



JANUARY 2026

HALLWAY HAPPENINGS

LITCHFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS - PO BOX 167 LITCHFIELD, NE 68852
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ONE ACT BY MRS. SLOCUM

Our one-act play, Pearl by Mandy Conner, was an intense drama set on a 1912 tobacco farm, following a young woman trying to break her family's long cycle of abuse. With a cast and crew of 24 students, everyone pitched in—actors helped build sets, actresses mastered hair and makeup, and our community, along with several helpful dads and grandpas, supported us every step of the way. We were super lucky to have two wonderful assistant coaches, Bevin Drew and Kaitlin Goff- We could not have done it without them!

I am incredibly proud of our students for stepping outside their comfort zones after several years of comedy/lighter shows. They voted on this year's play, auditioned in August, and began rehearsing in early September. Despite busy schedules filled with sports and activities, they showed up early, stayed late, and even practiced on weekends. Our motto was "Big Goals = Big Effort," and they truly lived it.

We competed at Wilcox on Nov. 10 and earned 3rd place, followed by our always-amazing community Dinner Theatre on Nov. 13, hosted by the Spartan Foundation. We ended the week with a festival at Ansley where we received valuable feedback and continued making improvements, including adding a fog machine and transition music. At conference in Holdrege, we came home as FKC champions! We were proud to end our season by placing 3rd at Districts in Gothenburg on Dec. 3.

No matter the results, our students learned powerful lessons about teamwork, grit, and confidence—and had a great time along the way.



FFA

BY ALISON HOLM AND MR. JOHNSON

We participated in LDE's in Ansley on Monday December 8.

Addie, Taryn, Jenna D., Knox, Braxton, Kinzlie and Blake - Conduct of Chapter Meetings - Red Ribbon
Koy Z. - Creed Speaking - Red Ribbon

Alison and Macie - Junior Public Speaking both received a Red Ribbon

James - Senior Public Speaking, - Purple Ribbon (State Qualifier)

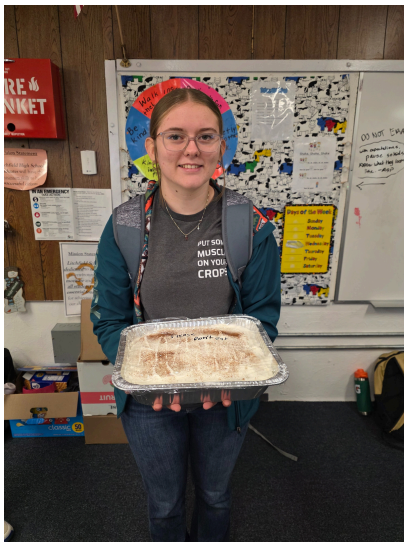
Malynn and Ida - Employment Skills. Maylynn Purple Ribbon and Ida Red Ribbon

Aubri, Jozzi, Collyn, Hailey, Rosa, Koy K. and Noah - Junior High Ag Quiz Bowl.

FIESTA DAY

BY MRS. CURLO

The Spanish I-IV's had their 2nd quarter Fiesta Day with a lot of different foods. Amongst the dishes, Keagan Ritchie made fresh Birria Tacos, Cooper Fletcher-Catalan Coca, and Macie Slocum-Tres Leches Cake. They did a great job!



CHORAL CLINIC

BY KOY ZULKOSKI, BLAKE SLOCUM, AND MRS. TURLEY

On Tuesday, November 18, the high school choir students traveled to Loomis for the FKC choir clinic. This is a special event, because instead of competing against each other, the students from the FKC schools all work together to make beautiful music. They arrived in the morning to rehearse with a clinician, Dr. Clark Roush, or "D.R." from York University. D.R. brought a ton of energy and did a wonderful job of not only teaching the students the music, but of encouraging them with life and music lessons. At the end of the day, they put on a concert to show off their hard work. I am very proud of how well the high school music students did musically, and even more proud that D.R. said that they are the most appreciative, well-behaved students he's ever worked with.



GIRLS BASKETBALL

BY TARYN COLE AND GARROD FERNAU

From the head coach, Garrod Fernau, “The Ansley-Litchfield Spartan girls basketball team is gearing up for what could be a strong and memorable season. With a solid group of returning letter winners and starters, along with several athletic newcomers, the Spartans enter the year with confidence and clear goals.

A major part of the team’s identity will come from its four seniors: Caydence Feldman, Ava Paitz, Bailey Hawkins, and Addilyne Rohde. Each of them brings experience, leadership, and a steady presence both on and off the court. Their influence has already helped set the tone for how the team practices, communicates, and prepares.

