

L'Anse Creuse News – March 2024

“No matter our backgrounds, we all have one common thread; our students and their success.”

### 100 Days in School!

Elementary students dress in creative costumes and participate in fun activities to celebrate.

The 100<sup>th</sup> day of school officially fell on February 21, and schools around the district celebrated in a variety of fun ways. One of the most popular ways to celebrate 100s Day is to play the part and dress up as a 100-year-old. At Yacks, kindergarten students went all out, dressing in wigs, fake glasses, hair rollers, and even walking with inflatable walkers and canes.

Tenniswood Elementary recognized the 101<sup>st</sup> day of school instead, with each classroom celebrating in a different way. One classroom, for example, dressed up as the 101 Dalmatians.

The next best way to celebrate 100s Day is with activities and games. Whether students are counting out 100 of their favorite treats, coloring in 100 gumballs, or stacking 100 cups, this day is a great way for young students to practice numbers and hone their counting skills.

### Building up the District: Louise's Legacy

Meet Louise Bommarito and learn about her generous gift to L'Anse Creuse students.

The Chauvin family has attended L'Anse Creuse Public Schools for three generations, leaving an impressive legacy of academic and athletic accomplishments in schools across the district. Louise Chauvin, who graduated from L'Anse Creuse High School in 1980, has a particularly special legacy, which will last well into the future and benefit generations of high school students.

During her high school career, Louise consistently strived for excellence, working hard to achieve straight A's and pushed the limits of girls' sports. In 1979, Louise's junior year, she won two State Championships – one in track and field for the 100-yard dash, the other with the Lancer Varsity Basketball team. Her exploits in breaking records, winning championships, and excelling in academics led to the high school even celebrating a day in her honor in 1979 – Louise Chauvin Day.

“She was very determined that she was going to do anything,” said Mary Knechtges, her former track coach and life long friend. “She was very skilled and worked hard.”

For as dedicated as she was to her studies and athletics, Louise was even more dedicated to L'Anse Creuse and the surrounding community. After marrying her husband, Andy Bommarito, the two began building a trust fund with the intent to give back to L'Anse Creuse students.

In 2021, Louise passed away at the age of 58 and her husband passed shortly after at 54, leaving Louise's brother Jim Chauvin as the trustee of the fund. Starting in the 2022-2023 school year, Jim donated the contents of the fund – \$175,000 – for L'Anse Creuse student scholarships.

Dawn Chauvin, Jim Chauvin's wife, said Louise was a generous person who was always looking for ways to help her family, friends, and community. Even though she's gone, this scholarship is Louise's way of continuing to look after others.

The Louise Bommarito Scholarship will provide \$5,000 each school year to one female student athlete at L'Anse Creuse High School. The scholarship is meant to model after who Louise was as a student, athlete, and community member – someone who excelled in everything she did.

"What's important, especially now teaching seniors, they're all so stressed about student debt and how they're going to pay for college," said Sam Giambone, Louise's niece and current Pankow teacher. "That's a lot of money and that's a lot of stress taken off of a kid."

From the Superintendent

Dear L'Anse Creuse Community,

We are in the second half of what has already been a great year for L'Anse Creuse! I am looking forward to our continued growth and accomplishments over the next several months. Hopefully at this point you have received preliminary information for an upcoming bond proposal on May 7, 2024 for L'Anse Creuse. I would like to share some background information and next steps in this important process.

Through the support of our residents, L'Anse Creuse has a first-class learning environment and schools where our students feel safe and connected to their community. The last bond proposal was approved by LCPS voters in 2005, and provided significant enhancements in the district such as secured entrances at each of our schools and facilities, which was groundbreaking security for schools at that time. The district was also able to rebuild their oldest elementary schools, South River and Green, expanding instructional space and technologies. In an effort to adjust to the everchanging educational requirements, the district constructed an adult/alternative high school to support success for all students. The 2005 bond continued a legacy within the district, introducing turf football fields at the high schools, which quickly became a trend with surrounding districts, and synthetic playground surfaces at our elementary schools. During this time, I was an educator in the classroom and saw firsthand how the bond improvements impacted the lives of our students and staff, and improved the learning environment. Now as the Superintendent 19 years later, I have witnessed the work and efficiency that has gone into maximizing these bond dollars well past the 10 years promised to the voters.

While we have maximized and extended our 2005 bond dollars, it has been 19 years and it is time to enhance and improve safety and security, to improve our instructional spaces and technology, to replace and update our infrastructure, and replace outdated and failing mechanical equipment. All of these projects will allow us to enhance our programming for instruction, arts, and athletics. It will empower our students through newer technology and updated instructional spaces. It will improve all of our school sites; addressing interior and exterior needs such as roofing, sidewalks/parking lots, and updated heating and cooling in classrooms.

