

BOE Petitions Now Available

On May 20, 2025, LaFayette Central School District voters will choose two district residents to serve on the LaFayette Board of Education from July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2028.

A school board member takes on one of the most important citizen responsibilities: overseeing the education of the community's youth. In these challenging times for public education, school boards are seeking individuals who find excitement and satisfaction in confronting tough challenges and working collegially to rise above them and help students in their communities succeed, according to the New York State Schools Boards Association's (NYSSBA) website.

The board of education is a uniquely American institution, according to NYSSBA. It ensures the public schools are flexible and responsive to the needs of the community. School boards are composed of volunteers within the community who dedicate their time to better public education. Board members are elected into their position, except for those in Yonkers and New York City.

With school children always their ultimate focus, school board members act officially at the board table, working with other board members to serve students and accomplish many tasks including creating a shared vision for the future of education, setting the direction of the school district to achieve the highest student performance, adopting and maintaining current policies, maintaining district facilities, establishing an annual budget, and setting a tax levy.

Board members benefit from having the following attributes:

Effective Communicator: Can describe what he or she wants and describe what others want; a good listener.

Consensus Builder: Capable of working toward decisions that all can support and willing to compromise to achieve goals.

Community Participant: Enjoys meeting a variety of people, can identify the community's key communicators and reaches out to the community.

Decision Maker: Is comfortable making decisions and can support group decision-making.

Information Processor: Can organize priorities and schedules to handle large amounts of verbal and written information.

Leader: Willing to take risks, be supportive of board colleagues, district staff and community

Team Player: Helps promote the board's vision and goals.

The LaFayette Central School District's Board of Education is composed of seven school district residents elected by voters. Each board member is

(...continued on Page 2)

Congratulations

Onondaga Nation Master Teacher, David Amidon, was recently selected as the 2024 Recipient of the National Association of Biology Teachers (NABT), Ecology / Environmental Science Teaching Award.

The National Association of Biology Teachers (NABT) is an organization that promotes the teaching of biology in the United States. Their mission is to improve the quality of biology education for all students. Colleagues nominated Mr. Amidon, through a video, essay, and letters of recommendation submitted on his behalf. The committee selected Mr. Amidon based on his exceptional teaching practices in the science field, where he focuses on student engagement with impactful learning outcomes.

"We are fortunate to have Mr. Amidon as the Onondaga Nation 6th-8th grade science teacher. He loves to bring new experiences to the classroom such as painting boats to send to the Arctic to map out ocean currents, and bringing in educational professional speakers who are culturally relevant to the students at ONS. He does a spectacular job bringing real-life experiences to students while motivating them with hands-on engaging activities."

Congratulations, Mr. Amidon. The Onondaga Nation School has been fortunate to have you for the past two years.



Dear Edwina, Jr.!

Congratulations to the Cast and Crew of Grimshaw's Musical, *Dear Edwina, Jr.!* The 5th and 6th graders worked extremely hard for three months to prepare for their big performance. They took center stage on Friday, December 6th at the Jr./Sr. High School. Way to go!!

Dear
Edwina
Junior



◆ LaFayette District News ◆

Dear School Community *(...continued from Page 1)*

elected to a three-year term. Board members are not financially compensated. According to New York State Public Officers Law § 3 and New York State Education Law § 2102 candidates for the school board must meet the following qualifications:

1. Must be able to read and write;
2. Must be a qualified district voter;
3. Must be, and have been, a district resident for at least one year prior to the election, but need not be a taxpayer;
4. May be the only member of his/her household on the board;
5. May not be an employee of the board;
6. May not simultaneously hold another public office, which has been determined by law, court ruling, or Commissioner's decision to be incompatible.

In order to have their name placed on the ballot, each interested resident must collect 25 signatures from qualified school district voters. The signatures must be on nominating petitions that must be filed by 4:30 p.m. on April 21, 2025, in the District Clerk's office, 5955 Route 20, LaFayette.

Please feel free to contact Paula Hibbert, District Clerk at 315-677-9728 if you would like a nominating petition.

Sincerely, Jeremy Belfield
Superintendent of Schools, LaFayette Central School District
jbelfield@lafayetteschools.org • 315-529-9550 (cell)



◆ The BIG PICTURE News ◆

So Much to Celebrate

As we approach the end of the semester, the past few weeks have been marked by numerous moments of engagement, learning, and hands-on experiences that have further strengthened the bonds within our community. From inspiring guest presentations to the intense creativity in our workshop, there's much to reflect on and celebrate.

