



LHMS

Mustang Messenger

~ Fall 2020 ~

Newspaper Sponsor

Mrs. Jennifer Neill

Honor Garden Flag and Veteran Ceremony

By Jennifer Neill

On November 5, 2020, Laurel Highlands Middle School held a small service in the newly-revived Honor Garden, in front of the school building. The ceremony marked the raising of new flags of the United States Armed Forces, which were generously donated by veteran Ron Kizner and the Hopwood Amvets, under Commander Stanley Angel. Also, in advance of Veteran's Day, the observance honored our country's veterans - the brave men and women who served in the various branches of the military.

LH High School Jr. ROTC color guard presented arms, while Mr. Jim Miller (LHMS band instructor) and students Ben Precht and Emma Miller played a moving rendition of *Taps*.

Although it was a much smaller celebration than we usually have, because of Covid-19, LHMS wants to express our genuine gratitude to our amazing veterans. We specifically want to honor Mr. Jim Pierce, Mr. James Shwallon, and Mr. Jake Miller. Thank you for your service and dedication to our country!



Pictured from left to right:
Assistant Principal Bobbi Downs,
Mr. Ron Kizner, and Principal Mike Rozgony



Honor Garden Revived

By Jennifer Neill

If you've walk past the front of LH Middle School recently, you might have noticed that the Honor Garden looks outstanding! On Saturday, October 10, 2020, a group of people came together to give the area some much-needed TLC. Led by Assistant Principal Bobbi Downs, both faculty and students alike, worked for hours on trimming the trees, pulling weeds, planting flowers, and mulching.

A huge thanks to Mr. Jason Scott, and South Union Township, for the extremely generous mulch donation. Also, Mr. Jim Shwallon, for volunteering lawn services, Mrs. Janae Kopec and the LHHS cheerleaders for time and efforts, and the members of the LHMS National Junior Honor Society for their community service. We also acknowledge Mr. Bob Downs, Carter Rosendale, Toby Downs, Kinley Kopec, and Xavier Kopec for volunteering as well. Mustang pride was on full display; awesome job to everyone involved!

“Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much.” (Helen Keller)



The Beautiful Colors of Fall Leaves

By Czcarrá Burrell

Have you ever seen the color of the leaves in fall? Well I have and they really make the trees stand out. What I mean by this is, they make the trees stand out and not look boring or plain. These leaves make the trees look colorful and happy to be living. After all, they are colorful, and they are beautiful when they fall from the trees onto the ground, leaving the ground colorful and bright.

Do the different colored leaves ever remind you of something or someone? They do to me. The different colored leaves remind me that no two people are alike. The leaves remind me of this because they might be the same colors on the outside but, on the inside there is always something that makes them different from each other, just like humans. It's kind of weird to think of how the different colors of the leaves and humans are alike, but they are.



Pumpkin Fluff Recipe

By Trent Campbell

Ingredients:

- 1 Vanilla Pudding Mix
- 1 Container of Cool Whip
- 2 Packages of Cream Cheese
- 1 15oz Can of Pumpkin Puree
- Pumpkin Spice
- Cinnamon Spice
- Pure Vanilla Extract

Preparation:

- In large mixing bowl combine pumpkin puree, pudding mix, pumpkin spice and vanilla extract
- Fold in Whip topping, you must fold in until thoroughly mixed
- Spoon mixed items into dish you wish to serve in
- Cover and chill for 1 to 2 hours or until cold

This is a very good dessert!! It is very light, and if you're a pumpkin lover, you won't go wrong with this. It is great served with cinnamon graham crackers, regular graham crackers, grapes, apples and vanilla wafers. It really looks unique in a pumpkin for serving. I hope that you enjoy this pumpkin fluff as much as I do!!



