

# WE are Lakota

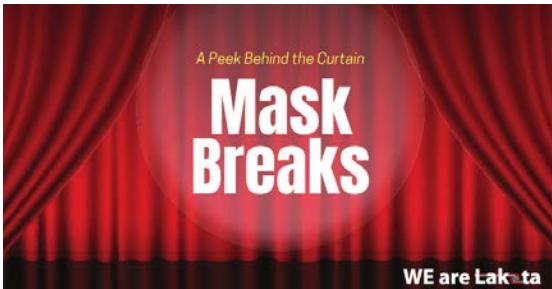


## A Look Around Lakota

District E-Newsletter

November 3, 2020

### FEATURED In This Issue



#### A Peek Behind the Curtain: Mask Breaks

Take a closer look inside Lakota Local Schools with a new video series called "A Peek Behind the Curtain."

This time, you'll get an inside look at this year's mask breaks - what they are, how they work and what students are saying about them.

Throughout the year, continue to follow this series to get a peek inside different parts of the school day.

[Watch the video](#)



#### Meet Our Board Video Series: Julie Shaffer

Meet **Julie Shaffer**, a member of the Board since 2012. A proud Lakota parent and West Chester resident, Mrs. Shaffer currently serves on the Community Engagement, Finance and

Safety Committees, as well as being the Lakota representative for the Butler Tech Career and Development Schools.

**Watch the video**

## Around Lakota

- [Safety Protocols Help Stop In-School Spread of COVID-19](#)
- [Improving COVID-19 Communication: Survey Results](#)
- ['Stuff the Bus' Food Drive Shatters Record](#)
- [WE are Prepared: Fall Community Newsletter](#)
- [VLO Contest: Oh! The Places You'll VLO](#)
- [Creekside Students Get Tips from Best-Selling Author/Illustrator](#)
- [Raise Craze Focuses on Kindness](#)
- [East, West Theater: The Show Must Go On](#)

## New Business

- Remote Learning Survey
- Save the Date: State of the Schools (Dec. 8)
- Community Conversation: District Finances (Nov. 18)
- Celebrating Dude, Be Kind Week (Nov. 9 - 13)
- Vision and Hearing Screenings
- [Social Media Contest: Why Are You Thankful?](#)
- C3 Annual Veterans Tribute (Nov. 7)

---

## SHOUT-OUTS

---



## State Champs: East Junior High Boys Soccer

The Lakota East Junior School boys cross country team overcame a challenging season by bringing home a state championship this month. Although race cancellations, illness and quarantines hampered the amount of time they've been able to train together, they came together to win the Ohio Middle School State Championship on Oct. 25. The team finished with 103 points in a field of 215 runners.

The championship team consisted of (from left to right) **Larkin Willis, Elijah Grissom, Jagger Dollenmeyer, Luke Nomina, Blake Gibbs, Reilly Meyer, Gavin Myers, Adam Hoffman, Carter Moore, and Evan Aponte**.

The team is coached by **Tom Thompson** and **Rebecca Bird** along with **Emily Colbert, Mike McManus, Frank Willis, Chaz Meyer** and **Tyler Prefontaine**.

## FUTURE READY DISTRICT LEADERS™ ADVISOR



### WELCOME

MATT MILLER



@LAKOTASUPER

Lead Advisor & Superintendent

Lakota School District, OH



#WEareLakota

## Superintendent Miller Named to Future Ready Advisory Board

Superintendent **Matthew Miller** has been named to the Future Ready advisory team. As the lead advisor for district leaders, Miller will work with 15 superintendents and school executives from across the country who have successfully implemented innovative learning opportunities in their schools based on the Future Ready framework.

The entire advisory team will play an integral part in the development of workshops, policy guides, and facilitating webinars for Future Ready Schools. Lakota Local Schools signed the Future Ready Pledge in 2017, making the commitment to implement significant changes to improve digital learning for students.



## Niche.com Ranks West No. 1 High School in Butler County

In its latest rankings, Niche.com ranked Lakota West High School No. 1 in Butler County. The ranking service combines analysis with reviews to highlight the best schools, companies, and neighborhoods, based on such indicators as academics, teachers, clubs and activities, diversity, safety, college preparation and health & safety.

"I've known for a long time that Lakota West is a very special place, but in my short time as principal, it's become even more apparent," said Lakota West Principal **Ben Brown**. "Our staff, students and families are committed to making our school a true community where students walk away feeling prepared academically, socially and emotionally for the next step. It's wonderful to see that commitment being validated and recognized by a source like Niche.com."

[Click here to view Lakota West's Niche.com profile.](#)

## West Visual Arts Students Earn Spots in Otterbein Virtual Exhibition

The Lakota West Visual Arts Department is proud to announce several students were accepted into the 2020 Otterbein High School Virtual Art Exhibition. Eight students' 12 works of art earned spots in the exhibition, which features local and global artists.

