

WE are Lakota



A Look Around Lakota

District E-Newsletter

November 17, 2020 Edition

FEATURED In This Issue



Lakota Earns International Technology Award

Lakota Local Schools is one of just three school districts worldwide to earn the "2020 Distinguished District Award" from the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE).



Meet Our School Board: Lynda O'Connor

Lynda O'Connor has been a member of the Board of Education since 2008. In addition to Lakota, Lynda has also served on the Butler Tech school board and was named a Master Board Member by the Ohio School Board Association in 2017. She is also actively involved in supporting the community.



November 'Super in 60'

Get the latest on Lakota's criteria for any possible shift to remote learning and the district's participation in a COVID-19 study evaluating in-school spread, plus an opportunity to help shape the focus of this year's "State of the Schools."

[Watch video](#)

Full story

through a variety of leadership roles.

Watch video

District/School Features

- [Live Video Debut: Persevering through a Pandemic](#)
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- Dec. 2: Coffee Chat with the Superintendent

SHOUT-OUTS



Lakota West Holds College Signing Ceremony

The Lakota West Athletic Department hosted their first college athletic signing event of the year on Nov. 11, the first day of the NCAA National Letter of Intent signing period for all sports (except football). The Firebirds honored these twelve student-athletes signing with their respective schools.

Brooke Brockman: Soccer (Cleveland State University)

Kailyn Dudukovich: Soccer (Ohio State University)

Savannah Grubbs: Soccer (University of Southern Indiana)

Julianne Hureau: Soccer (Kenyon College)

Sydney Jones: Soccer (Ohio State University)

Zach Beneteau: Track/Cross Country (Walsh University)

Coleman Cronk: Track/Cross Country (Florida State University)

Annika Kinley: Track (University of Cincinnati)

Kennedy Manning: Lacrosse (Coastal Carolina)

Jacob Beall: Baseball (University of Akron)

Grant Miller: Baseball (Ball State University)

Carter Rust: Baseball (University of Charleston)



Lakota East Honors Student-Athletes

Lakota East celebrated thirteen student-athletes who signed commitments to play their sport at the collegiate level. Congratulations to these Thunderhawks on fulfilling the ultimate goal of every high school student who plays an interscholastic sport.

Shelby Jackson: Soccer (Hiram College)

Nate Johnson: Basketball (University of Akron)

Meg Kobman: Volleyball (Earlham College)

Andrew Bachman: Baseball (Ohio State University)

Brooke Brown: Soccer (West Virginia University)

Kelsi Harris: Track/Cross Country (Ohio University)

Avery Mahon: Soccer (Bellarmine University)

Reyna Mijangos: Soccer (Murray State University)

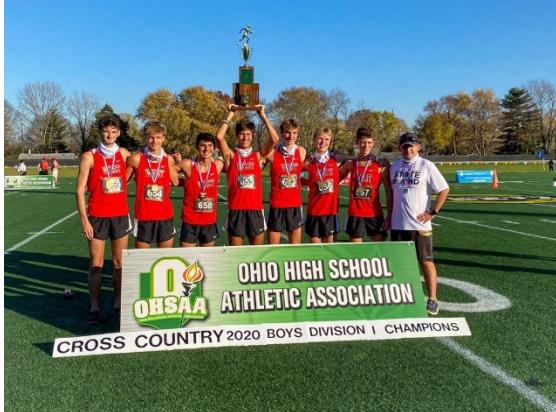
Brynn Myers: Soccer (Trine University)

Paxton Oberhaus: Cross Country (University of Findlay)

Carly Spletzer: Cross Country/Track & Field (Ball State University)

Michael Sprockett: Baseball (University of Akron)

Peyton Tennis: Soccer (Wilmington College)

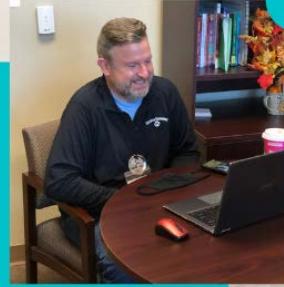


Firebirds Boys Cross Country Team Earns State Title

On Nov. 7, the Lakota West boys cross country team secured OHSAA's Division I state championship title. They finished the year ranked No. 14 in the nation.

