

WE are Lak~~ota~~ta



May 11, 2021 Edition

FEATURED In This Issue



Student Shout-Outs Top Off Staff Appreciation Week

From snack bars and handwritten notes to social media posts and a video series of student shout-outs, we took time to celebrate Lakota's 1,800 teachers and staff during Staff Appreciation Week May 3-7.



Words of Wisdom for Our Graduates

Graduation is just around the corner for the Class of 2021. With this in mind, some of our younger students are once again proving how wise they are.

This month's Words of Wisdom is all about advice for our seniors.

"On a daily basis, I have the privilege of witnessing the level of care, pride and selflessness with which our teachers and support staff do their jobs," said Lakota Superintendent **Matthew Miller**. "But it really is so much more than a job to them."

[Click here to read the full story.](#)

[Watch video](#)

[Watch the videos](#)

Around Lakota Features

- [Student-Led Project at Independence Challenges Others to 'Spill It Fill It'](#)
- [Lakota Announces Valedictorians & Salutatorians](#)
- [A New Twist on Volunteering](#)

New Business

- [Gifted Services Update](#)
- [Submit Transportation Forms by July 20](#)
- [Open Enrollment](#)
- [Summer Lunch Program](#)
- [Mental Health Summer Supports](#)

SHOUT-OUTS



Special Ceremonies Recognize the "Top 25" at East & West



East Athletic Signing Day

Lakota East recently held a Spring College Signing ceremony to honor these outstanding student-athletes who earned the privilege and opportunity to continue their athletic careers at the collegiate level.

Throughout the district, year-end ceremonies are taking place to honor the academic achievements of our students. At the high schools, the "Top 25" students, representing approximately the upper 4 percent of their graduating class, were recently recognized during some special celebrations at Lakota East and West high schools.

Congratulations to these Top 25 students:

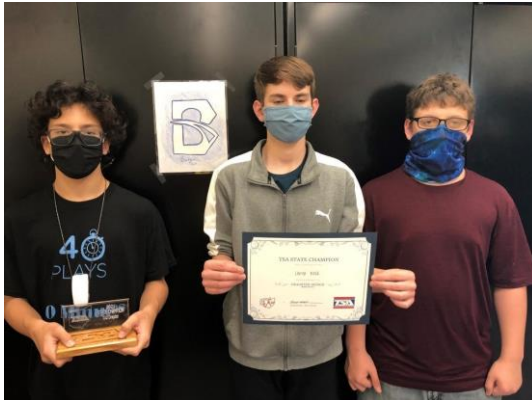
Lakota East
Michelle Antiri
Audrey Earnest
Adrianna Fay
Anna Florence
Annelise Gayer
Emma Grimm
Samuel Hamad
Alyssa Hampton
Saad Khan
Caitlyn Kozerski
Courtney Lyden
Christopher Mages
Anne Mathew
Isaac Michelson
Katherine Niewald
Morgan Novean
Allison Pratt
Matthew Price
Marisa Prisco
Sonali Ray
Luke Schambow
Sara Schnetzer
Lyna Sennoun
Robert Viox
Shiloh Wolfork

Lakota West
Clara Adkins
Nicholas Athans
Rachel Barrera
Zachary Beneteau
Evelyn Best
Brooke Boeding
Marcela Brower
William Comer
Savannah Conlin
Easton Crowther
Kailyn Dudukovich
Halina Hunt
Victoria Johnson
Ariana Kenny
Daniel Laritz

Andrew Bachman
Baseball (Ohio State University)
Christina Blount
Volleyball (Rider University)
Brooke Brown
Soccer (West Virginia University)
Myla Carter
Track & Field (Tiffin University)
Gillian Dombrowski
Horse Riding (Lake Erie College)
Will Edkins
Lacrosse (Ohio Northern University)
Kelsi Harris
Track/Cross Country (Ohio University)
Jack Hartmann
Football (Ashland University)
Shelby Jackson
Soccer (Hiram College)
Camiyah James
Track & Field (Central Michigan)
Nate Johnson
Basketball (University of Akron)
Justin Katona
Lacrosse (Wittenburg University)
Anna Kluesener
Track & Field (University of Findlay)
Meg Kobman
Volleyball (Earlham College)
Dillon Lacey
Baseball (Wright State University Lake Campus)
Luca Larubbio
Football (Thomas More University)
Nicholas Leman
Soccer (University of Vermont)
Avery Mahon
Soccer (Bellarmine University)
Reyna Mijangos
Soccer (Murray State University)
Rachel Moore
Soccer (Heidelberg University)
Adam Murphy
Golf (Capital University)
Ryan Murphy
Golf (Capital University)
Brynn Myers
Soccer (Trine University)
Paxton Oberhaus
Cross Country/Track (University of Findlay)
Rylee Oldfield
Soccer (University of Mount Union)
Owen Opp
Lacrosse (Otterbein University)
Flynn Prather
Cross Country/Track & Field
(Olivet Nazarene University)
Braxton Rich
Lacrosse (Berry College)

