

A Look Around Lakota: E-News Edition

September 20, 2019



WE are Lakota



2018-2019

QUALITY PROFILE

LAKOTA
LOCAL SCHOOLS

2018-19 Report Card Shows Consistency for Lakota

District Encourages Community to Look Beyond the Letter Grades

Lakota Local Schools has earned a "B" as an overall letter grade by the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) in its recently released state report card for the 2018-19 school year.

"Lakota Schools provides a future-ready, student-centered learning experience for every single child," said Superintendent **Matthew Miller**. "That is not only our mission statement, but what we strive to do every day. We are proud to have earned a 'B' as an overall letter grade. Our teachers and staff remain committed to engaging our students through personalized learning and innovative teaching."

Miller attributes the solid performance, in part, to an increased focus on personalized learning throughout the district, including collaboration across department, and even building, lines to meet the needs of the district's diverse learners. "We have received consistent feedback from parents and our community that there is too much emphasis put on testing," Miller said. "We have changed our approach to teaching, focusing on educating the whole child. Yes, testing is important, but it is only one form of assessment among many," he continued.

Superintendent Miller reminds parents and community members that the state report card is only one metric of a district's achievements. "Our students are more than just a test. This is only one measure of the education our kids receive at Lakota."

For a more complete picture of a Lakota education, the district has released its latest [Quality Profile](#) report. A companion piece to the state report card, the annual publication highlights current and future areas of focus for the district, including: academics, safety and security, finances, the student experience and parent/community engagement.

Click [here](#) to access the state report card for Lakota Local Schools.

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The Telly Awards



Somos Lakota Video Wins International Telly Award

Video Encourages Culturally Responsive Teaching

Lakota Local Schools is excited to announce that its “Somos Lakota” video, produced by SpotOn Productions, earned a 2019 Bronze Telly Award in the Branded Content General-Education category.

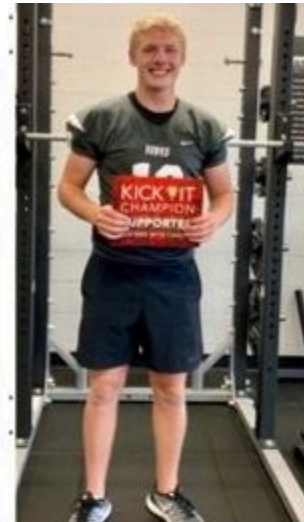
With 55 languages spoken by Lakota students, “Somos Lakota”, which means WE are Lakota in Spanish, invites the viewer to relate to the district’s nearly 2,000 students who speak a language other than English at home. The video shares the personal stories of several Lakota students who have come to the district from other countries. It describes their journeys to America along with challenges they face at school. The message that together, WE Are Lakota, can be found throughout the video.

“This video was created to raise awareness of the challenges our students in the ESL program may face and to encourage culturally responsive teaching in our schools,” said Superintendent **Matthew Miller**. “To win a Telly Award for our efforts is a great honor. By sharing the experiences of some of our students, ‘Somos Lakota’ reminds teachers that personalized learning means meeting students where they are in order to help them succeed.”

[READ MORE](#)



Lakota West Band



Gavin Myers



Grandparents Day W

**Perfect ACT:
Truman Mason**



**National
Merit
Semifinalists**

East (left); West (right)



Eleven Lakota Students Named National Merit Scholars

Eleven students from Lakota East and Lakota West high schools have earned positions as semifinalists in the 65th annual National Merit Scholarship Program, recognizing the nation's most academically talented high school seniors. Honorees include:

Alexander Bastin (East)

Eve Beiting (East)

Eric Coons (East)

Megan Hoke (East)

Rebecca Horwatt (West)

Tanya Kukreja (East)

Colin McQueen (East)

Abigail Niehaus (East)

Anne Pachuk (East)

Caroline Rice (West)

Kaya West (East)

The Lakota seniors are among the approximately 16,000 students nationwide being named National Merit Semifinalists for their performance on the Preliminary SAT (PSAT). About 1.5 million juniors in about 21,000 high schools took the PSAT. These semifinalists represent about one percent of U.S. high school seniors.

Lakota West Senior Aces ACT

More than 1.9 million students took the ACT last year and less than 1% received a perfect composite score of 36. Lakota West senior **Truman Mason** is one of them.

The ACT consists of tests in English, mathematics, reading and science. Each test is scored on a scale of 1-36, and a student's composite score is the average of the four test scores. All major U.S. colleges accept ACT test scores and scores provide colleges with evidence of student readiness for the academic rigors of college coursework.

