

WE are Lakota



A Look Around Lakota

District E-Newsletter

April 13, 2021 Edition

FEATURED In This Issue

A Peek Behind the Curtain

Virtual Learning Option



WE are Lakota

A Peek Behind the Curtain: Virtual Learning

Take a closer look inside Lakota Local Schools with a video series called "A Peek Behind the Curtain." This time, you'll get an inside look at the inaugural year of Lakota's Virtual Learning Option (VLO) from the perspective of students, parents and teachers who experienced it firsthand.

The [ECS/elementary edition](#) and [secondary edition](#) of this month's installment gives the Lakota community highlights of a day in the life of a VLO student, including their biggest successes, challenges and growth throughout the year. Hear about their personal experiences building relationships, adapting to technology and managing their flexible schedules.

Continue to follow this series to get a unique peek inside different parts of the school day like mask breaks, the "Dogs of Lakota," school resource officers and choir and music class.

[Watch the Complete Series](#)

Around Lakota Features

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SHOUT-OUTS





Ridge Student, Teacher Part of Rain Barrel Project

Ridge Junior student **Maria Steppe** and art teacher **Amy Panfalone** each have a rain barrel on display at the Cincinnati Zoo as part of the eighth annual Rain Barrel Art Project, an initiative designed to educate the community about water conservation and pollution caused by storm water runoff.

Community members throughout the Ohio River Valley submitted artistic designs to beautify otherwise dull rain barrels; about 40 of those designs were selected, and the submitting artists painted them on rain barrels. The barrels are on display at the zoo through the month April and will be auctioned off, with proceeds benefitting conservation education in the Ohio River Valley.

West Students Score Perfect ACT

Congratulations to Lakota West's **Gavin Detherage** and **Yash Tibrewal** for receiving a perfect 36 on the ACT.

They are in rare company; it is estimated that only .334% of test takers earn a perfect ACT score.

The ACT is a curriculum-based achievement exam that measures what students have learned in school. It consists of tests in English, mathematics, reading and science, scored on a scale of 1 to 36. The student's composite score is the average of the four test scores.



SUMMERFAIR 2021
CINCINNATI, OH

Summerfair Poster Revealed

CREATED BY RIDGE JUNIOR'S AMY PANFALONE

JUNE 4-6

SELECTED EXHIBITS OF FINE ARTS AND CRAFTS
Coney Island, I-275 at Kellogg
Friday 6 p.m. - 9 p.m. Saturday 10 a.m. - 9 p.m. Sunday 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Rain or Shine

Lakota Students Go to State Destination Imagination Tournament

Congratulations to our Lakota Destination Imagination (DI) teams for their performances at the state tournament this year. DI is a global educational nonprofit dedicated to inspiring the next generation of innovators, leaders and creative problem solvers.

These elementary students formed a team that placed first overall as well as first in every challenge category at regionals. At state they placed third overall and first in their central challenge.

Adena
Hayes Megee
Lydia Miller
Sydney Oliver

Freedom
Anna Leitsch
Cohen Pollack
Cora Westendorf

These early childhood students participated in the non-competitive Rising Stars Challenge at the state competition.

Liberty ECS
Eli Pond

Creekside ECS
Bryn Westendorf

Panfalone Designs Summerfair Poster

The official poster for the 54th annual [Summerfair](#), which runs June 4-6 at Coney Island, was revealed on Sunday. The beautiful design is the work of Lakota's own **Amy Panfalone**.

"Just prior to creating the Summerfair poster design, my husband and I toured many of the Native American sites throughout Ohio," said Panfalone, art teacher at Ridge Junior. "The poster design is influenced by the vibrant colors, motifs and patterns of Native American artistry. I'd like to think that my design this year is in terms of color and design and bold patterns as a tribute to Ohio's first artists," Panfalone said.

AROUND LAKOTA

WYANDOT'S PEACE PROJECT



Wyandot Community Embraces Peace Project

It's been challenging to make connections this school year due to COVID protocols, but that isn't stopping the entire Wyandot Early Childhood School community from working together on a new initiative called the Peace Project.

The idea came about through a survey that Principal **Liz Gruber** sent out asking teachers to reflect on what is working and what they miss because of COVID. "Overwhelmingly, staff said they miss connections between each other and classes within the building," said Gruber. In typical years, Wyandot staff members have many opportunities to connect with one another and for classes to connect with other classes on projects, buddy class activities and celebrations.

