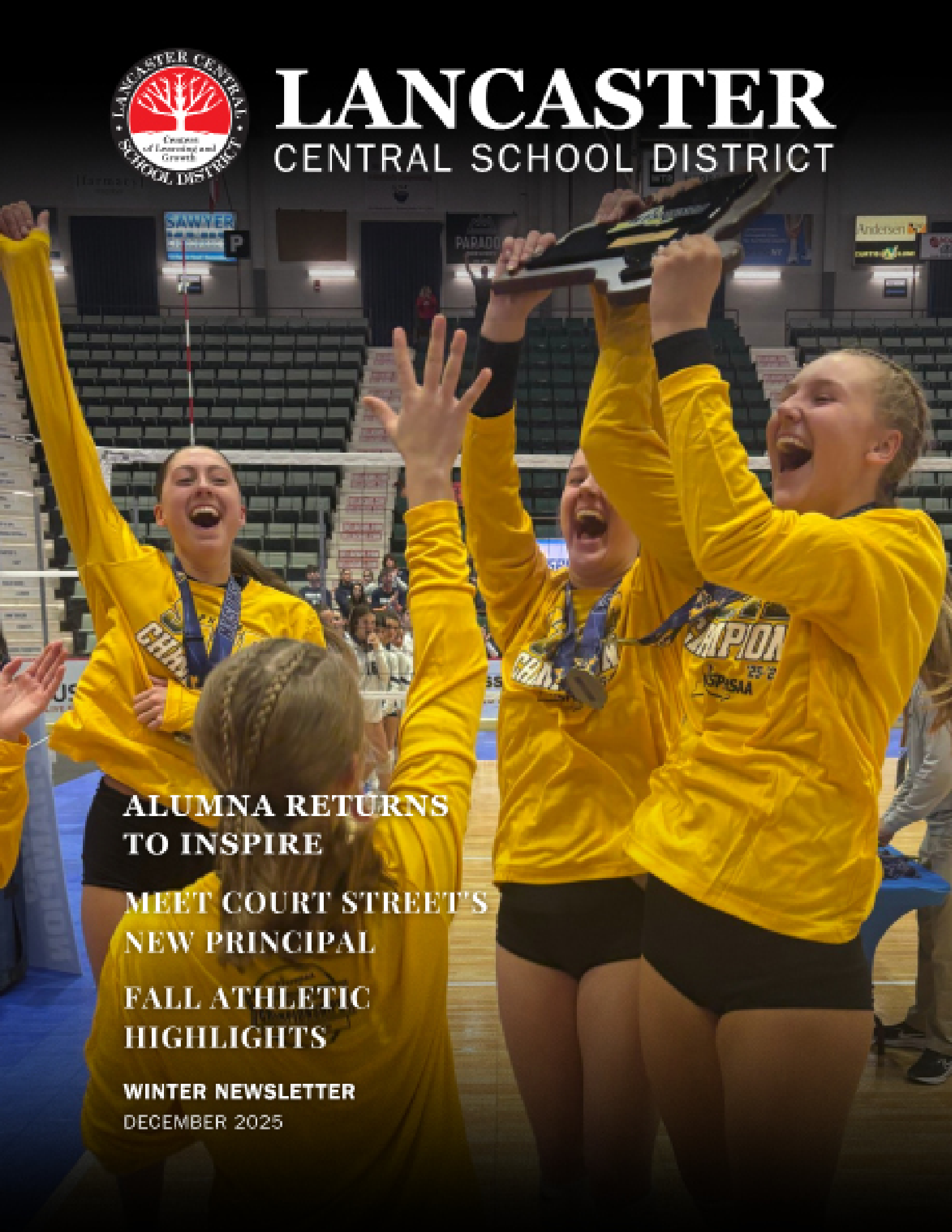
LANCASTER
CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT



ALUMNA RETURNS TO INSPIRE

MEET COURT STREET'S NEW PRINCIPAL

FALL ATHLETIC HIGHLIGHTS

WINTER NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2025

Message From the Board of Education

Dear Lancaster School Community,

The holiday season is a time for reflection and celebration for our Lancaster Central School District community, and during this time, it's important to acknowledge the incredible accomplishments that can only happen through the hard work and dedication of so many people.

