

WE are Lakota



August 25, 2020 Edition

FEATURED In This Issue



Welcoming Back Students

Lakota welcomed back its 16,800 students last week in a whole new way.

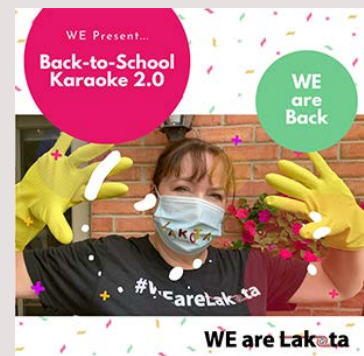
[Full story](#)



First Week Survey Results

Read what Lakota parents, staff and students said in a survey about the first days of in-person and virtual school.

[Full story](#)



Karaoke 2.0: Back to School Lakota Style

Catch students and staff celebrating the return to school with our latest karaoke video.

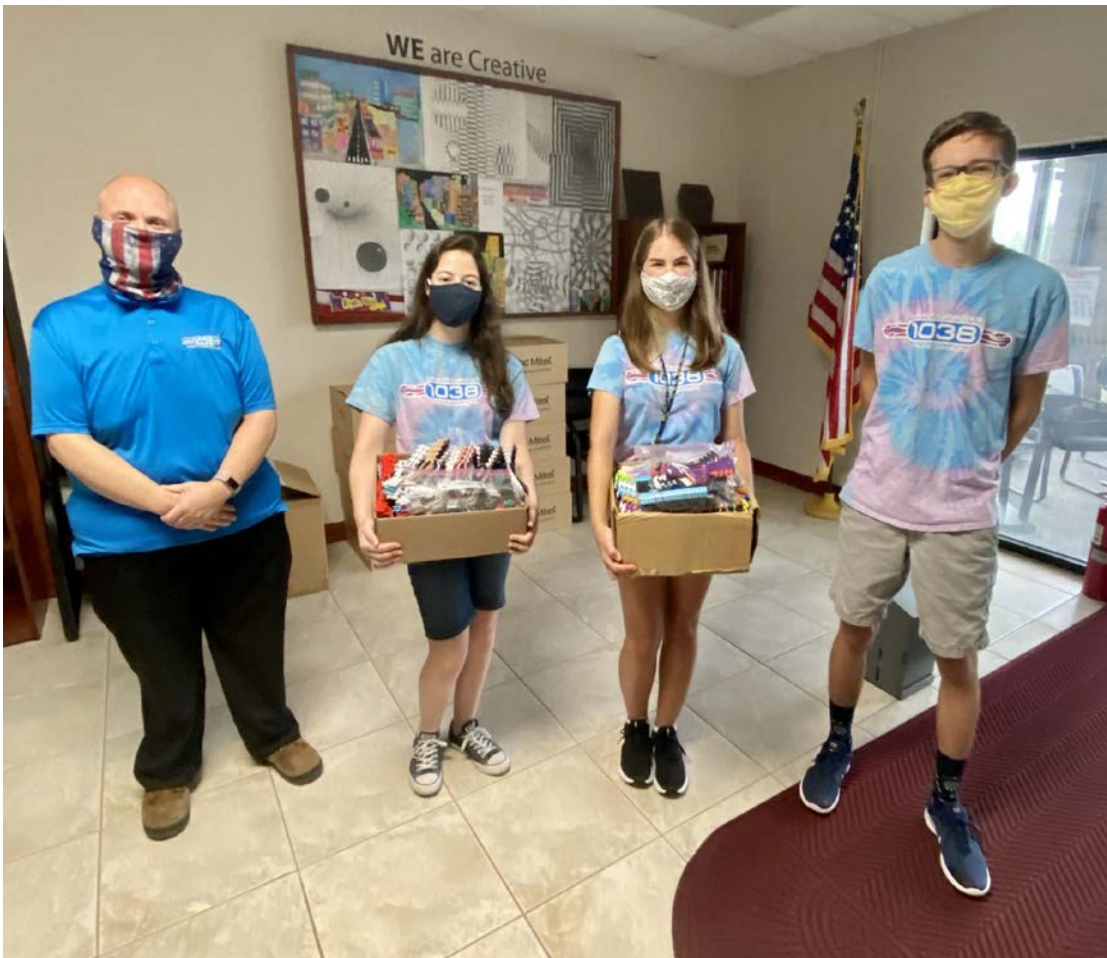
[Watch video](#)

[School Features](#)

[New Business](#)

- [Lakota Launches Unique Virtual Learning Option](#)
- [Lakota Welcomes New Administrators for the 2020-21 School Year](#)
- [What Does a 'Mask Break' Look Like?](#)
- [Barb Bossu Awards: Celebrating Special Lakota Volunteers](#)
- Mental Wellness Routines During Uncertain Times
- Board of Education Work Session: August 31

SHOUT-OUTS



Robotics Team Provides "Ear Savers" to Lakota Staff

A huge shout-out to the Lakota Robotics Team! They engineered and 3D printed 2,200 mask "ear savers" for our teachers and staff. Thank you to Mr. Nichols and our Robotics Team.