Candy Crush

By Emelia Cavaliere



What is the main part of Halloween? CANDY!!!! Here are some candy facts that I thought were very cool. The oldest candy in America is called Good and Plenty. It was introduced in 1893 in Philadelphia, PA. One of the most popular candies of Halloween is Reese's Peanut Butter Cups. Did you know that holiday Reese's have a shorter shelf time than the normal kind, because they are way fresher? The one question everyone asks when eating a lollipop... "How many licks does it take to get to the center or a Tootsie pop?" Well, some students at Purdue University created a licking machine, and found out that it takes 364 licks! Tootsie Rolls were given to soldiers because they could stand in different types of weather. Those are all the candy reviews I have... have a Happy Halloween! P.S. Don't eat too much candy!

Avatar the Last Airbender: TV Show Review

By Zoe Coffman

Avatar the last Airbender takes place in a world where people can control one of the four elements, water, earth, fire, and air. There are four nations each being able to bend their individual element. Though normally someone can only be a bender of one element, there is a person, born in one particular nation, that can control everything. This person is called the Avatar and it is their responsibility to maintain balance between the spirit world and the human world.

At the very beginning of the show, it is said that the Fire Nation started a war with the rest of the world, and this war lasted for 100 years. Avatar the Last Airbender follows Avatar Aang, an Airbender, as he tries to defeat the Fire Nation and learn all the other elements. The show has an amazing story and is super hilarious. It is impossible not to fall in love with every character. When I started to watch the show, I immediately got addicted to it. I would suggest Avatar the Last Airbender to anyone who is looking for something new to watch.



Pittsburgh Penguins Off Season Recap

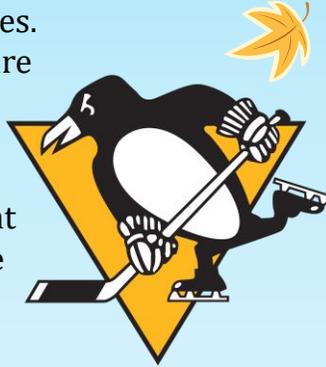
By Cameron Ferris

The 2020 NHL Playoffs saw the Pittsburgh Penguins eliminated in four games to the Montreal Canadiens in the play in round series. With this loss, the Penguins off season began. Pittsburgh Penguins general manager Jim Rutherford stated he wanted to make changes, and sure enough, he did.

Jim Rutherford started making changes early in the off season. The Penguins traded center Evan Rodriques, defenseman David Wasofsky, a centerman prospect Phillip Hallander, and the 15th overall pick in the 2020 NHL Draft to the Toronto Maple Leafs in return for right wing Kasperii Kapanen, left wing Pontus Aberg, and defenseman prospect Jesper Lindgren. This trade was the largest trade by far made by the Penguins, and this trade was made during the 1st round of the playoffs. Rutherford made two more trades in the playoffs, which were trading centerman Nick Bjugstad to the Minnesota Wild in exchange for a 2021 conditional 7th round draft pick. The last trade will have a significant change on the roster. The trade involved sending Patric Hornqvist to the Florida Panthers, in exchange for defenseman Mike Matheson and left wing Colton Sceviour. The Penguins aren't done with trading yet. During the 2nd Round of the NHL Draft the Pens traded goalie Matt Murray in return for the 52nd pick in the 2nd Round. Speaking of the draft the Penguins draft definitely wasn't the best. After all, they didn't have that many picks to begin with. The Penguins drafted the following players in the order they were drafted: goalie Joel Blomqvist, goalie Callen Clang, centerman Lukas Svejksky, forward Raivis Ansons, and center Chase Yoder.

With all of the trades out of the way, Rutherford moved onto focusing on contracts. The Penguins re-signed centerman Jared Mccann to a two year, around two million dollar, contract. Defenseman Juuso Rikola also received a two year one million dollar contract. The biggest signing for the Pens was re-signing goalie Tristan Jarry, which was a three year three million dollar contract. The Penguins also re-signed a couple of AHL and depth players to smaller contracts. In Free Agency, the Penguins didn't have much money. Their biggest signing was Cody Ceci, who signed for a one year 1.8 million dollar contract. They also signed Mark Janokowski and Josh Currie both to a one year \$700,000 contract. They also brought back Evan Rodriques to a one year \$700,000 contract.