Whether it be a state championship for our girls' volleyball team, led by coach Becky Edwards (Class of 1999), or watching our students and staff support families in need during the Lancaster Youth Bureau's annual Day of Giving, our school community has pushed itself to its full potential to make an impact and achieve great things.

The full value of this mindset, combined with hard work and the support of others, is evident in the stories of our alumni, who continue to *leave a legacy* since their time in our schools. In this newsletter, you'll learn about a connection a current student made with a 2013 alumnus, a Class of 2005 alumna taking the helm at Court Street, and Navy Lt. Cmdr. Lauren Schmiegel-Luvera, a 2008 Lancaster High School graduate whose military career has taken her around the world and provided opportunities to develop the next generation of military leaders. The memories she shared of the encouragement and growth she experienced from teachers, staff, and coaches during her time as a Lancaster student serve as a reminder that we all have a role to play in supporting our students' growth.

Thank you to all of the educators, staff, advisers, and volunteers in our schools for the tireless work that you do directly and behind the scenes to ensure the success of our students and families. Each of your actions lays the foundation for a positive and welcoming school community for which we can all be proud.

We have much to look forward to in the new year, from continued high expectations in the classroom to our concerts and musicals on the stage to a full calendar of athletics competitions, and we encourage you to come out and support our students and staff.

Thank you for supporting the continued growth and success of your Lancaster Central School District. On behalf of the entire Board of Education, we wish you a happy and safe holiday season and a wonderful new year.

Sincerely,
John Talarico
President, Board of Education

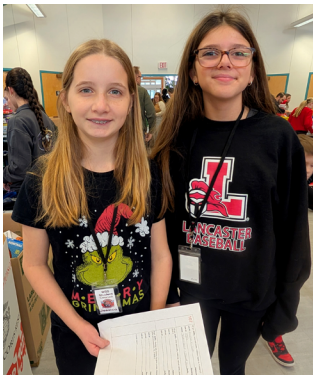














From Court Street Student to Principal: Andrea Parker Comes Home

The educational journey of Andrea Parker began when she was five years old in the classrooms of Court Street Elementary, discovering a love of learning through teachers such as Karen Overhoff, now retired. Parker's journey has brought her back to the school, where she will now serve as the school's principal. Among her goals is to partner with all stakeholders to create meaningful and enriching learning experiences for every child.

> **Thank you for allowing me to rejoin theLancaster family I so deeply love.**
>
> Andrea Parker, Incoming Court Street Principal

"As a proud Lancaster graduate, it's a privilege to come back and help carry out that mission," she said. "Thank you for allowing me to rejoin the Lancaster family I so deeply love."

Parker, who will begin in the principal role on January 5, 2026, brings 14 years of elementary education experience to the role, including time as an intern in Overhoff's classroom, affirming the influence educators can have on both students and interns. The 2005 Lancaster High School alumna has earned degrees in leadership, literacy, and childhood education, and during her career she has taught across multiple grade levels, including sixth grade ELA as well as second and fourth grades. She transitioned into administration just over five years ago, serving as a middle school assistant principal and coordinator of curriculum and instruction in the Cheektowaga-Sloan District. Most recently, she has been the assistant principal at Parkdale Elementary School in East Aurora for the past three and a half years.



Full circle moment: Andrea Parker with Karen Overhoff at the October Board of Education meeting where Parker was appointed the new principal of Court Street Elementary.

In preparation for the transition, Parker has worked closely with retiring principal Jackie Clinard to ensure a smooth handoff for students, families, faculty, and staff. As Director of Elementary Education, Karen Marchioli shared with the Board of Education during Parker's appointment in October, "Andrea has some big shoes to fill, following Jackie Clinard, who is truly a legend. But when we found Andrea, the entire hiring committee agreed she is the one who can take the reins and continue Court Street on its tradition of excellence."