Lakota East Kicker/Punter Dedicates Football Season to Childhood Cancer

In a continuing effort to raise funds and awareness for the fight against childhood cancer, Lakota East High School kicker/punter **Gavin Myers** is dedicating his senior football season to kids with cancer. Gavin is accepting donations for each field goal and extra point he makes during the football season. All donations received will benefit childhood cancer research through Kick-It, powered by Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation (ALSF).

Gavin is taking on the "Kick-It Champion" title for a third year, after raising more than \$7,000 in his first two years. For more information, and to pledge or donate, visit [Gavin's Kick-It Champion page](#).

Lakota West Takes Home Awards in Mid States Band Competition

The Lakota West Marching Band rose to the top at the Mid States Band Competition's Taylor Invitational on Sept. 14. One of 17 schools participating, West walked away with seven accolades, including: Best Percussion, Best Guard, Best Music, Best Visual, Best General Effects, First Place in Open Class and Grand Champion.

Three Lakota Students Win Awards in "Why I Love My Grandparent" Essay Contest

Three Lakota students won awards in an inaugural contest that challenged elementary students to write an essay answering this question: Why do you love your grandparent(s)? Sponsored by Home Instead Senior Care and West Chester Assisted Living and Memory Care, the contest was designed to honor National Grandparents Day.

Congratulations to the three award winners - VanGorden Elementary's **Landon Pratt** (first place in 3rd grade category), Endeavor Elementary's **Leila Hafidi** (first place in fourth grade category) and Cherokee Elementary's **Zander Brewer** (third place in 6th grade category) - who were honored at an awards ceremony and ice cream social on Sept. 12.

Ten Lakota Musicians Land Seat on All-State Ensembles

Ten student musicians will represent Lakota East and Lakota West high schools in the Ohio Music Education Association's (OMEA) All-State ensembles, for which thousands of students auditioned. Honorees include:

All-State Band

Reuben Allan - clarinet (East)

Cora Anderson - bassoon (East)

Evelyn Best - bass clarinet (West)

Nolan Collins - alto sax (East)

Johnathan Lemma - clarinet (East)

Thomas Skoog - horn (West)

Isaac Yoby - trumpet (West)

All-State Orchestra

Ian Mason - trumpet (West)

All-State Jazz Band

Alex Merk - piano (West)

Gabe Pimentel - trumpet (West)

The All-State ensembles practice for several days in late January, working with some of the most renowned guest conductors and composers in the country. The groups will perform as part of the OMEA's Professional Development Conference being held at the Cincinnati Convention Center Jan. 28 through Feb. 1. All student performances are free and open to the public. The complete schedule can be found at OMEA-Ohio.org.

AROUND LAKOTA



Lakota Students Share "Words of Wisdom" on Making New Friends

Personalized learning requires a commitment by students and staff to really get to know each other. That's why we've put an emphasis on building friendships since the first day of school.

In the same spirit, we are dedicating the second installment in our new "Words of Wisdom" video series to that very topic. A few Lakota students share their best advice for making new friends in [this month's "Words of Wisdom" video.](#)



Social

Lakota's annual Ice Cream Social for new families included face painting, bubbles, games, live music and, of course, ice cream.

New Family Ice Cream Social Forms New Friendships

A fun Lakota tradition confirmed that the playground is as much a place to make new friends for parents as it is for their children.

"I really enjoyed being together and having fun and meeting other people going through the same thing as me," said **Darla Nabatanci**, a parent whose Hopewell ECS kindergartner marks her family's official entrance into Lakota.

That outcome is the very goal of the district's annual ice cream social, an event hosted by Lakota's Outreach, Diversity and Inclusion department to bring together families who are new to Lakota. The district invited about 1,800 new students and their families to this year's event, held Saturday, Sept. 14 at Heritage Early Childhood School.

"Parental involvement and support is as much a part of the equation as the actual teaching and learning that happens inside our classrooms," said **Leah Aguilar**, Lakota's parent engagement and community outreach coordinator. "It was refreshing to see so many families join us and take an interest in getting to know the larger Lakota community."

[Click here to view the complete photo gallery from the ice cream social on Lakota's Facebook page.](#)

READ MORE



Heritage ECS second-graders in Jenny Hutzelman's class learn using an in-class flipped model.