Kaleb Martin
Nolan Meister
John Moore
Timothy Pence
Julieta Ramirez
Izaia Rayburn
Marin Sandefur
Anitvir Taunque
Vidushi Trivedi
Aneesh Vyas
Arani Wanigasekara
Hatim Wasanwala
Ryan Williams

Brooke Salyers
 Cross Country/Track & Field
 (Wright State University)
Mackenzie Schneider
 Track & Field (University of Findlay)
John Scott
 Football (Lake Erie College)
Kelsey Siereveld
 Basketball (Ohio Northern University)
Carly Spletzer
 Cross Country/Track & Field
 (Ball State University)
Campbell Spradling
 Baseball (University of Charleston)
Michael Sprockett
 Baseball (University of Akron)
Peyton Tennis
 Soccer (Wilmington College)



Ridge Students are TSA Champs

Ridge Junior students **Charlie Baccei** and **Matias Boloqui**, with assistance from **Shane Wolfrum** and **Lorelei Choate**, designed and built a CO2 powered dragster for the recent Technology Student Association State competition last week.

The team finished in first place in the middle school division, posting an outstanding time of 1.652 seconds in a 20 meter race. Congratulations!



Ohio's Top 75 Public High Schools Include East, West

U.S. News & World Report ranked Lakota East and Lakota West among the top 75 public high schools in Ohio. In the pool of 683 public high schools statewide, East and West ranked 54th and 74th, respectively.

One of many organizations that rank K-12 schools, U.S. News' formula is based 90 percent on student testing - both state exams as well as the Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate tests that some students choose to take. This year's rankings are based on data from the 2018-19 school year.



Celebrating Student Authors

The Lakota LEADS parent group recently announced the winners of its annual writing competition. The Write Challenge was open to K-12 students and submissions could be in the form of a poem, narrative or essay.

Winners will receive an award and have their writing published in an anthology.

[Click here to see the list of this year's winners.](#)



East Students to Compete in Computer Science Competition Finals

Seven students from Lakota East High School are moving on to the American Computer Science League (ACSL) competition finals. For 43 years, the ACSL has provided computer science and programming contests for students in grades kindergarten through 12. Last year, approximately 500 teams from around the world participated in the competition.

Congratulations to our Lakota East finalists who will compete virtually at the end of the month:

**Allison Pratt
Courtney Lyden
Garrett Laverty
Ian Balfour
Johnathan Lemma
Sean Huggins
Srihari Das**



CELEBRATING OUR STUDENTS



Celebrating Our Students

On May 10, the Lakota Board of Education student spotlight included 132 student achievements WE have celebrated since January. From academics to fine arts to athletics, students throughout Lakota have achieved success at the state and national level.

[Click here to watch the highlight video.](#)

AROUND LAKOTA



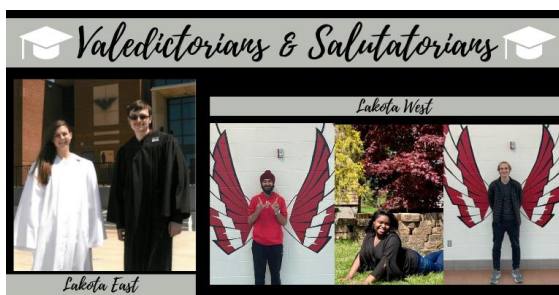
Student-Led Project at Independence Challenges Others to 'Spill It Fill It'

What started as a simple extra credit challenge escalated into a full-fledged social media campaign led by room 209 at Independence Elementary School. Their goal: "To be the

creators of the beginning of the end of littering."

