Brad Evenson

October 2026

Community Education

Fall Programs: Building Skills and Connections
October has been an active month for LPGE Community Education. Four fall youth programs—Flag Football, Tackle Football, Cooking Club, and Little Spikers Volleyball—have wrapped up for the season. Students enjoyed opportunities to develop new skills, explore their interests, and spend time with their peers. Thank you to the coaches, volunteers, and families whose support made these programs possible!

Early Childhood: Full Classrooms and Additional Funding
All sections of our three- and four-year-old early childhood programs are full. To accommodate increased participation, we expanded enrollment in our four-year-old sections to **18 students per class**. We also received funding for **five additional Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) seats**, helping support this expansion.

- VPK is Minnesota's publicly funded preschool program for four-year-olds, designed to prepare children for success in kindergarten and beyond. Its emphasis on learning through play supports language, thinking, and social-emotional development.

Winter/Spring Brochure: Planning Ahead
Work is underway on the **2027 Winter/Spring LPGE Community Education Brochure**, scheduled for release in early January. The brochure will feature classes and activities offered from January through May. Community members are encouraged to suggest new offerings or share their interests by contacting the Community Education Office at **320-357-3613**.

Stakeholder Advisory Council: Community Voices Matter
LPGE Community Education, LPGE Elementary and Secondary Schools, and Title Programs will host the first Stakeholder Advisory Council meeting of the school year on **Tuesday, October 20, 2026**. Each program will share updates and invite feedback on current services, activities, and future needs. This input helps guide program planning and ensures our offerings reflect the priorities of students, families, and the community.

Federal Programs

Career and College Fair: Exploring Future Opportunities
The LPGE Achievement and Integration Career and College Fair took place on **Tuesday, October 13, 2026**. This marked the fourth year of the format that incorporates the fair into the school day and allows students to select presentations based on their career interests.

This year's fair offered:

- **37 career presentations** covering a variety of occupations.
- Representatives from **12 colleges and universities**.
- **Three military representatives**.
- Booths hosted by **12 local businesses** offering connections to immediate employment and jobs after graduation.

Together, these opportunities helped students explore education, training, military service, and employment pathways. A special thank-you to the Career Fair Team for coordinating the event: **Luan Thomas-Brunkhorst, Audrey Morrill, Stacey Custer, Jonathan Young, Rachel Bothun, and Brad Evenson**.

Title Programs: Approved and Ready to Support Students
All LPGE Title programs are funded and approved for the **2026–2027 school year**. The annual planning and approval process provides an opportunity to review student needs, evaluate existing services, and identify new approaches to strengthen student achievement.

"I Scream for Books": Learning and Family Fun
Our Title Programs will host **"I Scream for Books" on Thursday, October 29, 2026**, at LPGE Elementary School. This family engagement event will allow students and parents or guardians to learn about Title services, participate in educational activities, and enjoy ice cream together.

Professional Learning: Federal Funding and Artificial Intelligence
On **Wednesday, October 7, 2026**, I attended the MAASFEP Conference in Plymouth. The one-day conference provided updates on federal program requirements, regulations, and funding. Sessions also explored the growing influence of artificial intelligence in education. These topics help inform our planning and administration of programs that support student learning.

21st CCLC

As LPGE begins implementing our **Cohort 10 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) grant**, a significant part of the startup process involves meeting Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) training and professional learning requirements. These activities help establish a strong foundation for program administration and high-quality learning opportunities outside the school day.

MDE's training and meeting expectations since school has started include:

- **Initial grantee orientation,** September 16-18th, to introduce grant expectations, policies, and procedures.
- **Fall grantee meetings,** September 23-24th, to review state and federal updates, participate in professional development, and connect with other grant recipients.
- **Annual continuous program improvement workshops**, October 2nd, Ignite Afterschool's M3 regional huddles, to help programs use data to guide improvements.

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