

A Look Around Lakota: E-News Edition

November 15, 2019



WE are Lakota

Personalized
Learning:

The Flexible Playlist



Personalized Learning Video Series: The Flexible Playlist

Personalized learning does not discriminate on the basis of grade level or subject area. Case in point: **Lisa Sizemore**'s second grade class at Wyandot Early Childhood School.

As part of Lakota's move toward more personalized learning, Sizemore introduced flexible playlists into her Math Workshop this year. Playlists give students a list of options from which to choose, each activity reinforcing a skill or concept they've learned in a different way.

Besides the element of student choice, the strategy allows students to pace their own learning and also get more individualized attention from their teacher whose time spent delivering content can be shifted to circulating around the room. Sizemore has seen a significant spike in student engagement and growth.

“I’ve been really surprised at how well the children have taken to it,” Sizemore said. “I wasn’t really certain that they would do well with all the freedom, but I see a lot of smiles and laughter and I think they really enjoy the choice.”

[Watch this video to learn how a flexible playlist model is making all the difference](#) for students all around Lakota and stay tuned for [more examples of personalized learning in this continuing video series](#).

WATCH THE VIDEO



Lakota Students Take OSBA Capital Conference By Storm

With more than 9,000 attendees, the Ohio School Board Association's Capital Conference is a highly anticipated event for educators across the state. One of the highlights of the three-day event is the Student Achievement Fair.

Each year, 100 booths display innovative learning opportunities from schools throughout Ohio. This year, Lakota Local Schools held five of them.

"What a testament to our teachers and students that we were selected to showcase five different experiences offered in our schools," said Lakota's School Board President **Julie Shaffer**. Twenty-three students and five teachers attended the event, speaking with conference-goers. "Our students are outgoing and articulate. It was a pleasure to see them interact with educators from all over the state."

Students from Lakota East and West high schools were on hand to promote the [cross-district collaboration](#) between American Sign Language classes. **Cole Stafford**, a senior at Lakota West and ASL III student, was also excited to explore the fair. "It's really neat to get a fresh, new look at what other schools are doing, and being able to see all the people who were interested in sign language."

Both high schools were also represented at a booth showcasing the district's empowerment of student voice to reimagine learning spaces. Last year, students were heavily involved in the transformation of media centers to innovation hubs at both Lakota East High School and the [West Freshman building](#). **Kelly Johangtes**, a senior at Lakota East, also talked to visitors about using student voice to [transform a locker bay](#) into a collaborative learning space. "Talking to people from across the state is really rewarding," she said. "I think it's really exciting that we're giving our ideas to other administrations and other students so that way they can bring a change to their schools."

READ MORE



SHOUT OUTS



Lakota East National Signing Day



Lakota West National Signing Day



Anne Broshear



Nia Butts

Lakota West Girls Soccer



Teacher of the Year Nikki Dreyer



Lakota West Girls Soccer Wins State Championship

On Nov. 9, the Lakota West girls soccer team finished what they set out to do...win a state championship. It's the first girls soccer title since 1999. The team, which is ranked fifth in the nation by *USA Today*, finished the season with a record 22 wins and is the first undefeated soccer team in the history of Lakota Local Schools.

The team defeated Whitehouse Anthony Wayne in a 2-1 victory at MAPFRE Stadium in Columbus. The game winning goal was scored by junior **Kailyn Dudokovich** with just 13 seconds left on the clock.

Dudokovich's stellar season has earned her titles of D-1 Player of the Year and Ms. Soccer by the Ohio Scholastic Soccer Coaches Association. The 50 goals she scored this season broke a Greater Cincinnati record set in 1986 and secured her ranking as 11th in all-time state history.

Chamber Honors Two 'Women of Excellence'

Anne Broshear, an intervention specialist at Plains Junior School, and Lakota East alumnae **Nia Butts** were among this year's ten "Women of Excellence," as named by the West Chester Liberty Chamber Alliance at its annual awards gala on Nov. 15.

