



# PEMBROKE COMMUNITY CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL DISTRICT 259

BUILT TO LAST....

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER | MARCH 2023



## MEET THE BOARD MEMBERS

BY SAM PAYTON & FAITH HARRISON

We'd like to introduce to you the Board Members of Pembroke Community Consolidated School District #259. They believe educational resources for students AND quality teachers are both highly important. Many of the Board Members went to school here in the district, and have had their children and grandchildren also go through this school system. They have been part of the community for a while and continue to fight for the students of the District. We interviewed the Board Members about their future vision for Lorenzo R. Smith and District #259. Here are some of their responses.



### **MR. IRA SNEED, BOARD PRESIDENT**

Our School Board President has served on the Board for 12 years; his highlight as a student was being inducted into the BETA Club. One of his goals for the district is to open a high school making Lorenzo Smith a K-12 district, something he believes students could benefit from.

### **MR. EURELIUS ROSS, VICE-PRESIDENT**

Mr. Eurelius Ross has served on the School Board for 18 years and now serves as Vice-President. His goal for the district is to see the students in the district progress and something he would like to see change is to get a larger enrollment. He sees a Board Members responsibility as to assure the kids we represent get a quality education.



### **MRS. STACEY NOBLE, SECRETARY**

Mrs. Stacey Noble has served on the School Board for 10 years and now serves as the Secretary. Her goal for the district is to have a track field built where we can hold and host track meets which leads us to why she decided to run for the School Board. Her goal was to make sure students receive the same benefits and opportunities available to them students have in other schools. Something she said she would like to improve is the negative stigma we have and make it more positive so people would want to bring their students here and also to change the mindset "We cherish our students and staff. We are a close-knit family."

### **MRS. CLEATIE BUTLER, TREASURER**

Mrs. Cleatie Butler has served on the School Board for 35 years and now serves as Treasurer. She decided to run for the School Board because she loves kids and a friend had recommended it because they thought she would be a good fit. She now wants to see the kids grow and do well. She said there is nothing she would like to change; she just wants the staff to keep pushing for the kids and to make sure the students have what they need when they leave the district. She sees a Board Members responsibility as to make decisions and take actions that are in the best interest of the students.

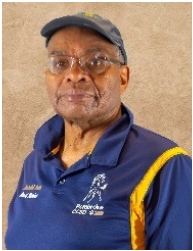


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#### MRS. TONIA LAFI, ASST. SECRETARY

Mrs. Tonia Lafi has served on the School Board for over 18 years; she currently serves as Assistant Secretary. She decided to run for the School Board to improve the morale of the students and staff and to build a better curriculum and give students a strong education. She would like to see a new curriculum that is a more robust STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) education.



#### MR. FRED CARTER, MEMBER

Mr. Fred Carter has served on the School Board since 2015. This is his 2nd term. He decided to run for the school board to have a deeper involvement. He stated that "My life is centered around the generation behind me. The youth are a precious gift." He also said he wanted to make a difference for the young people we represent. We are committed to inspiring young people and reclaiming the rich culture and spirit that is Pembroke Township. Leading into his goal for the district which is to create programs that are innovative to draw more people to want to come and stay in the area like a curriculum centered around STEM to make sure the children are well rounded to be able to work in any industry. He sees a Board Member's responsibility is "to make sure the school has whatever resources students need for administration to deliver on their commitment to the students".

## MEET THE PRINCIPAL

BY ENVY BROWN



Recently, Pembroke School District replaced out-going Principal, Dr. White. Dr. Patricia Starks graciously accepted the position, and her impact was felt on the first week as Principal. Dr. Starks sat down with the Mustang Press to offer perspective from her seat.

A typical day for Dr. Starks is she greets students and makes sure there is enough staff. This may include eating lunch with students. After school she catches up on emails, she also sends notifications to different staff members. Dr. Starks also checks up on the classrooms to ensure students have what they need. Overall, she's looking at the atmosphere of the building. She is also committed to helping students who are in need of it the most. Moving on to the promise of Pembroke, the promise of Pembroke to Dr. Starks means: "It doesn't matter what a person's zip code is, it's that they can fulfill dreams and become more successful."

Dr. Starks has served as an administrator in different areas for 11 years. When she got word that this position was open, she was willing to do it. But, being Principal also comes with challenges. For Dr. Starks this includes dealing with misbehavior, and when this misbehavior turns into disrespect towards adults.

