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LP County Schools Holds 2nd Annual Week of Code

All La Porte County public schools conducted coding activities throughout every grade to celebrate the annual National Week of Code, December 9-13, 2019. 73% of all La Porte County students participated in coding activities, up 5% from last year.

The Hour of Code was started as a worldwide effort designed to introduce students to computer science and demystify "computer coding." For several years, talented teachers in each school corporation participated in some type of coding experience. Now, all La Porte County public school corporations coordinate efforts and resources for cool coding experiences throughout the week. "Coding teaches problem solving, communication & how things work. We all want our kids to have an advantage, not be behind when they graduate." stated Maggi Spartz, Unity Foundation president, "And these coding skills are applicable to any career path, even ones outside the STEM field, so it's important for all our students to have these opportunities."

The La Porte County Public Library helped school corporations by training educators in skills identified by the Indiana Academic Standards. The skills associated with coding help students develop academic skills, and build qualities like perseverance, organization, problem solving, and communication. "South Central Schools had another successful Week of Code," said Deb Kammrath of South Center School Corporation, "All students had the opportunity to focus on various coding applications and games. Our partnership with Libraries360 and the generous grants and donations from the Unity Foundation, Views on Learning, and South Central Education Foundation have provided high-quality access to digital resources for our students on a daily basis."

The goal is to help students gain valuable 21st century skills and to create a talent pipeline of employees for the county and region. Fonda Owens, LP County Public Library Executive Director states, "We are happy to be advancing the resources for STEM in our County; and we hope that by providing technology and training for our educators we can help them meet the new required Indiana Academic Standards. Our local educators are phenomenal, and we enjoy every opportunity to work together to set up our community's children for success."

The La Porte County Skill UP Network, a county-wide effort, emerged when our local city Mayors, with leadership from the Center of Workforce Innovations along with the Northwest Indiana Workforce Board, came together to apply for a Skill UP 3 grant from the Indiana Department of Workforce Development. The La Porte County Skill UP Network brings together economic developers, many employers, K-12 education, Purdue Northwest and Ivy Tech, the Unity Foundation, and the La Porte County Public Library to create a talent pipeline, with an initial focus on manufacturers in La Porte County.