Lakota West's **Zachary Beneteau** finished in eighth place and **Kaleb Martin** finished in 10th. Beneteau's finish netted the Firebirds five team points and Martin's gave seven. Those points helped Lakota West finish with 73 points, just two points over runner-up St. Xavier.

Congratulations to the Lakota West boys cross country team on your victory!



JEFF REDWINE - CHEROKEE ELEMENTARY

WARM 98 TEACHER OF THE WEEK

Cherokee's Jeff Redwine the Warm98 Teacher of the Week

Cherokee Elementary fifth grade teacher **Jeff Redwine** was honored last Friday as Warm98's "Teacher of the Week" with a surprise Zoom session disguised as an impromptu parent meeting. Having spent his last 25 years at Cherokee, a highlight for Redwine is the opportunity to mentor former students, including one who is now a teacher at Cherokee.

"My son thinks that he is Mr. Redwine's favorite student and I would expect that many other students would echo that sentiment," wrote a parent of one of Redwine's students in her nomination letter. "Mr. Redwine has a warm and welcome presence and has a way of making each child feel valued as if they are the most important person in the classroom."

[Watch the surprise recognition on the Warm 98.5 Facebook page.](#)



OSBA Recognizes Lynda O'Connor

Lynda O'Connor, member of the Lakota Local Schools Board of Education, was recognized at the Nov. 16 school board meeting for her service to the Ohio School Boards Association (OSBA).

OSBA Executive Director and CEO Rick Lewis presented a plaque to O'Connor, thanking her for her contributions as a member of the association's Board of Trustees. In addition to serving on the OSBA Board of Trustees, O'Connor is a member of its Federal Relations Network and Southwest Region Executive Committee.

Prodoehl Sets Middle School Record at Cross Country USA Meet of Champions

Evelyn Prodoehl, an eighth-grader at Lakota Ridge and West Junior High Cross Country team, Ohio, won the girls division of the mixed middle school race at the XC Town USA Meet of Champions.

Prodoehl set the middle school record on the 3-kilometer layout by clocking 10:45 at the LaVern Gibson course in Terre Haute, Indiana. Prodoehl, who had placed third at her middle school state competition in Ohio, was 15th overall, including all of the male competitors.



Companions on a Journey Honors Counselor Audrey Young

Companions on a Journey (COJ) will present **Audrey Young**, counselor at Freedom Elementary, with the COJ 2020 Hope, Strength and Healing Award on Nov. 19.

This award is presented to individuals who, through their professional and personal lives, offer hope, strength and healing to the bereaved community.

Audrey has helped COJ expand into new schools, including St. Xavier High School and the Lakota School District. Her warm and giving heart has supported many grieving children on their journey, making sure that no child grieves alone.

Companions on a Journey is a local non-profit organization that provides ongoing support for the bereaved community.

AROUND LAKOTA



TONIGHT: 'WE Can: Persevering through a Pandemic' Video Debuts

Thinking back to Aug. 17, did you ever think in-person learning would still be an option three months later? Join us tonight for a special live video premiere at 7:30 p.m. on Lakota's [Facebook page](#) and [YouTube channel](#) to celebrate this awesome milestone and all that we've overcome so far this school year.

[Read more](#)

Remote Learning Survey Results

WE are Listening



#WEareLakota

Nov. 3-4 Remote Learning Survey Results

"While we certainly do not want to have to shift to remote learning, we want our staff and our families to be prepared," said Superintendent **Matthew Miller**. This belief led to the district's first remote learning practice days of the 2020-2021 school year on Nov. 3-4.

"Our teachers did a great job shifting to remote learning on a dime in March," said Miller, referring to the statewide shutdown of K-12 schools by Gov. Mike DeWine. "Our curriculum department provided professional development to our staff over the summer to help them create a more robust remote learning experience should we need to shift again." Additionally, a group of nearly 100 teachers and staff members created model courses for the Lakota Virtual Learning Option which can also be used for both in-person learning and should a shift to remote learning occur.

Following the November exercise, the district asked parents, students and staff for feedback on the days.