So at the end of the day, the Penguins have had a mixed off season. They have made some very questionable trades, but they also have signed good depth players for the bottom six players on the offense. Right now it is too early to tell how these moves will affect the time, but I can't wait to find out!



Around the Professional Sports Leagues

By Crosby Frantz

In the MLB, we have our first ever 16 team playoff! Although the pirates aren't in it, it looks like this is going to be a wild post season. In the NHL, the playoffs just ended with a wild ride! The Tampa Bay Lightning won the Stanley Cup for only their second time. Their season was rough with games that went 5 overtimes and others where they won 8-2. Tampa Bay has a good chance of winning another major sports league in baseball.

In the NFL the Steelers are 5-0 for the first time since 1978! They did win the SUPER BOWL that year. Other teams like the Ravens and Chiefs could ruin their season. Who knows what could happen, the pandemic might ruin the season, so wear a mask and stay safe!



About Trick-or-treating

By Rachel Gibbs

I will be talking about trick-or-treating. The first thing is about being safe. When trick-or-treating, you would want either an adult or a teenage sister. If you go out all alone, then something bad might happen.



The second thing is how to go trick-or-treating. If you are wanting to go trick-or-treating, make sure you have a bag for candy. Don't forget about the Halloween costume. Always have an adult near you at all times. The last part is have fun and stay safe.

The third thing is how to dress for trick-or-treating. When a kid is dressing up for Halloween, they would be excited because they can't wait to go trick-or-treating. When trick-or-treating, make sure to always say you like the little kids costume.

How to Make Pumpkin Cookies

By Jordyn Laing

Ingredients

- Non Stick cooking spray
- 2 ½ cups of all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp of baking soda
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- ½ tsp of nutmeg
- ½ tsp salt
- 1 ½ cup of granulated sugar
- ½ cup butter (1 stick), softened
- 1 cup 100% pure pumpkin
- 1 large egg
- 2 tsp vanilla extract, divided
- 2 cups powdered sugar, sifted
- 3 tbsp. milk
- 1 tbsp. butter, softened

Pumpkin Cookies are so delicious, am I right? This fall I am going to tell you how to make pumpkin cookies. The first thing you want to do is make sure you have a clean space to work on, and wash your hands! Here is what you will need... (Ingredients are listed on the left.)

Now I know that there are a lot of ingredients, but they are so worth it. First you are going to preheat your oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit, and spray your pan with the nonstick spray. Next, you will combine the flour, baking soda, baking powder, cinnamon, nutmeg, and salt in a medium sized bowl. Beat your sugar and the ½ cup of softened butter (**NOT** the 1 tbsp. of butter) in a large mixing bowl, until they are well blended. Beat in the pumpkin, egg and 1 tsp vanilla extract until smooth. Chocolate chips are optional as well. Gradually beat the dry ingredients from your medium bowl to the wet ingredients in the larger bowl. Drop by rounded tbsp. onto your sprayed baking sheet.

While the cookies are baking at 350 for 15 to 18 minutes, or until the edges are firm, you can begin to make your glaze (optional) to drizzle over the cookies. You will use the 1 tbsp. of softened butter, the sifted powdered sugar, milk, and the remaining 1 tsp of vanilla extract. Combine them, until they are smooth, in a small bowl. Once your cookies are done, remove them from the pan after 2 minutes of cooling, and transfer to a wire cooling rack. When they are cool, drizzle your glaze over the top off your cookies. Enjoy!



