

January

Lake Ann Elementary January 2026 Newsletter

Defensiveness. I believe that being defensive is a waste of time and energy.

I am human. Sometimes I'm right and sometimes I am wrong. Sometimes I make mistakes and sometimes I just don't know the answer. I forget things and I hurry through things when I should just slow down.

My belief about being defensive is this:

- If I make a good decision or I am right about something, I **don't need** to defend that.
- If I make a hasty or poor decision or I'm just plain wrong about something, I **should not** defend that.

Now as I stated, I am human. My behavior does not always line up with my beliefs. I have been known to try to defend something that I don't need to defend or defend something I should not try to defend. The fact is, defending things can take up a lot of time and energy. Energy and time that could be spent is much better ways.

All of this belief sharing, behavior defending, time and energy zapping talk is my way of leading up to my New Year's resolution:

I will approach each person this year by asking the question, "**How can I add value to this person's life?**"

Any time I might spend defending things I should not or don't need to defend can be better spent blessing others, in other words, adding value to their life.

So just what does added value look like? Hold the door; give the complement (authentic ones); really listen; give away time, money, stuff; apologize. I already do some of these things, but this year I want to be intentional about adding value to the lives of others and I hope to learn new ways to do this as the year goes by. Ideas? Please share!

PTO NEWS AND EVENTS:

January 12 – PTO meeting at 4:30 pm in the LAE cafeteria.

Popcorn Friday – January 9 – Mike and Carol Pomper; January 23 – Hollyhocks and Honey

January 26 - February 16 – Little Caesar's Fund Raiser

March 2 – Little Caesar's products expected to arrive.

New Year, new staff!

Just before Christmas break, a small (but mighty) team of teachers and paraprofessionals met to interview and select an additional paraprofessional to join our staff. We were so impressed by the applicants, that with the help and support of the superintendent and chief financial officer, we were able to offer both applicants a position in our school. I want to introduce our new staff, Deborah Forrester and Karlee Harris, in this newsletter. It also permits me to apologize for not introducing our last great staff acquisition from October, Caryn Hall, and provide me an opportunity to repair that oversight now!

Caryn Hall – Mrs. Hall has been an involved parent and supporter of Lake Ann Elementary for several years. She has been involved with many projects through the PTO and volunteers for many classroom activities. Mrs. Hall has a positive attitude and approachable demeanor that is accentuated by her continuous smile and affirming words. She has been working at LAE since October and is making a positive impact on our school culture by becoming a role-model for students with her willingness to try new things and help whoever needs her.

Deborah Forrester – Mrs. Forrester comes to Benzie with many years of experience as a paraprofessional in both general education and special education classrooms. She is described as reliable, courteous and hard-working by past employers with skills in instruction delivery and behavior monitoring. We are indeed excited about adding her to our staff and eager for our students to benefit from her experience and qualities of character.

Karlee Harris - Miss Harris is a Benzie graduate and is presently pursuing a degree as an educator. She has experience in Kindergarten, 1st grade, and 6th grade through the Teacher's Academy and comes highly recommended by those who have worked with her. We are indeed excited about adding her to our staff and supporting her as she becomes a teacher of the future!



January 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 Holiday Break	2 Holiday Break	3
4	5	6	7	8	9 Popcorn Friday – Mike and Carol Pomper 9-10 am Character Cafe	10
11	12 PTO meeting 4:30 in the cafeteria	13	14	15	16 Early Release 11:50	17
18	19 No school	20 Winter Benchmark testing begins	21	22	23 Popcorn Friday – Hollyhocks and honey	24
25	26 Little Ceasar's Fund Raiser begins through Feb 16th	27	28	29	30 9-10 am January Character Café Foundation Friday Early Release pm PD <u>Bake Sale 4th/5th</u> Winter Benchmark testing ends	31