## THE PROMISE OF PEMBROKE

The Promise of Pembroke was made to Hopkins Park, and we soon will have access to natural gas in our homes and businesses for the first time. Thanks to the actions of NICOR Gas and its partners, Lorenzo Smith School was awarded \$10,000 to enhance our Media Center and Greenhouse. Members of the "Mustang Press" were on hand to capture the moment. Willow Nichols (4th grade), Sam Payton (6th grade), and Faith Harrison (6th grade) did an outstanding job taking photographs and interviewing elected officials.



## A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO THE SPIRIT OF SOL

**Thank you for supplying our students with Reading Material for Winter Break. They loved reading the books.**

Spirit of the Sol is a non-profit organization whose mission is to prepare women and children to become agents of positive change with a focus on reading, financial and environmental literacy.





# STATE OF THE DISTRICT

## ACADEMICS

### 5 Essential Surveys – SURVEY OPEN THRU MARCH 31ST

Pembroke Community Consolidated School District 259 will join the Illinois State Board of Education in the eleventh statewide survey of school climate and learning conditions. The survey provides a unique opportunity for students, teachers and parents to have a voice in improving their schools. February 3 through March 31, students and teachers will be asked to take the research-based survey to help identify strengths and weaknesses in their school's learning environment. The parent survey supplement will also be administered during the same survey window. These surveys will serve as an opportunity for schools to reflect on progress since the last statewide implementation.

### Accelerated Reader

Accelerated Reader (A.R) is a computer program that helps Teachers and Librarians manage and monitor children's independent reading practices. Our students, Kindergarten - 8th grade choose a book on their reading level and read at their own pace. When finished, they then take a short quiz on the book they just read. Passing the quiz is an indicator that our students are understanding what they have read. When students can choose their own book that they are interested in and also on their reading level, it changes the playing field. This makes reading a much more enjoyable experience. A.R. helps everybody involved: students, teachers, and librarians to set goals and directly enhance their learning experience. Our overall reading goal at LRS is 80%. Currently, our top Reading Percentage Classrooms are 1st - Ms. Glenn's 6th class. 2nd - Mrs. Ostrowski's - 7th class, and Ms. Foster's 8th grade class, Congratulations to all.

### Fountas & Pinnell

Lorenzo R. Smith School, has just adopted a new Literacy Program, Fountas & Pinnell (F & P). F & P is a whole group, small group and independent reading program that gives teachers a blueprint for teaching creative experiences in reading, writing, talking and reflecting. F & P, also provides instructions on Guided Reading, where you meet the students where they are and help move them forward. Interactive Reading, where students are given the opportunity to explore their text, by way of finding more information on the author or illustrator. Shared Reading is when small groups of similar reading level students come together and read, reflect and share about their text or story. Independent Reading is where students have the opportunity to enjoy books on their own. This is the goal, to have students wanting to read and understand what they are reading.

*"A key factor of independent reading is choice." – Irene C. Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell*



**Your feedback is important to us!**

Students, Teachers, and Parents across Illinois have an opportunity to participate in the annual statewide Illinois 5Essentials Survey. Help us generate a sense of how to improve this institution to meet the needs of the Pembroke



2023 Illinois 5Essentials Student Survey  
Link to survey: <http://survey.5-essentials.org/illinois/survey/student/>  
Students will need to enter their student ID and birth date to take the survey.

2023 Illinois 5Essentials Teacher Survey  
Link to survey: <http://survey.5-essentials.org/illinois/survey/teacher/>

2023 Illinois Parent Survey  
Link to survey: <http://survey.5-essentials.org/illinois/survey/parent/>

## GREENHOUSE CLUB

Lorenzo R Smith school started a greenhouse at the end of the school year of 2022. This year we developed a Greenhouse Club to keep the greenhouse running. The Greenhouse Club grew fall mums and sold them to make money for greenhouse supplies. In the future, we would like to have flower sales and vegetables for every season.

Some goals that the Greenhouse Club committee members have made include:

- Grow flowers for Mother's Day gifts
- Flowers for the front of the building
- Future flower sales - Spring and Fall
- Grow vegetable gardens outside of the greenhouse



Freddie, Keilly, Benjamin, Faith, Sam, Elija, Heidi, Ka'Maree, Analia, Advisor Mrs. Ostrowski



## BROADCAST CLUB

BY KAMAREE & FAITH

Greetings! We are the Journalism/Broadcast/Media Club of LRS for 2022-23 school year. We currently have students from 4th - 8th grade. We have been covering all the events here at Lorenzo Smith School and some away sporting events. We assisted in the media coverage for The Promise of Pembroke event, where NICOR Gas held its event at LRS with public officials and community leaders.

