Lind-Ritzville Cooperative Schools

January 2026 | **Community Connections Newsletter** | **lrschools.org**

Superintendent Message

Welcome back from winter break and welcome to the new 2026 calendar year. I hope that the time off these past two weeks has been refreshing and that all are ready for the second half of our school year.

January is school board appreciation month in our state. Please reach out and thank our school board members who serve the learning and well-being of all our students and for maintaining the vitality and strength of our Lind-Ritzville Cooperative Schools. Erin Repp, Tia Kubik, Reid Phillips, Courtney Fannin and Trevor Devore represent Ritzville. Adam Labes, Brianne Williamson, Jim Weidemann, Greg Schmunk and Andy Wahl represent Lind. I truly appreciate the work that each of our board members do to support our students and staff.

Winter weather is beginning to affect our region. Each morning during inclement weather we will observe road conditions and we will report to all via our online and phone messaging systems if there is a need to delay school start times. If you do not hear from us, school will begin at the regular scheduled times. Please drive safely.

Our Cooperative School Boards will be selecting a new superintendent for leading our schools starting in the 26-27 school year. The position closed on January 2nd and now the search consultant and school board members will begin reviewing applicant files and looking to select those they wish to interview. There will be more information available soon. This is an exciting and important decision for our board members to make.

Both the Lind and Ritzville Districts will be asking voters to consider two measures on February 10, 2026.

- The Education Levy (EP&O), which is a renewal levy and not a new tax, will continue funding staff, services and extracurricular programs that are not paid for by state funding. The Education Levy covers the difference between state funding and the actual costs of operating school programs, accounting for 15% of Ritzville's budget and 11% of Lind's budget. Levy funds are very important for the day-to-day operations of schools in Lind and Ritzville.
- The Capital Projects Levy is also a renewal levy that will help fund technology equipment and services for our students and will additionally help pay for major school repairs and equipment replacements. It is important that we "Maintain What We Have" with Capital Levy funds so that we continue to maintain our equipment and facilities in good condition for students and staff.

Learn more about our Levies on the district website at lrschools.org/levy2026 and please remember to vote by February 10th!

Gary Wargo
LRCS Interim Superintendent
gwargo@lrschools.org

School Board Appreciation Month

THANK YOU TO THE LIND & RITZVILLE BOARD OF DIRECTORS!

WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO TAKE A MOMENT TO THANK OUR INCREDIBLE LIND & RITZVILLE BOARD OF DIRECTORS!

Lind District	**Ritzville District**
Adam Labes	Erin Repp
Greg Schmunk	Tia Kubik
Jim Weidemann	Reid Phillips
Breanne Williamson	Courtney Fannin
Andy Wahl	Travis DeVore

Upcoming LRCS Events

January 12 - FCCLA Regional Competition
January 13 - HS Knowledge Bowl at Washtucna
January 14 - Levy Informational Webinar - Lind SD 6PM / Ritzville SD 6:45PM
January 16 - HS Winterfest Dance
January 19 - NO SCHOOL (Martin Luther King Day)
January 20 - End of 1st Semester
January 23 - Little Cheer Performance at HS Basketball Games
January 24 - LR FFA Trapshoot at Ritzville Gun Club
January 26 - School Board / LRMS Collaboration Room / 6:30PM
January 27 - HS Knowledge Bowl at Coulee City
February 5 - 100th Day of School!
February 6 - FBLA Winter Conference
February 16 - NO SCHOOL (Presidents Day)
February 23 - School Board / LRHS Collaboration Room / 6:30PM
March 2 - HS Spring Sports Practices Start
March 5 - Snow Make-Up Day (If needed) or NO SCHOOL
March 6 - NO SCHOOL
March 23 - School Board / LRMS Collaboration Room / 6:30PM
March 26 - End of Midterm 3
April 2 & 3 - Spring Conferences (NO SCHOOL)
April 6-10 - Spring Break

**Dates & Times Subject to Change

Lind-Ritzville Cooperative Schools Joins Region-Wide Solar Initiative

The Lind-Ritzville Cooperative Schools is proud to announce its participation in The Giving Grid, a region-wide solar energy initiative that will bring significant benefits to our community and schools. This exciting project will see nearly 500kWdc of solar energy installed to power Lind Elementary School, Ritzville Grade School, Lind-Ritzville Middle School, and Lind-Ritzville High School.