The annual event honors outstanding women, who through their careers or volunteerism, have enhanced business, education, culture, philanthropy, and provided outstanding service to our region. Broshear was recognized for her 20-year career at Lakota that has been marked by a unique approach to involving the community in her multiple disabilities classroom. A 2019 graduate now attending Bowling Green State University, Butts was recognized for the monumental impact her service continues to have at East, particularly through her generous support of the Edge Teen Center.

East Educator Named Butler Tech Secondary Teacher of the Year

Nikki Drew, exercise science teacher at Lakota East High School, has been named the Butler Tech Secondary Teacher of the Year. After receiving nominations from each Butler Tech campus and associate school, Drew was honored, in part, because of her commitment to empowering student voice and fostering positive relationships with both students and colleagues. Drew has taught the Butler Tech class at

Lakota East for eight years.

Administrators from both Butler Tech and Lakota surprised Drew during class to share the news with her. Drew's nomination has now been entered for both the Ohio Department of Education's Teacher of the Year and the Association of Career and Tech Educators in 2020.

Student-Athletes Sign National Letters of Intent

Lakota East and West high schools held their first athletic signing events of the year on Wednesday, the first day of the NCAA National Letter of Intent signing period for all sports (except for football). Sixteen student-athletes at Lakota East signed early commitments to continue their athletic careers at the collegiate level; Lakota West had six students participate in its signing ceremony.

Lakota East

Brock Aten – Golf – IUPUI

Hannah Cech – Swimming – University of Arkansas

Samantha Dodd – Soccer – University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Preston Dorsey – Baseball – Wittenberg University

Nathan Haberthier – Baseball – Ohio State University

Hailey Holtman – Softball – Hillsdale College

Danielle Horter – Cross Country/ Track – Lee University

Peyton Houston – Golf – Wright State University

Lizzie Jantausch – Swimming – University of Cincinnati

Maggie McMullen – Volleyball – Mount St. Joseph's University

Sarah Norcom – Volleyball – University of Cincinnati

Dylan Risola – Baseball – Marietta College

Alanna Schlaeger – Crew – Robert Morris University
Alexis Trammel – Soccer – Northern Kentucky University
Mitchell Vincent – Baseball – University of Charleston
Tara Witkowski – Swimming – Dennison University

Lakota West

Nevaeh Dean - Basketball – Virginia Tech
Grace Glosson - Swimming-University of Buffalo
Vanessa Menchofer - Soccer – Ashland University
Regan Meyer - Soccer – Marshall University
Jenna Sitarski - Soccer – Ohio Northern University

AROUND LAKOTA



WE ARE

Three local relief organizations were the real winners in the second annual 'Stuff the Bus' Food Drive; over 15,000 pounds of food were donated this year.

Three Communities Win in 'Stuff the Bus' Crosstown Competition

The longstanding tradition behind Lakota's annual food drive helped the district bring home a win in the second annual "Stuff the Bus" crosstown competition against neighboring school districts Middletown and Hamilton.

But the real winners were all three communities that collectively brought in more than 15,000 pounds in donations for their respective relief organizations, a total determined thanks to the support of Planes Moving & Storage.

"It's always fun to be a little competitive, but the truth of the matter is that we are all in the business of serving our communities," said Lakota Superintendent **Matthew Miller**. "It's great to see what we can accomplish when we all come together around a single cause."

Given the varying sizes of all three districts, the leader was determined by the total weight per student. Lakota accounted for nearly 12,000 pounds of the grand total, enough to stuff two school buses with canned goods and other non-perishable items for Reach Out Lakota. CEO **Scott Stephens** said the delivery comes at a critical time for the relief organization, which so far this year has provided more than 77,000 meals to our neighbors in West Chester and Liberty townships.