Michigan has a very unique system for funding schools that is different than most other states. Each year we are given a per student allotment determined by the legislature and governor. This is generated

primarily from sales tax across the State of Michigan. Sales taxes paid by our residents do not directly go to L'Anse Creuse schools, but rather the State and then redistributed across all schools in Michigan. These dollars are primarily used to fund programs and employee salaries. Bond proposals, such as this one, must be approved by local voters, and the bond proceeds that district residents authorize go directly to L'Anse Creuse. These dollars can be used for capital improvements, technology, facilities, and infrastructure. Both of these different, important sources of financing are used in schools across Michigan. The projects we are proposing in the new bond are large scale and the district needs are too great to utilize general fund dollars.

This past December, the Board of Education approved the district moving forward with a bond proposal on the May 7, 2024 election ballot, and the Michigan Department of Treasury has approved our bond application. Due to the financial history of spending down the 2005 bond funds, we are able to ask the community for \$330 million in a new proposal, with a no projected tax rate increase to residents.

From now until May 7, I will be working to provide factual information to the L'Anse Creuse Community on the many proposed projects that will update, enhance, and empower our district facilities and programs. Please visit our Bond Election Information webpage at [www.lc-ps.org](http://www.lc-ps.org). This page provides a very detailed Frequently Asked Questions, an individual project list for each school or facility, and an opportunity to submit a question to the district.

Thank you for your continued partnership.

Erik Edoff

Superintendent

## 2024 Bond Program

“Empowering Success, Honoring our Legacy”

May 7, 2024

L'Anse Creuse Public Schools has placed a \$330 million bond proposal on the May 7<sup>th</sup> ballot. It is projected that the bond will not increase the current tax rate.

Quick facts about the bond:

The bond will generate revenue to...

- enhance and improve safety and security at all L'Anse Creuse Public Schools facilities
- support updates to the technology network and purchase instructional devices
- enhance the arts program
- update athletic spaces and fields
- improve playgrounds
- Improve instructional spaces
- expand early childhood programming
- replace and improve school infrastructure, such as
  - o roofs

- parking lots, sidewalks, driveways, and bus loops
- masonry
- heating and
- cooling systems.
- purchase buses

To learn more, visit [www.lc-ps.org](http://www.lc-ps.org) and click on the Bond Election page.

### Shining a Light: Transitional Kindergarten

Learn more about the TK program and how it is helping to set students ahead of the curve.

The goal of any public school district is to set students up for success, both for school and a career, but also for the real world and the challenges that come with it. The L'Anse Creuse Public Schools Transitional Kindergarten (TK) Program works to build a strong foundation to propel young students forward academically, socially and emotionally.

Since the start of the 2020 school year, two TK classrooms – one at Francis A. Higgins Elementary, one at Donald J. Yacks Elementary – have been welcoming students full-time, eager to provide extra support and time for the district's youngest learners. TK is the first step of a free, two-year kindergarten sequence, providing students with a full school day, engaging curriculum, and balanced work-to-play ratio.

The TK program provides four- and five-year-old students and their families with the gift of time; time to learn new things, time to grow as a person, and time to get comfortable with the school routine. Kelly Conwell, whose son attended TK at Yacks last year, said the gift of time has made an incredible impact on her son.

"It helped him a lot with the writing. I worked a lot with him before, but this year he is doing absolutely amazing," she said. "In preschool, he did not want to write. Now he writes just to write."

The TK program follows the kindergarten curriculum, but slows it down to make it more friendly for the younger age group. This structure allows for an academic boost, putting one hundred percent of TK students at or above what is expected of students in the fall of their kindergarten year.

The two TK teachers, Gina Skeltis at Higgins and Amanda Shimkus at Yacks, also teach their students social and emotional skills, such as how to communicate with others, how to talk about their feelings, and how to follow school rules. Both teachers actively model these skills for their students, and employ the use of a "Trait Crate," where students can learn positive behaviors in a fun and engaging way.

Teaching the kindergarten curriculum to four- and five-year-old students does come with its challenges, though. Progress looks different for every kid, but especially in TK, and Shimkus wants parents to understand how the extra time is beneficial to students in varying ways.

"I always tell all the parents, 'even if they're not halfway to their goal, they're further than possibly a peer that they would be in the room with next year,'" she said. "This is a growing year; this is a gift of time; this is nothing that they need to master."

Gina Skeltis adds that TK students are consistently becoming the leaders of the classroom when they enter kindergarten. Not only are students prepared for the structure of a full day, but TK students are also often helping their peers become adjusted to the class and kindergarten curriculum.

“If you give them the tools and if you model for them, they can do it. If you believe in them and you teach them to believe in themselves, they can do it,” Skeltis said. “I thrive on teaching them independence.”