The early part of the season has been productive. The players have been quick to pick up new strategies, adjust to fresh terminology, and show they are willing to put in the work needed to improve. Coaches have noted how eager the group is to learn and how well they support one another during practices.

The Spartans have set two main goals for the year: to be playing on Saturday of the FKC Tournament and to contend for a District title. With the mix of returning talent and promising younger players, those goals feel within reach.

The coaching staff is excited to get the season underway and watch this team continue to grow. There is a strong sense of belief around the program, and the players are ready to compete, improve, and represent the school with pride. The season holds a lot of potential, and the Spartans are eager to make the most of it.”

BOYS BASKETBALL

BY DAEVON MAGNER AND MR. DREW

The beginning of the 25-26 season has brought many challenges. We have had some injuries, some newness, and some learning. We played Hi-Line close, playing our pace and just couldn't finish. Against Ravenna, we had too many turnovers, and they shot well. Tuesday, we got our first victory against Elba. The game was extremely physical but we were able to hold on for a win.

THE KINDNESS QUILT

BY MRS. KRATZER

The Kindergarten through 4th grade students have recently made a kindness quilt after listening to the story The Kindness Quilt written by Nancy Elizabeth Wallace. The students worked on this project with their Reading Buddies on Friday afternoons. Each student made their own quilt square with a picture and a sentence showing what they do to be kind to others. When finished, Mrs. Vega put these together on the hallway wall in the Blue Building so we have our own kindness quilt. Ms. Tali added the little boy to the quilt being covered in kindness. The students did a great job showing how to spread kindness wherever they go.

ART GALA

BY JENNA HOLM, JOZZIE SLOCUM, AND MRS.VARAH

Litchfield Art Students Raise Over \$1,100 for Sherman County Foundation

By: Allison Varah

Seven Litchfield art students joined in helping the Sherman County Foundation raise over \$30,000 at their recent Good Life Gala. Litchfield art teacher, Allison Varah asked students if they would be willing to make art to be donated to the gala which was themed “Rooted in our Communities”. Students had a resounding “yes” to the request. Students collaborated to create framed works with modeling paste and acrylic paint showcasing trees with roots sprawling into the ground. At auction the works brought over \$1,100.

Litchfield school supported the student’s goals by supplying the materials including modeling paste and frames so the artwork looked finished and professional at auction.

The committee had originally planned to showcase the trees for the theme and background of the event. They were blown away by the four works and at auction the winner of the bid was able to choose their favorite, making the bidding exciting for all.

Betty Kuszak, Executive Director of the foundation said: “The trees added a whole level of depth to the gala because of how much personality they had - being able to auction something from the students that was so personal and made it impactful throughout the whole evening.

Given the perimeter of the assignment, “trees, rooted and flourishing” the students came up with solutions that were unique and different from each other that gave the gala a visual delight. Ava Paitz when asked about the project said: “I am very proud of all of the artists, it is truly a unique small-town experience that we are able to support the foundation which in turn supports all of us.”

The students found out on Monday how much their art had contributed to the fundraising event and they were “tickled” says Wesley Fowler. “I enjoyed working with the modeling paste which is kind of like smearing around mud.” Markus Bester reflected “I didn’t know that painting a tree could be fun and that my artwork could bring money to a good cause.”



JAG NEWS

BY TARYN COLE, KINZLIE MCAULIFF, AND AUBRI CORBIN

On December 14, our chapter proudly hosted our 2nd Annual Toy Drive. We were overwhelmed by the generosity of our community, which donated an incredible number of toys. Your support truly means so much to us, and we are grateful to everyone who contributed in any way.

We would also like to thank the families who came out to shop and support our efforts. As a JAG chapter, we strive to give back to our community and help whenever we are needed.

Thank you to everyone who donated, volunteered, shopped, and helped make this event a success. Your kindness and support made a meaningful impact.

FBLA NEWS

BY KINZLIE MCAULIFF AND MRS. RASMUSSEN

Thank you to everyone who supported our recent food drive for our Backpack Program. We collected an impressive 689 nonperishable items thanks to your generosity! The 3rd and 4th grade classes collected the most items and won an ice cream party. We also appreciate everyone who attended the Litchfield Community Club Christmas Celebration and enjoyed our free-will donation soup luncheon. Keep an eye out for our FBLA students selling items and cornhole board raffle tickets at our home basketball games.



