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The LITCHFIELD PRIDE

WINTER 2021

Official Newsletter of Litchfield Public Schools

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 2

CENTER SCHOOL • INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL • MIDDLE SCHOOL • HIGH SCHOOL

Art students hone their skills

By: Rebecca Melaragno and Michael Bucci, Art Teachers; Kristen Della Volpe, Principal

For several years, art teachers Rebecca Melaragno and Michael Bucci have been challenging students to stretch their artistic abilities, and the fall of 2020 is no different. Sculpture and ceramics students learned to use the slab method and the coil method, common introductory pottery techniques that help the potter to shape clay around molds or into angular shapes too challenging to achieve on the pottery wheel. Drawing students learned to draw from observation using contour line art, with a focus on value and proportion. They worked to perfect shading with charcoal and graphite, and to blend with colored pencils. Painting and mixed media classes worked with translucent painting mediums, like watercolor

and ink wash, to convey texture in representational subjects. Advanced art students worked on still life's, with a focus on composition and value through charcoal. For second semester, these students will develop independent projects that incorporate skills acquired throughout their years as artists at LHS.

LHS currently has one full-time art teacher and one part-time art teacher. The program offers six half-year courses and two full-year courses. It has remained one of our top three elective programs for several years, and our staff are eager to be able to offer more programming, such as advanced graphic design and Character and Illustration II, when resources become available.



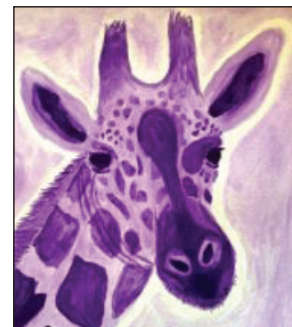
Effie Saltourides, Grade 11



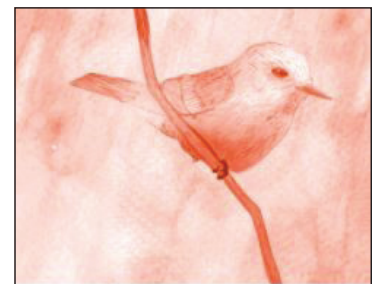
Jasmina Guaman, Grade 10



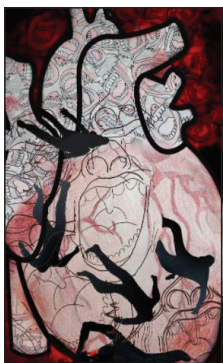
Tyrahlynn Santos, Grade 11



Ronan Tenney, Grade 12



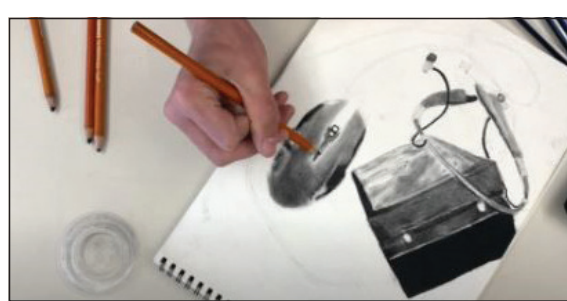
Madelyn Kerins, Grade 12



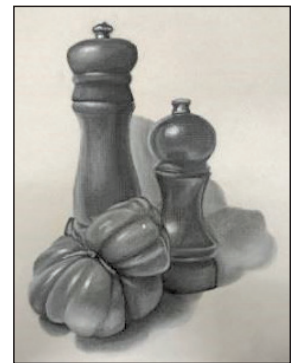
Logan Saunders, Grade 12



Luis Hurtado, Grade 12



Thomas Eykelhoff, Grade 12



Katharine Orr, Grade 11

A Unique Time: 2020 + 1

By: Christopher Leone, Superintendent

Community,

Welcome to a new year and a new edition of *The Litchfield Pride*.

Recently I have reflected on the previous year, considered goals for the current year, and pondered long-term into the future. In a recent community letter, I stated, "our best days are yet to come." It is something I truly believe about our school district.

How can one be positive about the future during an international pandemic?

My positivity is born in recent months witnessing students, teachers, parents, and community, all adjusting. Yes, it has been a challenge, a bit stressful, but overall we continue to revise instructional practice. Out of necessity, the field of education has evolved after decades, and this gives me a reason for optimism.

While I believe we have learned a lot during recent months, if we have learned only one thing, it must be that doing the same thing (day-after-day) is not possible. The education of 2021, is not the education of 2020, and won't be the education of 2022, or beyond.

I find positive in this adjustment because as Superintendent of two districts, we have seen that change through collaboration can be beneficial, resourceful, and yield great things for our students and staff.