Once operational, approximately 92% of the energy needs for these four schools will be met through solar power. Over the next 10 years, LRCS is projected to save $593,000 in net energy costs, with that money reinvested back into the schools through low-income programs. Construction is set to begin in January, with the solar panels expected to start generating power by March.

This initiative comes at no cost to the schools, thanks to the partnership with Zero Emissions Northwest (ZEN), PRWA, and Ellensburg Solar, with support from Avista and the WSU Energy Program. For the first 10 years, ZEN will own the project, ensuring zero upfront or ongoing maintenance costs for the district. The district incurs no cost to participate in the program as it is funded through the WSU Community Solar Expansion Program.

Lind-Ritzville joins 20 other schools in Eastern Washington participating in this initiative, collectively saving over $25 million in energy costs. Additionally, Ellensburg Solar is offering a 15% discount on residential solar installations for Lind and Ritzville residents to support the community's transition to clean energy.

This project represents a significant step forward in sustainability and community investment, and we are excited to celebrate this milestone with our students, staff, and neighbors.

To learn more about Zero Emissions Northwest or The Giving Grid, visit their websites: https://zeroemissionsnorthwest.com/ https://zeroemissionsnorthwest.com/the-giving-grid

GREAT THINGS HAPPENING AT LRCS





Congratulations to the LRMS First LEGO League team who placed 2nd overall and qualified for the STATE competition! Great job Henry, Lewis, Freya, Mason and Coach Tanner!

First LEGO League is a robotics program, where students dive into a full robotics competition packed with missions, challenges, and creative projects. Teams design, build, and program an autonomous LEGO robot to complete tasks on a themed course—putting their problem-solving, strategy, and creativity to the test.

Teams also identify a real-world problem related to the season's theme, research it, and develop their own innovative solution. They then present their ideas to judges—just like real engineers.





Last month, Mrs. Terris and Mrs. King's third grade classes at RGS took a field trip to the Ritzville Public Library.

They listened to stories about Ancient Rome and Hannibal Barca's battles. After the story they made their own wax tablets. Wax tables are reusable and portable writing surfaces used in ancient Roman and Greek times and were used for records, bookkeeping and formal letters.







The 6th grade students at LRMS have been working on an Animal Allies unit in English and wrote essays about jobs that animals do for people. Several students wrote their essays about K9 officers. Mrs. Davey reached out to the Adams County Sheriff's office and Deputy Phillips brought K9 Nado in to do a demonstration for the middle school students.

It was an great experience and we appreciate Deputy Phillips and Nado for visiting.



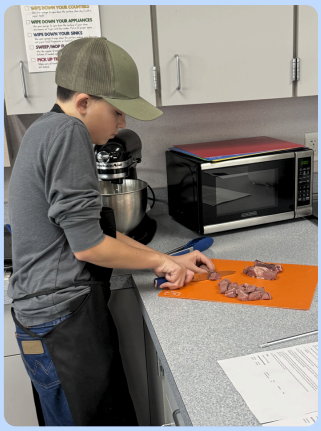
The LES 3rd-5th graders attended "The Best Christmas Pageant Ever" performed by the Academy of Children's Theatre in Richland. They also had lunch at Howard Amon Park.

A BIG THANK YOU to Lind PTO and the Academy of Children's Theatre for making this field trip possible!