"Reach Out Lakota served a record number of families in October and our shelves were bare. We haven't seen our supply this low in years," Stephens said. "Thankfully the donations came in and we were able to serve 27 families the same day we were unloading the buses. This food will sustain our pantry through March or April. Thank you to all who contributed."

[READ MORE](#)



Lakota Learning Blog: Portrait of a Graduate Our 'North Star'

The genesis of Lakota's "Portrait of a Graduate" started with this simple request: "Describe the ideal Lakota graduate." We figured that if everything WE do is designed to create a future-ready, student centered learning experience, then we should start with the end in mind.

In the latest "Inside Lakota Learning" blog, Executive Director of Curriculum & Instruction **Keith Koehne** shares just what went into developing the district's "north star" for developing the skills and attributes that we want to see in every Lakota graduate. Every instructional and programming decision is now vetted through this new roadmap created in collaboration with students, teachers, administrators, business owners, parents, Chamber of Commerce members, elected officials, and even college admissions officers.

Lakota educators are the voice behind the “Inside Lakota Learning” blog, which is designed to help educate the community about Lakota’s learning strategies and oftentimes bridge the gap between how those strategies can be reinforced at home.

[Click here to read this latest post and to subscribe to alerts for future posts.](#)



SAVING THE BEEES



PERSONALIZED LEARNING SERIES
FOCUS ON: PROJECT BASED LEARNING



[Click to watch a video](#) about how a 'Save the Bees' project empowered fifth-graders at Independence Elementary.

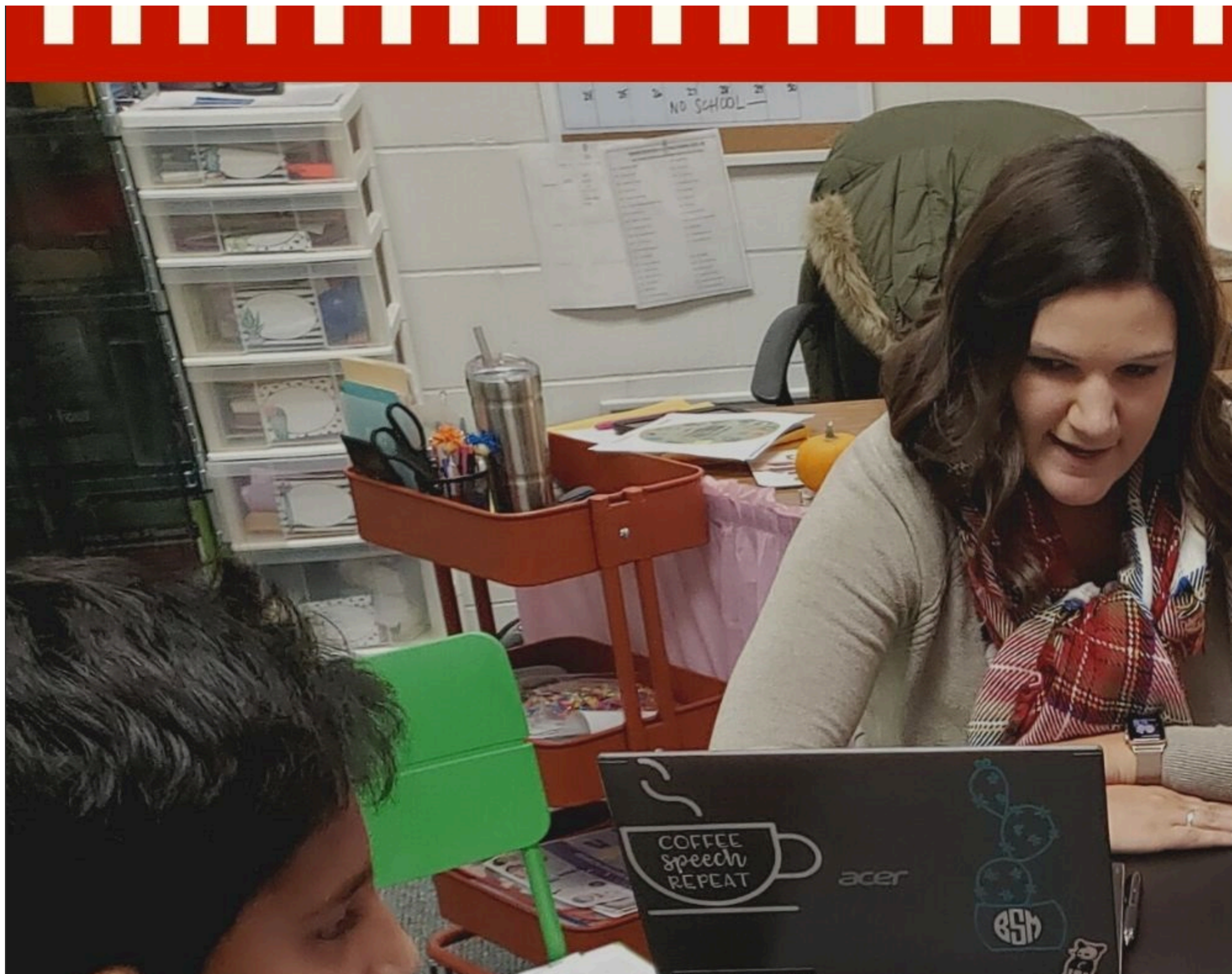
Video Shows How Project Based Learning Empowers Students