FEATURED PHOTOS



Introducing This Year's Back-to-School Photo Contest Winners

While Back to School 2020 may have looked a little different in some ways, Lakota's annual back-to-school photo contest returned in full force. We are excited to announce this year's contest winners, based on the posts with the most votes (or "likes"). Pictured left to right:

Siporah Tshering Bhutia (and her VLO kindergartner and family) for her inspirational Facebook post to lift up all Lakota families tackling virtual learning this year together.

Marlon Styles or @MCSDSuper (and his Creekside ECS first-grader) for his front stoop superhero shot shared on Twitter.

Michelle Knox or @mrsknox34 (and her freshman and sixth-grader) for her wish on Instagram for a school year that is "blessed, protected, covered, goal oriented, determined and filled with a praying village each and every day!"

Wyandot ECS teacher **Cassidy Traylor** or @MrsTraylor2nd (and her second grade class) for sharing on Twitter how they used their problem solving skills to find a creative and COVID-friendly alternative to the traditional high five.

Our winners will be receiving some special "WE are Lakota" spirit prizes in the coming days. Thank you to everyone who shared their first day moments. Search #WEareLakota and #WEcanLakota on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram to see all entries.



New School Year Brings Freshman Busing

The first day of the new school year also marked the first day in nine years that Lakota's freshman students had the option to ride the bus to and from school. Nearly 1,300 freshmen over both campuses are taking advantage of the expanded service, occupying 36 total buses each day.

Last fall, the Lakota Board of Education voted unanimously to reinstate transportation services for freshman students, effective for the 2020-21 school year for students living outside of neighborhoods with walking paths or sidewalks that lead to schools. High school busing in its entirety had been eliminated with the district's decision to decrease transportation services to the state minimum in 2011.



East NHS Sees Solar Panel Project Come to Life

Lakota East's National Honor Society had the opportunity to see their year-long service project come to fruition from their school's rooftop this summer.

The group's key players gathered to see the solar array (solar panels arranged in a group to capture sunlight and convert it to usable energy) their fundraising efforts had made possible. Through a project that doubled as both a learning opportunity and a way to make a sizable environmental impact, the group raised almost \$20,000 to support the installation.



Lakota Welcomes Back Students

Lakota welcomed back its 16,800 students last week in a whole new way. While relationship building was still in the forefront, students and staff also spent the first days of school becoming accustomed to new safety procedures.

For the first time, the district began the new school year with a staggered start schedule. Students attended school on either Monday and Wednesday or Tuesday and Thursday, with Friday used as a professional development day for staff. "We wanted to give our students and staff the opportunity to begin the year in a smaller group setting," explained Superintendent **Matthew Miller**. "In addition to the traditional adjustment period at the start of any school year, we also have many new safety procedures for in-person learning and a new online school for our students enrolled in Lakota's Virtual Learning Option."

[Read more](#)



In-Person & VLO **SURVEY RESULTS**

Survey Results: How was the First Week?

Lakota Local Schools values feedback from its families, students, staff and community. Beginning on March 13 when Lakota closed its doors to in-person learning due to the state-mandated shutdown of schools because of the novel Coronavirus (COVID-19), the district began gathering feedback about everything from the remote learning process to looking ahead to the 2020-2021 school year to feedback on the first days of school. District leaders use the feedback to help guide their decisions on how to best meet the needs of its students.

Following the first-time staggered start to the new school year, the district surveyed parents, staff and secondary students about the first days of school. A separate survey was sent for in-person and virtual learning.

[Read more](#)

WE Present...



Back-to-School Karaoke 2.0

Lakota's Back-to-School Karaoke 2.0 Celebrates Safe Return

Lakota's Back-to-School Karaoke 2.0, which follows [last year's hit school bus karaoke debut](#), features Lakota students and staff celebrating a safe return to school. The new hit, titled "At Lakota," is sung to the tune of "Copacabana".

WE are excited to have our students and staff back. Together, WE can make it a great year!

[Watch Lakota's Back-to-School Karaoke Video](#)



Lakota Launches Unique Virtual Learning Option

One in four Lakota students are starting their school year as part of the Virtual Learning Option (VLO), setting up their classrooms in home offices, kitchens and even in an RV during travels out West.

"We knew that many of our families would have concerns about not being able to have their child return to school in the fall due to the COVID-19 pandemic," said Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction **Keith Koehne**. That's why Lakota began the massive undertaking to develop this unique 100-percent online K-12 education option for families.