[Read more](#)

*Student
Choice Meets*

Monuments & Memorials

Students Transform Liberty Junior into Memorial Site

During the days leading up to spring break, Liberty Junior was the site of 350-plus student-created monuments or memorials honoring the likes of Princess Diana, Jackie Robinson, Amelia Earhart and even Seabiscuit.

For the first year ever, all eighth-graders participated in the joint venture between the school's social studies and language arts department. Their challenge: Create a monument or memorial honoring an historical achievement, moment or movement that speaks to you or has personally impacted you in some way. The project was something language arts teacher **Angie Belia** and social studies teacher **Rick Cooper** introduced to their shared team of students four years ago.

[Read more](#)



West Hallways Filled with New Art Installation

"We are One" is a new art installation filling the hallways at Lakota West. The sixty larger-than-life photos of in-person and VLO students are part of a global participatory art project called "Inside Out."

West photography student **Martin Philip** explains the meaning behind the project. "With the current state the world is in right now, this project did not discriminate but included everyone for who they are... it didn't matter their race, gender, disability... we are all one and deserve to be treated equally as one whole family." The theme also embraces that

fact that West is one student body composed of both in-person and virtual learners.

[Read more](#)



East ASL Club Creates Unique Summer Reading Program

In a “normal” year, mentors from the [Deaf Institute](#) visit houses during the summer to read books to children using American Sign Language (ASL). Like many other plans, the coronavirus has made the organization rethink its summer reading program.

“Normally, people go to houses and sign books because so many parents of deaf children don’t sign or are learning to sign themselves,” explained Lakota East ASL teacher **Jessica Snyder**. As a member of the organization’s board, Snyder is part of the group that has reimaged the program and tapped into the East ASL Club to help.

[Read more](#)

FEATURED PHOTOS



Lights, Camera, READ: Adena Celebrates Literacy

Lights, camera, READ! Adena Elementary students and staff put "Right to Read Week" in the spotlight last week. All week long the literacy team welcomed guest readers into Adena's classrooms, both in-person and virtually, to celebrate the joy of reading. Daily spirit days like a book character dress-up day encouraged all students and staff to get involved and a week-long reading challenge promoted strong daily reading habits. A "Hall of Fame" in the middle of the building spotlighted famous book characters while a "book tasting" was made available in the school's Innovation Hub.



New Mural Greets West Students, Staff

Lakota West unveiled a new mural on Main Street to welcome students and staff back from spring break.

The mural showcases the clock tower located in the heart of West Chester just across the street. "The clock tower symbolizes a common place for our West Chester community to gather and unify as one," said Principal **Ben Brown** said. "We wanted to improve the look on Main Street for our students and find an image that reflects our shared relationship within the West Chester community."

NEW BUSINESS



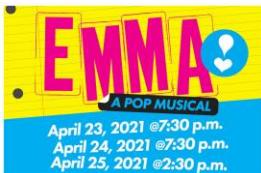
Military Commitment Ceremony Honors 24 Seniors April 28

Join us as we celebrate our seniors who have made a commitment to enter either a military academy or branch of service after graduation. Due to COVID restrictions, the in-person ceremony on Wednesday, April 28 at 7 p.m. will be exclusive to Lakota's 24 senior honorees and their families, but the district will live stream the program on West Chester Township's YouTube channel for the larger community to enjoy.

This will be the district's fourth annual Military Commitment Ceremony. "Even last year, when the ceremony had to be completely virtual, we

found a way to recognize our seniors who are putting service before self after graduation," said Superintendent Matthew Miller. "We are excited to be able to return to an in-person format, even if just for our student honorees and their families."

[Visit West Chester Township's YouTube channel on April 28 at 7 p.m.](#) to recognize our student honorees as a community.



East Theater Presents "Emma"

East's next theater production is set for April 23-25, and tickets are now on sale for the pop musical "Emma."

Welcome to Highbury Prep, where senior Emma Woodhouse is on a matchmaking mission. Based on the Jane Austen novel of the same name, Emma is a musical adaptation that takes you from "Chapel of Love" by the Dixie Cups to Natasha Beddingfield's "Unwritten," all while Emma tries to orchestrate happy endings for all!