The History of Halloween

By Preston Lauffer

As of this month, there is the spookiest holiday coming and we all know it as Halloween. An old fact that you may or may not know is that the origin of this holiday was that the people would wear costumes to ward off and move around spirits. The origin of the jack o' lanterns started in Ireland, with the myth of Stingy Jack. It starts off with Jack and the devil go to have a drink, but Jack doesn't want to pay. He convinces the devil to turn into a coin to pay, but traps him in his form with a cross. Jack makes a deal with him, and the devil promises to leave him alone for a year. Year after year he played this trick, and finally Jack died, but God wouldn't allow him in heaven and the devil wouldn't allow him in either. So, he would roam the world and put coal in carved out turnips as his job.

The origin of trick-or-treating also came from Ireland as a festival to please the ghosts of the dead. It was brought over to America and changed the holiday a lot. With the influence of the Irish and their myths, they created the famous things that we all know about Halloween.



The LHMS National Junior Honor Society

By Carlee Luckey



What is the National Junior Honor Society? National Junior Honor Society, NJHS for short, is an organization of students who excel academically, and demonstrate excellent behavior. Not only do these students possess those specific qualities, but they also show great leadership and citizenship. In order to get into NJHS, you must have a 3.8 GPA or above after the second nine weeks of seventh grade, no disciplinary infractions (detention, suspension, etc.), and no more than eight absences. You must maintain these standards throughout the remainder of your time in NJHS. The NJHS works together as a group to help better the middle school, and the community!

With that being said, congratulations to the members, and officers, of the NJHS! The officers are as follows, Matt Schwertfeger as president, Yelena Ford and Addison Milson as co-vice presidents, Gianna D'Annolfo as historian, Kelan Milson treasurer, Ellie Mancini as secretary, and myself (Carlee Luckey) as public relations. Congratulations; everyone had absolutely wonderful speeches.

National Hispanic Heritage Month

By Madison Satsatin



National Hispanic Heritage Month is a span of time from September 15 to October 15 that celebrates Hispanic and Latin culture. During this month we recognize what Latin and Hispanic people have done to contribute and influence the culture, history, and achievements of the United States. Until 1988, Latin History Month was only a week long. In 1968 Hispanic Heritage Week was established by the legislation and sponsored by Representative Edward R. Roybal of Los Angeles. Hispanic Heritage Week became National Hispanic Heritage Month in 1988 by legislation, and sponsored by Representative Esteban Edward Torres also known as D-Pico Rivera. This was amended by Senator Paul Simon and signed into law by the President at the time, Ronald Reagan. It may seem weird that the month starts on the fifteenth, however there is an explanation for this. National Hispanic Heritage Month starts on the fifteenth of September because it is the anniversary of independence for five Hispanic countries, including, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Honduras. These countries all officially declared their independence on September 15, 1821. In addition to these countries, Mexico, Belize, and Chile celebrate independence on September 16, 18, and 21.

During this commemorative month we celebrate the military achievements of Hispanic and Latin Americans. About 20% of enlisted soldiers are Hispanic, about 5% of general/flag officers are Hispanic, and about 10% of all officers are Hispanic. During Hispanic Heritage month, events are held such as the Northwest Arkansas Hispanic Heritage Festival, which was established in 2013 to celebrate the Heritage of Hispanics in America. Some other events include the El Barrio Latin Jazz Festival in the Bronx, New York City, the Hispanic Family Festival in Springdale, Holyoke, Massachusetts, the annual Latino Short Film festival in Coachella, California, the Carnaval De La Cultura Latina on Junction Boulevard in Corona, Queens, and the annual Hispanic day parade in New York. The Smithsonian Institution and Smithsonian National Museum of American Indians also host Hispanic Heritage events such as the Zoo Fiesta. Even though some people may think that Hispanic Heritage Month doesn't apply to them, it does because Hispanics have affected this country and should be celebrated just as much as we would celebrate anyone else.



PlayStation 5

By Hudson Scott

The PlayStation 5 (PS5) is finally coming out after a long wait. It will cost \$500. In the US, it will be released November 12, 2020. We have all seen the PS5 design. This console will run at 120 FPS (frames per second). Its big competitor is the Xbox series X.