Court Street Student's Community Interview Featured in *The Lancaster Bee*



As part of a new second grade English Language Arts project designed to build background knowledge about local communities, Court Street Elementary second grader Porter Leavoy recently interviewed Carmen Ciccarelli from the Town of Lancaster Parks & Recreation Department. The assignment, created to help students learn about the people who make their community work, asks each student to select a place or job that interests them, from local parks and restaurants to favorite destinations like Frosty's and Darien Lake, and interview someone who works there.

The project also supports key Social Studies learning standards by helping students understand community roles, and the importance of goods and services. Teachers provided a set of guiding questions, while students developed additional questions of their own to deepen the conversation. The experience culminated in a persuasive writing piece and illustrated poster encouraging others to visit their chosen location.

Porter, who loves being outdoors and playing sports, prepared thoughtful questions for Ciccarelli during his visit to Westwood Park. Ciccarelli, a proud Court Street alumnus, said he enjoyed helping a student from his former school complete the project.

The story of Porter's interview was recently featured in The Lancaster Bee (Porter proudly holds a copy in the picture above), giving the project an audience beyond the classroom. This is the first year the project was implemented across the district's elementary schools, and the response from students, teachers, and families has been overwhelmingly positive, demonstrating the value of connecting curriculum to the community around us.





More community connection: Owen Baker (top) brought his persuasive poster from the project to Big Papa's Creamery in the village and was thrilled when owner Kole Kingsland (Class of 2013) asked to display it in the shop's window. Kingsland also enjoyed sharing about the business and his passion with Owen. The Pizza Heist proudly shared Jack Rickli's persuasive poster (bottom) in their shop window and on their social media.

Global Connections Club Brings World Cultures to William Street School

A new Global Connections Club is helping introduce new world cultures and experiences to students at William Street School, one shared lesson at a time. Those experiences include learning about the cultural backgrounds of their fellow club members, sharing meals, learning about holidays from different parts of the world and even planning activities like experiencing international dances and crafts. The club was seen as an important way to help students of all backgrounds feel welcome and valued.

“We wanted a space where everyone could shine, and could share their stories proudly,” said Alison Camp, a math teacher who advises the club.

The lessons for students can come in a variety of ways. For the club’s November meeting, students learned about differences in the availability of food around the world, with the help of students from Lancaster High School’s Culture, Climate, and Inclusivity club. After receiving cards with the name of a character, their location, work and life story, students were grouped into tables or floor areas with different snacks based on regions with plenty, some and very little food access.

“It made me think about how other people live each and every day,” said Ryker Petroffski, a sixth grader at the school. “It’s important for people to be grateful for what they have.”

The activity, modeled after Oxfam’s Hunger Banquet, helps foster empathy and understanding among students. Students learned statistics from Oxfam that more than 1.5 billion people across the world live in poverty, the equivalent of one in every five people. As part of the event, students watched a video showing a typical lunch meal in schools in different countries.

“I hope they got to think about what it is like to be a kid outside of William Street School, somewhere else in the world,” Camp said.

With the club in its first year, the group is still developing its plans for the rest of the school year. Future activities for the club include hearing from teachers who have traveled outside the United States, and possibly a dance lesson.

“I’m excited to learn about different languages, different dances,” said Isabella Wozniak, a sixth grader.







Top to bottom: Students at William Street School’s Global Connections Club pose for a group photo; Club advisor Alison Camp speaks to students; Students share cards with the names of characters and back stories during a meal event at the club’s November meeting.

Fall Sports Highlights: Lancaster Student-Athletes *Leaving A Legacy*

GIRLS VOLLEYBALL

- NYS Class AAA State Champions (first state title since 2006), Division 1 Co-Champions, Section VI Champions, Far West Regional Champions
- Finished the season with a 19-2 record
- Cara Lewandowski, Paige Lewandowski, and Jill Cummins were named to the All ECIC, All WNY, and All State 1st team.
- Cara Lewandowski named NYS MVP for Class AAA.

