

WE are Lakota



A Look Around Lakota

District E-Newsletter

May 19, 2020 Edition

FEATURED In This Issue



Parade of Graduates

To carry on the "Parade of Graduates" tradition (in a virtual format), every weekday from May 11 through May 22, Lakota is releasing a new video dedicated to each of the elementary schools our graduates may have attended.

[Full story](#)



Honoring the Class of 2020

A senior year like no other of course means honoring the Class of 2020 in unique ways as well. Don't miss details surrounding Lakota's graduation plans and a special "Light the Path" ceremony to involve our community in paying tribute to this year's graduates.

[Full story](#)



Military Commitment Ceremony Held May 7

On May 7, Lakota celebrated its 22 seniors who have committed to attending a military academy or enlisting in a branch of the armed services after graduation.

[Full story](#)

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SHOUT-OUTS



Endeavor Team Places Second in Statewide eCybermission Competition

A team of Endeavor Elementary sixth grade students earned second place in this year's statewide eCybermission STEM competition. eCYBERMISSION is a web-based science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) competition. Students are challenged to



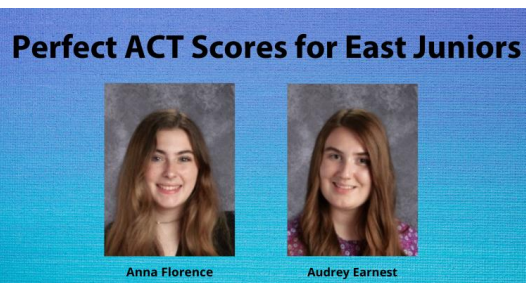
East Students Recognized in Governors Art Competition

Six Lakota East students placed in the top 300 works of art in the Ohio Governor's Youth Art Competition. The students are: **Alex Fernholz, Anna French, Saad Khan, Mae Koger, Vince Kornau and Jenifer Le.**

explore how STEM works in their world while working as a team to solve problems in their community.

Team Power, which included **Adharsh Sundar, Owen Huffman, Serena Kaldas** and **Eliana Stepaniak** developed a prototype of a sensor that could be used on a dangerous hill in the community to warn people about oncoming traffic. Each team member won a \$500 U.S. Savings Bond. Honorable Mention was also awarded to another Endeavor team named "The Helpline", which included **Ava Shepard, Borianna Matey** and **Catherine Clarke**. The team created a more comfortable student chair that could be used in schools to prevent students from sitting on their knees.

The Ohio Governor's Youth Art Exhibition, now in its 50th year, is dedicated to the educational and artistic advancement of our talented young people in the state of Ohio. The exhibition is open to all of Ohio's 1,112 high schools, both public and private, chartered by the State of Ohio Department of Education.



East Juniors Earn Perfect ACT Scores

Lakota East's **Anna Florence** and **Audrey Earnest** both scored a perfect 36 on their recent ACT tests. Just one half of one percent of all 1.8 million test takers earn a perfect score. A big congratulations to Anna and Audrey!



East, West Celebrate College-Bound Student-Athletes

Collectively, Lakota East and Lakota West high schools celebrated 67 senior student-athletes who have committed to play their sport at the collegiate level. Both schools compiled a listing of student-athletes, by name, sport and destination. View [Lakota East's program](#) and [Lakota West's video presentation](#).

FEATURED PHOTOS



Fun Field Day Challenges

Schools across the district held their field days virtually this year. Liberty ECS hosted a 'Beat the Teacher Field Day' challenging students to beat their teachers' times on 11 different events, including bunny hop races, stack the cups, mailbox mania and spoon balance (shown above).



Ridge Art Club Rain Barrels Coming to Cincinnati Zoo

For the second year in a row, Ridge Junior School has a space in the Cincinnati Zoo's "Party for the Planet" event.

Eighth-grader **Reese Stanard** (pictured left) and art teacher **Amy Panfalone** (pictured right) both painted winning rain barrels for the zoo's annual partnership with Save Local Waters. As shared in last year's story about Ridge Junior School's involvement in the rain barrel project through Art Club, the zoo ultimately displays 40 rain barrels painted by local artists, auctioning them off to the public to raise money for educational programs and increase awareness about water conservation.

The rain barrel will be on display at the Cincinnati Zoo July 1-28 and available in the online auction on July 18. Congratulations Reese and Amy!

AROUND LAKOTA



Live, Virtual Parades of Graduates Celebrate Class of 2020

Lakota's "Parade of Graduates" tradition has become an important rite of passage for Lakota East and Lakota West seniors, traditionally bringing them back to the elementary school where their schooling started.

