Lewiston-Porter Central School District

One Purpose. Your Pathway. Our Promise.

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Dear Lewiston-Porter Students and Families,

As we approach Spring Break, I want to take a moment to wish all of our students and families a happy, restful, and well-deserved break. The weeks leading up to this time of year can be busy and demanding, and I hope this break provides an opportunity to recharge, spend time with loved ones, and return refreshed for the final stretch of the school year.

As always, I would like to share a few important updates from across our campus:

Capital Project Update: Investing in Our Future:
We are excited to see continued progress on our $11.15 million capital project. With the arrival of spring weather, work will soon resume on Phase 2 improvements at Elia Stadium.

Thanks to strong planning and effective construction management, we have also identified approximately $1.5 million in available funds, allowing us to move forward with a Phase 3 of the project. This additional phase will include:

- Enhancements to the entrances and surrounding grounds leading to both stadiums
- A new scoreboard at Blakeslee Stadium
- A new storage building for athletic equipment
- Upgrades to the press box at Elia Stadium
- Repaving of the entire High School parking lot, supported through our repair reserve

When completed, this project will be a source of pride for our entire community and will significantly enhance the experience for our student-athletes, families, and spectators.

High School/Middle School Schedule Proposal:
We sincerely appreciate the thoughtful feedback shared by our community regarding the proposed Middle School/High School schedule changes.

The original intent of the proposal was to allow for greater sharing of staff across buildings and to ensure long-term fiscal responsibility. However, we clearly heard concerns—particularly related to student opportunities in fine arts programs, including art and music. Based on the feedback shared at the March 23, 2026 Board of Education meeting, we are committed to:

- Revisiting the proposed schedule
- Making thoughtful modifications
- Ensuring we continue to support diverse learning pathways for all students

We value the voice of our community and will continue to engage stakeholders as we refine this work.

2026–2027 Budget Update:
As shared at our recent Board of Education meeting, we have developed a balanced budget that will be presented to the community for a vote on May 19, 2026.

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Balancing a school budget continues to be challenging amid rising costs and limited revenue growth. Key points include a proposed 1.9% tax levy increase, and the use of:

- Appropriated fund balance
- Teacher Retirement System (TRS) Reserve
- Employee Retirement System (ERS) Reserve
- Debt Service Reserve

This year, we addressed a budget gap of just over $700,000 through careful review of expenditures and strategic use of reserves. Should additional Foundation Aid be included in the final New York State budget, we will look to reduce our reliance on reserves where possible.

Additionally, voters will be asked to consider the creation of a new Capital Reserve (up to $6 million). This reserve will support future capital improvements aligned with our 5-Year Building Condition Survey and help position the District for a future capital project anticipated in May 2028.

This work is also critical to maintaining access to New York Power Authority (NYPA) Greenway Funds, which are designated specifically for projects that enhance community access to our facilities. As a reminder, these funds stem from the 2007 settlement with host communities and must be used exclusively for capital improvements.

Looking ahead, future work is expected to include:

- Upgrades to art and music spaces across the campus, particularly at the Middle School
- Enhancements to the IEC and High School auditoriums
- Improvements to our baseball and softball fields as part of our Greenway initiatives
- Additional facility improvements to support student learning and community use

We also want to acknowledge that both the Town of Lewiston and the Town of Porter are undergoing reassessment of property values. With this uncertainty in mind, we have worked diligently to be as fiscally prudent and responsible as possible in developing this year's budget, recognizing the potential impact on our taxpayers.

As we head into Spring Break, I want to again thank you for your continued partnership, support, and engagement. Together, we are building a strong future for all Lewiston-Porter students.

Please remember that Spring Break begins at the close of the school day today, Friday, March 27, 2026 and school will resume on Monday, April 13, 2026.

Enjoy the break, and we look forward to welcoming everyone back for a strong finish to the school year.

Warm regards,

Paul Casseri
Superintendent of Schools