Mental Health Awareness and Connection: A Workshop with Christa

One of the standout moments came on Monday, November 28th, when Christa from Community Contact Services led an impactful workshop titled "It's Real: Teens and Mental Health." The session was more than just a presentation—it was an opportunity for our students to learn how to engage in conversations about mental health, seek help, and prioritize self-care. Christa's interactive approach left a lasting impression, encouraging students to think deeply about their well-being and how to support others in their community.

The session concluded with an invitation from Maddy, one of our Seniors, to participate in her Mental Health Meetup. This event promises to be a space for students to connect, enjoy each other's company, and engage in creative self-care activities like bracelet-making. We're excited to see how this initiative unfolds and the positive impact it will have on our school culture.



Exploring the Electrical Trade with the Local Electricians Union

Another highlight was our visit from Tom and Ryan of the local Electricians Union. They provided us with an in-depth look at the world of electrical work, from the essential skills required to the diverse career opportunities in the field. The hands-on activity where students were challenged to design a circuit with light switches was an exciting opportunity to put theory into practice. It was clear that many students found the experience both engaging and inspiring, and several expressed an interest in learning more about apprenticeship programs in the electrical trade.

◆ The BIG PICTURE News ◆

Exhibition Week: A Celebration of Creativity and Growth

As Exhibition Week unfolded, it was evident that our students had been hard at work. We achieved an impressive 92% on-time exhibition rate, and the energy in the school was palpable. Parents and community members were welcomed into the space, where they had the chance to view the incredible projects our students had been working on. For many, it was a first opportunity to showcase their progress and achievements.

The 101s held their inaugural exhibitions, presenting their “Who Am I?” projects with impressive poise, thanks to Carolyn Bice’s public speaking mini-lesson. Our older students in the 201s and 301s also demonstrated significant growth, transitioning into their new learning plans with confidence. The 401s reported on the progress of their Senior Thesis Projects, sharing the innovative work they’ve been doing.

Several students had standout moments during their exhibitions. Céra shared her almost-completed shelf/bench, proudly detailing the tools and techniques she used to bring her vision to life. Roy presented his ambitious dog house project, overcoming challenges with determination, while Colton demonstrated his skill on the lathe, creating a miniature baseball bat. Even though he hadn’t finished by the time of his exhibition, he used this as an opportunity to engage his panel, walking them through the process.

In addition, Kyla led the creation of a Lego League game table for the Grimshaw Robotics Club, a project that showcased her leadership and planning skills. The table was a hit with the robotics students, and Kyla’s attention to detail in ensuring easy transportation and storage made the project all the more impressive.



Exploring Nature and Science

In Empirical Reasoning (ER), students have been diving deep into their second research module, examining the gold-enrod stems for parasitic activity. This hands-on exploration is providing valuable data that will be used to draw conclusions about the ecosystems we’re studying. Students are eagerly looking forward to what they will discover next.

We also took a group of students to plant our garlic crop at the Apple Festival Grounds, a rite of passage for our 101s. While some students are already engaged in internships or running the coffee shop, we are excited to bring together a mixed-level group to plant the crop. This will be a perfect opportunity for the older students to pass on their knowledge to the younger ones.



Senior Thesis Projects: A Reflection of Passion and Ambition

Our 401s continue to make significant strides in their Senior Thesis Projects (STPs). Several students have secured dates, locations, and guest speakers for their projects. For example, Lucian is organizing a multi-school GSA Summit, Ryan is assessing small engines for his repair drive, and Gabby is making beautiful handmade items like bracelets, beaded rings, and wooden dolls to sell at craft fairs in support of Every Child Matters. It’s inspiring to see how these projects are not only helping students grow in their chosen fields but are also making meaningful contributions to the community.

The past few weeks have been filled with incredible learning experiences, creativity, and growth. As we approach the holiday season, we are proud of the work our students have accomplished and look forward to the upcoming exhibitions and projects. Thank you to everyone who has contributed to making this journey such a success—whether through hands-on work in the shop, thoughtful

contributions to community initiatives, or support during exhibitions. Here's to continued learning, growth, and community connection!