Congratulations to **Amy Albert, Ella Chaffee, Katie Evert, Sydney Luebbe, Abby McDonell, Trang Nguyen, Marialinda Roblero Escalante and Brian Usrey**.

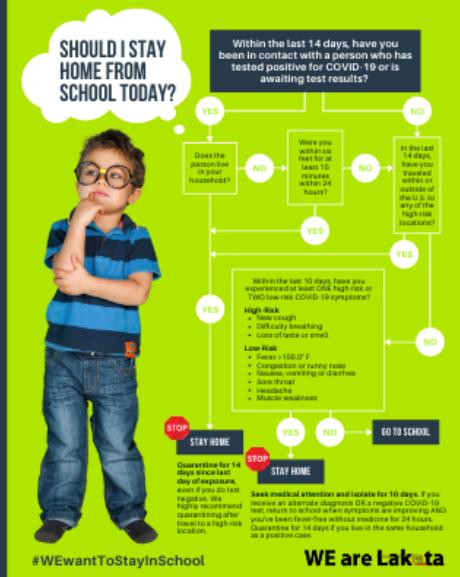
[All pieces can be viewed via the virtual exhibition.](#)

---

## AROUND LAKOTA

---

# WE Want to Stay in School



## Safety Protocols Help Stop In-School Spread of COVID-19, Keep Students in School

Did you know that even though the number of positive cases of the novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) continues to rise across Butler County and the state of Ohio, we are not seeing classroom spread of the virus?

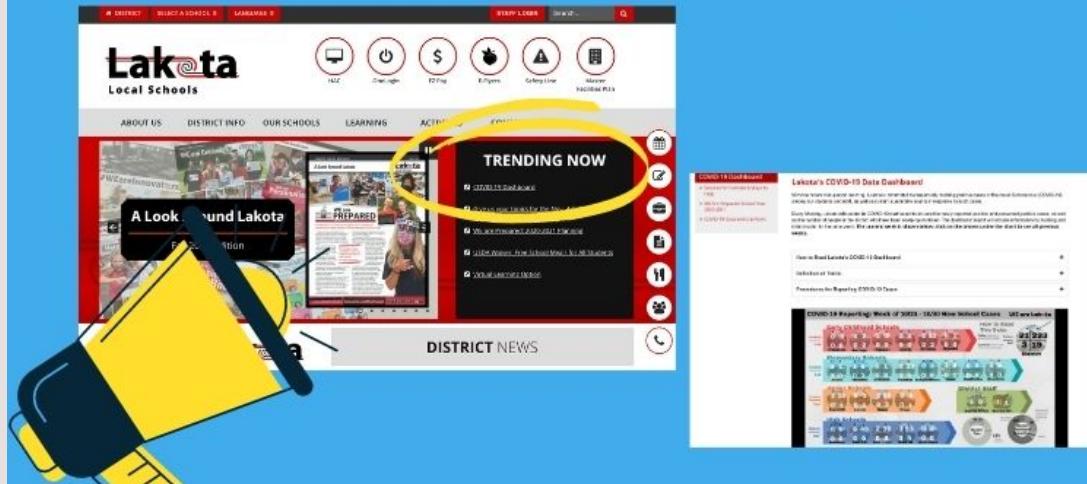
**Let us repeat that. We are not seeing COVID-19 spread in Lakota's classrooms.**

Are there positive cases in the district? Yes. Are students and staff in quarantine? Yes. Are those who are quarantined because of a school-related case testing positive? No.

Our data is showing that the safety protocols the district has in place, including requiring face coverings in school, is working to help stop the spread of the virus. It is imperative that our families keep students home if they are sick and communicate with our schools if symptoms are present.

[Read more](#)

# COVID-19 Communication Update



## Improving COVID-19 Communication: Survey Results

In the last district e-newsletter, a ThoughtExchange was launched to find out how we can best communicate COVID-19 related information to our parents, staff and community. A total of 110 participants shared 57 thoughts. [A full report of the results can be found by clicking here.](#)

Many of the thoughts revolved around similar topics. Click the link below for a list of the top five rated thoughts and the district's response.

[Read more](#)



## 'Stuff the Bus' Food Drive Shatters 2019 Record

In a year when our local food pantry provided 645 emergency food boxes in a little over a month, the Lakota Board of Education's annual "Stuff the Bus" food drive tradition was more critical than ever. Students, staff and families topped last year's grand total of 12,000 pounds, donating nearly 15,500 pounds of food and other essentials.

"This year has been a trying one on many different levels, but the 'WE are Lakota' community has proven time and again that 'WE can' do great things together," said Lakota Board President **Brad Lovell**. "Thank you to everyone who realized the need and stepped up to help in a big way."