To carry on this tradition in a virtual format, every weekday from May 11 through May 22 (the last of Lakota's original graduation dates), Lakota is releasing a new video dedicated to each of the elementary schools our graduates may have attended. Each release is premiering live on Lakota's Facebook page and YouTube channel at noon to encourage live commentary. The release schedule is as follows:

- May 11 - Adena Elementary
- May 12 - Hopewell Elementary
- May 13 - Cherokee Elementary
- May 14 - Independence Elementary
- May 15 - Endeavor Elementary
- May 18 - Union Elementary
- May 19 - Freedom Elementary
- May 20 - VanGorden Elementary
- May 21 - Heritage Elementary
- May 22 - Woodland Elementary

[Click here to view the complete collection of Parades of Graduates released so far.](#) Search #LakotaPoG2020 on social media to view or join the conversation.



LIGHT THE PATH FOR THE CLASS OF 2020

- Tie a ribbon in your school colors around a tree or light post in your front yard
- Turn on your front lights at 8:20 p.m. (2020 in military time)

**MAY 20****MAY 22**

Celebrating the Class of 2020

A senior year like no other of course means honoring the Class of 2020 in unique ways as well. A community celebration on what should have been graduation night for both Lakota East and West high schools, May 20 and 22 respectively, will light the path for our graduates.

On Wednesday, May 20, the community is encouraged to tie a ribbon in Lakota West's colors around a tree or lamp post in their front yards. At 8:20 p.m., or 2020 in military time, front porch lights throughout West Chester and Liberty townships will be illuminated to honor the Class of 2020. The recognition will repeat on Friday, May 22, in order to honor the Lakota East graduates.

The district recently announced plans to hold multiple graduation ceremonies so that the nearly 1,300 graduates may receive their diplomas in front of their immediate family members and classmates. The ceremonies will be held at both high schools on May 30 for Lakota East and May 31 for Lakota West.

[Read more](#)



Lakota's Military Commitment Ceremony Honors Seniors

On May 7, Lakota Local Schools celebrated its 22 seniors who have committed to attending a military academy or enlisting in a branch of the armed services after graduation. While this was the third annual Military Commitment Ceremony for the district, it was the first held virtually.

"Regardless of the setting, it was important that we recognize our seniors who have chosen to put service before self after graduation," said Superintendent **Matthew Miller**. "I couldn't be more proud of our students who have chosen to enter one of the service academies or branches of our military."

As part of the [Portrait of a Lakota Graduate](#), Enlistment is one of the four Es the district instills upon its students, along with Enrollment in Higher Education, Entrepreneurship and Employment.

The virtual ceremony opened with a moving performance of the National Anthem by members of the Lakota East and West choirs. Along with Miller, principals **Suzanna Davis** and **Elgin Card** addressed the honorees and community.

[Read More](#)



PTO/PTA Activities Bring School Communities Together

Lakota schools are still relying on the support of their parent-teacher organizations during remote learning to help bring their school communities together.

Earlier this month, VanGorden Elementary's PTA presented 'Drop the Mic' to replace the annual Talent Show that had to be cancelled due to COVID-19.

[Read more](#)



Woodland Team, Blue Jacket Captain Create Memorable Moment for Student

Considering it came from his all-time favorite sports figure, Woodland Elementary **Thomas Kiefer** received the compliment of a lifetime last week. "You'd be a big leader in our locker room," said Columbus Blue Jackets Captain Nick Foligno. "I love your enthusiasm. You're awesome," he added, to which Thomas responded, "I think you are, too!"

The recent virtual meeting may have topped any "normal" day Thomas has had in the classroom - ever. The fifth-grader joined the scheduled Zoom call to find a "room full" of some of his favorite people from Woodland: intervention specialist **Katie Woodruff**, language arts teacher **Jen Greer**, occupational therapist **Stacey Walsh**, instructional aide **Sharon George** and principal **John Wise**.

Knowing full well that the call was just to discuss how to add an expert voice to his recent writing prompt, Thomas had some suspicions. "You're hiding something," he said with a grin.

[Read more](#)

A New Look to Award Ceremonies



Surprise Presentations Part of Plains Junior Virtual Awards

During normal times, Plains Junior eighth-graders would have had several events to mark the end of their junior high years.

"Because of the pandemic we couldn't physically have these celebrations, but we wanted to make sure students knew that their hard work did not go unnoticed," said Plains Principal **Kim Wade**. "So our staff came up with the idea of doing a virtual awards ceremony to let students know we were thinking of them."