GYMNASTICS

- Finished 10–2 this year and 3–0 in league play
- Ava Konieczny and Madelyn Gram qualified for states

BOYS GOLF

- Finished 8–2 and second in league play.
- 4 qualifiers for ECICs: Devin Schobert, Ari Daum,John Kladke, and Aidan Duggan.
- Aidan Duggan qualified for sectionals (played in May).

BOYS SOCCER

- Section champ 3 years in a row
- Two Players getting selected All WNY and All State Declan Sengbusch and Roland Wenk. They join Luciano Gallo and Jake Rinow as the only other two being selected to All State in Lancaster history.
- Roland Wenk 1st player being selected to All Region in Lancaster history.

GIRLS SOCCER

- Regional Champs for the 1st time in program history! (First Team to make it to the State Championship Tournament)
- Sectional champs three years in a row
- Five girls selected for post season awards, 2–ECIC 1st Teams, 3–ECIC 2nd Teams, Laila Sengbusch–ALL WNY & ECIC 1st team
- Laila Sengbusch, Class AAA 2nd Team All-State
- Taylor Snyder, Class AAA 3rd Team All-State

BOYS VOLLEYBALL

- The varsity team was ranked as high as 1st in WNY (three weeks running) and 3rd in the State.
- Rocco Vaughan reached a milestone career moment with over 1,000 kills. Rocco was also named to the All-WNY First Team.
- The varsity team reached the Sectional Finals match and the JV team won every tournament they were in, including the JV Championships!

GIRLS GOLF

- Placed 2nd overall in Section 6 large schools with a 7–2 record
- Seven of eight girls qualified for ECICs–placed 2nd overall in team score for the tournament and had two girls place top 12 in the individual standings: Ella Duchon and Stephanie Couchman
- Six of eight girls qualified for sectionals in the Spring

FIELD HOCKEY

- Placed third in ECIC division and Class C
- Lucia Lawrence was selected as first team ALL WNY and Emily Rodriguez was selected as second team ALL WNY
- Finished the season with a record of 10–5

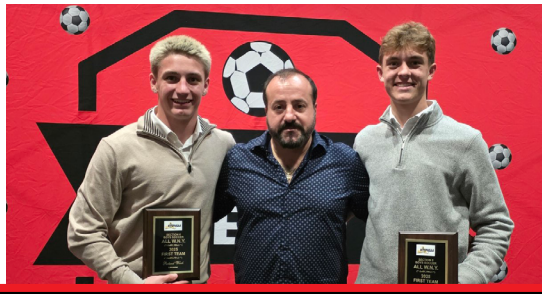
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GIRLS TENNIS

- Four girls qualified for ECIC's, Carrie Kornacki placed 5th at ECIC's
- Carrie Kornacki made it to the quarterfinals at Sectionals
- Team placed 4th overall in our division

GIRLS SWIMMING

- Multiple qualifications in the ECIC and Section VI level meets
- Catherine Markowski placed top eight in both individual events at Section VI Championships

GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY

- The team was an ECIC Division I Title Co-Winner
- Charlotte Winnicki named both a Section VI All WNY Girls First Team Runner of the Year and the Section VI All WNY Girls Grade Level (9th Grade) Runner of the Year; Mallory Adams was named a Section VI All WNY Girls Second Team Runner of the Year

BOYS CROSS COUNTRY

- Ranked sixth overall in the WNY Large School Poll
- Carson Zuba finished 15th at both the State and Federation Meets, medaling in each
- Zuba earned All-WNY Top Boys Runner of the Year and the Section VI Class A Sportsmanship Award

CHEERLEADING

- All 16 athletes made their Competitive Game Day Varsity debut this fall, with most competing Game Day for the first time ever.
- Heather Miller and Leah Reid were named ECIC All-Star Award Winners for Competitive Game Day.

