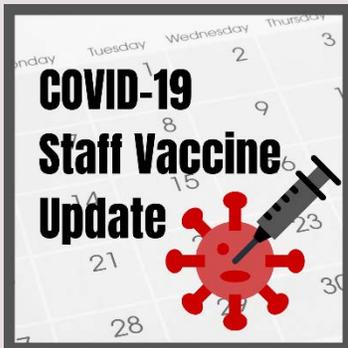


WE are Lak@ta



January 26, 2021 Edition

FEATURED In This Issue



COVID-19 Update: Staff Vaccines

In an email update to staff and parents earlier today, Superintendent Matthew Miller shared that Lakota employees will have the option to receive their first of two COVID-19 vaccinations next Wednesday, Feb. 3. The second vaccine will be administered on Feb. 24.



Lakota VLO Family Takes Learning Cross-Country

The **Piening** family likes to think they've been "making COVID lemonade" since August.

In just five months, the family of five has managed to visit more than 20 cities in 11 different states - all while first-grader **Cami**, second-grader **Daniel** and fifth-



Celebrating School Board Appreciation Month

Have you ever wondered what a school board does? Join Cherokee Elementary fourth-grader **Josef Ullman** as he dons his detective hat to discover the important role Lakota's Board of Education plays in the district.

[Watch Video](#)

Please read this email communication closely for important information regarding changes to the academic calendar to allow all staff the opportunity to get their vaccine.

[Read more](#)

grader **Elle** continued their “regular” studies (and then some) at Liberty ECS and VanGorden Elementary. How? They rented their home for a year, replaced their three cars with an RV and hit the road just as their other adventure with Lakota’s first-ever virtual learning option (VLO) was getting underway.

[Read more](#)

Around Lakota Features

- [New Dashboard, Quarantine Updates](#)
- [Super in 60: January Edition](#)
- [Words of Wisdom: Lakota Looks Forward](#)
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New Business

- [Tonight: Ending the Silence Mental Health Presentation](#)
- [Listen Up Lakota](#)
- [Feb. 3 Coffee Chat](#)
- [2021-2022 Registration](#)

SHOUT-OUTS



Lakota Artists Take Top Honors in Scholastic Regional Competition

Lakota East and West high school students had another strong showing in the regional Scholastic Art Competition. The awards were

West Students Win National Photo Contest

Congratulations to **Kailyn Dudukovich, Sydney Jones** and **Zara Silvis**, Lakota West

founded in 1923 and, for nearly a century, have inspired bold ideas in creative teens throughout the country.

Lakota East had 39 artists taking home 12 Gold Key awards, 25 Silver Key awards and 30 Honorable Mentions.

Art pieces receiving a Gold Key award move on to the National Competition in New York City.

Lakota West had 100 students enter 790 pieces of art; record-breaking results included 59 Gold Key awards, 66 Silver Key awards and 131 Honorable Mentions.

[Click here to view the virtual exhibition](#) of winning art in the region. A live virtual ceremony will also take place on Feb. 19 on YouTube to celebrate all award recipients. The Art Academy of Cincinnati will be hosting an in-person exhibition for Gold and Silver Key portfolios from Feb. 16-21.

Good luck to all of the students moving on to the national competition.

Pictured (left to right):

West's **Emily Daiker** - "My Mudroom"
East's **Ream Awad** - "The Muslim in Us"
West's **Amy Albert** - "An Old Friend"
East's **Saad Khan** - "Pack Mule"

Still Photo Students, whose artwork was selected to be part of a special exhibition at the Getty Museum and in a national projection series sponsored by the J. Paul Getty Foundation.

Only 30 teen images were selected from over 1,500 submissions from across the country. These four images will be projected onto buildings in Seattle, Anchorage, New York City, Los Angeles and Washington D.C. as an effort to inspire hope.

The theme of the competition was "In Pursuit Of." Each of these students were awarded letters stating, "Congratulations! It was amazing to see so much impactful artwork coming from the future leaders of this nation; you are an inspired generation, and we can't wait to see you pursue your dreams."



Bruder Named 'Teacher of the Week'

Chamber Names Superintendent Miller 'Citizen of the Year'

Shawnee ECS kindergarten teacher **April Bruder** was recently surprised with a call from WARM 98.5 naming her the station's "Teacher of the Week." The nomination letter for Bruder pointed out that she "works every day to be inclusive of all of her 'friends' (what she call her students)" and that "we are thankful to have Mrs. Bruder in all of our lives." Congratulations!

