

The Leigh Legend



February 2026



A Note from Mr. Fischer...

This month I am including my annual report of Leigh Community Schools. This report is a snapshot of the many different statistics of LCS. We are particularly proud of our district being rated EXCELLENT according to the Nebraska Department of Education for the third year in a row! This puts us in the top 20% of schools in the state. Please take a moment to look over the report and feel free to call me at the school with any questions.

BE THE BEST!

Cole Fischer

Superintendent/Elementary Principal



Leigh Community School
Board of Education
Regular Meeting
January 14, 2026

President Kamin Held called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

Verification of Notice by Kamin Held (Published on January 7th, 2026 in the Leigh World Newspaper & Posted on January 7th, 2026 at Leigh Community Schools, Main-Stop and the Leigh Post Office)

Recognition of Open Meetings Law by Kamin Held

Secretary Brabec read the roll call. Present were Machmueller, Urban J, Went, Wietfeld M, Brabec D, Folken, Held K, Higby, Hoffman.

Also present were Superintendent Fischer, Principal Faltys, Secretary Brabec.

Oath of Office Policy 2004 - read - signed by all Board members

Secretary Brabec read through roll call again. Present were Urban J, Went, Wietfeld M, Brabec D, Folken, Held K, Higby, Hoffman, Machmueller.

Election of Officers - Approved the Election of Board Officers – Kamin Held, President; Ryan Hoffman, Vice President; Megan Folken, Treasurer; April Brabec, Board Appointed Secretary.

Board Code of Ethics – Policy 2012 – provided for all Board members

Update Board Committees

Approval of Agenda

Principal's Report – Students of the Month; Athletic Schedules; Football Schedules; FCCLA District Star; FFA CDE's; Speech Season; Dance Team Competition; Transportation; Upcoming Events.

Superintendent's Report – Start of 2nd Semester; Facilities; New Students Enrolled; Staffing Additions; Transportation; Questions.

Consent Agenda approved the December 10th, 2025 meeting minutes, Treasurer/Financial Report, Bills/Payroll.

Discussion Item: '26-'27 athletic equipment needs

Motions Passed: Approved Superintendent Fischer to make athletic equipment purchases; Approved KSB as LCS Counsel, Citizens State Bank as LCS Financial Representative, and Leigh World as LCS district newspaper; Approved Superintendent as Non-Discrimination Compliance Coordinator & the State and Federal Authorized Representative; Approved the '26-'27 Negotiated Agreement.

Discussion Item: Superintendent's Annual Report 2025-26 school year

Motions Passed: Approved '26-'28 Superintendent Contract; Approved '26-'27 Principal Contract.

Discussion Item: '26-'27 school calendar

Motion Passed: Approved updates for marquee on Main Street

Moved by Brabec D, seconded by Urban J to adjourn at 7:58 p.m. All present voting "aye". Motion carried.

Next regularly scheduled meeting will be at 6:30 pm on Wednesday, February 11th, 2026 at the Leigh High School STEM Room (B138).

April R. Brabec, Board Secretary



LEIGH COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

ANNUAL REPORT

January 2026



Board of Education

Kamin Held Ryan Hoffman Josh Urban
Debbie Brabec Nate Higby Megan Folken
Travis Went Matthew Wiefeld
Drew Machmueller

leighcommunityschools.org

RECENT PK-12 ENROLLMENT

<u>TOTALS</u>	
2018-19	226
2019-20	246
2020-21	257
2021-22	266
2022-23	280
2023-24	291
2024-25	299
2025-26	314

ENROLLMENT - JANUARY 2026

Pre-School-3yo/4yo	34
Kindergarten	22
1st Grade	32
2nd Grade	23
3rd Grade	25
4th Grade	30
5th Grade	17
6th Grade	23
7th Grade	20
8th Grade	19
9th Grade	14
10th Grade	18
11th Grade	21
12th Grade	16
TOTAL	314