Can fifth-graders come up with viable solutions to a real-world problem? Laura Brown's students at Independence Elementary School would answer with a resounding, "Yes!" During science class, Brown asked the question, "How can we, as ecologists, help convince the community to save the bee population?"

[Click here to see a video about how this project based learning assignment brought choice into the classroom](#) and empowered students to decide how they would demonstrate the knowledge they gained through their research. Be on the lookout for more video examples of personalized learning in classrooms throughout Lakota Local Schools.

[Click here to read the full story on using project based learning to save the bees.](#)

WATCH THE VIDEO



Digital Resources Give a New Look to Speech Therapy Sessions

If you stop into **Brittany Schafer**'s fifth grade speech therapy session, you'd be surprised at how engaged her students are – and at how much she can cover in just 30 minutes.

New resources are changing the look of traditional speech therapy sessions. While Schafer still uses flash cards, worksheet exercises and games like Apples to Apples, Lakota teachers now have access to new digital resources that can transform the way they teach and the way students learn.

One of the new resources is Nearpod, a student engagement platform recently purchased for Lakota staff.

“I can put together an interactive lesson for our iPads covering all of the goals for a small group of students, in just 10 minutes,” said Schafer.

Schafer says “sometimes it’s hard to get students excited about coming to speech.” But with these new tools – her students walk into her speech room excited to get started.

Freedom fifth-grader **Aubrey** loves these reimagined speech lessons because “the games are lots of fun.” Her fellow group members agree; **Daniel** adds that they “help keep me focused” and **Sid** says they have “helped me improve my grammar.”

During the group session, the three students work side-by-side, supporting each other and giving each other high-fives when a skill is mastered. While Schafer works one-on-one to help with certain skills, she often works with students in these “mixed” groups. Mixed groups include students who can be working on different speech goals.

[READ MORE](#)



**'Talk to Me
Tuesdays**



**Building
Relationships
at Hopewell Junior**



Building Relationships with Hopewell Junior's 'Talk to Me' Tuesdays

“What I love about this school is that everyone is on board that building relationships is the centerpiece of education,” said Hopewell Junior math teacher **Kyle Schlensker**. “It’s a goal that falls outside of curriculum and standards, but it’s key to our students’ success.”