Between Litchfield Public Schools and Regional School District No. 6, there is now shared professional development, human resources, leadership, technology, operations, and fiscal management. All of this has resulted in 0% increases and more resources for our students and staff.

There has been a 2.5-mile divide for over 65 years. That divide, through change and collaboration, has closed dramatically during a pandemic. On that, we can be positive about the impact on education. Despite the obstacles, we are making progress and the best is yet to come.

Stay strong. Stay healthy. Keep living forward.

Chris

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Litchfield Intermediate School

“Fall into Reading” Virtual Book Fair

By: Jamie McDevitt, ITL Teacher at Litchfield Intermediate School

The first-ever PTO Virtual Scholastic Book Fair was a total success!! In combining with Center School, we were able to continue the book fair tradition, and bring an online fair to students in grades pre-K- 6 this November! Over 6,000 items, including new releases, best sellers, and value packs, were included in the Fair! This interactive book fair gave students the opportunity to browse bookcases, check-out exclusive book trailers, and view curated reading lists by grade level. This new experience offered students a virtual walk-through shop with premium titles. Our school community felt like we were at a real-life Book Fair—from the comfort of our classrooms; the 360° bookshelf view was just one of many highlights! Our reading events in school and virtual family events surrounding the Fair were also a huge success. We earned 25% of all sales in rewards for our school! We appreciate the community gathering together to support our students and our school through the Fair. Thank you to students, staff, and families for keeping our kids reading and raising funds for our school!

Hour of Code: Introduction to Coding at LIS

By: Jamie McDevitt, ITL Teacher at Litchfield Intermediate School

Computer science is a 21st-century skill that enables students to be creators, rather than just consumers, of technology. Its emphasis on problem-solving, critical thinking, and innovation



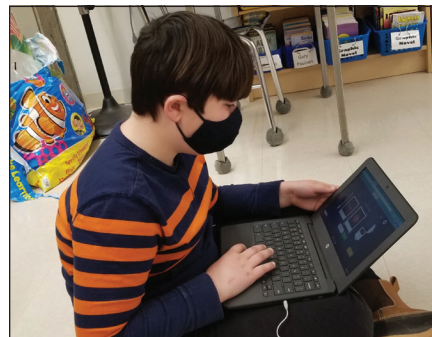
4th graders in Ms. Kraut's class participate in Hour of Code

will provide students a foundation upon which they can build and develop.

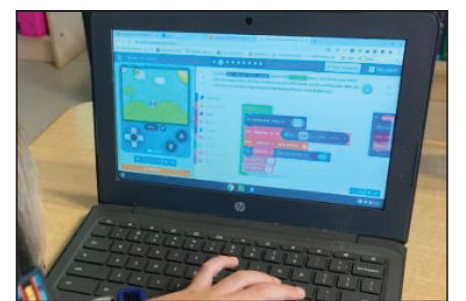
Knowing how to code or knowledge of coding fundamentals will be required in almost every job that students might have in the future and it is one of many

reasons why we believe it is so important that our students have the opportunity to learn, develop, and write code in school.

This year, Computer Science Education Week was December 7-13. During this week, students at LIS had the opportunity to participate in The Hour of Code on Wednesday, December 9, 2020. The Hour of Code is a global movement set on introducing students to computer science. This one-hour challenge, found at www.hourofcode.com, is a super fun introduction to coding; students can choose from



5th grader Benjamin Allen participates in the Hour of Code in Ms. Sullivan's classroom.



Hour of Code encourages students to develop their fundamental coding skills through different activities including video game simulations.

multiple devices, and even include unplugged activities! Some favorite activities of LIS students included: Angry Birds, The Grinch, Disney's Frozen, and Minecraft along with Code.org's activities! There were no set instructions, no set lessons or activities for Hour of Code. Students were encouraged to explore any area of interest on Code.org and we hope they were inspired to show you their code at home! The Hour of Code is just the beginning of our coding journey this school year.

Pajama Day For Connecticut Children's Medical Center

By: Kelly Leifert: 4th grade teacher at Litchfield Intermediate School

So far this school year, LIS has participated in a number of different spirit days, some including an optional charitable component to give back to different organizations. Principal Dr. Michael Pascento explained the importance of continuing these special spirit days. “This year more than ever building a sense of community and teaching lessons of giving to others is critical. Our students love to show their support for those in need.”



4th grader Audrey Pickert sports her “Buddy the Elf” themed pajamas for LIS's Pajama Day.



(From left to right) Sunny Fedorovich, Charlotte Foss, and Ella Paradise from Ms. Leifert's 4th grade classroom wore their pajamas to school in support of CCMC.