The PS5 loading time is amazingly fast. It is also coming out with all new games and experiences. Unfortunately, some games will not be passed on to PS5. Don't worry though, because a lot of new games will be released. I will certainly be buying the PS5!!!





Thanksgiving

By Alyssa Sharp

Thanksgiving is on November 26th. The meaning of Thanksgiving is the expression of gratitude, especially to God. Why is Thanksgiving important? Thanksgiving is important because it's a positive and special holiday where we celebrate gratitude. It's also a celebration of the fall harvest. Thanksgiving has been an annual holiday we celebrate in both the United States and Canada.

On Thanksgiving, my family and I go to my grandparent's house. They have a big dinner. The dinner usually includes Ham, mashed potatoes, rolls, salad, beets, macaroni salad, potato salad, nut rolls, and pumpkin pie. We always invite our whole family to dinner, and we all eat together. We also go around the table saying things about each other that you love. The overall idea of Thanksgiving is that it is not just about the food and desserts. It's about God, gratitude, and family and friends.

The History of Halloween Costumes

By Mackenzie Whitley

Halloween costumes date back to over 2,000 years ago. Halloween costumes originate from the Celtic Day of the Dead autumn festival Of Samhain. America's festival of Halloween dates back to the 1840s. Lovetoknow.com states that, "Their celebrations of All Saints' and All Souls' Days still preserved many of the ancient rites of Samhain. For example, the carving of pumpkins comes from the Irish legend of Jack, a man so evil that when he died he was rejected by both heaven and hell and was condemned to roam the countryside with nothing but a glowing turnip for a head." A company in Massachusetts called *The Dennison Manufacturing Company* started to make paper costumes in 1910. Lovetoknow.com says that, "Collegeville, located in Pennsylvania, began as a company that produced flags and later used the scraps to create costumes around 1910, and continued to make early clown and jester costumes. The costumes produced in America are testaments to the creative powers." Halloween costumes are now a tradition in the U.S for trick-or-treaters.



Mustang Football

By Mia Wisilosky

As everyone knows, fall is one of the most important times for football. Our high school team has already started their season, but they have plenty of games to play. The next game is on October 23 at Mustang Field. We will be playing Washington. Football games are a great time to socialize with friends and have some fun in these times of uncertainty. Make sure to purchase your tickets to watch our amazing football team! Go Stangs!



Annual Public Notice of Child Find Activities (Pages 1-2)

The following documents are for the stakeholders of the Laurel Highlands School District.

Laurel Highlands School District

Annual Public Notice of Child Find Activities

The Laurel Highlands School District uses the following procedures for screening, identifying, and evaluating specific needs of school-aged students requiring special programs of service.

The district meets the health screening requirements as described in Section 1402 of the School Code. The district routinely conducts screenings of a child's hearing acuity in the following grades: Kindergarten, 1, 2, 3, 7, and 11, and other grades according to need. Visual acuity is screened in every grade. Height and weight data are collected yearly at every grade level and Body Mass (BMI) is calculated. Visual acuity, hearing acuity, height and weight screenings are conducted throughout the school year at the child's home school. School nurses work with the private schools (such as Montessori, New Directions, etc.) to provide required screenings. Dental exams are conducted in the spring of each school year in kindergarten, grades 3 and 7 at the respective schools. Physical exams are conducted in the spring of each year. Physicals are conducted in Kindergarten, grades 6 and 11, as well as scoliosis screenings in grades 6 and 7.

Kindergarten registration is held in the spring of each year. Currently, all school districts throughout Fayette County are holding kindergarten registration during the same week in order to take advantage of local media to inform parents of the need to register students who will attend kindergarten in the fall. Students are to accompany parents when registering for kindergarten. During the registration, kindergarten teachers will screen each student's readiness skills, speech/language therapists will screen the student's articulation and language abilities, and the nurse will review the student's health record including immunizations. Classroom teachers assess gross motor and fine motor skills, academic skills, and social-emotional skills on an ongoing basis and referrals made for follow-up when needed.