TALK TO AN FBLA MEMBER OR EMAIL US
AT FBLA@LITCHFIELDPS.ORG

PREK NEWS

BY JORI MCNEIL, MADISYN SPANEL, AND MASON BEHMERWOHL

This week we asked our preschoolers one of the most important holiday questions of all: What do you want for Christmas? As always, their answers were creative, sweet, and full of personality. From glowing toys to classic favorites, each child shared something that made their eyes light up. **Grant** is hoping for playdough that can make food, while **Asher** has his heart set on a toy racetrack. **Ryleigh** wants a magnet, and **Lucille** is excited about Mighty Pups. **Addlyn** asked for Barbies, and **Jasper** is dreaming of a light-up dinosaur. **Illah** went big with her wish for a Barbie Dreamhouse and a bike. The Christmas magic continued as we asked the rest of the class. Some children wished for things that glow in the dark, some for anything with wheels, and some for beloved toys like strollers, yoyos, Barbies, and race tracks. A few even gave detailed descriptions like “a slowly race track with two cars,” which might be our favorite preschool phrasing of the year. No matter the size of the wish, the excitement was the same. Their answers reminded us just how joyful and imaginative this age truly is. As we move closer to Christmas, we’re grateful for these small moments that show us the wonder of the season through their eyes.

SENIOR SPOTLIGHT

BY TARYN COLE

Questions-

1. What are your plans after high school?
2. Favorite memory from high school so far?
3. If you could be any animated character what would you be?
4. How long do you think you'd survive a zombie apocalypse?
5. Would you rather always walk backward or talk backward?
6. Favorite Movie?
7. Favorite Band/Singer?

Gracie-

1. I'm going to become an esthetician.
2. Going to State FFA
3. I would like to be Jinx of Arcane.
4. 4 Years
5. Walk backwards.
6. Arcane
7. Nirvana



Wesley-

1. Getting married and buy a house.
2. When Brian Johnson laughs
3. Superman
4. All my life
5. Walk backwards
6. Back to the future
7. Matthew West

COUNSELOR CORNER

BY TOPANGA BOYLES AND MRS. POLAND

Career Chats with EducationQuest and 4-H

December 9th, a few 6th and 8th graders participated in a Zoom call hosted by EducationQuest and 4-H. They heard from a Wildlife biologist and a Food Science specialist. Did you know that culinology is a career? The speakers shared about their “day in the life” and the steps they took to get to their current position. Students learned that both received their Bachelor’s degree and can travel with their jobs. Recommendations from the two speakers included following their passion for their career, and that when you go to college, you may discover a path you never knew existed.

Connect the Dots

Schools from the area attended the Connect the Dots program put on by UNL Extension at the Valley County Ag Building on December 3rd. Litchfield had 4 students attend. They participated in career simulation activities geared towards career fields they selected from interest inventories. Area employers represented the 16 career clusters. They gave the participants information about their possible job in their career cluster. Part of the simulation, students were given “life happens” cards that may throw a curve into their ideal life--job loss, need more education, have ill parents, and have to move back home to help. A few employers shared their stories of how they got to their current position. Several reminded students that life and career paths are not straight lines. Many experiences were gained to get them to their current positions.

ACT Test Dates

January 9, 2026, is the deadline for the February 14, 2026, National ACT test. Go to www.act.org to register. Remember to study with our OnToCollege ACT Test preparation. Some students may qualify for an ACT fee waiver. Please have your student contact Mrs. Poland to inquire. Seniors, remember to use the John Baylor OnToCollege website to review for your ACT test. Juniors, continue to practice with the materials you have been provided with during our ACT prep class.

The Junior class continues to utilize John Baylor’s OnToCollege test preparation to review and ready themselves for the ACT test, as well as utilize the free prep from ACT.

Congratulations Seniors!! Keep applying!! Keep focusing on your next adventure goal.

Scholarships

Seniors, keep checking your email for reminders and updates on scholarships due in the next few months. Keep working on your personal statement as well as updating your resume and/or personal data sheet. The more you apply, the more money you may receive.

Susan Thompson Buffett Scholarship opened November 1, 2025, and closes February 1, 2026, at 5 p.m. (CST)

For local and state scholarships, visit Scholarship Quest at EducationQuest.org. It is never too early to begin searching for scholarships as well as making your list of strengths, volunteer activities, and other notable characteristics about yourself. Litchfield Scholarship list(PDF) Litchfield Scholarship list (spreadsheet)

Dual-enrollment scholarship

There is a scholarship opportunity for students taking dual-enrollment college courses. Students participating in dual-enrollment college courses or early admit programs are encouraged to apply for the Access College Early (ACE) Scholarship if they show financial need. This state and federally-funded scholarship will pay tuition and mandatory fees at participating Nebraska colleges. Applications will be reviewed by Nebraska’s Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education (CCPE). If you have questions, contact me or Ritchie Morrow, Financial Aid Coordinator, CCPE, ritchie.morrow@nebraska.gov or 402.471.0032.