Learning Empowers Individuals to Great Heights

Statewide Assessment Data 2024-2025 (NSCAS/ACT) - % Proficient

	<u>LCS</u>	<u>State</u>	<u>ELA</u>	<u>LCS</u>	<u>State</u>	<u>Science</u>	<u>LCS</u>	<u>State</u>
<u>Math</u>								
3rd	63%	60%	3rd	58%	57%	3rd	**	**
4th	53%	61%	4th	71%	60%	4th	**	**
5th	50%	59%	5th	77%	56%	5th	95%	83%
6th	89%	56%	6th	83%	59%	6th	**	**
7th	78%	55%	7th	67%	58%	7th	**	**
8th	64%	57%	8th	91%	63%	8th	100%	76%
<i>Overall District Proficiency: Math 65%, ELA 72%, Science 97%</i>								
<u>ACT- Junior Class Average Scores</u>			<u>LCS</u>	<u>State</u>				
ELA			24	16				
Math			23	17				
Science			24	18				

ELA
Math
Science

Student Population Characteristics

	<u>LCS</u>	<u>State</u>
High Ability Learners	21%	13%
SPED	15%	17%
Free/Red. Lunches	21%	50%

K-12 DAILY ATTENDANCE DATA

	<u>Dist.</u>	<u>State</u>
2020-21	96%	93%
2021-22	95%	92%
2023-24	95%	93%
2024-25	96%	92%
2025-26	95%	92%

School Improvement Goals

- ❖ Math Proficiency
- ❖ Reading Comprehension and Fluency
- ❖ CTE Career Readiness

LCS Administration

Cole Fischer, Superintendent/Elem. Prin.
Andrew Faltys, 7-12 Principal/A.D.

NEP-AQuESTT - School Rating

Overall District-**EXCELLENT**

- ❖ High School -**EXCELLENT**
- ❖ Middle School -**EXCELLENT**
- ❖ Elementary -**GOOD**

**Updated in Fall of 2025*

Full Time Certified Teachers

25.5

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<u>Tax Levy and Valuation Data (Approx. Levy)</u>	
<u>School Year</u>	<u>Tax Levy</u>
2020-21	0.89
2021-22	0.91
2022-23	0.99
2023-24	0.92
2024-25	0.84
2025-26	0.78
<u>District Valuation</u>	
2020-21	\$442,932,633
2021-22	\$449,232,794
2022-23	\$455,193,330
2023-24	\$501,168,858
2024-25	\$563,022,075
2025-26	\$624,296,495

Grants and Program Expansion

- ❖ LCS has been awarded numerous grants estimated at over \$100,000
- ❖ CNA program with CCC and CHI
- ❖ Mechatronics STEM Program with CCC
- ❖ ITE Course Expansion
- ❖ Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG)

Leigh Community Schools

The Leigh Community School District(#39) comprises 80.7 square miles. The district covers parts of Colfax, Platte, and Stanton counties. The community's financial base develops from an agriculture economy. A new HS (7-12 grades) was built onto the existing Elementary building creating a PK-12 facility in 2020. In 2024, due to increasing enrollment, 4 classrooms were added to the elementary wing. The mission of Leigh Community Schools is to foster a positive educational culture where: STUDENTS thrive, TEACHERS guide, ADMINISTRATORS lead, PARENTS support and the COMMUNITY is the foundation for all.

The Leigh Community Schools district has a total valuation of \$624,296,495 The current total tax levy is 78 cents.

The Leigh Board of Education is very supportive in the continuation of providing a quality education for the students of the district while maintaining fiscal responsibility.

WE ARE LEIGH! #BETHEBEST

- AQUESTT EXCELLENT District Rating
 - Top 15% in the state
- New Jr/Sr High School in 2020
 - Elementary classroom expansion complete in 2024
- ITE courses that focus on fabrication, design, and entrepreneurship
- CNA Pathway Program in partnership with CCC and CHI
- Mechatronics Stem Program in partnership with CCC
- Proactive Board of Education
- Professional and Progressive Staff
- LCS is 1:1 Computers/IPads in grades K-12
- 98% High School Extracurricular Activity Participation
- State Assessments and ACT Scores above the state average
- Dual Credit and College Courses offered
 - 2025-100% of all seniors graduated with college credits