We recently attended the Museum of Broadcast Communications in downtown Chicago, where we were able to actually enter a "Real Broadcast Studio." We learned the history of the Chicago Station WGN (World's Greatest Network), where The Bozo Show aired. We look forward to keeping you informed!

Trae, Romeo, N'la, Envy, Annie, KaMaree, Faith, Willow, Jacob, Sam, Omar, Raymond, Advisors Ms. DeLoach & Ms. Talley

# EDUCATION HACK

**IAR TESTING PREPARATION WILL BEGIN MARCH 13TH FOR LORENZO R. SMITH STUDENTS. HERE ARE SOME TESTING TIPS THAT CAN BE USED TO HELP YOUR SCHOLAR PREPARE FOR SUCCESS!**

- 1. USE TECHNOLOGY IN A TARGETED WAY:** Do you want to know what taking the English/Language Arts/Literacy or Math portion of the IAR Assessments is like? A practice test for each grade is available on the website for you to familiarize yourself with the kinds of items and format used for the tests. Parents are invited to use the IAR Parent Portal, where you can access individual student results and resources to support everything you need to know about your child's performance on the Illinois Assessment of Readiness for English Language Arts and Math. This portal also allows you to access your student's previous test results and access them in the future. Visit <https://il-results.pearsonaccessnext.com/login>
- 2. SHOW THEM THE DATA AND SET INDIVIDUAL GOALS:** Ownership is a huge part of success. Have each student examine their previous scores, setting goals that they agree to reach for.
- 3. GIVE THEM STRATEGIES FOR WHEN THEY WANT TO GIVE UP:** Many students admitted that they shut down when they saw a wall of text. Encourage your students to employ just one strategy to help them when they wanted to give up.  
Here are some strategies you can share:
  - Teach them how to chunk text so that they tackle little bites at a time.
  - Teach them how to break sentences down into their parts so that they can highlight the subject and predicate in their brains.
  - Teach them how to visualize the concept or gist of a passage.
  - Teach them how to activate prior knowledge or make connections to the material. For many kids, this doesn't just happen magically—we have to preach it over and over and show them that they already have far more knowledge of our content areas in their heads than they realize.
- 4. BUILD CONFIDENCE:** At test time, there's nothing you can do but say, "You're ready." Students have a skill they need to take these tests—it's called educated guesswork. And after years of school, and your teaching, they have some ability to do it. They just need to trust themselves.

## COMMUNITY CORNER

**KCCSI - Energy assistance - Every Wednesday**

KCCSI is present at Lorenzo Smith School every Wednesday to accept applications for the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) by appointment only between 9:00am to 1:00pm. For more information or to make an appointment, call KCCSI at 815-933-7883.

Kankakee County Community Services Incorporated (KCCSI) is a nonprofit and Kankakee County's Community Action Agency, which provides a diverse array of services to and advocacy on behalf of low-income individuals and families. Services include emergency services, gas, propane/and or electric, emergency furnace, weatherization, Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP), Youth Employment, Rental or Mortgage Assistance, and Food Pantry.

KCCSI currently employs nearly 25 people serving more than 5000 residents in Kankakee County annually with over 15 programs designed to alleviate hunger and homelessness, prepare individuals for the workforce, improve health outcomes, lower energy costs, strengthen families and mitigate crises. They are located at 657 E Court Street in Kankakee, Illinois.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**March 13th – 24th – IAR Testing**

**March 22nd - Spring and Graduate Pictures**

**March 23rd - Intermediate Basketball Game @ LRS**

**March 27th - 31st - Spring Break**

**April 5th - Shadow Day at St. Anne High School**

**April 6th – Parent Teacher Conferences**

**April 7th - Good Friday No School**

**April 11th - Track Meet Watseka**

**April 12th - Pastries with Parents**

**April 14th - Early Release Day**

**April 20th - Track Meet Watseka**

**May 10th - Pastries with Parents**

**May 23rd - 8th Grade Banquet**

**May 25th - 8th Grade Graduation**

**May 26th - Field Day**

**May 31st - Last Day of School**