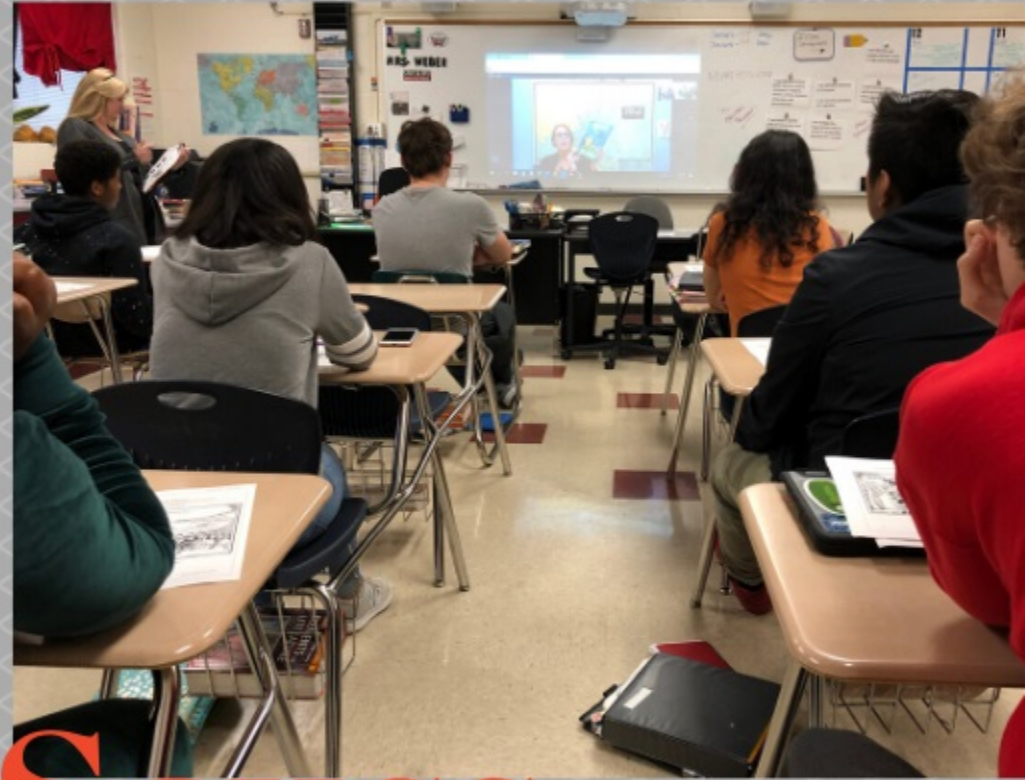
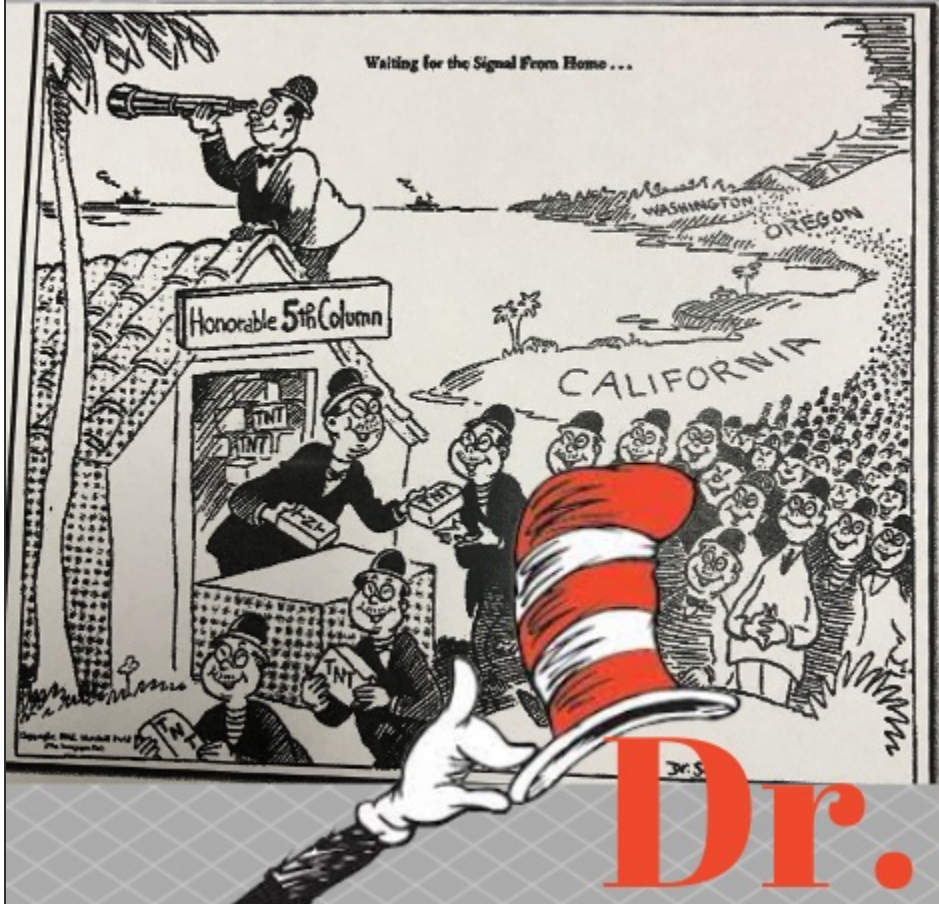
For the first two days of the school year, instead of opening books, Lakota teachers focus on building relationships with students and setting a strong foundation for the year ahead. ‘Talk to Me Tuesdays’ began at Hopewell Junior last year to continue to cultivate those relationships.