January “To Do” List

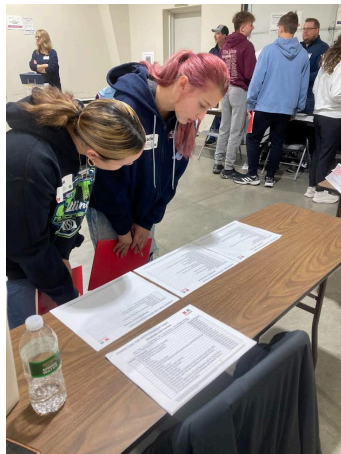
Complete these tasks during December to stay on the right college planning track.

- Seniors:
 - If you haven’t already, submit college applications and the FAFSA.
 - Continue to apply for scholarships.
 - Jr/Sr Timeline
 - Follow EducationQuest on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram for a chance to win a \$500 scholarship.
- Juniors
 - Take an ACT prep course.
 - Plan for College.
 - Set up a ScholarshipQuest profile and start searching for Nebraska-based scholarships.
 - Use this College Timeline to stay on track to college.
 - Follow EducationQuest on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram for a chance to win a \$500 scholarship.

Prepare for the FAFSA with free programs and resources

If you’re a senior, it’s time to start preparing for the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid). FAFSA opened December 1 and submit the form, typically, before April 1, depending on your college’s priority deadline. Colleges will use your FAFSA results to determine how much they will award you in federal, state, and college-based financial aid.

The following EducationQuest link will help you learn more about the financial aid process and the FAFSA <http://www.educationquest.org> Kearney office 308-234-6310. Follow them on Facebook and X.



January



| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--------|-------------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------|----------|
| | | | | 1 NO SCHOOL | 2 NO SCHOOL | 3 |
| 4 | 5 MUFFINS GOULASH | 6 OMELETTE TACO SOUP | 7 STRUDEL POPCORN CHICKEN | 8 EGG BISCUIT SLOPPY JOE | DONUTS PIZZA | 10 |
| 11 | 12 WAFFLE RIBS | 13 HASHBROWNS MEXICAN RICE BOWLS | 14 COFFEE CAKE MEXI TOTS | 15 FRENCH TOAST MEATBALL SUBS | DONUTS NACHO | 17 |
| 18 | 19 CHURRO SPAGHETTI | 20 PANCAKE DOG CHICKEN NUGGETS | 21 EGG/CHEESE PULLED PORK | 22 BISCUIT/ GRAVY QUESADILLA | DONUTS HOT DOGS | 24 |
| 25 | 26 MUFFINS RUNZA CASSEROLE | 27 OATMEAL ROUNDS CHICKEN PATTY | 28 WAFFLES TACO LASANGA | 29 CINNAMON ROLLS HAM SANDWICH | DONUTS CRISPTOS | 31 |
| | | | | | | |

LITCHFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING
December 15, 2025

President Mitch Feldman called the regular meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Members present: Mitch Feldman, Cole Lewandowski, April Gross, Marie Sweley, Katie Slack, and Alyssa Reynolds.

Visitors: Katherine Miller

President Mitch Feldman announced and informed the public that a current copy of the Open Meeting Law is posted on the wall of the meeting room and indicated the instructions for those who wish to speak during public forum.

Marie Sweley moved and Katie Slack seconded to approve board minutes from the Regular Board meeting from last month. Motion carried 6-0.

April Gross gave the treasurer report as General Fund Statement beginning balance of \$724,649.21, general funds receipts \$37,142.40, and actual cash available in general fund \$504,794.91 in the district treasury. Payroll and claims in the amount of \$244,361.01 were presented for payment. Alyssa Reynolds moved, and Marie Sweley seconded the approval of payment of monthly claims. Motion carried 6-0.

Matt Drew gave the Principal/AD Report, and action items; AQuESTT Ratings, CIP 5 year visit next year. Winter Fine Arts Program, AD; FKC One -Act champions, One-Act District 3rd Place, Winter Activities.

Cole Lewandowski moved, and April Gross seconded to approve Policies; 718 & 802.07 Motion carried 6-0.

Marie Sweley moved and April Gross seconded the motion to approve the Principal contract of Nick Carlson for the 2026-2027 school year. Motion carried 6-0.

Board discussed Community Club using football field for Old Settlers, building and grounds update; bleacher maintenance, football fence, Main entrance, and bathrooms in blue building.

April Gross moved and Alyssa Reynolds second the motion to enter into executive session to discuss the Superintendent Contract. Motion carried 6-0.