Lakota Superintendent **Matthew Miller** appears in line-up of award winners for the West Chester Liberty Chamber Alliance's 2021 Annual Celebration. Miller is receiving the "Dorothy & Art Roth Citizen of the Year Award," which recognizes an individual or organization for extraordinary community involvement in West Chester or Liberty Township and the Tri-State area.

The 45-year-old program honors individuals who have made special contributions to business and the community over the previous year. The event is open to the public and will be held virtually this year on March 9 at 11:30 a.m. Tickets will be available on the [Chamber Alliance's website](#) soon.



Cherokee Teacher Named 'Teacher of the Month' by Ohio Lottery's Partners in Education

Congratulations to Cherokee Elementary teacher **Beth Morgan**, selected in December as a "Teacher of the Month" by Ohio Lottery's Partners in Education program. The program recognizes outstanding K-12 teachers for their excellence in the classroom, leadership, creativity and community involvement and dedication on behalf of Ohio students. Beth was among just nine regional winners statewide to be selected last month.



Student, Staff Duo's Artwork Selected for Cincinnati Zoo Display

Artwork created by Ridge Junior School art teacher **Amy Panfalone** and Ridge eighth-grader **Maria Steppe** will be on display at the Cincinnati Zoo this April. Both were selected to hand-paint a rain barrel with their original winning designs. The accent pieces will be part of a silent art auction at the zoo's Party for the Planet Celebration, helping bring awareness to its storm water conservation efforts and motivate local homeowners to do their part, too.

An extension of Ridge Junior's Art Club for the last three years, the community service project has yielded a student winner each year.

Two Lakota Schools Earn Purple Star Award

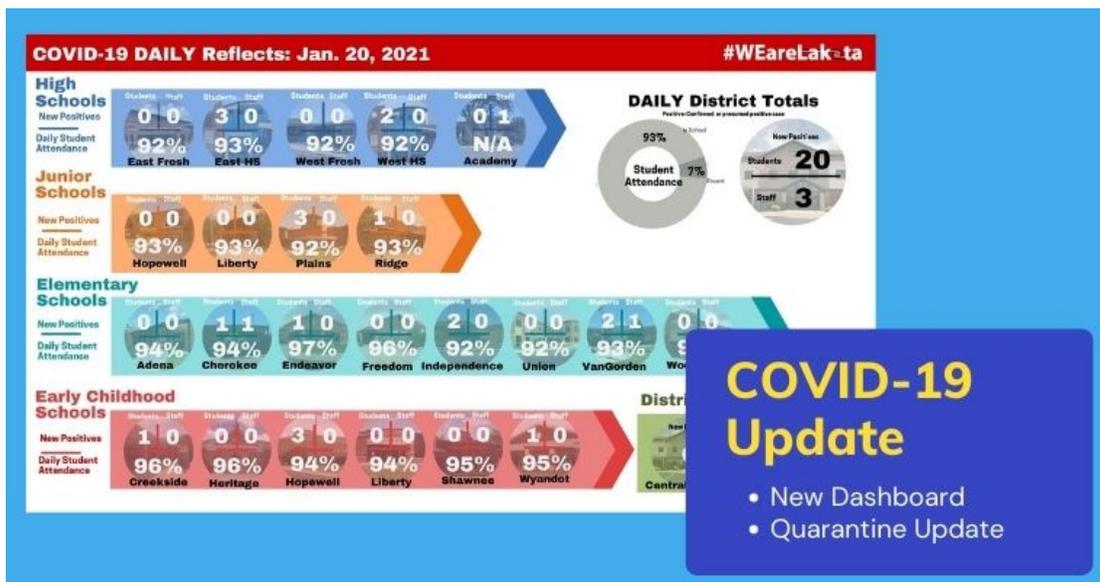


Supporting Military Families

The Ohio Department of Education has selected Adena Elementary and Lakota East High School as 2021 Purple Star designees for their outstanding commitment to serving military-connected students and families in their schools.

To be successful in school and when transitioning between school settings, Ohio's military-connected youth require particular supports to ensure that their unique social, emotional and academic needs are met. Adena and Lakota East have demonstrated that they provide these supports to help military-connected students and families succeed. The Purple Star designation is valid for three years. Congratulations to both schools!

AROUND LAKOTA



COVID-19: New Dashboard, Quarantine Update

New Dashboard

On Jan. 13, the district launched its new COVID dashboard, which is used to inform the community about the impact the novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) is having on its schools. A daily and weekly report is now available on the [district's website](#).