You can enjoy the show in-person or via ON-DEMAND. Tickets are now available for purchase for the shows on April 23 or 24 at 7:30 p.m. and April 25 at 2:30 p.m. These tickets are limited due to COVID restrictions. [Click here to purchase in-person tickets](#). ON-DEMAND will be available for viewing from April 30 through May 2 in the comfort of your own home; [click here to preorder the link](#).

[Get tickets](#)



West's Try Band is Back

Save the dates... Wednesday, April 21 and Thursday, April 22 because Lakota West's Try Band is back!

The event is open to all sixth graders at Adena, Cherokee, Endeavor and Freedom elementary schools. Students will get to try any of the instruments available in seventh grade concert band at Ridge and Plains. All safety protocols will be followed and new single-user mouthpiece units will be provided for each student to use. Information will be available on instrument rentals, lessons and more. [Click here to sign up](#) for Try Band. [Click to watch a video](#) and see the journey students can take when they 'Try Band'. [Click here](#) for the event flyer. If you have questions, please communications@lakotawestbands.org.

[Sign up](#)



April 30: Lakota West Jazz Festival

Lakota West's Inaugural Jazz Festival is Friday, April 30 from 6-9:30 p.m. at the West Freshman Stadium! Think of Jazz-n-Cakes and the Swing Dance combined into one event -- except without the pancakes!

The event will include music from the Lakota West Jazz Orchestra, Jazz Lab Band, Freshman Jazz Ensemble, Ridge Junior Jazz Band and Plains Junior Jazz Band.

Tickets are \$10 each and include music, dinner, vendors, raffle baskets and more. Seating for performances will be in the stadium, or chairs and blankets can be brought in for seating as well. Masks and social distancing will be required. Dancing is welcome and encouraged on the track. Tickets can be purchased in advance or at the door; [click here to purchase tickets.](#)

Basket raffle tickets will be sold at the door for \$1 per ticket. Raffle tickets are available for presale at the great rate of \$25 for 50 tickets, \$30 for 60 tickets and \$50 for 110 tickets. [Click here for presale raffle tickets.](#)

[Click here to view the event flyer.](#) The event is sponsored by the Lakota West Upbeat Club and proceeds will support all Lakota West Bands, Color Guard, Winter Guard as well as scholarship funds.

[Get tickets](#)

ON THE RADAR

Community Conversation on Resiliency

Resiliency is an important topic for discussion, especially during a pandemic in which we have collectively experienced loss, toxic stress, and trauma. Children and adults have all been impacted in some way. How do we strengthen our ability to recover more quickly from life events, and how do we help our children?

Caring Community Collaborative (C3), the Butler County Family & Children First Council and Lakota Local Schools are excited to provide a free virtual movie screening and host a community conversation. Join us and watch RESILIENCE: BIOLOGY OF STRESS & SCIENCE OF HOPE.

You can watch the one-hour film from the comfort of your own home beginning on Sunday, April 17 through 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, April 22. Then join us for a virtual Community Conversation regarding the film on April 22 from 6:30 – 8 p.m.

UPCOMING EVENTS

[Coffee Chat with the Superintendent](#)

April 14
3 p.m.
Zoom

[Kinship Connections: Child Trauma](#)

April 21
7 p.m.
Zoom

[Community Conversation on Resiliency](#)

April 22
6:30 p.m.
Zoom

[Lakota Board of Education Meeting](#)

April 26
6:30 p.m.
Plains Jr. & Zoom

Registration is required. A link to view the film and join the virtual meeting will be shared beginning April 17. [Click here to register.](#)

Next Superintendent Coffee Chat: April 14

Join Superintendent Miller on Facebook Live (@LakotaSuper) for his next monthly coffee chat on Wednesday, April 14 at 3 p.m. for an update on the school year and to share your questions and concerns.

To help Mr. Miller efficiently prioritize questions and concerns, consider sending in your thoughts [via Thought Exchange](#). Other participants will have an opportunity to rate your thoughts (and share their own), helping us address the most pressing concerns in the allotted time frame. Coffee Chats are traditionally hosted on the first Wednesday of every month at different times to accommodate varying schedules.

Military Commitment Ceremony

April 28
7 p.m.

Coffee Chat with the Superintendent

May 5
8 a.m.
Zoom

Lakota Board of Education Meeting

May 10
6:30 p.m.
Plains Jr. & Zoom

District Calendar

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