Throughout the school year, the district will administer standardized tests to students, beginning in kindergarten. These tests may include in grades K-5 the NWEA (Northwest Educational Assessments) and the Moby Max placement exams. The CDT (Classroom Diagnostic Test) will be administered throughout the year in grades 3-12. Results of these tests are provided to the parent/guardian each year. In addition, elementary teachers will test students to see if they have learned the particular skill being taught. These tests are given throughout the year.

The Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) is administered at the mandate grade levels each school year. Other testing occurs on the basis of individual need. Vocational interest tests may be given in the secondary schools. Report cards are issued quarterly. Any parent who has a question about the testing program should contact the Building Principal. The Pennsylvania Alternate School Assessment (PASA) is available for students who meet the eligibility for this assessment.

If the student is experiencing academic, social, and/or behavioral issues that are impacting the student's education, then the student may be eligible for intervention to address the student's concerns. Every attempt will be made to maintain the student in his/her regular education environment prior to considering special education services. Screening information is utilized by a team consisting of the building principal, classroom teacher, guidance counselor, and school psychologist to determine if adjustments can be made in the child's current program and/or if a multidisciplinary evaluation is warranted. Once the student's needs are identified the team will discuss strategies to implement in the child's current program. If a student does not make progress, parents will be asked to give written permission for a multidisciplinary evaluation.

Parents with concerns regarding their child may contact the building principal at any time to request a screening or evaluation. The request shall be in writing, if the request is made orally, the parent will be asked to make the request in writing and will be provided with the proper form. Communication with the parents and students shall be in English or their native language. For parents with a hearing impairment, the school district will provide a person to communicate in sign language.

After the multidisciplinary evaluation is completed, an Evaluation Report (ER) is compiled with parent input and includes recommendations for the types of intervention necessary to accommodate the child's specific needs. Parents are provided with a draft copy of the ER to review prior to the meeting where the results of the evaluation are explained and discussed. An Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is developed for those students qualifying for special education services. This plan includes demographic information regarding the student, his/her strengths and needs with goals and objectives that address needs, along with specially designed instruction and related services necessary to accomplish the goals and objectives. The IEP Team consists of the following: the parent, the building principal/LEA, a special education teacher and a regular education teacher. Other team members may include: the student when appropriate, the school psychologist, public agency representative, other teachers or specialists, other administrative staff, etc. Parents are an integral part of the IEP team and are encouraged to be physically present at the IEP meeting. The district makes every effort to ensure parent participation. The district notifies the parent in writing and makes documented phone calls to make parents aware of the IEP conference and the importance of parent participation. Parents are then presented with a Notice of recommended Educational Placement (NOREP) with which they may agree or disagree. If parents agree, the IEP is implemented. If parents disagree with the recommendation, the issue may be taken to mediation or to a due process hearing.

The Laurel Highlands School District operates a comprehensive continuum of services for special needs students. For the most part identified exceptional students are served in their home school. Types of services available include: **Learning Support** that is primarily for students with academic learning needs, **Life Skills Support** that focuses primarily on the need for independent living skills, **Emotional Support** which addresses social and emotional difficulties, **Multiple Disabilities Support** which is for students with more than one disability, **Physical Support** for students whose need is the result of a physical disability, **Autistic Support** for those students diagnosed with Autism and/or Pervasive Development Disorder, **Speech/Language Support** that is for students who have articulation and/or expressive/receptive language difficulties, **Hearing Support** for students who are hearing impaired/deaf, **Vision Support** which is for students who are blind or visually impaired, and **Gifted Support** for those students identified as mentally gifted. The Laurel Highlands School District works closely with neighboring school districts and Intermediate Unit # 1 to place students who cannot be served within the district. The small number of students who needs cannot be accommodated in the public school setting can receive services in an approved private school or other licensed facilities at school district expense. No such placement is made without an IEP meeting and parental agreement. Laurel Highlands intends to serve students at the home school or within the district before considering other placements.