It was a class discussion on citizenship and civic participation during a social studies unit about "Rights and Responsibilities" that sparked what the class has since coined the "Spill It Fill It" movement. When the topic of littering elicited a large response during her class's brainstorming, fifth grade teacher **Kim Bryant** challenged her students to clean up a public space by filling up a bag of trash. Next thing she knew, her students were voluntarily creating flyers, presentations, videos and logos to get others on board with the idea too.

[Read more](#)



Announcing the Valedictorians & Salutatorians for Lakota's Class of 2021

Lakota is proud to announce the valedictorians and salutatorians for the Class of 2021.

Lakota East's valedictorian is **Christopher Mages**, with a cumulative GPA of 4.8964. He plans to major in Chemical Engineering at the University of Cincinnati, with the goal to pursue a career in pharmaceuticals or battery technology.

Katherine Niewald is Lakota East's Class of 2021 salutatorian with a cumulative GPA of 4.8525. In the fall, she will attend the University of Kentucky and major in Accounting. She also plans to participate in Army ROTC.

At Lakota West, valedictorian honors go to **Anitvir Taunque** with a 4.9884 GPA. He will be attending The Ohio State University to major in Biomedical Sciences.

Arianna Kenny and **William Comer** were both named Lakota West salutatorians.

Ariana is graduating with a 4.9623 GPA. She plans to attend Xavier University in the fall to major in Pre-Med.

William graduates with a 4.9061 GPA, with plans to attend The Ohio State University and major in Computer Science Engineering.

Click below to read more about these outstanding students.

[Read more](#)



A New Twist on Volunteering

Did you ever wonder why Lakota high school students volunteer with community organizations as part of their government classes? The 15 volunteer hours even comprise about 20% of a student's quarterly grade.

"Volunteering is essential to civic-mindedness in our representative democracy," said East government teacher **Dr. Tisha Grote**.

"Volunteering is one's responsibility (just like voting or working on a political campaign) and lends itself to the participatory democracy our Founders envisioned." She said that not everyone can vote or work on a political campaign, but they do have the ability to give back to their community.

[Read more](#)

FEATURED PHOTOS



Military Commitment Ceremony Honors 27 East, West Grads

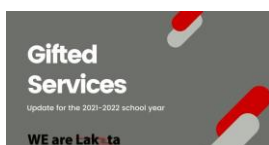
At its fourth annual Military Commitment Ceremony on April 28, Lakota honored the 27 Class of 2021 Lakota East and West graduates who will serve in a branch of the U.S. military. Seventeen graduates participated in the evening program at Lakota East Freshman School. Thanks to the partnership of West Chester Township, the ceremony was broadcast live. [The recorded program is now available on Lakota's YouTube channel.](#)



Countdown to the Last Day of School

Across the district, students (and teachers) are having fun using the letters of the alphabet to count down the last 26 days of the school year. For **Jessica Hickey's** Hopewell ECS first graders, celebrations included 'A for Art Day' to 'G for Games Day' to 'P for Paper Airplanes.' Last week, the class marked 'O' day with some outside reading.

NEW BUSINESS



Gifted Services Update

Changes to the structure of gifted services for the 2021-2022 school year will result in more students being served. "By rethinking the way we work and committing to a multi-year rigorous professional development plan,,

we're going to be able to not only serve more students, but also add services," said **Lauren Webb**, Lakota's assistant director of gifted services.

For several years, the district's gifted intervention specialists (GIS) have provided targeted instruction to students identified as gifted in math through Lakota's Math Plus program beginning in third grade. Students identified as gifted in reading are clustered together in class placement. Currently, the district's eight GISes serve approximately 350 students. That number is expected to more than triple with the new structure in place.

[Learn more](#)



Submit Transportation Requests by July 20

To ease the transition to a new school year and honor families' requests for alternative pick-up and drop-off locations for transportation, Lakota is asking that families submit transportation forms by July 20 to receive transportation on the first day of school. There are now separate forms for early childhood and elementary school students.

Grades K-2: Early childhood schools ask that all families complete a form to have on file, even if transportation is not needed.