LCS Legislative Districts Representatives:
Dist. 16/19/22/23 - Ben Hansen, Robert Dover, Mike Moser, Jared Storm

SCHOOL DISTRICT STATISTICS

- ◆ PK-12 Students: 314
 - Growing Enrollment
 - State of the Art Facilities
- ◆ 24 Certified Teachers
 - 24 Classified Staff
- ◆ 2 Administrators
- ◆ General Fund Levy: \$0.6045
- ◆ Building Fund Levy: \$0.0566
- ◆ Bond Fund Levy: \$0.1209
- ◆ General Fund (Dec. 2025): \$1,475,430.47
- ◆ Building Fund (Dec. 2025): \$829,619.39
- ◆ Depreciation Fund (Dec. 2025): \$1,182,185.39
- ◆ State Aid
 - 2025-2026 \$654,589.00 (+\$26,379)
 - 2024-2025 \$628,210.00 (+\$132,244)
 - 2023-2024 \$495,966.00 (+\$304,351)
 - 2022-2023 \$191,615.00



#BETHEBEST



Leigh FCCLA Members Shine at District STAR Events Competition

The Leigh FCCLA chapter recently participated in the District STAR Events Competition. STAR—Students Taking Action with Recognition—provides members with the opportunity to showcase their knowledge and skills through a variety of projects connected to Family and Consumer Sciences. Below, you'll find the competition results along with highlights of the impressive projects completed by our students!

Elizabeth Hoffman - Job Interview, Level 3

1st Place, Gold Medal, State Qualifier

This event requires participants to prepare a portfolio, including a job application, and participate in an interview. Liz prepared her portfolio for a career in marketing and received a perfect score on her interview!

Ava Kasik, Karly Wendt, Nevaeh Zulkoski - Focus on Children, Level 3

1st Place, Gold Medal, State Qualifier

For their Focus on Children project, Ava, Karly, and Nevaeh wanted to educate elementary-aged students about the importance of whole foods and nutrition. Through funding provided by the Team Nutrition Grant, they implemented a comprehensive nutrition education project designed to teach elementary students about whole foods and healthy eating habits. Grant funds were used to purchase all necessary supplies to support hands-on learning experiences, including food preparation and monthly taste-testing activities. Using NDE's Harvest of the Month resources, they will teach students about a variety of fruits and vegetables.

Sydney Messerlie - Teaching Strategies, Level 3

1st Place, Gold Medal, State Qualifier

Teaching Strategies is an individual event that recognizes participants who exhibit knowledge and competency in incorporating research-based teaching strategies into an original lesson plan activity. Sydney chose to focus her lesson plan on preschool-aged children. Her "learning to count pizza party" lesson featured strategies such as modeling, prompting, and game-based learning activities. Not only was she evaluated on the creation of a lesson plan, but she was also required to role-play her lesson with the evaluators acting as the students.

Luke Eisenmann, Kyle McMullin - Repurpose and Redesign, Level 3

3rd Place, Gold Medal, State Qualifier

This project focused on repurposing an old, unusable piano into a functional and visually appealing wine bar. By disassembling, redesigning, and reconstructing the piano, Luke and Kyle transformed a discarded item into a sustainable piece of furniture with practical storage. The project required planning, creativity, and hands-on carpentry skills while emphasizing environmental responsibility.

Jocelyn Donnelly, Halle Korth - Chapter in Review Display, Level 3

3rd Place, Silver Medal, State Qualifier

Throughout their project, Jocelyn and Halle highlighted our chapter's program of work and shared

how our chapter's happenings reflect the purposes of FCCLA and promote Family and Consumer Sciences. They focused on our membership campaigns, our chapter meetings and recognition activities, and our participation in leadership and competitive events.

Ella Higby, Madi Freudenburg - National Programs in Action, Level 3

2nd Place, Gold Medal, State Qualifier

Ella and Madi focused on the National Program, Families First. Their goals were to provide cookie kits to the families who received donations from Leigh Cares. Their hope was that families could use the opportunity to spend time together and build strong family connections over the holiday season. Each cookie kit included 12 cookies, 2 frosting bags, sprinkles, and a handmade card from Ella and Madi on behalf of our FCCLA chapter.