[Read more](#)

QUESTIONING

QUARANTINES

Lakota Schools
Participates in
Public Health
Evaluation

Lakota One of Nine Districts to Participate in State COVID Study about Vaccines

Lakota Local Schools is one of nine districts statewide to participate in a public health evaluation about classroom spread of the novel Coronavirus (COVID-19). The Ohio COVID-19 School Evaluation (OCSE) testing program will give school districts, public health experts and elected officials more scientific data regarding quarantines related to positive novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) cases in school.

The study will assess whether students and staff identified as close contacts to an individual testing positive, when wearing masks correctly, should be required to quarantine. The pilot is being run by The Ohio State University with assistance from Wright State University, Ohio University, Dayton Children's Hospital and the Post-Acute Rapid Response Team (PARRT).

[Read more](#)

COVID-19 Communication Update

- Staying Safe Over Thanksgiving Break
- Transportation Update



Wear a mask



Physical Distance



Avoid Large Gatherings



COVID Update on Thanksgiving, Bus Transportation

Stay Safe over Thanksgiving Break

In the weeks following Halloween and the remote learning practice days, the district has seen an increase in positive cases of the novel Coronavirus (COVID-19). The origin of many of these cases have been traced back to social gatherings outside of school.

As Thanksgiving break approaches, please keep in mind that wearing masks and avoiding large social gatherings helps prevent the spread of COVID-19. Additionally, it is recommended that anyone traveling out of the country or to a state with a positivity rate over 15% quarantines for 14 days upon returning home. [Click here to view the Ohio Department of Health's current COVID-19 travel advisory.](#)

Transportation Preparedness

On Nov. 6, parents were advised that Lakota's transportation partner, Petermann, is concerned about driver absences related to COVID-19. Lakota's chief operations officer, Chris Passarge, shared in an email to parents that, although Petermann does employ substitute drivers, "a surge in driver absences could result in not having enough drivers to cover Lakota's routes."

Passarge explained that "the purpose of this email is not to alarm (parents), but to ask (them) to plan ahead should (their) child's bus route be impacted. Similar to a snow day, we may not know about an impacted route until the early morning hours."

When a route cannot be covered, principals communicate this information with their families. "While we will do our best to shift drivers and continue to run our bus routes, we ask that parents have an alternative plan in place to get their student to and from school," said Passarge.

[Read more](#)



'Dude, Be Kind' Week a Year-Round Philosophy at Hopewell ECS

At Hopewell Early Childhood School, kindness isn't just something staff teach; it's something they model. And although it was even more top of mind during the district's celebration of "Dude, Be Kind" week all last week, Hopewell's interim counselor and reading intervention specialist **Kathy Gall** says it's really a year-round focus in their building.

"We want students to recognize what kindness looks like, what it sounds like, what it feels like even," said Gall, pointing out that children oftentimes have an image of kindness as a tangible gift. "Kindness comes in all different shapes and sizes and we want our kids to realize that it can be something as simple as asking someone to play or holding the door for someone."

[Read more](#)



VanGorden Celebrates Diversity

VanGorden's 'Team Togetherness' Helps Celebrate Diversity

The transformation of the VanGorden Elementary lobby is now underway. The school's new Team Togetherness Committee is overseeing the project that highlights the diversity of its students and staff.

"Our first project was to hang flags in our lobby that represent the countries that our students and staff were born in," said Principal **Julie Engelbert**, who serves on the committee. Team Togetherness discovered that the VanGorden family is represented by fourteen unique countries.

[Read more](#)



Plains Pilots Peer-Run 'Sources of Strength' Program

A pilot program at Plains Junior is just the start of a three-year health and wellness plan for all Lakota seventh and eighth grade students.

Sources of Strength is designed to be a companion to the high schools' Hope Squad initiative, and it will roll out to the other three junior schools during the second semester and next school year.

[Read more](#)



Engineering Students Helping Others Through Real World Learning

Real World Learning has even more meaning when the project helps a teacher. Watch the video to see how **Taylor Blackburn, Jonah Dangel** and **Amane Ohhashi** designed a shoe for English teacher **Kendra Herber's** prosthetic leg in their Introduction to Engineering Design class at West Freshman. The class is led by teacher **Scott Fetzer** and is through Butler Tech's Project Lead the Way program.