Our latest spirit day had a special charitable option. On Friday, Dec. 18, Litchfield Intermediate School participated in the 10th anniversary of PJ Day for Connecticut Children's Medical Center. Students and staff were encouraged to wear their pajamas to school to show their support of CCMC and if possible, to donate \$1.00. After many generous donations of a dollar or more, our combined donations from LIS totaled \$774.05! A great big thank you to all who participated!

The LITCHFIELD PRIDE

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Litchfield Center School

Looking Forward to 2021-2022

By: Lisa Deltano, Principal, Litchfield Center School

As the calendar changes to 2021, we are beginning preparations for the 2021-2022 school year.

Kindergarten

Children living in Litchfield, Bantam, and Northfield who will be 5 years old by January 1, 2022, are eligible for Kindergarten for the 2021-2022 school year. Kindergarten registration will take place starting January 25th. Registrations may be completed at Center School from January 25 - February 5 between the hours of 9:30 am and 2:30 pm or online at our Litchfield Public Schools website.

We will be posting a video for families to learn about our Kindergarten program, expectations for students, and to meet the teachers. The link will be on our Center School website. After viewing the video, we will invite families to join us for a Google Meet on February 1 at 6:00 pm to answer any questions you may have. The link for the Google Meet will be on our Center School Website. We look forward to meeting you and your child!

Preschool

Litchfield Public Schools is excited to begin the enrollment/registration period for our 2021—2022 integrated preschool program. The program is designed around the developmental needs of typical and developmentally delayed children living in the towns of Litchfield, Bantam, and Northfield. Morning and afternoon sessions are available for both 3 & 4-year-old children. The cost of the preschool program is \$2700 per year (multi-child discounts are available). Applications will be accepted from January 27th - February 26th, 2021. Available seats will be filled through a lottery held on March 2, 2021, at 12:00 p.m. Application forms must be received by 12:00 p.m. on February 26th. Please contact Lisa Deltano at Center School with questions.

Please join us for a Way to Grow information session. Session 1 is an informational session for parents about our three-year-old and four-year-old preschool program. Session 1 (Virtual): January 27, 2021, at 2:00 pm and 4:30 pm. The link to the virtual meeting will be on the Center School website.

SuperRRR Hero

By: Rachel Caporuscio, LCS School Counselor & Lisa Deltano, LCS Principal



Students at Litchfield Center School are the real Super Heros! They have pledged to be R-responsible, R-respectful, and R-ready to learn and are doing an amazing job. The purpose of the Center School Super Hero program is to establish and maintain a safe and effective school environment that maximizes academic achievement and behavioral competence of students. The program builds a positive school community and helps students make connections with one another and the staff.

At Center School, we do this by following the 3 R's.

Ready means that you are ready to follow directions and learn.

Responsible is making good decisions, doing your jobs, and caring for others.

Respectful is thinking and acting in a positive way about yourself and others; being respectful means you care about someone's feelings.

Students work on the 3 R's in all areas inside and outside of the Center School building. Students can earn Super Hero tickets for demonstrating 3-R behavior. At the end of each month, students can turn in their tickets for a reward or save them for the next month if they have a particular reward in mind. Each reward has a different ticket value. Some of the rewards include: share a book with your class, choose a Go Noodle, a phone call home, lunch with a teacher, fancy lunch, extra specials time, or assist the principal! Students are excited at the end of each month to count their tickets to see if they have met their goal. On the last Friday of each month, we gather as a school to share our successes and celebrate our new learning. It is truly wonderful to see students cheering each other on and being excited for a friend when they have met their goal.



Sophia earned 50 SuperHero tickets and redeemed them to "Assist the Principal."



Center School students, staff & families raised over \$1,200 to benefit CCMC

Harper and Mrs. LaBonte rocking their matching pj's in honor of CCMC PJ Day.



Carefully navigating the Jingle Bell Jungle.



Ms. Moore, Francesca and Mrs. Murray show their holiday spirit.



Ammie is checking out the new shelving in the library purchased through a grant from the Seherr-Toss Foundation.



Michaela and Sage are trying the new tables and chairs in the library purchased through a grant from the Seherr-Toss Foundation.



Celia and Brion are practicing their persistence and cooperative skills in PE.



Preschool students enjoying a sing along with Mr. Parker, Miss Raymond, Mrs. Marshall and Mrs. Rutz.



Miss Raymond, Mrs. Marshall, Mrs. Moore, Mrs. Betz and Mr. Parker created special activities for students in December.