Emersyn Urban, Vylet Hollatz - Chapter Service Project Display, Level 3

1st Place, Silver Medal, State Qualifier

The purpose of the Chapter Service Project STAR Event is to recognize chapters that develop and implement an in-depth service project that makes a worthwhile contribution to families, schools, and communities. Emersyn and Vylet conducted a winter clothing drive with drop boxes at Citizens State Bank, the school office, the FCCLA Family Christmas event, and at the Humphrey/Lindsay versus Clarkson-Leigh basketball game on December 5. Those who donated at the basketball game received a voucher for a free popcorn from the concession stand. In total, they collected 222 items to be donated locally or at the county level.

Trevor Hoffman - Entrepreneurship, Level 2

2nd Place, Gold Medal, State Qualifier

Trevor utilized his experience as the owner of the small business Connect Golf to complete the Entrepreneurship STAR project. In addition to including information about his current business, he considered plans for expansion and explored what the future of his business might look like. He also expanded his learning to include personnel management, marketing, and an understanding of health, fire, insurance, and zoning codes at both the local and state levels.

Averi Clausen, Avery Kuester, Wyatt Eisenmann - Sports Nutrition, Level 2

1st Place, Gold Medal, State Qualifier

"When we think about success in sports, we usually focus on training, talent, and motivation. But behind every strong performance, every personal best, and fast recovery, there is one essential factor working in the background: nutrition. Sports nutrition is not just about eating more food or following the latest diet trend. It is about fueling the body correctly so it can perform at its best and stay healthier over the long term."

After researching the nutritional recommendations for athletes, they provided meal and hydration plans to a fellow athlete here at school. They tracked his progress using MyFitnessPal to evaluate the results.

Lainey Urban - Career Investigation, Level 2

1st Place, Silver Medal, State Qualifier

For this project, Lainey chose to investigate a career as a Dietician. She conducted self-assessments and a vast amount of research on the field of dietetics, as well as participated in a job shadow with a dietician at Faith Regional Hospital in Norfolk.

Eisley Urban, Khloe Kabes, Emery Malena - Professional Presentation, Level 1

1st Place, Silver Medal, State Qualifier

Dancing Toward a Healthier Generation: 1 in 4 teens are not meeting the recommended one hour a day of physical activity. To help combat this issue, Eisley, Khloe, and Emery presented to the 7th and 8th grade students at Leigh, along with their dance group on the importance of physical activity, with a focus on the health benefits of dance. They focused on not only the benefits to an individual's physical health, but also their social and emotional wellbeing.

Ella Hansen, Kinna Closson - National Programs in Action, Level 1

2nd Place, Silver Medal, State Qualifier

Ella and Kinna chose to focus on the National Program, Student Body. Their goal was to educate the 3rd and 6th grade class about eating a well balanced diet that includes foods from all five food groups.

Layla Hollatz, Mariah Kasik, Harper Wendt - Focus on Children, Level 1

1st Place, Gold Medal, State Qualifier

The goal of this project was to educate the 4th grade students at Leigh Community Schools about physical and online safety. As part of their lesson, they created personal safety kits with the students. These kits included bandaids, gauze, hand sanitizer, kleenex, alcohol wipes and other basic first aid items. Each student was able to take their safety kit home or keep it in their backpack for minor emergencies.



FCCLA®
LEIGH

WHAT IS CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION?



CTE is delivered at middle schools, comprehensive and CTE-dedicated high schools, career academies, area technical centers, community and technical colleges and some four-year universities.

CTE students earn industry certifications and licenses, postsecondary certificates, associate degrees, bachelor's degrees and higher.