Teachers Focus on Personalized Learning

Flipped classrooms? No, it doesn't have anything to do with the furniture. It's one of four learning styles Lakota teachers are implementing in their classrooms this year to further bolster personalized learning.

In fact, Lakota Local Schools believes so strongly in personalized learning that "WE are Personalized" is a pillar in its [strategic plan](#).

Lakota tailors the instructional environment to address the individual needs, skills and interests of the whole child because education should not be a "one size fits all" model. One of the benefits of this type of personalized learning is that students develop ownership of how they learn the material and how they demonstrate what they've learned, while still being held accountable to the standards.

The learning styles being focused on are project based learning, flipped classroom, flexible playlist and station rotation.

While these are not new concepts for some in Lakota, the district is focused on providing the support all teachers will need to successfully integrate these styles into the classroom by improving structures and systems that align with this vision.

"Every teacher in Lakota is committed to making learning more personalized for their students," said **Keith Koehne**, executive director of curriculum and instruction. "Teachers are developing strategies and implementing new ways of teaching to keep students engaged in learning."

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Patriot Day at Adena



Adena Elementary held its fifth annual Patriot Day Ceremony last week.

Adena Assembly Honors First Responders

Last week Adena Elementary's 700 students and staff members joined together outside for the school's annual Patriot Day Program.

"Sept. 11 is an important day to always remember," said Principal **John Mattingly**. "We should never forget the events that happened, and the brave first responders and people who ran into the danger. We wanted to use this year's program to honor these first responders."

Adena's color guard, wearing their new red, white and blue t-shirts, began the ceremony by raising the flag at the front of the school, then lowering it to half-staff to honor those who died on Sept. 11.

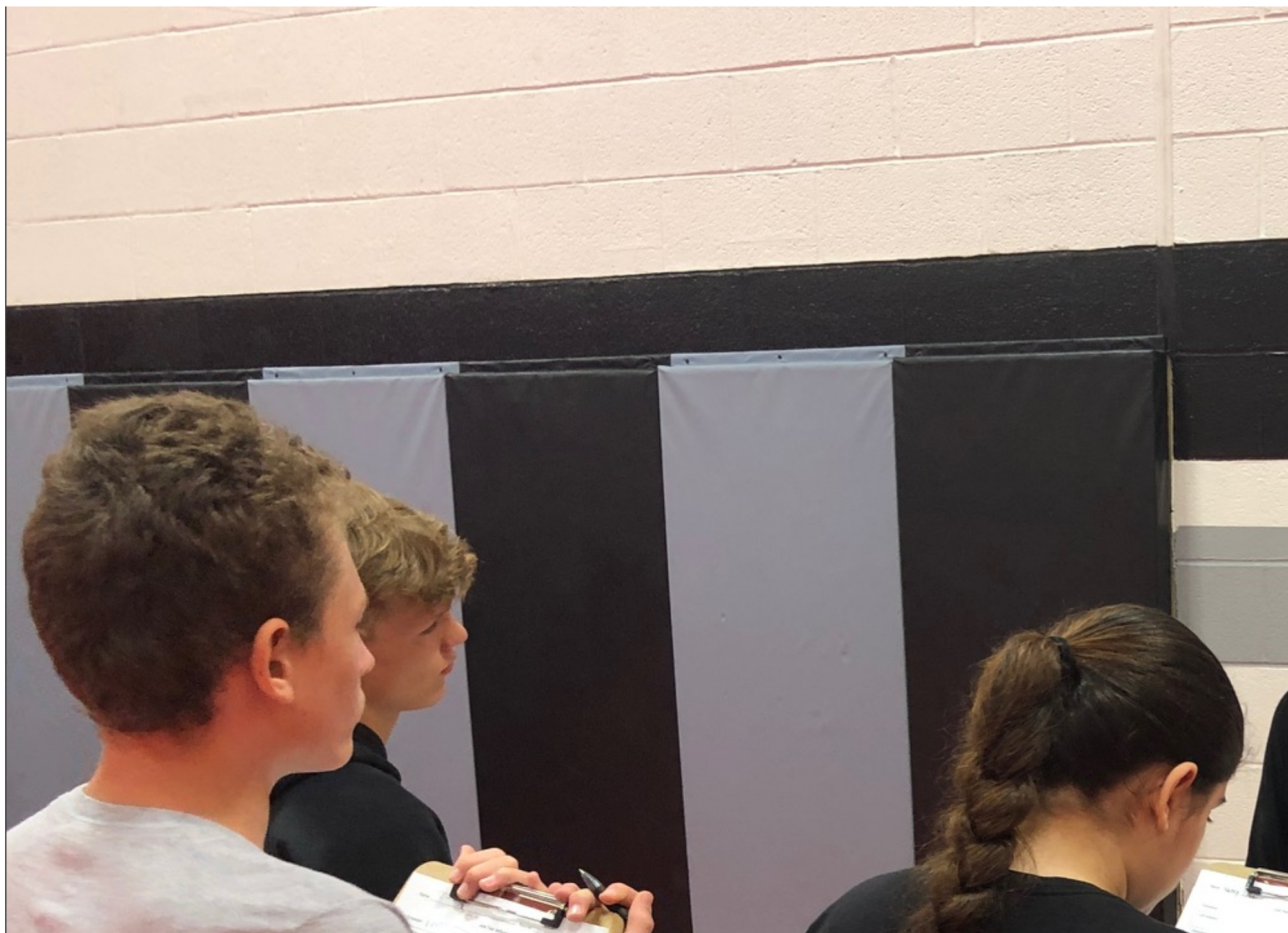
The school then recited the Pledge of Allegiance, and joined fourth-grader, Quinn, as she signed the Pledge in American Sign Language.