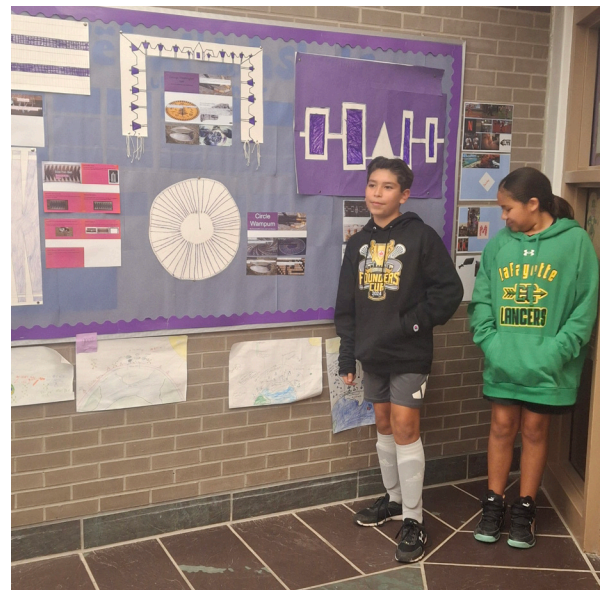
◆ Onondaga Nation School News ◆

Onondaga Nation School News

Janelle Zachary was granted tenure at the November 13th BOE meeting. Janelle has been working at ONS since 2021 as the speech-language pathologist. Janelle says “I chose this profession because I knew I wanted to work with kids and help them on an individual basis. Everyone deserves a voice, and I wanted to help give students tools to effectively communicate and build connections with others.” Congratulations Janelle!!

ONS opened their first Little Free Library in October! The library will be open year round and is located by the front entrance sign. Books will be available for readers of all ages. Thank you to Mrs. Powless, Mr. Capella, Mrs. Mary, and Mr. Neu for helping complete the project. Art design by Big Pic intern Class of 2024.

ONS has held two Family Nights so far this year on Oct. 23rd and Dec. 11th. Free dinner is served to the families that attend with activities to follow. The October family night had student presentations and games in the gymnasium. The December family night put on a social in the gymnasium. We look forward to the Onondaga Nation community joining us for our upcoming family night on Wednesday, February 26th at 5pm!



◆ Junior/Senior High School News ◆

FIRST MARKING PERIOD HIGH HONOR ROLL

Grade 7

Oliver Allen
Jacob Baker
Connor Booher
Braxton Chawgo
Levi Farwell
Gabriel Fridmann
Adalynne Gamlen
Mason Gray
Lenox Harmatuk
Leena Kolbeck
Liam McMahon
Preston Nels
Ethan Parry
Adrianna Ryan
Sequoia Shenandoah
Cameron Stevenson
Elise Zehner

Grade 8

Hannah Bauer
Evelyn Borchert
Jacob Christoffel
Austin Johnson
Rose Kendall
Brielle Nels
Makenna Reed
Paisley Wiers

Grade 9

Atticus Allen
Rylee Andersen
Kennedy Harmatuk
Leah Heath
Presley Homer
David Kostiv
Jackson Loughlin
Graham Olin
Ayson Ryan
Hailey Schrader

Grade 10

Jeremy Aldrich
Logan Booher
Ashtin Carrier
Olivia Coppola
Josephine Davidson
Claire Fischer
Grant Gates

Amanda Johnson
Delilah Johnson
Caden McClary
Cross Newman
Cambria Stanton

Grade 11

Hudson Borchert
Ian Colburn
Amelia Evans
Katherine Fischer
Gisele Greco
Leah Haas
Logan Hazeltine
Fayvion Jackson
Lynn Jones
Landon Kendall
Sophie Olrich
Maximus Race
Caitlin Somerlot
Thomas Somerlot
Sye Stanton

Grade 12

Jason Borte
Gracie Burns
Asha Christiana
Kenneth Clarke
Carlee Clemens
Caroline Davidson
Kal[^]:na Dockstader
Shayla Elm
Kaitlyn Fabend
Bennett Friedman
Aubrie Jones
Isabella Kremers
Lily McElhannon
Ryan Ortlieb
Rayna Poplawski
Kiera Reed
Aubrey Reynolds
Ava Shute
Owen Simmons
Gavin Slishevsky
Kayla Tillinghast
Paul Wells
Gregory Wheeler
Claire Zehner

FIRST MARKING PERIOD HONOR ROLL

Grade 7

Jedidiah Bush
Zoe Gibson
Molly Humphrey
Mason Maroney
Matthew Ousby
Teiowentawakon Shenandoah
Jacob Snyder
Guy Watkins

Grade 8

Hannah Bauer
Evelyn Borchert
Jacob Christoffel
Austin Johnson
Rose Kendall
Brielle Nels
Makenna Reed
Paisley Wiers

Grade 9

Atticus Allen
Rylee Andersen
Kennedy Harmatuk
Leah Heath
Presley Homer
David Kostiv
Jackson Loughlin
Graham Olin
Ayson Ryan
Hailey Schrader

Grade 10

Jeremy Aldrich
Logan Booher
Ashtin Carrier
Olivia Coppola
Josephine Davidson
Claire Fischer
Grant Gates
Amanda Johnson
Delilah Johnson
Caden McClary
Cross Newman
Cambria Stanton