[Watch video](#)



Lakota Marching Bands Triumph Over Tenacity, Not Trophies

While their performance schedules were nowhere near their normal load, both Lakota East and Lakota West's marching bands have something big to celebrate: they finished their seasons.

"Several times, we thought that the season would be shut down by the current events of the pandemic," remembered Lakota West Band Director **Andrew Carr**. But against all odds, regulations were loosened just enough to give

them some semblance of a season. And with it came a new realization.

[Read more](#)



VLO Celebrations Build Connections, Community

"It was an optional Zoom session, but 90% of my children came to the party dressed in their costumes. What I thought might be a half hour turned into 50 minutes of fun and laughter – talking – sharing – just enjoying being together," said Wyandot ECS first grade teacher **Abigail Detcher**.

Woodland third grade VLO teacher **Annie Wagner** said a parent told her "our fall party was the happiest their child has been all year."

Fall celebrations from grades K-12 brought students and staff together to form connections and community.

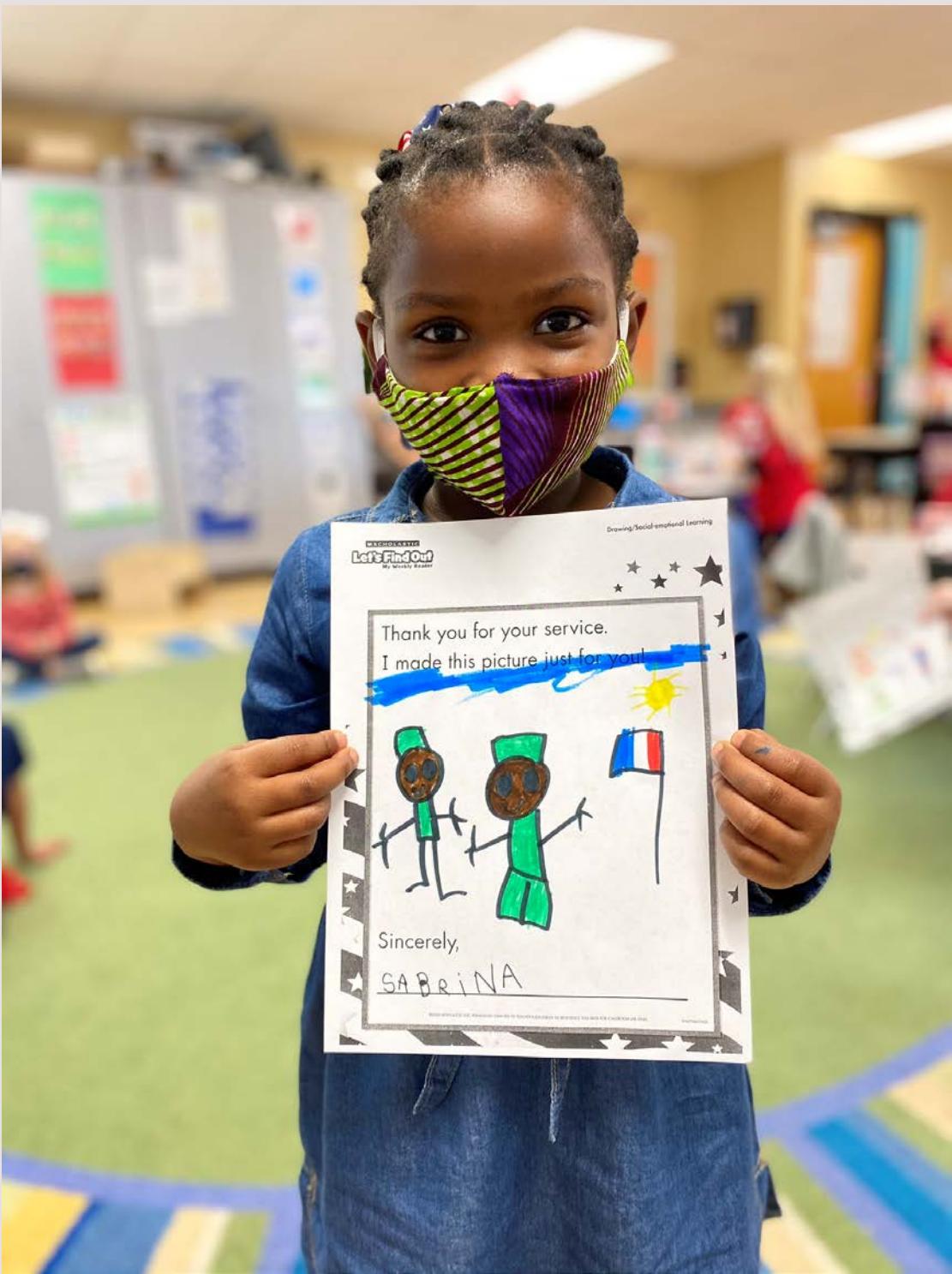
[Read more](#)