[Read more](#)



Lakota Welcomes New Administrators for the 2020-21 School Year

As the district prepares to welcome back students for the 2020-2021 school year, Lakota welcomes new administrative leaders at several schools, as well as in two key district positions.

"It's exciting to see so much talent and career advancement happening within our organization this year," said Lakota Superintendent **Matthew Miller**. "I'm looking forward to seeing how our students will benefit from their leadership and the fresh ideas they will bring from their former positions and districts."

[Read more](#)



What Does a 'Mask Break' Look Like?

From dancing on the playground to relocating class outside, teachers throughout Lakota are finding creative ways to give their students, and themselves, "mask breaks."

While there may have been some concern before the start of school with how students would adapt to the new safety protocols, including wearing a face covering all day, the consensus throughout the district seems to be that they are doing a great job. "The kids are actually really good about wearing their masks inside," remarked Freedom third grade teacher **Jennifer Turner**.

[Read more](#)



Barb Bossu Awards: Celebrating Special Lakota Volunteers

Lakota spent the last weeks of summer break honoring the district's most beloved volunteers. A social media campaign, each day featuring a different 2020 Barb Bossu Volunteer Spirit Award winner, replaced the District Parent Council's traditional recognition event that takes place in person every spring.

Since 1990, Lakota has honored its top volunteers in memory of a dedicated Lakota parent, Barb Bossu, whose untimely passing in 1989 was mourned by all in our school community. The Barb Bossu Volunteer Spirit Award is given to volunteers in recognition of their positive spirit, dedication to students and generosity of time and talent. Each school selects an award recipient, with one individual receiving the district-wide honor for his/her far-reaching efforts.

[Visit Lakota's Facebook album](#) and learn more about each school winner or [read the article published last spring.](#)

[District Winner Video](#)

NEW BUSINESS



Mental Wellness Routines During Uncertain Times

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, reevaluating 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 (choose the date you want to attend; the same material will be presented on each day): [9/17/2020 @ 5pm EST](#); [10/8/2020 @ 5pm EST](#); or [11/12/2020 @ 5pm EST](#).



August 31: Board of Education Work Session

A Lakota Board of Education work session will take place at 6:30 p.m. on Aug. 31.

The meeting will be a work session focusing on the start of the 2020-21 school year. The Lakota Board of Education, Butler County, will meet in person at its normal meeting location, Plains Jr. School, 5500 Princeton Rd, Liberty Township, Ohio, with limited seating available.

The draft agenda will be available and can be viewed at <https://www.boarddocs.com/oh/lakota/Board.nsf/Public>

Due to social-distancing requirements, twenty (20) seats are available to the public. Seating will be first-come first-served. Additionally, those attending the meeting will be required to adhere to the state-wide mask mandate.

We encourage members of the public to continue to take advantage of our virtual option of viewing and participating in our Board meetings at the following link: <https://lakotaonline.zoom.us/j/99058236291?pwd=UkUxenB2eW01cWsyOEZlTmhHa3FVUT09>.

ON THE RADAR

Check Your Lakota Communication Preferences

Timely and transparent communication is critically important to Lakota Schools. The district's mass notification system, School Messenger, delivers important school and district news and announcements via email, phone and text message to parents, staff, students and community members (opt-in only). We will be using this same platform to communicate with our Virtual Learning Option families as well.

While contact information is updated in accordance with our information systems, we encourage parents, employees and community members to [log into School Messenger](#) to check their information and preferences. [Watch this new video tutorial about how to log into and navigate your School Messenger account.](#)

Still Have Back-to-School Questions?

Lakota has compiled a comprehensive FAQ with everything you need to know to have a great start to the 2020-2021 school year.

[Click for Lakota's Back-to-School FAQ.](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

[Board of Education Work Session](#)

August 31
6:30 p.m.
Plains Junior & via Zoom

[Labor Day \(No School\)](#)

September 7

[No School: Professional Development Day for Staff](#)

September 8

[Board of Education Meeting](#)

September 14
6:30 p.m.
Plains Junior & via Zoom

[District Calendar](#)

Alternative Transportation

Transportation for all eligible students is based on the home address listed in our student database. If your child will be needing transportation to or from an address different than their home address, please remember to complete a new [Transportation/Child Care Form](#) with current information.

For forms received after Aug. 12, transportation will be available on Sept. 2.

After Sept. 3, all forms will be processed within 48 hours.

COVID-19 Safety Resource Manual

In accordance with guidance from the Butler County Health Department, Lakota Local Schools has compiled a comprehensive resource manual outlining the district's safety protocols and guidelines for its responsible reopening this school year. The district is requiring all staff to carefully review this document and is encouraging families to familiarize themselves with its contents as well.

[Click to view the COVID-19 safety resource manual.](#)

WE are Lak@ta



Lakota Local Schools
5572 Princeton Road
Liberty Township, OH 45011
(513) 874-5505
lakota@lakotaonline.com
www.lakotaonline.com