Both Shimkus and Skeltis have received wonderful feedback from other parents as well. Shimkus said one of the best non-verbal compliments is when she has a past student’s siblings enrolled in her class. For Skeltis, the biggest compliment is hearing how her students mimic her at home; copying her songs, phrases, and even teaching their younger siblings using her lessons.

With Higgins Elementary’s TK class already full for the 2024-2025 school year, the district is looking to open a new TK classroom at Graham Elementary in the fall of 2024. The new proposed class will meet the standards of the other two TK classrooms, offering a full day of learning, a highly qualified teacher, and lower class size to those enrolled. All TK students residing in the LCPS attendance area may also receive transportation, depending on location.

## Learning in Action

### Obstacle Course & Heart Health

During the month of February and March, elementary students learned more about good heart health thanks to the American Heart Association (AHA). A few schools, Carkenord, Yacks, South River, Green and Lobbestael, set up a “Ninja Warrior” obstacle course for students to run through during their 40-minute gym class.

The course is designed to be a fun cardio challenge, showcasing how fun heart health can be. The course was set up for an entire week, ensuring students from every grade level could experience the fun before it moved on to the next school.

Students at Higgins participated in the Kids Heart Challenge for the AHA, completing activities in their PE class relating to heart health and education.

## Character Education Assembly

Middle School - East Principal Justin Hauser has been leading a unique initiative to help his students. Once a month, students gather in the school’s cafeteria for Hauser’s Character Education Assembly, in which Hauser talks to students about topics that build confidence, promote positive habits, and inspire students to be better versions of themselves. February’s assembly, for example, focused on the virtue of perseverance.

Students have had very positive experiences with the assemblies. Seventh grade students Eli S. and Mia K. said they learned that they can go to teachers, staff and Mr. Hauser if they ever need a helping hand.

“These meetings really make me think about the things I want to accomplish and how to accomplish them,” said Ava S.

### Bringing New Life to the Pankow Center

The Pankow Center is home to several Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs, all of which generally operate by themselves to give students a look at different career fields. However, when the classes work together, there is bound to be magic. On February 22, students from the Horticulture, Hospitality, and Construction classes teamed up to breathe new life into the Pankow Center’s entrance.

The new look includes three banana trees grown and looked after by Horticulture, three custom planters built by Construction, and a new layout design for the chairs and tables thanks to Hospitality. The joint project is the first big step to redecorating the entrance area to be a more inviting area to sit and work for students, staff, and visiting families.

### “Kindness Bugs”

On February 28, Mrs. Sakowski’s resource room students at Middle School - South made “Kindness Bugs,” a fun crafting project made from yarn, pipe cleaners, and googly eyes. Though it may look like just a simple craft, Mrs. Sakowski uses the Bugs as a lesson in kindness and empathy following the class’s unit on the Holocaust.

The project opens up a discussion on the acts of kindness that took place despite the atrocities – how ordinary citizens risked their lives to help Jewish people survive. Students learn how a small act of kindness and empathy can make a person’s day, even save a life.

Sakowski said she also likes to give this project to students as a break from the heavy subject material.

### STARBASE: Making STEM Exciting

The STARBASE program from Selfridge Air National Guard base has been providing elementary students with unforgettable and meaningful science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) learning experiences for 35 years. Six L’Anse Creuse elementary schools – South River, Graham, Green, Lobbestael, Yacks, and Carkenord – have the privilege of sending 5th grade students to Selfridge to participate in the program. South River and Graham attended this past February, with the other schools scheduled out for April and May.

“STARBASE gave our students a unique opportunity to explore STEM in an interactive, modern, and engaging way,” said Kendall Day, 5th grade teacher at Graham. “Students were able to experience a variety of activities such as coding robots, landing a space shuttle, and so many experiments!”

Students attend STARBASE for one day a week for five weeks. Each lesson focuses on something different within the STEM field, giving students a wide variety of opportunities to find something they enjoy and are passionate about.

## L'Anse Creuse Winter Athletics

### High School Accomplishments

The winter athletic season is coming to a close, and we are so proud of all of our student athletes and the strides they made this year for themselves and their schools. This page is dedicated to covering the middle and high school athletes and their accomplishments.

#### Basketball

The Lancers and Crusaders went head-to-head in the District Semi-final round at Anchor Bay High School on Wednesday, February 28. The Crusaders pulled ahead to win 54-42 against the Lancers. The Crusaders went on to beat Dakota to become District Champions.

#### Cheer

The Crusader Varsity Cheer team are back-to-back Division I Champions, Regional Champions, and went on to finish as 5th in the State. The JV Crusader team also earned the MAC Red Division title, creating an exciting vision for the future of Crusader Cheer.