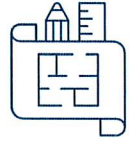
8.6 million high school students and **3.3 million** college and adult students participate in CTE, learning skills in the classroom and on the job.¹

**CTE PREPARES THE
WORKFORCE ACROSS A
WIDE RANGE OF INDUSTRIES
AND OCCUPATIONS.**



Agriculture

Construction



Arts, Entertainment
& Design

Management &
Entrepreneurship



Education

Energy & Natural Resources



Financial Services



Hospitality, Events & Tourism

Healthcare &
Human Services



Digital Technology

Public Service & Safety



Advanced Manufacturing

Marketing & Sales



Supply Chain &
Transportation



CTE is good for students, good for businesses and good for communities.



CTE high school students are college and career ready – **97%** graduate high school and most enroll directly in college.²

Postsecondary credentials in CTE fields—from industry certifications to short-term certificates to degrees—**lead to higher earnings** than credentials in other fields.³



CTE is the answer to the nation's projected deficit of **6 million** skilled workers through 2032.⁴



LEARN MORE ABOUT CTE AT [ACTEONLINE.ORG](https://acteonline.org)

¹ Perkins Collaborative Resource Network, Perkins Data Explorer, customized Consolidated Annual Report data, 2023-24.

² Perkins Collaborative Resource Network, Perkins Data Explorer, customized Consolidated Annual Report data, 2023-24; U.S. Department of Education, NCES, HSLIS-09, Base-year, 2013 Update, High School Transcript, and Second Follow-Up.


³ McLeod, E. et al. (2025). *Bridging the middle skills gap: Connecting a diverse workforce to economic opportunity through certificates and associate's degrees*. Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce; Morris, C., Cheah, B., & Strohl, J. (2025). *The major payoff: Evaluating earnings and employment outcomes across bachelor's degrees*. Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce.

⁴ Lightcast (2024). *The rising storm: Building a future-ready workforce to withstand the looming labor shortage*.

Leigh Community Schools

<div>February</div> <div>2026</div>						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thr	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
SB Pitching Camp in Elem Gym (Gr 7-12: 2-3:30 p.m.; Gr 3-6: 4-5:30 p.m.)	FFA Meeting National FBLA Week Girls Basketball: East Husker Conference Basketball Tournament (Varsity)	4:30 p.m. JH BBB @ Schuyler National FBLA Week Boys Basketball: East Husker Conference Basketball Tournament (Varsity)	10:00 a.m. LATE START - NO AM Pre-K FFA - State Degree Interviews & Proficiency Application Judging in Columbus National FBLA Week	6:00 p.m. JH BBB vs Wayne @ Clarkson National FBLA Week Girls Basketball: East Husker Conference Basketball Tournament (Varsity)	10:00 a.m. WR - Patriot Tournament @ Leigh - PARENT'S RECOGNITION WSC Honor Choir 1:00 EARLY DISMISSAL National FBLA Week Boys Basketball: East Husker Conference Basketball Tournament (Varsity)	12-1:00 p.m. 1st & 2nd Gr BB fundamentals Girls Basketball: East Husker Conference Basketball Tournament Championships (Varsity) Boys Basketball: East Husker Conference Basketball Tournament Championships (Varsity)
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
SB Pitching Camp in Elem Gym (Gr 7-12: 2-3:30 p.m.; Gr 3-6: 4-5:30 p.m.)	EHC Honor Band @ WSC National FCCLA Week 6:00 p.m. C Team BB vs Madison @ Leigh 3:30 p.m. JH BBB @ Archangels Catholic	National FCCLA Week 4:30 p.m. G & B BB Marathon @ Ft. Calhoun	National FCCLA Week 6:30 p.m. Regular School Board Meeting	National FCCLA Week 4:30 p.m. B & G BB Marathon vs Stanton @ Leigh - PARENT'S NIGHT 4:30 p.m. JH BBB @ Madison	National FCCLA Week WR Districts @ Oakland/Craig Speech @ Wakefield	WR Districts @ Oakland/Craig Youth BB Tourney - Boys in Leigh; Girls in Clarkson 6:00 p.m.-10:00 p.m. FCCLA Parent's Night Out
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
SB Pitching Camp in Elem Gym (Gr 7-12: 2-3:30 p.m.; Gr 3-6: 4-5:30 p.m.)	FFA - 2nd Round CDE's LEAP - after school (2nd grade) Girls Basketball Sub Districts - TBD	Girls Basketball Sub Districts - TBD		Sate WR Championships Girls Basketball Sub Districts - TBD	6:00 p.m. JV/V Boys BB @ David City Sate WR Championships	Sate WR Championships 9:00 a.m. Boys C Team Tourney @ Tekamah-Herman Speech @ Wisner/ Pilger State Cheer & Dance Competition in Grand Island
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
FCCLA Peer Ed Conference SB Pitching Camp in Elem Gym (Gr 7-12: 2-3:30 p.m.; Gr 3-6: 4-5:30 p.m.)	FCCLA Peer Ed Conference National FFA Week Boys Basketball Sub Districts - TBD	National FFA Week Boys Basketball Sub Districts - TBD MAP Testing-Jr/Sr High - AM	National FFA Week EHC Speech @ Howells/Dodge	JAG - Career Development Conference National FFA Week PreK Classes - Visit to Public Library Boys Basketball Sub Districts - TBD 7:45 a.m. FCCLA Chapter Meeting MAP Testing-Jr/Sr High - AM	National FFA Week Girls Basketball District Finals - TBD	Boys Basketball District Finals - TBD (or on 3/2 or 3/3)