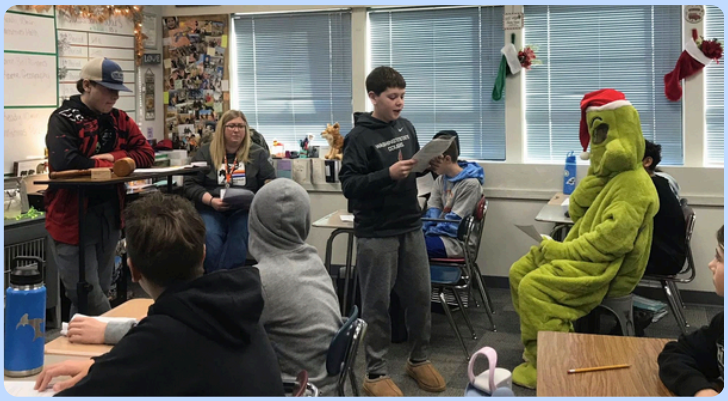


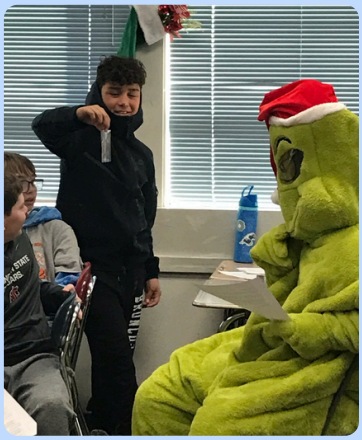


The Farm to Table class at LRMS finished up their unit on red meat. They learned about the differences between red and white meat, the different retail cuts that come from beef, pork, and lamb and how to choose a good steak at the grocery store. During the cooking lab, they used what they learned and made steak bites.



To gain valuable hands-on experience, the LRHS Floral students went to Washington Floral Wholesaler in Spokane. They were able to see how a wholesaler works, explore different departments, showcase their plant ID skills, and pick out the best florals for their floral fundraiser.





Mrs. Davey's 6th grade English class at LRMS has been working on writing and speaking standards. In the spirit of the holiday season, they researched trials, watched "The Grinch" cartoon, and then wrote trial scripts.

Using their scripts, the students put Mr. Grinch on trial for his crimes. The jury found the defendant guilty and he was sentenced. However, Mr. Grinch filed an appeal and will be granted his request after the Holidays!





The LRMS & LRHS Honor Society members joined other community volunteers to participate in the 16th annual Bikes for Tikes build day event in Kennewick. They helped assemble bicycles to be given to local children during the Christmas season.

This annual event is organized by UA Local 598 Plumbers and Pipefitters Union. Over the last 15 years, this incredible program has assembled more than 22,000 bikes for children.



Congratulations to the L.E.A.D. Class at Lind-Ritzville Middle School! The LEAD Program (Law Enforcement Against Drugs) is designed to build strong character, promote positive decision-making, and provide students with the tools they need to make healthy, responsible choices while fostering positive relationships with law enforcement.

A special thank you to Deputy Hampton for his time, leadership, and commitment to mentoring our youth and making this program a success.



Congratulations to RGS teacher, Mrs. Terris, on receiving a Caring Neighbors Grant. This funding will help with the purchase of STEAM Evo Robots for her classroom, providing hands-on learning experiences for students.

A special thank you to Dale Anderson with Caring Neighbors for providing this opportunity and supporting our schools!

Thank you to our staff & students that worked hard to make our concerts AWESOME! We appreciate our families and community members that came to watch. A special thank you to Alicia Miller, Carol Wagner & Jennifer York for their time and dedication. It really shined through the talents of our students!

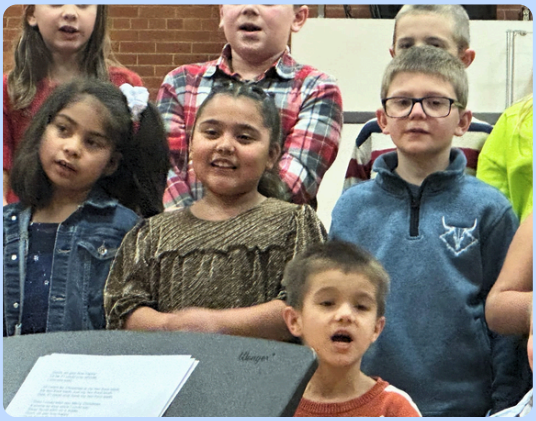














The Bronco Basketball team stopped by RGS to greet students as they came to school. RGS students also got the opportunity to vote on their favorite Gingerbread houses that were decorated by the team.





We loved seeing all the smiling faces at the annual Candy Cane Lane! We appreciate our community partners that help make Candy Cane Lane a success every year!





LRMS 8th graders went on the annual Eagle Watch field trip on lake Coeur d'Alene. This wouldn't be possible without the help of a CF Industries grant.

Each winter from November through February, hundreds of bald eagles migrate to the Wolf Lodge Bay area (east side of the lake) to feed on spawning kokanee salmon — making it a spectacular wildlife viewing opportunity.



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