Quarantine Update

When students returned to the classroom in January, new quarantine guidelines from the Ohio Department of Health were in place. Each school continues to identify individuals who are close contacts of a school-related COVID-positive case. A close contact is defined as being within six feet of the COVID-positive person for 15 minutes or more with or without a mask.

While these individuals must still quarantine outside of the school day, if masks or face coverings were worn properly, the close contacts may continue to attend school. They may not participate in extracurricular activities. Any close contacts who were unmasked will not be allowed to attend school during the quarantine period.

[Read more](#)



Super in 60: January Edition

In each month's edition of "Super in 60", Lakota Superintendent Matthew Miller provides the latest district highlights in just 60 seconds. Get the latest on Lakota's newest therapy dog, our community's celebration of MLK Day, School Board Recognition Month and the district's release of this year's Quality Profile.

[Watch Video](#)



January Words of Wisdom: Lakota Looks Forward

After a particularly challenging year, WE are looking forward to what's in store for 2021. See what our students are most looking forward to this year in the January edition of Lakota's "Words of Wisdom" video series.

[Watch Video](#)



**Second Graders
Learn Important Lessons**

Project Helps VLO Second Graders Learn More than Economics

To culminate their recent Economics unit, Lakota VLO students banded together to learn some real-life lessons about needs and wants.

In second grade students learn about how an income - and the spending and saving of that income - can provide for needs and wants.

During their studies, classes read *Beatrice's Goat*, a story about a young girl and her family in Uganda who receive a goat from Heifer Project International. The students learned how this gift changed the family's future by providing rich milk for their diets -- and even enough extra milk to purchase a uniform so the young girl could attend school for the first time at nine years of age.

[Read more](#)



West Senior Brings LOG OFF Movement to Lakota

"Put down your phone" is probably something that most teenagers have heard their parents say at one time or another. Would you believe that it's something that teens are saying to one another?

Sarah AbuDakar, a senior at Lakota West, is one such teen.

While working on a project about happiness for her ninth grade English class, AbuDakar became aware of the impact social media was having on her own life. "I began to realize how social media takes over your life," she said. By limiting her social media intake, she became aware of how much she was attached to it.

[Read more](#)

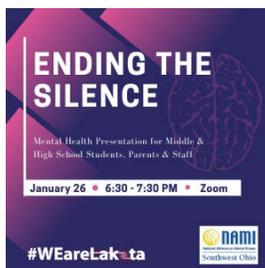
FEATURED PHOTO



Teaching a Dog New Tricks?

Maya Theobald and **Brynlee Shean** from **Miss Carlson's** kindergarten class at Liberty Early Childhood School are great teachers! They are sure making Biggs feels comfortable while he is learning to read his first word: dog.

NEW BUSINESS



Jan. 26: 'Ending the Silence' Mental Health Presentation

'Ending the Silence,' an engaging presentation from the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) about mental health for middle and high school students, parents and school staff, will be available virtually on Jan. 26 from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. The lead presenter will share an informative presentation while a young adult with a mental health condition shares their journey of recovery.

The presentation includes an opportunity for audience members to ask questions and helps parents and caregivers recognize warning signs and symptoms and seek help for their loved ones. [Click here to learn more about the presentation and to access the Zoom link.](#)



International Technology Award Featured in January 'Listen Up Lakota'

This month's edition of "Listen Up Lakota," a monthly radio program powered by 89.3FM WMKV, will focus on the work behind Lakota's recent international digital learning award. These special guests share how Lakota's partnership with the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) has transformed learning: Liberty Junior teacher Moriah Walker, Independence and Woodland innovation specialist Kim Carlson and VanGorden assistant principal and former innovation specialist Jessica Carrelli.

Tune in at 1 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 28 on 89.9FM WLHS or 89.3FM WMKV.

[Click here to learn more about the work behind Lakota's recent ISTE award.](#)

[Learn more](#)



Feb. 3: Next Virtual Coffee Chat with the Superintendent

Join Superintendent Miller on Facebook Live ([@LakotaSuper](#)) for his monthly coffee chat on Feb. 3 at 1 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.

[Learn more](#)



K-12 Online Registration for 2021-2022 School Year Opens Feb. 1

Online registration for grades K-12, including Lakota's all-day kindergarten program, opens Feb. 1 for the 2021-2022 school year. Early kindergarten registration extends through April 1.