‘Talk to Me Tuesdays’ is a building-wide initiative that every teacher participates in during advisory period every Tuesday. Each week, teachers have one-on-one personal conversations with a handful of students.

“It’s a time when we can check in with students and talk about how everything is going – academics, home life, after school programs, etc.,” said Schlensker, who enjoys spending this one-on-one time with his seventh-graders. Some of his recent conversations with students included talking about balancing school work and sports, reducing stress about homework, and handling relationships with peers and parents. “Sometimes it’s hard to get to know students who aren’t as outgoing in class; this gives us the opportunity to let all of our students know that someone is here for them, that someone is in their corner.”

Students also appreciate having the chance to sit down and check in with their teacher. Seventh-grader **Morgan Dmuwah** said “Mr. Schlensker gives us tips when we check in with him, and it helps to keep our grades up too.” **Grace Wang** added that it is “nice to know that there is someone you can talk to.”

Learning American Literature through



Dr. Seuss

Lakota West students gained a new perspective on the work of Dr. Seuss during a recent lesson in their American Literature class.

WWII Expert Makes Dr. Seuss Relevant to High School English

Now that they've studied some of his 400-plus political cartoons, students in **Marian Weber**'s American Literature class at Lakota West will likely never look at a Dr. Seuss book the same.

"We've all read his children's books, but I never realized there were deeper meanings beyond all the rhymes," said West junior **Sergio Negroe**, noting his surprise at finding out Dr. Seuss's first career as a controversial political cartoonist later used children's books to subliminally apologize for his former missteps.

To build upon her class's recent study of "The Crucible," Weber invited an expert from the National World War II Museum in New Orleans, Louisiana into her classroom via Skype. For over an hour, students analyzed a handful of blatantly racist political cartoons that Dr. Seuss had authored before and during World War II. She says the enrichment activity offered students a parallel example of historical literature characterizing a time marked by mass hysteria and the idea of one being guilty without evidence.

"It was a great example of history repeating itself, and an opportunity to examine the historical evidence of mass hysteria in the 1600s versus the 1940s, especially through the eyes of an author as relevant and well-known as Dr. Seuss," Weber said. Ending the lesson with students creating their own "Crucible" political cartoons opened the door to a discussion about the impact of modern day hysteria and accusations without proof created through channels relevant to their generation, such as social media, for example. "I think it's important for them to make that real world connection to what we're reading in class to what they write and read about others on social media. That's what makes it relevant," she said.