#### Bowling

The Crusader Varsity Girls Bowling team became back-to-back Macomb County Champions on January 13 at the Macomb County Girls and Boys Team Championship. The team made it to State Bowling Finals, finishing top 13th in the State. Lauren Zelinski and Haley Straetmans represented the Crusaders in the Singles round, with Lauren finishing 8th and Haley finishing 13th.

The Lancer Boys Bowling Team shared the MAC Blue Division Title with Romeo as Co-Champions, putting on a strong performance during the season with eight wins and only two losses.

#### Wrestling

The Crusader Varsity Team were the MAC Silver Division Champions for the second year in a row, marking the second season in 20 years the team has won the MAC title. Nathon Zydell named the MAC Silver MVP, which was voted on by all of the division coaches.

#### Swim

The Crusaders boys swim team earned the MAC Blue Division Dual Meet Championship, winning their last dual meet of the season 124-54, giving them a record of 8 wins and only 1 loss. Crusader Diver Joe Vaughn competed at Diving Regionals and earned a spot in the State Championships.

### High School Highlights

- Lancer Wrestler Brandon Gordon took 2nd place at the Regional Tournament, earning a ticket to the State Finals at Ford Field, where he placed 8th in the State.
- On Saturday, February 3, the L'Anse Creuse Unified Hockey Team paired up with Chippewa Valley United to raise money for Angels of Hope, a Michigan-based foundation dedicated to helping families impacted by cancer. Together, the teams raised over \$4,300 for the foundation.

- During the Crusader's basketball season, senior Drew Kozel became the leading rebounder (640) and three point shooter (124) in school history. Kozel also broke the All Time Scoring Record at LCHS - N with 1277 career points.
- The Dave Jackson Classic is an annual basketball fundraiser in honor of the late Dave Jackson, who coached for four high school basketball teams in the area, including LCHS and LCHS - N. The proceeds from the game go towards scholarships for students at each school.

## Middle School Sports

January marks the beginning of basketball season for student athletes at the middle school level. The boys teams had strong performances this season, with the 8th grade team from Middle School - North going undefeated. The girls season started in mid-February and the girls are already off to a great start.

Outside of basketball, students can join various athletic clubs to stay active and meet new friends during the cold winter season. The ski & snowboard club at Middle School - East takes advantage of the Michigan weather with trips to Mt. Holly, while cheer club members move inside for the season to perform during halftime at basketball games.

The future is bright for L'Anse Creuse athletics thanks to all the hard work middle school students have put in this season.

Did you know?

Former Crusader Taylor Girard, who graduated in 2016, signed a two-year contract with the Professional Women's Hockey League (PWHL) as a Forward for Boston. Girard has played professional hockey since 2021 after being drafted first overall by the Connecticut Whale.

L'Anse Creuse Public Schools presents the Stellar Students

Leading by example...

January

- Early Childhood Center: Mackenzie
- Green: Connor
- Middle School – South: Addison
- Pellerin Center: Hayden

February

- Higgins: Kendall
- Middle School – Central: Nicole
- LC High School: Alex

March

- Anna Mae Burdi Center: Mason



- Lobbestael: Wyatt
- Middle School – East: Santino
- LC High School – North: Adrianna

Congratulations to our Stellar Students!

### Community Education Classes and Upcoming Events

Are you or someone you know interested in learning a new skill, joining a fitness class, or attending fun events and tours? Look no further! L’Anse Creuse Community Education is enrolling right now for a variety of classes and events for people of all ages. Scan the QR code below to visit the Community Education page and sign up for something new and fun today!

#### Youth Classes

- Self Defense for Children
- “Off to a Great Start” Program
- TGA Golf Classes

#### Adult Classes

- Variety of fitness classes
- Music Lessons including: Guitar, Piano & Ukulele
- Self Defense for Women

#### Trips and Tours

- Coffee & Donuts at the DSO - Country Hits
- Coffee & Donuts at the DSO - Disco Fever
- "Murder on the Orient" show @ WSU with lunch
- Meadowbrook Theatre production of “Route 66”
- Indian Village Home & Garden Tour

Join L’Anse Creuse and Shape the Future with us!

We are seeking passionate individuals who would like to make a difference in the lives of students. Here at L’Anse Creuse, we are known for our “family” culture and everyone is committed to the success of all students. Apply now and become part of one of the strongest districts in Macomb County, surrounded by highly talented staff who work everyday to provide the best education our future deserves! There are a wide range of positions available. If you have questions, please call the Human Resources Office at (586) 783 6300 ext. 1213 between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

We have a need for the following positions:

- Custodial
- Maintenance
- Crossing guards
- Special education
- Noon aides

- Bus drivers
- Food service
- Paraprofessionals
- SACC aides
- Childcare aides

The L'Anse Creuse News is published quarterly by Katelyn Hill, Community Relations Coordinator, for the L'Anse Creuse Public School Community.

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