[Read more](#)



## WE are Prepared: Fall Community Newsletter Now Available

Several times a year, Lakota produces a community newsletter to help parents and residents stay informed about important district-wide news and updates. The fall 2020 edition, titled "WE are Prepared", was recently mailed to all residents and businesses.

This issue shares an inside look at one of the most unusual starts to a school year yet.

[Read more](#)



# Oh! the Places You'll VLO!

## Contest for VLO Families

Show us where you 'VLO' and you just might win a fun prize!  
Post your photo and include #GowithTheVLO & #WEareLakota.



### 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.

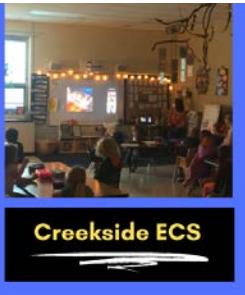
We're celebrating that flexibility with a contest we're calling Oh! The Places You'll VLO!

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!

[Read more](#)

**Author/Illustrator Shares Tips with Students**



Creekside ECS

### Creekside Students Get Tips from Best-Selling Author/Illustrator

Creekside VLO and in-person students recently learned the secret to being good at anything.

Award-winning author and illustrator Derek Anderson held a special Zoom session for each grade at Creekside, where he shared this secret along with many other tips about writing and drawing.

[Read more](#)



## Raise Craze Fundraiser Focuses on Acts of Kindness

"We have to focus on the positive, on things that we can do, on giving lots of grace and having lots of patience this year." What could be considered words to live by in the middle of a pandemic is actually how **Emily Miller**, co-president of the Adena Elementary School PTO, recalled a conversation among the executive board when discussing fundraising activities for the year.

[Read more](#)



## THE SHOW MUST GO ON

### East, West Theater: The Show Must Go On

Last spring, just two weeks before Lakota West was set to perform Fiddler on the Roof, COVID-19 happened and the show was cancelled.

"It was all so very disappointing, but looking back, it was actually partially a gift," said **Ethan Kuchta**, who was to play Tevye. "A lot of us were taking being in the show for granted, getting the opportunity to perform for granted. Now we are very invested and realize the huge loss."

The pandemic continues to have a profound effect on the arts community, but creative thinking is allowing Lakota high school students to perform their shows this fall.

[Read more](#)



## Why Are You 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!

[Read more](#)

---

## FEATURED VIDEO

---



### New Video Captures East NHS Solar Panel Project

This past summer, Lakota East High School became the first public school in Southwest Ohio to install a solar array, thanks to the year-long efforts of the National Honor Society. What was little more than an idea 12 months earlier is now a physical structure on the roof of the school's auxiliary gym. The East array will help power the school for decades to come with clean, renewable energy.

Bringing this project from inception to reality involved a variety of obstacles: navigating county permits, engaging with the district to enter a partnership with Solar Is Freedom and raising \$20,000. [Watch this video that captures the vision and determination of East's NHS chapter in making this project a reality.](#)

## NEW BUSINESS

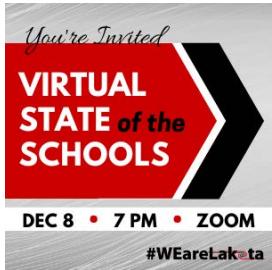


### Remote Learning 2.0 Parent-Student Feedback Survey

On Tuesday and Wednesday, Nov. 3-4, all in-person students at Lakota Local Schools are participating in a remote learning exercise. While the district has no plans to implement a shift to remote learning at this time, the goal is for students and staff to be better prepared for any unexpected change of plans because of COVID-19.

Feedback from students, parents and guardians remains a priority as the district continues to focus on the well-being of our students and staff. Parents and students in grades 7-12 are encouraged to complete the remote learning survey by Thursday, Nov. 5 at noon. Employees will complete a separate survey geared towards their experience.

[Take the survey](#)



### 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. Lakota's third annual event was originally scheduled for last spring, but was canceled due to COVID-19 limitations on large gatherings.

"There have been many changes since last spring and while we've communicated a lot of information, this event will focus on Lakota's top priorities, as they relate to our current and future work," Miller said. "As always, I'm looking forward to sharing the stage with many of our students and staff who can speak from their own experiences."

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. The district will also debut a new video that gives viewers an inside look at learning amidst the COVID-19 pandemic and how our students and staff are persevering.

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.

[Learn more](#)



## Nov. 18 Virtual Community Conversation: District Finances

With an annual budget of more than \$175 million, there's lots of interest in where the money comes from and how it's used to provide an education for nearly 17,000 students.

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>.



## Lakota Celebrates 'Dude, Be Kind' Week

Leading up to World Kindness Day on Friday, Nov. 13, Lakota will be joining school districts across Ohio to celebrate 'Dude, Be Kind' Week.