FOOTBALL

- Finished the season 7-3
- Set a school record for most points scored in a game vs. Lockport with 67
- Matt King, Daniel Ahearn, Brayden Klinger and Tim Kopacz all earned 1st team class AA honors.





Eric Rupp Honored with WNY Football Officials Sportsmanship Award

Lancaster High School alumnus Eric Rupp (Class of 2002) has been named the 2025 winner of the WNY Football Officials Sportsmanship Award, also known as the Paul Gagliardi Sportsmanship Award. The honor, presented annually by the Western New York Certified Football Officials, recognizes a coach and their staff who encourage character and sportsmanship among their players.

Rupp, who serves as both Lancaster's Head Football Coach and Athletic Director, has long been committed to fostering a positive and respectful culture both on and off the field. Nominations for the award are submitted by WNYCFO members, with recipients selected by the organization's awards committee.

Lancaster Alumna, Naval Officer Reflects on Mentors, Influence of Teachers

Reflecting on a Navy career that provided the chance to serve on the waters of the Arctic Circle and help cultivate a new generation of military leaders and service members, Lt. Cmdr. Lauren Schmiegel-Luvera shared appreciation for the people in Lancaster who helped chart a course for her professional life.

"If I close my eyes and think of my time in the Lancaster School District on the surface level, I'm going to see the activities, I'm going to see the classes, I see the dances and the football games, the hallways and the locker assignments and my friends," she said. "But when I let the emotions go deeper, I see the development. I see the opportunities. I see empowerment. I see a school district that took a student growing up in Lancaster, New York and gave that student every tool they needed to make something of themselves because that's what Lancaster School District did for me."



"But when I let emotions go deeper, I see the development, I see the opportunities, I see empowerment. I see a school district that … gave that student every tool they needed to make something of themselves because that's what Lancaster School District did for me."

Lt. Cmdr. Lauren Schmiegel-Luvera

Schmiegel-Luvera, a LHS graduate in 2008, currently serves as the commander of the Buffalo Military Entrance Processing Station (MEPS), where applicants for military service complete their enlistment process. Personnel at a MEPS ensure that each applicant meets standards set by the Department of Defense and individual service branches. Earlier roles in her career included time as operations officer, Navy Talent Acquisition Group New

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Top right: Schmiegel-Luvera speaks to staff members during the Legendary Day of Learning on August 28, 2025. Bottom right: Faculty and staff were eager to connect with the decorated alumna following her speech.

England, admissions counselor and regional director for her alma mater, the United States Naval Academy and assistant chief engineer aboard USS Normandy which deployed to 6th and 2nd Fleet Area of Operations.

Speaking to Lancaster staff during the district's Legendary Day of Learning on August 28, Schmiegel-Luvera spoke on key connections in her academic career that ranged from the warmth she felt starting her schooling in Kristine McLouth's class, to feeling valued after being asked for her opinion by her fourth grade teacher Ami Cole, to the encouragement she received from her lacrosse coach Donna Aquino and field hockey coach Kathy Majeski. Teachers like Tony Tylenda shared the value of a firm handshake, a lesson felt by those greeting Schmiegel-Luvera during the event, and science teacher Bernadette DuPre (formerly Tomaselli) inspired her to be her best.

"Each one of you in this audience are to someone who Kristine McLouth, Ami Cole, Donna Aquino, Tony Tylenda, Bernadette (Tomaselli), and Kathy Majeski were and are to me," Schmiegel-Luvera said.

The naval officer said her appreciation for Lancaster grew as she became an admissions counselor for the United States Naval Academy, giving her a chance to view schools across the northeast and understand not every district had the talented faculty and opportunities for students found in Lancaster. For Schmiegel-Luvera, that ranged from a litany of instrumental and vocal music performances, to the empowering feeling of being asked to work with fellow students, upon graduation, to develop a curriculum that would become the high school's Leadership Academy.