If a child does not qualify for special education services, he/she may still be considered a protected handicapped student and require services under Chapter 15. A protected handicapped student is a student who is school aged with a physical or mental disability that substantially limits or prohibits participation in or access to any aspect of the school program. The Laurel Highlands School District provides each protected handicapped student the aids, services or accommodations which are needed to provide equal opportunity to participate in and obtain the benefits of the school program and extracurricular activities to the maximum extent appropriate to the student's abilities. If you believe your child comes under this classification and is in need of a service to assist him/her in benefiting from his/her education, you should contact your building principal.

The Laurel Highlands School District recognized the need to protect the confidentiality of personally identifiable information in the education records of exceptional children. The Laurel Highlands School District confidentiality Assurance Policy has been prepared as to insure the privacy rights of both the parents and the exceptional child in the collection, maintenance, release, and destruction of these records. The Laurel Highlands School District and its staff are required by Federal law and State and Federal Rules and Regulations to protect the rights of students. The foundation of these rights comes from Federal Legislation entitled the Family Educational rights and Privacy Act of 1974 - FERPA (also known as the Buckley Amendments). All students are protected by the State Regulations contained in Chapter 12 known as Student's Rights and Responsibilities. In addition, State Rules and regulations protect regular and special education students' rights and privacy.

Annual Public Notice of Child Find Activities (Pages 3-4)

The following documents are for the stakeholders of the Laurel Highlands School District.

School records are always open and available to parents and only to school officials who have legitimate "need to know" information about the child. Disclosure of information means to permit the release, transfer or other communication of education records to any part, by oral, written and/or electronic means. This means that information about a student cannot be shared in conversation without permission. This also applies to other personnel who do not have an educationally relevant reason to possess knowledge student.

The parents of a student or eligible student have the right to inspect and/or challenge their child's or their own educational records, to receive copies of the records, and to have a school official explain the records if requested as outlined in the Laurel Highlands District Policy. The school district will disclose directory information which includes: the student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weights and heights of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, the most recent previous educational agency of or institution attended by the student, and other similar information. Should the parent of a student or eligible student wish to refuse disclosure of this information, a written notice or refusal of disclosure of directory information must be sent to the Principal within twenty (20) days of this public notice. To inspect your child's or your records, contact the Building Principal.

The Laurel Highlands School District will release information from a student's education record without prior consent to officials of the other primary or secondary schools or school systems in which a student seeks or intends to enroll. Transcripts to post-secondary institutions in which a student seeks or intends to enroll will be sent upon request of parents of a student or eligible student. Parents, upon written request, may receive a copy of records that may be released by the school district. The parents have the right to request that their child's or their educational records be changed if they are inaccurate, misleading or violate students' rights, and to have a hearing if that request is refused.

A more detailed explanation of these rights, the procedure to follow, and the limitations on the release of records are presented in the school district's policy on the collection, maintenance and release of student records. You may obtain a copy of this policy by contacting the Building Principal.

Early Intervention

In Pennsylvania, a child between three years of age and the school district's age to begin school who has a developmental delay or one or more of the physical or mental conditions listed above, will be identified as an "eligible young child." The parents of these children have the same rights described above.

The Pennsylvania Department of Education is responsible for providing programs and services to eligible young children under Act 212 of 1990, the Early Intervention Services System Act. Screening for preschool children is available through the Child Alert Program operated by Intermediate Unit #1. To schedule an appointment for screening call Barbara Rothermel at 1.800.328.6481. For additional information, contact Lori DiCenzo at 724.437.2821

A developmental delay is determined by the results of a developmental evaluation. The results of one or more domain areas (adaptive, personal-social, communication, motor or cognitive) have to show at least a 25% delay or a score of 1.5 standard deviations below the mean (Standard Score of 77 or below). The delay results in the need for specially designed intervention/instruction (SDI) in order to participate in typical activities and routines.