[Transportation Form \(K-2\)](#)

Grades 3-6: By default, transportation for all eligible students is based on the home address listed in Home Access Center. All alternative transportation plans are automatically cleared at the end of each school year, so please complete the form before each school year if you'll require transportation to or from an address different than your home address.

[Transportation Form \(Grades 3-6\)](#)

[Learn more](#)



Staff and Returning Families: Open Enrollment Applications Due May 28

Each school year, the Lakota Board of Education re-evaluates the district's open enrollment policy and votes on whether or not to approve its renewal. If renewed, students residing in other Ohio school districts can apply to attend Lakota.

Due to the high volume of returning open enrolled students, at this time we are not accepting first-time applicants for the 2021-2022 school year. Per Board Policy 5113 and Administrative Guidelines, we will only be accepting applications from current Lakota staff, returning open enrolled students and siblings of returning open enrolled students.

All completed applications must be submitted to enroll@lakotaonline.com by the close of business on Friday, May 28, 2021.

[Learn more](#)



Summer Food Service Program Begins May 27, USDA Extends Free Meals through Next School Year

The Lakota Local School District, in partnership with the Faith Alliance, is participating in the USDA's Summer Food Service Program. Meals will be provided to all children (ages 1-18 and individuals with disabilities through age 21) - free of charge regardless of income - beginning May 27 through August 5. The final pick-up day will be Aug. 2.

The summer program's qualifications fall in line with the USDA's free meals waiver for all students, recently extended through the 2021-2022 school year. This program is implemented at no cost to the district. Summer meals will be distributed at nine different locations.

Click on the link below for locations and other details.

For any questions regarding the program, please call the Lakota Child Nutrition Department at 513-644-1163.

[Learn more](#)



Mental Health Supports Remain in Place Over Summer

We all know that mental health needs don't take a summer break and that our students continue to need support even when they are not at school.

That is why our Mindpeace partners and therapists are still available to support Lakota students via telehealth or in person (typically at the school). If your child isn't currently seeing one of our therapists, but you have concerns, please feel free to reach out to your school's therapist to discuss appropriate next steps for your child. You can also find resources, look for community providers or other school partners by visiting www.MindPeaceCincinnati.com.

[Click here for a link to the therapists who are available and working over the summer break.](#)

ON THE RADAR

May 19 & 21: Light the Path for the Class of 2021

Once again, the community is invited to "light the path" for the Lakota East and Lakota West Class of 2021 by tying a ribbon around a tree or porch light in their high school's

UPCOMING EVENTS

Preschool Last Day for Students

May 18

colors. At 8:21 p.m. on the night of graduation, 2021 in military time, neighbors are encouraged to turn on their front porch lights in honor of Lakota's graduates. Lakota East's graduation is scheduled for May 19 with Lakota West's following on May 21. [Click here to read more about celebrations honoring this year's graduates.](#)

Be Part of Neighborhood Bridges Lakota

Lakota Local Schools is proud to announce the launch of neighborhood bridges' "Gateway for Kindness" program - a resource to facilitate community support of students and families in need within the Lakota school system.

As a tool for teachers, counselors and social workers, neighborhood bridges Lakota will involve the surrounding community to aid in meeting the essential needs of at-risk and underprivileged students as a way of removing barriers to learning.

Families, community members and businesses can follow needs in the community by subscribing to email updates on the [neighborhood bridges Lakota webpage](#) and following on social media channels that include: Facebook ([@neighborhood bridges - Lakota](#)), Twitter ([@BridgesLakota](#)) and Instagram ([@lakotanb](#)). [Click here for more information.](#)

Preschool Teacher In-Service Day

May 19

One Hour Early Release K-12

May 19

Lakota East Graduation

May 19

5 & 8 p.m.

Cintas Center/ Live Stream

Light the Path for East Class of 2021

May 19

8:21 p.m.

K-12 One Hour Early Release/Students' Last Day

May 20

K-12 Teacher In-Service Day

May 21

Lakota West Graduation

May 21

5 & 8 p.m.

Cintas Center/ Live Stream

Light the Path for West Class of 2021

May 21

8:21 p.m.

Lakota Board of Education Meeting

May 24

6:30 p.m.

Plains Jr. & Zoom

[District Calendar](#)

WE are Lakota



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