Help us celebrate the power of kindness all week long.

### Monday, Nov. 9

Say something kind to someone you don't know well

### Tuesday, Nov. 10

Perform an act of kindness

### Wednesday, Nov. 11

Write a kind note to someone

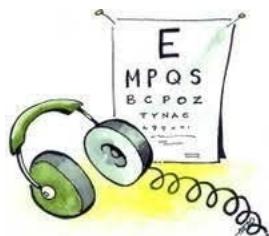
### Thursday, Nov. 12

Be the "I" in Kind

& post a picture in front of a Kindness display on social media

### Friday, Nov. 13

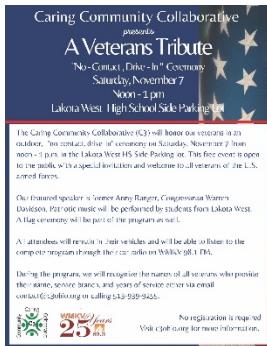
Write a message of kindness in sidewalk chalk;  
take a picture & post it on social media



## Hearing and Vision Screenings

Due to COVID-19, at this time Lakota nurses are not conducting routine screenings for vision and hearing during the 2020-2021 school year. Generally, these are conducted annually for all students in grades K, 1, 3, 5, 7, 9 and 11. Screenings require close contact between the nurse and students, so for the safety of everyone, we decided to waive the routine screenings as allowed by the Ohio Department of Health. If conditions improve, we will re-evaluate this decision.

If you have concerns about your child's hearing or vision, however, you may request to have him/her screened by the nurse. Please contact your building nurse directly to request the screening.



## Nov. 7: C3 Annual Veterans Tribute

The Veterans Tribute will be from noon to 1 p.m. on Saturday, November 7, in the Lakota West High School side parking lot. Congressman Warren Davidson, a former Army Ranger, will be the featured speaker. Students from Lakota West will provide patriotic music. A flag ceremony will be part of the program as well.

All veterans of the U.S. armed forces are welcome. The event is free and open to the public. All attendees will remain in their vehicles and can hear the program through the radio (98.1 FM) in their vehicles.

No advance registration is required. However, veterans who register for the program in advance will be recognized by name during the proceedings. Veterans planning to attend should provide their information (name, service branch, years of service) by emailing [contact@c3ohio.org](mailto:contact@c3ohio.org) or by calling 513-939-9255.

## ON THE RADAR

### Nov. 4: Coffee Chat with the Superintendent

Our next monthly Coffee Chat with the Superintendent is coming up tomorrow at 8 a.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.

### Kinship Connections: Love & Logic

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

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Remote Learning for In-Person Students: VLO Continues as Normal

November 4

### Coffee Chat with the Superintendent

November 4  
Facebook Live  
8 a.m.

### Virtual Conference Series on Social Media & Youth

November 5  
4 p.m.

### Board of Education Meeting

November 16  
6:30 p.m.  
Plains Jr. and via Zoom

### Kinship Connections Topic: Love & Logic

November 18

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.](#)

## **2020 MLK Day Contest Challenges Students to 'Reinvent Reforms'**

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.](#)

## **Mental Wellness Routines**

An informative presentation about the importance of mental wellness routines was created by Dr. Ann-Louise Lockhart in collaboration with our MindPeace partners and 1N5. Routines and daily practices are a large part of maintaining positive mental well-being.

This webinar will talk about right size expectations during this time, re-evaluating health and wellness goals, creating new habits for well-being, and adjusting and maintaining routines for both individual family members and as a family unit.

[Click here to watch a recorded presentation](#); you can also [register for a live webinar for the remaining 11/12/2020 date](#).

## **Nov. 5: Last Session on Youth & Social Media**

7 p.m.  
Via Zoom

### **Community Conversation on Finances**

November 18  
6:30 p.m.  
Via Zoom

### **No School (in lieu of conferences)**

November 25

### **No School: Thanksgiving Break**

November 26 & 27

**District Calendar**

Lakota and the Caring Community Collaborative (C3) are hosting their final virtual mental health session on the impact of social media and technology on youth at 4 p.m. on Nov. 5.

There's no cost to attend, and both mental health professionals and the public are welcome.

To see the full schedule of speakers and topics, and to register, visit the events page on C3's website at [www.caringcommunitycollaborative.com](http://www.caringcommunitycollaborative.com). For more information, email [contact@C3Ohio.org](mailto:contact@C3Ohio.org) or call 513-939-9255.

### **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.](#)

---

**WE are Lakota**



**Lakota Local Schools**  
5572 Princeton Road  
Liberty Township, OH 45011  
(513) 874-5505  
[lakota@lakotaonline.com](mailto:lakota@lakotaonline.com)  
[www.lakotaonline.com](http://www.lakotaonline.com)