"Lancaster faculty just made their students strive harder and left every door open and available," she said. "Lancaster faculty never put a metaphorical ceiling on their students."

Schmiegel-Luvera encouraged the faculty of Lancaster that they could leave a legacy through the way they inspired their own students.

"The slightest encouragement, the slightest investment that you show your students goes a very, very long way," she said. "It's going to last a lifetime."

Below: Kathy Majeski, Julie Buccieri (Class of 1999), Bernadette DuPre, Navy Lt. Cmdr. Lauren Schmiegel-Luvera, Kristine McLouth, Ami Cole, Dr. Andy Kufel.



Lancaster Marching Band Makes Program History at State Championships



The Lancaster Marching Band capped off an outstanding 2025 season with a record-setting performance at the New York State Field Band Conference Championships. Performing their field show, “Vacancy on 13”, the Marching Legends earned a score of 91.05 and secured second place in the Large School 2 division. Although they have placed first in this class in previous seasons, this was their highest score ever in Large School 2, and the second-highest finish in program history across all divisions.

This year’s show showcased the talents of Lancaster’s musicians and performers across woodwinds, brass, percussion and color guard, as well as standout soloists. Leading the ensemble on the field were drum majors Sydney Palmer and Lucas Schweickert, whose leadership helped guide the group to its fantastic achievement.

The Lancaster Marching Legends are under the direction of Jacob Seymour, with assistant directors Brandon Bauer (Class of 2017) and Jonathan Gesicki (Class of 2008).

Save the Date: February 2026 Musicals



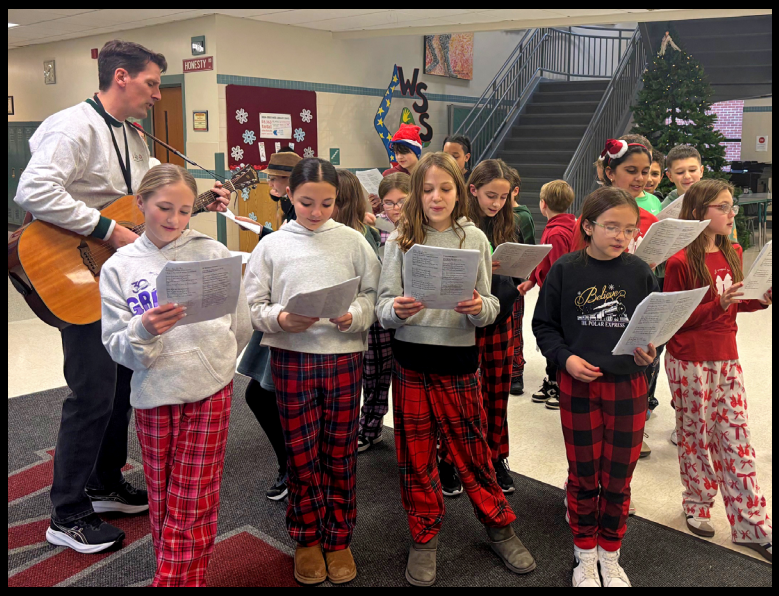
Lancaster Middle School Presents *Frozen*
February 4 - 6 at 7:00 p.m.
February 7 at 1:30 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.



Lancaster High School Presents *Annie*
February 12 - 13 at 7:30 p.m.
February 14 at 1:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

Tickets for both musicals go on sale in January at lancastermusic.simpletix.com





Left: The Grinch, with a heart that grew three sizes, visited Como Park Elementary to the delight of students. Right: William Street students in Ryan Sturm's fifth grade class spread holiday cheer by singing impromptu carols for students passing by.







The holiday tradition of the Cookie Marathon took place at the high school, where student co-chairs, along with Student Union volunteers, baked and packaged more than 6,000 cookies for families in our community as part of the Day of Giving.



Lancaster Middle School National Junior Honor Society members volunteered at Hillview Elementary's Evening with Santa event.