Litchfield Middle & High School

Litchfield Middle School Advisory Program Emphasizes Social-Emotional Learning

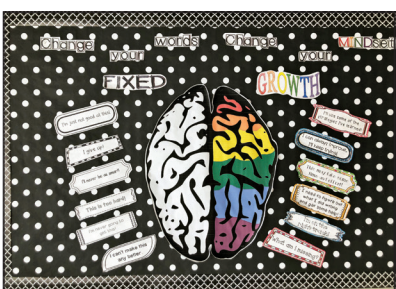
By: Kristen Della Volpe, Principal

Litchfield Middle School Advisory Program schedules two days a week for students to participate in the Second Step® Middle School Program, a research-based social-emotional learning program designed to improve students' emotion management, impulse control, problem-solving, and empathy. Second Step skills and concepts are designed to help students both in and out of school. These include:

- **Mindsets and Goals:** Students learn about ways to grow their brains and get smarter, along with research-based strategies for achieving goals and handling difficult situations.
- **Recognizing Bullying and Harassment:** Students learn how to recognize bullying and harassment, stand up safely to bullying, and respond appropriately to harassment.
- **Thoughts, Emotions, and Decisions:** Students learn how to recognize strong emotions and unhelpful thoughts, and apply strategies to manage their emotions and reduce stress.
- **Managing Relationships and Social Conflict:** Students learn strategies for developing and maintaining healthy relationships, perspective-taking, and dealing with conflict.



LMS students work on Second Step activities during advisory; LMS bulletin board.



“Second Step is helping our middle school address conflicts in a much more productive way,” explains LMS Interim Dean of Students Ben Storrs. “Students are able to make natural connections between the program activities and our restorative practices.” The 7th grade program focuses mainly on positive relationships; the 8th grade program focuses on individual growth and successful goal-setting.

Second Step lessons are delivered by classroom teachers on Mondays and Tuesdays during Advisory.

LHS Library Focuses on Diversity

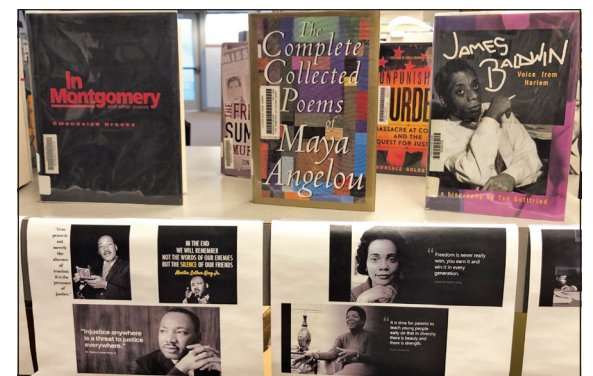
By: Kristen Della Volpe, Principal

Litchfield High School Library Media Specialist Brendan Eckert is working this year on the library's capacity to develop students' empathy and fact-based decision-making, two concepts closely linked to the standards for the International Society for Technology in Education and the National School Library Standards. Eckert is using his weekly “LHS Library News” video updates to highlight for students' current available resources that build understanding and empathy for others, and that discuss current events and reliable information from opposing viewpoints.



“Multiple, rigorous research studies have supported the claim that reading is a powerful tool for building empathy,” Eckert explains. “By immersing oneself in stories about others' experiences, one sees the world in new ways, beyond the limitations of their own experience.” Monthly, Eckert selects a culturally marginalized group and features works written by members of that group, informational texts that educate about the group, and novels with prominent characters from the group. Throughout September, Eckert featured the LGBTQ+ community; in October, people with physical or mental disabilities; and in November, Native American heritage.

Eckert's mission is to develop our students' critical minds by presenting objective information, and modeling the process of developing a position based on facts. During his weekly “LHS Library News” broadcasts, Eckert draws attention to high-quality resources currently available to students on current events. For example, after the passing of Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg made national headlines and raised questions about her successor, Eckert highlighted for students our library resources about Justice Ginsburg and other Justices, both past and present, as well as the general role of the Supreme Court in our government. Also, prior to our fall break, Eckert shared library materials that presented a balanced perspective about Christopher Columbus, as well as the various histories of Native Americans.



Water Stations Thanks To LH&WR



The COVID-19 pandemic has brought many facility challenges inclusive of the requirement to close water fountains per the recommendation of the Department of Public Health. With the generosity of Litchfield Health and Wellness Resources (LH&WR) this problem has been solved.

In January, six filtered water bottle filling stations purchased from a financial gift to the district by LH&WR will be installed across our campuses. This gift comes after providing three cases of bottled water to each classroom in the fall.

This amazing gesture once again shows that nothing is possible in education without our community.

A special thanks to the Board of LH&WR for their efforts to assist the children and staff during a time of need.

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