All students are eligible for all-day kindergarten, with the option to enroll in the half-day program, if desired. Lakota's kindergarten classes will be held at six K-2 early childhood schools, including Creekside, Heritage, Hopewell, Liberty, Shawnee and Wyandot. Please note that students must be five years old on or before Aug. 1 in order to enroll in kindergarten for the 2021-2022 school year. [Visit the kindergarten registration site for more details.](#)

Families must register online before scheduling an appointment to visit the Welcome Center at 5572 Princeton Road to provide required documentation. [Visit the Welcome Center website for more information and to register online.](#) All questions can be directed to the Welcome Center at (513) 682-4120.

[Learn more](#)



MLK Day Virtual Celebration Still Available

The virtual edition West Chester Liberty's community celebration of Martin Luther King, Jr. is available on the Lakota YouTube channel.

This year's student contest, themed "Reinventing Reforms," challenged students to reflect on what they can do personally, using the resources of this era, to carry on the work started by MLK. All 18 winning essays, skits, songs, artwork or video were shared during the virtual program, also complete with a keynote address, music and other elements from the traditional in-person celebration.

[Watch video](#)

ON THE RADAR

Save the Date, Call for Exhibitors: Lakota Summer Fun Fair

Lakota is teaming up with the West Chester Liberty Chamber Alliance to hold our annual Summer Fun Fair using a unique online event solution called Remo, where Lakota families can come 'face-to-face' with exhibitors offering summer programming activities. Summer Fun Fair will be held on Wednesday, March 3 from 6:30-8 p.m. [All attendees are invited to visit the event link to set up their personal Remo account before using it to access the fair on March 3.](#)

Like years past, any for-profit business or non-profit organization offering summer activities for youth is welcome to participate. Activities and services can be educational or recreational and should pertain to students in grades K-12.

[Please use this Google form to register as an exhibitor for this year's event no later than Monday, Feb. 22.](#) This deadline will be strictly enforced, as we need adequate time to set up the event in Remo. A complete exhibitor list and other event resources will be available at www.lakotaonline.com/SummerFair.

USDA Free Meals Program Extended through End of School Year

UPCOMING EVENTS

[NAMI Ending the Silence](#)

Jan. 26
6:30 p.m.
Zoom

[CCP, Summer School & Credit Flexibility Q & A Session](#)

Jan. 27
6:30 p.m.
Zoom

[Kinship Connections: Love & Logic](#)

Jan. 27
7 p.m.
Zoom

[Lakota Science & Engineering Fair](#)

Jan. 29

[Coffee Chat with the Superintendent](#)

In response to the financial hardship felt nationwide as a result of the novel Coronavirus (COVID-19), the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has announced an extension to its free meals program for all students announced this fall. Originally ending Dec. 31, 2020, all students learning both in-person and virtually are now eligible through the end of the 2020-2021 school year. The program is being offered at no cost to the district. [Click for more information on the program.](#)

Looking for Alternative Credit Options?

While the district previously hosted presentations about these options, we are providing informational videos for you to access at your convenience. The topics are applicable for students entering grades 7-12 next year and include Summer School, Credit Flexibility, the PE Waiver and College Credit Plus.

Please click on the links below to review information about these programs:

CCP Information: <https://youtu.be/zUXbzY0yhRo>

Alternative Education Information: <https://youtu.be/luVOTBldydM>

If you have questions about any of these options, please join us for a live Q&A session on January 27, 2021, from 6:30-7:30 p.m. This session is for general questions, and all student-specific questions should be directed to the student's school counselor.

You can use this Zoom link to access the Q&A session:

<https://lakotaonline.zoom.us/j/91739759190?pwd=K0dkbkJTdHJxZEplRWJ4MnpUcUVldz09>

Passcode: 154318

Lakota Looks Ahead: January Social Media Challenge

What are YOU Looking Forward to in 2021?

With 2020 in the rear view mirror, it's time to celebrate 2021 with a new social media challenge! Lakota, we want to hear what YOU are looking forward to in 2021.

There are a few days left in January to share your new year's thoughts and ideas on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or all three! Be sure to tag Lakota Local Schools ("[Lakota Schools](#)" on Facebook, [@LakotaDistrict](#) on Twitter and [Lakota_District](#) on Instagram) and include [#LakotaLooksAhead](#) in your posts.

Feb. 3
1 p.m.
Facebook Live

Board of Education Meeting

Feb. 8
6:30 p.m.
Zoom

No School (Pre-12)

Feb. 12

No School: President's Day

Feb. 15

District Calendar

WE are Lakota

Lakota Local Schools
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www.lakotaonline.com