Music teacher **Stacey Pease** helped lead the program at Adena. She has been working with the students since the start of the school year to learn the *National Anthem*, *You're a Grand Old Flag* and *God Bless the USA*. These patriotic songs were a highlight of the assembly.

Adena fifth-grader **Rory** said, "I think my favorite part of today was how the entire school came together to sing, because we are all one voice." **Sam**, a sixth-grader, agreed that singing together was the best way for everyone to remember Patriot Day.

"One of the goals of the program was to help students understand that Patriot Day is different than Veteran's Day," said Pease. "Today was about honoring our first responders and letting the students know that when they are around, it is not always because something bad is happening -- that they are the good guys who are here to protect us and keep us safe."

Principal John Mattingly said that Patriot Day is a tradition at the school, but each year he tries to amplify it and make it better. "I've never been more proud as I watched our nearly 700 students and staff members unified together signing the Pledge of Allegiance and honoring first responders through song."



As part of its new "Reality Path Fridays," the math department at Hopewell Junior School hosted a "Future Ready Fair," where students could explore the realities of different career paths. Lunatic Fringe Salon, pictured above, provides insights about careers in not only cosmetology, but also small business ownership and entrepreneurship.

Students Get Reality Check in Hopewell Junior Math

Math teachers at Hopewell Junior School are addressing the age-old "When am I ever going to use this?" question - and then some.

The department's new "Reality Path Fridays" are challenging every single seventh- and eighth-grader to map out their futures with a strong consideration toward their personal finances. The project-based learning activity is designed to span two years, asking students to first shape their short-term plans and then look beyond high school.

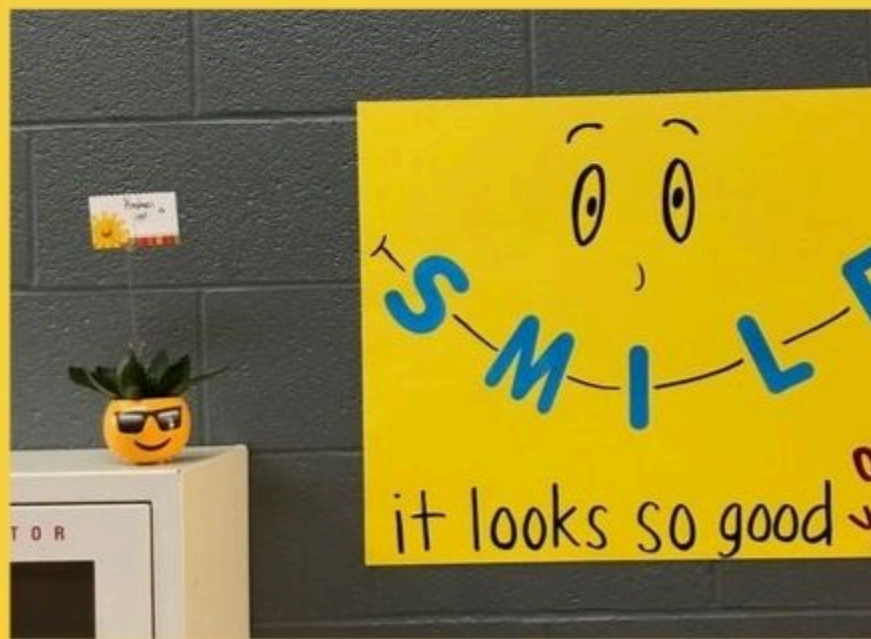
"It's obviously our job to teach the curriculum," said math teacher **Blake Cripe**, "but I also feel a responsibility to make it relevant for my students - to go beyond math word problems. We need to make school relevant to real life."