FEATURED PHOTOS



#DudeBeKind Week

Lakota took part in #DudeBeKind Week by providing students and staff with daily kindness tips. To kick off the week, students at Lakota West were greeted by positive chalk messages -- part of the Be Kind Campaign created by the school's Student Government Association and Hope Squad.



Celebrating Veterans Day

Schools across the district celebrated our country's Veterans on Nov. 11. Kindergarten students in Mrs. Moeller's class at Heritage ECS wrote letters and drew pictures that are being sent to Operation Gratitude.

NEW BUSINESS



Dec. 3 Virtual Community Conversation: Diversity & Inclusion

Everything WE do is designed to provide a future-ready, student-centered learning experience for every single child. This is the mission statement of Lakota Local Schools. In order to achieve this, WE must ensure that every classroom and school community provide an inclusive and equitable learning environment for all of our students.

On Dec. 3, LODI will host a Community Conversation that challenges students, staff, parents and community members to discuss the current opportunities and challenges for continuing this important work.

[Learn more](#)

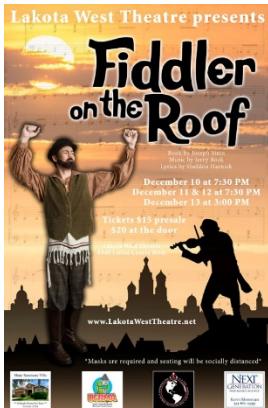


MLK Day Celebration, Student Contest the Focus of November 'Listen Up Lakota'

This month's edition of "Listen Up Lakota," a monthly radio program powered by 89.3FM WMKV, will focus on West Chester Liberty's "Live the Dream" MLK Day celebration and student contest.

Tune in at 5 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 20 or 1 p.m. on Thursday, Nov. 26 on 89.9FM WLHS or 89.3FM WMKV. You can also stream it live at WMKVFM.org or download the WMKV app. The interview will be available as a podcast on the station's website after the first air date. WLHS/WMKV is a member-supported public radio with its studios located at Maple Knoll Village in Springdale.

[Learn more](#)



Dec. 10-14: Lakota West Performs *Fiddler on the Roof*

Even during a pandemic, the show must go on! *Fiddler on the Roof* was slated to perform early April of 2020. With the shut down of school and only two weeks left of rehearsal, the show was postponed.

We are so excited to try this again! Some roles have been recast but the majority of the original cast is still a part of the show! Please join us Dec. 10-13 at 7:30 p.m. and Dec. 14 at 3 p.m. as Lakota West Theatre presents *Fiddler on the Roof*, a classic American musical with songs like "Tradition," "Matchmaker" and "If I Were a Rich Man."

Seating will be socially distanced and only 100 tickets can be sold to each performance. Patron tickets are available now by contacting the director at kim.eldridge@lakotaonline.com. Regular priced tickets go on sale Dec. 1 at www.LakotaWestTheatre.com. Thank you for supporting the arts during this uncertain time.



Dec. 2 Coffee Chat with the Superintendent

Our next monthly Coffee Chat with the Superintendent is coming up on Dec. 2 at 3 p.m. We hope you will join Superintendent Miller on Facebook Live ([@LakotaSuper](#)) for an update on the school year and to share your questions and concerns.

These virtual coffee chats have been very well attended, and to help 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 timeframe.

ON THE RADAR

Save the Date: State of the Schools

Lakota Superintendent Matthew Miller will deliver the district's "State of the Schools" address virtually this year on Tuesday, Dec. 8 at 7 p.m.

The 45-minute event is open to the entire community and serves as the district-wide update for both last school year and the current one.