Children with a developmental delay may show weaknesses in the following areas:

Adaptive – Pre-kindergarten aged children with a developmental delay may have difficulty dressing/undressing; using utensils to eat, removing shoes without assistance, distinguishing between nonfood/food substances, or have difficulty with toileting needs. One may have difficulty moving independently around the house, understanding that hot is dangerous, putting away toys when asked, indicating an illness or ailment to an adult, or demonstrating caution and avoiding common dangers.

Personal-Social – Pre-kindergarten aged children with a developmental delay may have difficulty responding positively to adult praise, rewards or promise of rewards; greeting familiar adults spontaneously; enjoying simple stories read aloud, helping with simple household tasks, initiating social interaction with familiar adults, expressing affection/liking for peers, playing cooperatively with peers, stating first name, last name, age, or whether he is a male/female; using objects in make-believe play, using 'I' or 'me' to refer to himself, or recognizing facial expressions of common emotions.

Communication - Pre-kindergarten aged children with a developmental delay may have difficulty following 2-step verbal commands, associating spoken words with pictures, recalling events from a story presented orally; engaging in extended and meaningful nonverbal exchanges with others, using words to get his/her needs met, responding to 'yes' and 'no' questions appropriately, or asking 'wh' questions.

Motor - Pre-kindergarten aged children with a developmental delay may have difficulty running without falling, kicking a ball without falling, walking up and down stairs alternating feet without assistance, walking backward, imitating the bilateral movements of an adult, pointing with his index finger independent of the thumb and other fingers, scribbling linear and/or circular patterns spontaneously; using the pads of fingertips to grasp a pencil, holding a paper with one hand while drawing or writing with the other hand, fastening clothing without assistance, cutting with scissors, copying a circle, or imitating vertical and horizontal markings.

Cognitive - Pre-kindergarten aged children with a developmental delay may have difficulty attending to one activity for 3 or more minutes, reciting memorized lines from songs or TV shows, showing interest in age-appropriate books, matching/naming colors, responding to one and one more, giving three objects on request, matching shapes, identifying objects by their use, identifying items by size, identifying colors of familiar objects not in view, or identifying simple objects by touch.

Developmental disabilities are birth defects related to a problem with how a body part or body system works. They may also be known as functional birth defects. Many of these conditions affect multiple body parts or systems. Researchers have identified thousands of different birth defects. Birth defects can have a variety of causes, such as:

Genetic problems caused when one or more genes doesn't work properly or part of a gene is missing, problems with chromosomes, such as having an extra chromosome or missing part of a chromosome, environmental factors that the expectant mother is exposed to during pregnancy, such as Rubella or German measles or if she uses drugs or alcohol during pregnancy.

For further information on the screening procedures, evaluation procedures, and provision of services to protected handicapped students, contact Dr. Jesse T. Wallace, Superintendent of Schools, 304 Bailey Avenue, Uniontown, PA 15401 or call 724-437-2821

Age Waiver Public Notice

Due to the decrease of enrollment and small classes in the Laurel Highlands School District special education may be out of compliance due to age range according to PDE. A student with a disability eligible to receive special education services may not be placed in a class in which the chronological age from the youngest to the oldest student varies beyond three years in the grades K-6 and 4 years in grades 7-12 unless an exception is determined to be appropriate by the IEP team of the student whose age is outside the age range of the program where the student would be receiving special education services. (22Pa. School Code 14.42(f)) A statement will be written into students' IEPs indicating age differences. Parents will also sign a waiver informing them of the age range of their child's special education program and their child's IEP will not be adversely affected by this change. Their child's needs will be met through the student's IEP.



Thank you so much for reading the LHMS *Mustang Messenger*. Thanks also to the amazing student authors who submitted articles; they were fantastic!



Be sure to check out our Winter issue in 2021!

~ Mrs. Neill ~