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District News](#)

FEATURED PHOTOS



On Nov. 5, Lakota East hosted more than 500 students and 100 advisors from schools across Ohio who gathered for the second Ohio Hope Squad Conference presented by the Cincinnati-based non-profit, Grant Us Hope. All four Lakota high school campuses have Hope Squads made up of members selected by their peers and who participated in the Election Day conference. Hope Squad is a school-based, peer-to-peer suicide prevention program that equips and empowers students to watch for warning signs and provide support to their peers who may be in emotional distress by referring them to trained adults.



All around Lakota, World Kindness Day was marked by a flood of social media posts like this one from Independence Elementary. The schools banded together, in partnership with their parent teacher organizations, to challenge their communities to be the “I” in KIND. The trend sent an overwhelming message of united around component that defines Lakota's approach to character education through behavior models like $E+R=O$. [Click here to view Lakota's "I" in KIND Facebook album.](#)



All across the district, Veterans' Day ceremonies were held to thank those who served our country. Shown above: Students at Creekside ECS honored over 100 veterans at their events, which included a parade through the school's hallways.

NEW BUSINESS

West Theater: 'It's a Wonderful Life' Performances on Dec. 6 & 7

Get ready to start celebrating the holiday season with Lakota West's upcoming theater production 'It's a Wonderful Life, The Radio Play.' Performances will be held on Dec. 6 and 7 at 7:30 p.m.

Tickets go on sale today for this classic story about George Bailey, the unsung, beloved hero of Bedford Falls. [Click here for \\$12 presale tickets](#); at the door, tickets will be \$15.

Tickets on Sale for Ridge Junior's 'Willy Wonka JR.'

The Lakota Ridge Junior School Drama Club's production of 'Willy Wonka JR.' will be held at the Lakota West Freshman theater at 7 p.m. on Nov. 21-22. Plan now to see Roald Dahl's beloved classic; [click here to purchase tickets online for \\$8](#); tickets are also available at the door for \$10.

Are You Ready for Winter? Check Your Weather Communication Preferences Today

Let the dropping temperatures serve as a reminder to check your Lakota communication preferences for possible weather-related delays and closures in the coming months.

In addition to posting an alert on the district website, mobile app, social media accounts and local television and radio stations, Lakota also issues a phone call, text message and email to anyone who has selected these options for weather-related alerts in their School Messenger account. Lakota's notification system allows the district to differentiate between general, emergency and weather-related notifications, helping parents, staff and community members receive different types of alerts in the manner they wish to receive them.

If you are the official parent or guardian of a current Lakota student or a current employee with a valid Lakota email address, please [log into School Messenger](#) to make sure the phone numbers and email addresses being automatically pulled from Home Access Center (parents) and active directory (staff) are accurate and up-to-date. To view and modify your weather-related preferences, select "Preferences," then "Weather-Related Notifications."

Others in the Lakota community who are not parents, guardians or employees and wish to subscribe to district communications may do so via [Lakota's self-sign-up portal](#). [Click here for more information about signing up for or logging into your School Messenger account for Lakota communications.](#)

The decision to close or delay school due to weather is always a difficult one and one we take very seriously, because it involves our students' safety. We will always do our best to share our decision with parents in as timely a manner as possible, given the timing and development of weather conditions.

Several different factors are considered, including road and parking lot conditions and how they may or may not affect buses running and arriving on time and safely. We consider temperature and sidewalk conditions and how they may affect the students walking to school. We also look at wind chill, along with multiple forecasts to assess how much and how quickly the temperature will change throughout the morning. The district's business operations team begins monitoring these conditions the evening prior to any sort of inclement weather and throughout the night, as conditions continuously change.

LATEST E-FLYERS

E-Flyers is Lakota's convenient and eco-friendly way to distribute information about programs, classes, events and opportunities happening in our schools and around the community.