The video was put together by Media Design and Communication teacher **Jacob Shaw** and

includes opening speeches by Wade and Plains student **Aliya Merchant**, and ends with final reflections from student **Eesha Saggi**. In between, students were recognized for academic excellence (3.75 GPA and above), departmental/subject awards, citizenship awards and three merit awards.

Staff members wanted to make the presentation of the merit awards special, so they surprised the winners at their homes.

[Read more](#)



East Holds Reimagined 'Relay for Life'

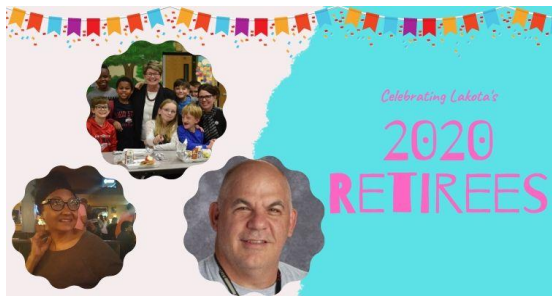
This is the tenth year that Lakota East has held its Relay for Life event to benefit the American Cancer Society. This year, though, it looked a little different than in the past.

When in-person Relay for Life events were cancelled through the end of June, East decided to pivot to a virtual event to ensure that those affected by cancer could still receive the things they need, especially during these difficult times.

"We know how much this event means to the survivors, community, and students and wanted to be able to bring this to them even though it's not how we imagined it," said East student **Lauren Rader**, who serves as a senior chair of the event.

"After switching to a virtual Relay, we basically had to start over and recreate everything we had been planning since last summer," said Rader.

[Read more](#)



Celebrating Lakota's 2020 Retirees

Lakota Local Schools is celebrating its 21 employees who will be retiring in 2020. The district has been recognizing each of the individuals on social media throughout the month of May. Congratulations to the following teachers, staff members, administrators and school resource officers:

Gail Allshouse: VanGorden Elementary
Bobbie Bach: Wyandot Early Childhood
Susan Bauer: Lakota West High
Paulette Birdsall : Ridge Junior
Judith Buckenmyer: Lakota East
Phillip Chumley: Plains Junior
Eileen Coday: Liberty Early Childhood School
Marguerite Doll: Lakota East
Jami Fullington: Freedom Elementary
Linda Gallagher: VanGorden Elementary
Janice Gathof: Lakota West
Lyndelle Johnson: Cherokee Elementary
Anthony Jones: Union Elementary
Katie McMahon: Wyandot Early Childhood School
Janet Meyer: West Freshman
Joanne Muir-Myers: VanGorden Elementary
Jane Raver: Adena Elementary
Linda Richard: Independence Elementary
Michelle Sorrell: Union Elementary
Gwendolyn Trujillo: Lakota West
Terrie Williamson: Creekside Early Childhood School

[Visit the district Facebook page](#) to view an album with the congratulatory social media posts.

[Read more](#)



Mental Health Video Series: Validating Your Child's Emotions

Lakota's emphasis on social, emotional and mental health has become even more pronounced as students, staff and our families start to feel the toll of our recent break in routine. Throughout this pandemic, Lakota is sharing brief video messages from our mental health experts on what small actions can help support our children and teenagers and keep their minds healthy and happy during these uncertain times.

In the latest installment of this video series, Lakota's Student Wellness Coordinator Megan

Cameron shares some tips for validating your child's emotions related to COVID-19. In this minute-long watch, she provides a list of considerations to help ease your child's emotions. [Watch the latest mental health video all about discussing COVID-19.](#)

[Watch the complete series](#)

NEW BUSINESS



Community Foundation Accepting Nominations for Educator of Excellence Awards

The Community Foundation of West Chester/Liberty, in partnership with Lakota Local Schools, is currently accepting nominations for the 2020 Lakota Educator of Excellence Awards. The nomination deadline, traditionally in the spring, has been delayed until Sept. 4 due to the current health crisis.

"Surprising recipients with the award in front of their students and colleagues is the best part of this process. We hope we will be able to continue with that tradition by extending the deadline to the fall," says **Erin Clemons**, Community Foundation president & CEO. "During this challenging time of distance learning, we are especially grateful for our Lakota educators who have stepped up and adapted to ensure their students are still getting a quality education."

[Learn more](#)



Summer Meal Distribution

Lakota's Summer Lunch Program will kick off on May 27 at nine locations throughout the district. In addition to six neighborhood stops, three pick-up locations are available for families. Meals are provided free of charge to children ages one through 18.

[Learn more](#)



Be Part of 1000 Community Thank Yous

Our community is filled with heroes. From hospital workers, to police officers; firefighters and other essential workers, these everyday heroes are working tirelessly to help keep our community safe. Join the Caring Community Collaborative (C3) in saying thank you 1,000 times.