That's the driving force behind the program Cripe and his math colleagues are building from scratch this year. Every Friday, they add a new layer, shifting from high school and post-graduate career path options to researching basic living expenses like home ownership, utilities, insurance and childcare, just to name a few.

[READ MORE](#)

HOPE

SQUAD



The Hope Squads at Lakota East and West are starting their second year, and have already made a huge impact in changing the stigma about mental health issues.

Hope Squads Making an Impact on School Culture

Lakota East and West's Hope Squads used last week's National Suicide Prevention Week to spread positivity and help break the stigma about mental illness issues.

At West, squad members passed out Life Savers and high-fives to students as they entered school, and they held a school wide egg hunt (eggs were filled with a positive message, treats and even a chance to win homecoming tickets).

East's Hope Squad also passed out Life Savers, created treat bags that included buttons with positive messages and, as students left the building at the end of the school day, the exits were chalked with messages letting students know that they are valued, they matter and they are loved.

It takes about three years to affect a culture change, but the effects of Hope Squads after just one year are evident.

[READ MORE](#)

FEATURED PHOTOS



VanGorden Principal Gail Allshouse read some of her favorite books to Lakota students at this month's Story Time with a Lakota Principal. Everyone got to make bookmarks too! The next Story Time will be Oct. 17; Creekside Principal Linda Pavlinac will host the fun evening.



Throughout the district, students and staff remembered the tragic events of 9/11 with special social studies lessons and other activities. A group of students from Lakota East's Veterans Network Club joined hundreds of others at the 9/11 Memorial Run at Nippert Stadium. Those who participated were challenged to run 2,071 steps in 56 minutes, symbolizing the 110 floors of each of the World Trade Center towers. There were breaks in the stair climb to observe key moments of 9/11 such as the second plane striking the second tower and the crash of Flight 93 in Shanksville.



Lakota East & West had lots of special activities for their future Hawks & Firebirds at their home varsity football games on Sept. 6. Future Firebirds from Shawnee ECS (top photo) and future Thunderhawks from Woodland (bottom photo) enjoyed music, giveaways, games and a parade before kick-off.

NEW BUSINESS

Meet the Candidates Night for Lakota's Board of Education

The Lakota District Parent Council is hosting a Meet the Lakota School Board Candidates Night on Tuesday, Oct. 22 at 7 p.m. at the Miami University Regional Campus (7847 VOA Park Drive). Parents, community members and stakeholders are invited to submit questions in advance to: <https://bit.ly/2TRNaFx>.

Oct. 5-6: Lakota West's Arts & Craft Show

The Lakota West Arts & Crafts Show, hosted by the school's PTSO, has been going strong for over 41 years, and is one of the premiere shows in the area. You'll find over 220 booths at this show which will be held at the West Main Campus on Union Centre Boulevard. There is also free on-site parking, and lunch and concessions will be available. Admission is \$2.

Saturday, October 5
10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Sunday, October 6
11 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Elementary Cross Country Series; Optimist Club's "Run for Youth"

The final one-mile race to prepare for the Lakota Optimist Club's "Run for Youth" is on Monday, Sept. 23 at Hopewell Junior. This race for students in grades K-6 is sponsored by Lakota junior cross country teams. Medals will be given out medals to the top 15 boys and top 15 girls. [Click here to view a flyer with more details about the running series.](#)

The 1.5 mile "Run for Youth" will be held at Plains Junior on Saturday, Oct. 5 at 9 a.m. Although this race is designed for area students in grades K-6, parents and others are welcome to register and participate (only K-6 runners will receive awards). Preregistration is \$20 for the race only and \$25 for the race and t-shirt. Runners are encouraged to register by Sept. 23 in order to receive their t-shirts on race day. [Click here for more information about the "Run for Youth".](#)

This series is about participation and encouraging youth to try running and get a sense of accomplishment by making it to the end of the course, no matter how long it might take.