FEBRUARY 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2 BR: Breakfast Burrito L: Chicken & Rice Casserole, Broccoli	3 BR: Cinnamon Roll L: Meatball Sub, French Fries	4 LATE START-NO BRKFST L: Corn Dog & Beans	5 BR: French Toast Sticks & Sausage L: Chicken Sandwich, French Fries	6 BR: Cereal, Toast, Juice L: Breakfast Sandwich, Juice, Hashbrown	7
8	9 BR: Rice Krispie Bars L: Chicken-Bacon-Ranch Pizza	10 BR: Omelet, Sausage, Toast L: Goulash, Garlic Bread, Corn	11 BR: Apple Fritter L: Salisbury Steak, Baked Potato, Peas & Carrots	12 BR: Tornado L: Chicken Fajita, Mexican, Rice	13 BR: Popart L: Hamburger, Chips, Beans	14 
15	16 BR: Pancake wrap L: Chicken Nuggets, Mac-n-Cheese	17 BR: Breakfast Sandwich L: McRib, French Fries	18 BR: Cherry Turnover L: Grilled Cheese, Tomato Soup	19 BR: Churro L: Walking Taco, Refried Beans	20 BR: Muffin L: Cheese Pizza	21
22	23 BR: Biscuit & Gravy L: Tater Tot Casserole, Garlic Bread, Green Beans	24 BR: Apple Turnover L: Pulled Pork, Beans, Sweet Potato Fries	25 BR: Yogurt Parfait L: Sub Sandwich, Chips	26 BR: Long John L: Chicken Fried Steak, Mashed Potatoes, Corn	27 BR: Uncrustable L: Bosco Stick, Meatless Pasta Bake	28
	This institution is an equal opportunity provider	Menu is subject to change		Milk is available at all meals	Fruit & Vegetable bar is available at lunch	

THE LEGEND
222 W 4TH STREET
P O BOX 98
LEIGH NE 68643

From the Principal's Desk:



February is shaping up to be a busy and exciting month at Leigh Community Schools! Our girls and boys basketball teams are wrapping up the regular season as conference basketball tournaments take place next week. Best of luck to both programs as they compete—your hard work and dedication have been fun to watch. Conference wrestling will be held Saturday in North Bend, and we are excited to host the Patriot Invite on Friday, February 6th, beginning at 10:00 a.m. Community members are encouraged to stop in and enjoy a great day of wrestling.

Speech season is in full swing, and our team is off to a strong start, placing third at the North Bend Speech Meet. Conference speech will be held on February 25th at Howells-Dodge, and we wish our speech team the best as they continue their season.

Our FFA and FCCLA students have also been busy competing in their district events, representing Leigh Community Schools with pride. Be sure to check the Leigh Community Schools Facebook page for results and updates from recent activities.

Overall, this has been a great way to start 2026, and there are great things still to come.

#BeTheBest