Post your message of appreciation on social media, tagging C3, or send a handwritten thank you note in the mail. Be sure to use **#1000CommunityThankYous** in your posts.



District Remote Learning Survey Open Until May 22

Recently, Gov. DeWine has signaled that school may look different in the fall due to the novel Coronavirus. Feedback from our students, parents and guardians remains a priority as we near the end of our fourth quarter and continue to plan for the 2020-21 school year.

[Please click here to offer your feedback on remote learning during Lakota's fourth quarter.](#) We also ask that you share your thoughts looking ahead to next year.

If you are a parent and have multiple students in the district, we encourage you to click "Submit Another Response" upon completion of this survey. The survey will close on May 22.

ON THE RADAR

Summer School Update

Following guidelines from Gov. DeWine on Monday, April 20, Lakota's summer school program will be taught through remote learning this year.

Those who have already registered should have received an email with updated information. As we get closer to the start date of May 26, parents and students will receive more details and communication from your teacher(s).

At this time, only credit recovery courses and End-of-Course Assessments for the summer testing window (pending state approval) remain open for registration.

Please visit www.lakotaonline.com/summerschool for registration information and for regular updates. If you have any additional questions, please send an email to summerschool@lakotaonline.com.

Early Entrance to Kindergarten Testing Delayed

Lakota's testing for early entrance to Kindergarten, originally scheduled in May, has been postponed, pending guidance related to the COVID-19 response. We hope to have more guidance after June 1. Updates will be available on Lakota's Gifted Services website.

Open Enrollment Applications Due May 29

UPCOMING EVENTS

Light the Path for Lakota West Seniors

May 20
8:20 p.m.

Students Last Day of School

May 21

Staff Last Day of School

May 22

Light the Path for Lakota East Seniors

May 22
8:20 p.m.

Board of Education Work Session via Zoom

May 26
6:30 p.m.

Summer School Starts

May 26

Lakota East Graduation Ceremonies

May 30

Lakota West Graduation Ceremonies

May 31

Each school year, the Lakota Board of Education re-evaluates the district's open enrollment policy and votes on whether or not to approve its renewal. If renewed, under Board Policy 5113, students residing in other Ohio school districts can apply to attend Lakota.

Due to the high volume of returning open enrolled students, at this time we are not accepting first-time applicants for the 2020-2021 school year. Per Board Policy 5113 and Administrative Guidelines, we will only be accepting applications from current Lakota staff, returning open enrolled students and siblings of returning open enrolled students.

To apply, please [complete the open enrollment application](#). All applications must be submitted to enroll@lakotaonline.com by close of business on Friday, May 29, 2020. Please complete a separate application for each student. Applicants may not always receive their first school of choice, depending on the school's base enrollment for students residing within its attendance zone.

Custom Frames

Show your support of our students, teachers and staff with our new photo frames on Facebook. Frames are available to celebrate our seniors at both Lakota East and West or to show that WE are in this together as a community. Click here to visit Lakota's Facebook page to try them out.

Submit Alternative Transportation Form Requests by July 20

To ease the transition to a new school year and honor families' requests for alternative pick-up and drop-off locations for transportation, Lakota is asking that families submit transportation forms by July 20.

By default, 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.

All alternative transportation plans are automatically cleared at the end of each school year, so please complete the form before each school year if you'll require transportation to or from an address different than your home address. The early childhood schools ask that all their families complete a form to have on file, regardless of where they will require transportation.

Please honor the following deadlines to receive transportation for the upcoming school year, beginning on the date indicated:

Form Submission

By July 20, 2020

By Aug. 12, 2020

Transportation Available

First day of school

Aug. 24, 2020

Graduation Video Premieres

June 10 (West)

June 11 (East)

Board of Education Meeting via Zoom

June 8

6:30 p.m.

[District Calendar](#)

After Aug. 12, 2020
After Sept. 3

Sept. 2, 2020
Forms processed within 48 hours.

K-12 Online Registration for 2020-2021 Remains Open

Despite Lakota's building closures, online registration for grades K-12, including Lakota's all-day kindergarten program, remains open for the 2020-2021 school year. Lakota's Welcome Center will not be open to the public for in-person appointments, but will still be conducting business by phone and email to obtain all required documentation.

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 2020-2021 school year. [Visit the kindergarten registration site for more details.](#)

Families can register online, after which they will be contacted by phone to provide any further required documentation. [Visit the Welcome Center website for more information and to register online.](#) All questions can be directed to the Welcome Center at enroll@lakotaonline.com or (513) 682-4120.

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