Lakota is proud to partner with Peachjar to share these opportunities in a digital format. Look for district-approved flyers in your email inbox every Wednesday or click the button below to view all current flyers by district or school.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Event Spotlights

- Monday, Nov. 18
Board of Education Meeting
at Plains Junior School
6:30 p.m.
- Thursday, Nov. 21
Storytime with a Lakota Principal (Carrie Montgomery from Liberty ECS)
at IKEA
6:30 p.m.
- Monday, Nov. 25
Community Conversation: District Finances
at Lakota West Community Room
6:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, Nov. 27
No School in Lieu of Evening Conferences
- Thursday, Nov. 28 - Friday, Nov. 29
Thanksgiving Break: No School
- Monday, Dec. 2
Student Fanfare
at Lakota West Main Campus
7:45 a.m.
- Monday, Dec. 2
POSTPONED: Community Conversation on District Culture
- Wednesday, Dec. 4
Coffee Chat with the Superintendent
at Einstein Bros. Bagels
8 a.m.

ON THE RADAR

Announcements & Opportunities

Social Media Contest: 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!

To add your note of thanks to the growing list, be sure to tag Lakota Local Schools and include #LakotaGivesThanks in your posts.

Nov. 21: Liberty ECS Hosts Story Time with a Lakota Principal

As part of its ongoing efforts to build community support around early literacy, Lakota's early childhood and elementary principals will take turns hosting "Story Time with a Lakota Principal" this school year.

On Nov. 21, Lakota students are invited to IKEA West Chester (9500 IKEA Way). From 6:30 - 8 p.m. in the restaurant on the second floor, students can hear Liberty ECS Principal Carrie Montgomery share some of her favorite stories. Students are also encouraged to bring a book to exchange for another book they may take home with them. Dinner may be purchased on an individual basis, as desired. All Lakota students are welcome.

Upcoming Community Conversation on District Finances

The Community Conversation program, now in its eighth year, allows school board members, the superintendent and other school district leaders to get input about Lakota schools and their operation from all our stakeholder groups. Join us for the next scheduled conversation:

- Thursday, Dec. 5
Winter Jazz Festival (East & West)
at Lakota East Theater
6 p.m.
- Friday, Dec. 6
West Theater: It's a Wonderful Life, The Radio Play
at Lakota West Theater
7:30 p.m.
- Saturday, Dec. 7
West Theater: It's a Wonderful Life, The Radio Play
at Lakota West Theater
7:30 p.m.

**See Full
Calendar**

District Finances

Monday, Nov. 25 @ 6:30 p.m.
Lakota West Community Room

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 more than 16,000 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 and the superintendent. You'll get a chance to share your thoughts about the district's finances and hear what others think as well.

MLK Celebration of Unity, Call for Entries

In the spirit of honoring Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s values and ideals surrounding diversity and inclusivity, our community's annual observance of Martin Luther King Day will include a new component this year.

The "Celebration of Unity Expo" - to be held in conjunction with the regular MLK Day "Live the Dream: Our Declaration of Unity" march, program and lunch on Jan. 20 - invites individuals or families to share information about their culture with their West Chester and Liberty township neighbors.

[Click here for more details about this opportunity to get involved, including the participation form.](#)

Like in past years, all K-12 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 "20-20 Vision" theme challenges students to use their hindsight vision to identify Dr. King's single most important accomplishment. All entries are due Monday, Dec. 2, 2019 at 4 p.m. [Click here to learn more about this year's MLK Day contest and download the contest guidelines and entry form.](#)

New Internships, Apprenticeships & Volunteering Opportunities

High school students should keep their eye on Lakota's Internship, Apprenticeship and Volunteering Opportunities web page. New listings include a paid administrative internship in the financial industry.

Other real-world learning experiences range from HVAC apprenticeships to a marketing internship to volunteering in a hospital environment.

Please visit [Lakota's Internship, Apprenticeship and Volunteering webpage](#) to see a list of all of the opportunities and how to apply.



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