President Mitch Feldman reinstated the purpose of entering into executive session was to discuss Superintendent Contract.

The Board entered into executive session at 8:12 p.m.

Cole Lewandowski moved and Alyssa Reynolds motion to exit executive session. Motion carried 6-0.

The Board exited executive session at 8:21 p.m.

Cole Lewandowski moved and Alyssa Reynolds seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:23 p.m. Motion carried 6-0.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Education will be at 7:30 p.m. on January 19th, 2026. The agenda is a continuous agenda and is available for examination during regular hours at the office of the Superintendent. Public notice of the meeting will be given in the Hallway Happenings Newsletter and in the Sherman County Times.

Marie Sweley
Board Secretary

12/10/2025 01:44 PM

Posted - All; Fund Number 01; Processing Month 12/2025

User ID: TDF

| Vendor Name | Vendor Description | Amount |
|--|--------------------|--------------|
| Checking Account ID 1 | Fund Number 01 | GENERAL FUND |
| 125 CAFETERIA PLAN | | 100.00 |
| AED BRANDS | | 193.00 |
| Ansley Public Schools | | 3,506.35 |
| BAYLOR ENTERPRISES INC | | 1,395.00 |
| BLACK HILLS ENERGY | | 1,155.64 |
| Custer Public Power | | 3,632.08 |
| DAS STATE ACCOUNTING - CENTRAL FINANCE | | 468.48 |
| EAKES OFFICE SOLUTION | | 3,427.94 |
| Educational Service Unit 10 | | 13,797.98 |
| Farmers Co-op Association | | 916.22 |
| HAMILTON | | 446.65 |
| HOMETOWN LEASING | | 341.51 |
| Island Supply Welding Co. | | 88.72 |
| Jerry M. Rolfsmeyer | | 97.78 |
| JW Pepper & Son Inc | | 151.99 |
| Litchfield Hot Lunch | | 416.20 |
| Loup Valley Lighting, Inc | | 140.17 |
| NICHOLS REPAIR INC. | | 1,636.78 |
| P & D MARKET | | 77.96 |
| PEREZ, CHAZ | | 750.00 |
| PETTY CASH FUND | | 1,333.49 |
| RITCHIE, TERRY | | 337.40 |
| RODS BODY & PAINT INC. | | 3,067.40 |
| TITAN MACHINERY | | 242.68 |
| U.S. BANK | | 4,350.44 |
| US FOODS | | 1,114.35 |
| Village Of Litchfield | | 469.95 |
| WEX BANK | | 936.50 |
| Fund Number 01 | | 44,592.66 |
| Checking Account ID 1 | | 44,592.66 |

2026

January

| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|----------------------------|--|--|--|
| 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 01 No School | 02 No School Teacher In-Service BB JVGBB/VGBB/VBBB v Sandhills-Thedford @ Dunning 3:45/5:00/6:30 | 03 BWR @ Pleasanton 9:00 GWR @ SEM 10:00 Spartan Youth Bball Tourney |
| 04 Spartan Youth Bball Tourney | 05 | 06 | 07 | 08 BB JV/V G/B @ Amherst 4:30/6:00/7:30 GWR @ Columbus 10:00 | 09 BB JV/V G/B v Twin Loup @ Sargent 3:30/4:30/6:00/7:30 WR @ Burwell 11:30 | 10 WR @ Amherst 9:30 |
| 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 No Preschool BB JV/V G/B v Shelton @ Litchfield 3:30/4:30/6:00/7:30 GWR @ Ord 1:00 | 17 BB JV/V G/B v Wilcox-Hildreth @ Litchfield 1:30/3:00/4:30 GWR/BWR @ Shelton 10:00 |
| 18 | 19 JH BB v South Loup @ Callaway 1:00 | 20 JH BB v Pleasanton 3:00/4:00 @ Litchfield GBB JV/V Pleasanton @ Litchfield 6:00/7:00 | 21 JH Quiz Bowl @ Merna | 22 BB JV/V G/B v South Loup @ Ansley 4:30/6:00/7:30 | 23 BB JV/V G/B @ Overton 4:30/6:00/7:30 WR @ Callaway 10:00 | 24 GWR @ Axtell 11:00 Speech @ Broken Bow |
| 25 | 26 JH BB @ Twin Loup 1:00 | 27 BB JV/V G/B @ SEM 4:30/6:00/7:30 | 28 HS Quiz Bowl @ Merna | 29 | 30 No Preschool WR @ Ord 10:00 | 31 GWR @ Ansley 9:30 Speech @ Hampton FKC Bball Bunny Bracket |

**LITCHFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
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