Grade 11

Hudson Borchert
Ian Colburn
Amelia Evans
Katherine Fischer
Gisele Greco
Leah Haas
Logan Hazeltine
Fayvion Jackson
Lynn Jones
Landon Kendall
Sophie Olrich
Maximus Race
Caitlin Somerlot
Thomas Somerlot
Sye Stanton

Grade 12

Jason Borte
Gracie Burns
Asha Christiana
Kenneth Clarke
Carlee Clemens
Caroline Davidson
Kal[^]:na Dockstader
Shayla Elm
Kaitlyn Fabend
Bennett Friedman
Aubrie Jones
Isabella Kremers
Lily McElhannon
Ryan Ortlieb
Rayna Poplawski
Kiera Reed
Aubrey Reynolds
Ava Shute
Owen Simmons
Gavin Slishevsky
Kayla Tillinghast
Paul Wells
Gregory Wheeler
Claire Zehner

♦ Junior/Senior High School News ♦

Photography and Poetry Contest

The winners of the district's Fall Photography & Poetry contest have been chosen!

Photography 7-9: Jacob Meyer. Photography 10-12: Caden McClary

Jacob grabbed this photo while on a flight to Ireland. Caden captured his amazing fireworks display photo while in Pigeon Forge, TN.

Poetry 7-9: Jaiden Beirman. Poetry 10-12: Kayla Tillinghast, for "You"

Congratulations to our fall winners, and to everyone who shared their amazing work for the contest!



POETRY GRADES 7-9
JAIDEN BEIRMAN

POETRY GRADES 10-12
KAYLA TILLINGHAST

YOU

I think I saw you in my dreams
A black figure
Standing quiet in the corner
A stare so deadly
It hurt to move
The panic shook me
Like a scary movie
Tears running down my cheek
But before I could reach you
The alarm rang loudly
And you were gone in an instant
Scared away by acknowledgement



CADEN MCCLARY

◆ LaFayette Community News ◆

LaFAYETTE COMMUNITY COUNCIL NEWS

• www.townoflafayette.com • PO Box 98 Lafayette, NY 13078 • 315-677-7272 •

YOUTH PROGRAMS

Fall Sports: We had a wonderful soccer season with over 130 participants from PreK through 6th grade. Thank you to all our volunteer coaches - we could not do this without you!

Winter Sports: Wrestling season is underway for PreK-6th with over 60 registrants and Basketball season is underway for 3rd-6th with over 70 registrants. Instructional Basketball for 1st and 2nd grade will begin in late February. Watch for more details to come.

Volleyball Registration will go live January 1!

Spring Sports: Hard to believe Spring is already coming soon - watch for Baseball, Softball and Tee Ball Registration to go live February 1 and Lacrosse Registration on March 1!

ADULT PROGRAMS

Adult **Basketball** and **Volleyball** programs are underway hosted at Grimshaw. Reminder to participants to register every week for insurance purposes. Basketball is hosted Monday nights from 7:30-9pm. Volleyball is hosted Friday nights from 7-9pm.

APPLE FESTIVAL

A HUGE thank you to all our Apple Festival volunteers! We had a record volunteer turn out this year to make our booth a massive success. You are what helps make this program run and we appreciate you!

CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTING

Thank you to our volunteers for helping make hot cocoa and serving snacks at the Town Tree Lighting. You made the night so special!

LCC Contact Information:

If you are able to help with any of the LCC programs – **AND WE DO NEED YOUR HELP** - please contact LCC at 315-677-7272 or via email: playlccny@gmail.com. We cannot offer these programs without volunteers. Thank you.

Updates on all LCC programs can be found on LCC's Facebook page and new website www.playLCC.com

Information about Community Council programs can be obtained through the following sources:

Call **315-677-7272** - Leave a message/ask a question and a board member will return your call. (Messages are retrieved at least three times a week.)

E-mail playlccny@gmail.com

24/7 on our new website www.playlcc.com



LaFayette CENTRAL SCHOOLS

5955 Route 20
LaFayette, NY 13084

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Jeremy Belfield, Title IX Compliance Officer, LaFayette Central School, 5955 Route 20, West, LaFayette, New York 13084

The LaFayette Central School District does not discriminate on the basis of age, color, creed, national origin, race, sex, or handicapping conditions in its employment practices or educational programs.

Jan / Feb

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER



January

- 1-3** Holiday Recess
- 20** No School
MLK Jr Day
- 22** BOE Meeting, 5:30pm
- 24** Half Day, All Students
- 29** No School
Asian Lunar New Year

February

- 5** Community Budget Meeting,
5pm
- 12** BOE Meeting, 5:30pm
- 17-21** No School
Winter Recess
- 26** ONS Family Night 5pm

Don't forget
to like us on
Facebook.