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, September 23
Board of Education Work Session
at Plains Junior Media Center
6:30 p.m.
- Friday, September 27
Wyandot Student Fanfare
at Wyandot ECS
8:45 a.m.
- Monday, September 30
Community Conversation: Ridge Junior Community
at Ridge Junior School
6:30 p.m.
- Tuesday, October 1
Community Conversation: West Chester/Liberty Chamber Alliance
at Sabin Hall/Liberty Center
11:30 a.m.
- Wednesday, October 2
Coffee Chat with the Superintendent
at Einstein Bros. Bagels
8 - 9 a.m.

ON THE RADAR

Announcements & Opportunities

Limited-Time Back-to-School Promotion in Lakota's Online Spirit Wear Shop Ends Today

To celebrate the start of a new school year, Lakota is proud to offer the community reduced rates on select district apparel in its online spirit wear shop. [This limited-time promotional offer ends Sept. 20.](#)

On top of the discounted prices, all orders placed during the promotional period will not be subject to sales tax or shipping (normally \$6.95). The district has arranged for all orders to be shipped directly to your building of choice no later than Oct. 7.

September 'Listen Up Lakota' Features #WEareEmpowered

This month's edition of "Listen Up Lakota," a monthly radio program powered by 89.3FM WMKV, will feature special guests Lakota East Principal **Suzanna Davis**, Lakota East Innovation Specialist **Ryan Corris**, Lakota West American Sign Language Teacher **Katie Nicol** and Lakota's manager of school and community relations, **Lauren Boettcher**.

Hear about how the devices in Lakota's 1:1 technology program, WE are EmPowerED, are only part of the equation when it comes to personalizing and transforming the learning experience for Lakota students.

Tune in at 5 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 20 or 1 p.m. on Thursday, Sept. 26 on 89.9FM WLHS or 89.3FM WMKV. You can also stream it live at

- Friday, October 4
Shawnee Student Fanfare
at Shawnee ECS
8:45 a.m.
- Tuesday, October 8
Fellas & Fiction
at X-Quisite Cutz
6 p.m.
- Monday, October 14
Board of Education Meeting
at Plains Junior Media Center
6:30 p.m.

[See Full
Calendar](#)

WMKVFM.org or download the WMKV app. WLHS/WMKV is a member-supported public radio with its studios located at Maple Knoll Village in Springdale.

Send Us Your Selfies: Contest Ends Sept. 30

Students and staff started the school year with a focus on building the friendships that will carry them through the remainder of the year. In the same spirit, we are dedicating this month's social media contest to celebrating those new and continuing friendships around Lakota.

To participate, snap a selfie with a Lakota student, co-worker, family or community partner you value as a friend. Tell us why they make a difference in your corner of Lakota. Share your selfies on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or all three, along with #LakotaFriendships and #WEareLakota.

Fall Internships In Pediatric Therapy, Photography, Teaching, Communications and Writing

Do you know high school students interested in therapy, photography, teaching or writing? Here's a chance for them to get hands-on, real world experience through one of our fall internships.

ABC Pediatric Therapy: Clinical Therapy

Delicious Designs Cookies: Assist with After School K-6 Cookie Decorating Classes

Women of Excellence (West Chester/Liberty Chamber Alliance): Writing Internship

Ali Wolfe Photography: Photography Internship

Lakota East: Innovative Design (Marketing/Communications)

[Click here for more details and information on how to apply.](#) Be sure to watch for more opportunities throughout the school year.

Oct. 2: Next Coffee Chat with the Superintendent

Lakota's next Coffee Chat is set for Wednesday, Oct. 2 from 8-9 a.m. at Einstein Bros. Bagels (9216 Allen Road).

Superintendent Matthew Miller will be on hand for drop-in conversation with parents and residents.

Coffee Chats are held on the first Wednesday every month (with some exceptions), rotating between West Chester and Liberty Township locations. The times vary to accommodate different schedules. [Click here to view the Coffee Chats scheduled for this school year.](#)

Upcoming Community Fanfares for Students

The concept is a simple one: Line the school's entrance and give students high-fives and words of encouragement as they are filing into school,

providing students with a visual display of all their supporters during times like testing and the start of a new semester.

The student fanfares have proven so popular with students, their families and community members that they are now an annual tradition at all Lakota schools.

We hope you'll join us for these upcoming fanfare events:

Friday, September 27
Wyandot Student Fanfare
8:45 a.m.

Friday, October 4
Shawnee Student Fanfare
8:45 a.m.



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