Miller will facilitate a panel of students and staff speaking to such topics as virtual and in-person learning, diversity and inclusion, social and emotional supports, and new curricular programs like INCubatoredu@Lakota.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Kinship Connections: Love & Logic

Nov. 18
7 p.m.
Zoom

Community Conversation on District Finances

Nov. 18
6:30 p.m.
Zoom

No School for Pre-12 (in lieu of conferences)

Nov. 25

The event will take place via [Zoom](#). To help Miller and the panel address the most pressing topics, students, parents, staff and community members are encouraged to participate in the [State of the Schools Thought Exchange](#) before it closes on Nov. 30.

Nov. 18 Virtual Community Conversation: District Finances

We'll start with a short overview from Lakota Treasurer **Jenni Logan**, so that everyone has the most up-to-date information. The rest of the time will be spent in conversation with your neighbors and with school leaders, including school board members, the superintendent and CFO. You'll get a chance to share your thoughts about the district's finances and hear what others think as well.

Join us for this virtual Community Conversation on Wednesday, Nov. 18 from 6:30 to 8 p.m. Advanced registration is required: <http://bit.ly/LakotaCCFinance>.

Contest for VLO Families: Oh! The Places You'll VLO!

There's no doubt about it – with Lakota's VLO you can learn from just about anywhere.

We're celebrating that flexibility with a contest we're calling Oh! The Places You'll VLO!

It's as easy as 1-2-3 to participate. Snap a photo of a place where you are doing some learning. It could be the kitchen table, an area park or a creative office you've set up at home. Then post it on social media and you just might win a fun prize!

Tell Us Why YOU are Thankful

As we begin to count down the days to Thanksgiving break, Lakota is asking staff, students, parents and residents to look back over the last year and let us know who or what makes you thankful for your Lakota experience.

Post your photos that best capture the people, places, programs or things that make Lakota a better place. We invite you to share your personal words of thanks on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or all three. Be sure to include #LakotaGivesThanks on your post!

Nov. 18 Kinship Connections: Love & Logic

No School: Thanksgiving Break

Nov. 26

No School: Thanksgiving Break

Nov. 27

Coffee Chat with the Superintendent

Dec. 2

3 p.m.

Facebook Live

Community Conversation: Diversity & Inclusion

Dec. 3

6:30 p.m.

Zoom

Lakota Virtual State of the Schools

Dec. 8

7 p.m.

Zoom

District Calendar

Lakota's Outreach Diversity & Inclusion (LODI) Department is introducing a monthly program called "Kinship Connections." Designed for our grandparents and other kinship caregivers of Lakota students, the program is being introduced in response to the feedback district leaders received at a Community Conversation with some members of this group earlier this year.

Each virtual meeting will not only connect participants with one another, but also provide them with new tools and strategies for supporting their student(s) through their educational journey. The next meeting is:

Wednesday, Nov. 18

7-8 p.m.

Topic: Love & Logic

There is no need to pre-register. [Simply join via Zoom on the designated date and time.](#)

Dec. 1 Deadline for Entries: 2020 MLK Day Contest

In preparation for our community's annual celebration of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, all Lakota students are invited to participate in a contest that promotes self-reflection about diversity and inclusion in our community and nationwide.

This year's "Reinventing Reforms" theme challenges students to reflect on what they can do personally, using the resources of this era, to carry on the work started by Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The contest is part of the community-wide observance of MLK Day, known as the "Live the Dream: Our Declaration of Unity" celebration.

Students in grades K-12 are asked to submit their entries by Dec. 1 at 4 p.m. [Click here for complete contest details, including the electronic entry form.](#)

USDA Waiver: Free Meals for All Lakota Students

In response to the financial hardship felt nationwide as a result of the novel Coronavirus (COVID-19), the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced an opportunity to provide free meals to all students through the end of the 2020-2021 school year at no cost to the district. This applies to students learning both in-person and through the district's Virtual Learning Option (VLO).

All students can receive one breakfast and one lunch daily at no cost. A-la-carte purchases will still be charged as usual.

VLO students are able to participate in a twice-weekly meal distribution program where they can receive up to 10 meals.
[Click here to read more about the new USDA waiver providing free meals to all students.](#)

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