

A Look Around Lakota: E-News Edition

September 6, 2019





Safety is Number One Priority: New Safety Measures for 2019-20

As another indication of the importance of safety, Lakota Local Schools has implemented new security measures throughout the district.

"The safety of our students and staff is always our number one priority," said Superintendent **Matthew Miller**. "Our plans are never complete. We are always working with our law enforcement partners to evaluate all of our safety measures in order to improve."

During the summer, 1,200 Bearacade® Door Control Systems were installed in classrooms throughout the district. If a building activates a lockdown, the device is rapidly deployed by staff, preventing an intruder from entering a room. "The Bearacade® system is a time saver for our staff, should they ever be put in a dangerous situation," said Miller. "The device deploys in three-to-eight seconds, securing the room quickly." Local law enforcement and fire departments have been supportive of this additional safety measure.

The district has also upgraded its camera system at the main campuses of both Lakota East and West high schools. Planning has begun to upgrade the cameras at other secondary schools. "We plan for this work to start in the fall and it should be completed this school year," Chief Operations Officer **Chris Passarge** said. "We will continue to upgrade systems at the primary buildings over the next few years."

These additions follow [other new safety measures introduced during the last school](#) year. Lakota hired eight new school resources officers, bringing its total to 18 - one at each campus. It also implemented a new visitor management system called Raptor at each of its buildings. "We will continue to evaluate our safety protocols on a regular basis," said Miller. The District Safety Committee, which meets on a regular basis, includes district administrators, school board members, first responders from both Liberty and West Chester townships and emergency management officials.

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Portrait of a Lakota Graduate



Portrait of a Graduate Helps Define the 4Es

A new visual now serves as a roadmap for Lakota educators whose ultimate goal is to prepare

every graduate to follow one of the 4 Es at the end of their K-12 career: Enrollment in higher education, Enlistment in the military, Employment, or the pursuit of Entrepreneurship.

With this end goal in mind, Lakota has developed a Portrait of a Lakota Graduate (POG).

"The portrait really gives some definition to the 4Es we're always focusing on and is a great complement to the district's new strategic plan," said Lakota Superintendent **Matthew Miller**. It zooms in on the most critical skills our kids need, regardless of what path they choose after graduation."

Inspired through input from students, parents, administrators and the district's business and community partners, the portrait portrays the skills that every Lakota graduate should possess. The final document expands on each skill, further defining what it means to master each one.

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Two West Musicians Earn Chairs in All-National Honor Ensembles

For the first time in its history, Lakota West Bands will be represented by two students at the National Association for Music Education (NAfME) 2019 All-National Honor Ensembles.

Seniors **Isaac Yoby** and **Evelyn Best** are among just over 550 students nationally who earned a chair in one of the group's six national ensembles through a rigorous audition process. Yoby, who plays trumpet in Symphonic Winds and Jazz Ensemble, and Best, who plays clarinet in Symphonic Winds, will perform November 7–10 at the Gaylord Palms Resort and Convention Center in Orlando, Florida.

Both are drum majors and student conductors of the Lakota West Marching Firebirds and have been members of the OMEA All-State Ensemble for several years.

AROUND LAKOTA



Shawnee Early Childhood School is one of ten Lakota buildings with new sensory paths. These movement paths offer endless possibilities to increase student focus and learning.

New Sensory Paths Increase Focus and Learning

Over the summer, hallway floors at 10 Lakota schools were transformed to look like giant gameboards. These new sensory paths have Shawnee ECS students jumping on lily pads, hopscotching on tiger paws, and turning circles on pictures of coiled snakes.

These sensory paths are making their way into schools across the nation to help keep kids moving and engaged during the day. Students and teachers alike are enjoying these cool new movement paths.

"The kids love the sensory paths," said **Effie Goetz**, a Shawnee second grade teacher. "They are great for wiggly, squiggly kids that need a brain/sensory break, but I use them for my whole class as well."

Principal **Kevin Thomas** is excited for the endless possibilities for this new teaching tool. "The paths can be used for students with specific sensory needs or for overall academic reinforcement. Studies have shown that movement can help reinforce a lesson; for example, teachers can ask students to spell a sight word when stepping on an orange circle or skip count when they land on a single tiger paw. ESL teachers are even using the paths to help their students with English language acquisition."

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During the first few weeks, students at all eight elementary schools have been visiting their school's new Innovation Hub, previously the media center, and exploring all the learning tools it has to offer.

New Elementary Innovation Hubs Empower Students, Staff

Lakota's elementary school media centers, turned innovation hubs, still offer shelves of books to enjoy - but they are also now complete with virtual reality stations, video production green screen rooms, a sound recording booth, a 3D printer and even modernized furniture to help facilitate authentic, future-ready learning.

"If we are truly going to make the shift to personalized, student-centered learning, we have to give our students and staff the innovative spaces and tools that support that model," said Lakota Superintendent **Matthew Miller**. "Our Innovation Hubs are designed with that exact purpose in mind."

Following last year's media center transformations at the juniors schools and high schools, Lakota's eight elementary schools followed suit this past summer, using mostly district-provided funds to refurbish the space.

"The whole goal was to provide a space that becomes an extension of the classroom where students can come and begin exploring new ways to capture their learning, express their ideas and share their voice," said Innovation Specialist **Jennifer Neubarth**, who is supporting the elementary hub rollout at all eight schools.

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The Hopewell Junior Staff Lunchroom got a big makeover this summer, all spearheaded by the school's PTSO.

Extreme Makeover Surprises Hopewell Junior Staff

The staff at Hopewell Junior had a big surprise awaiting them when they returned for the new school year. Over the summer months, the school's PTSO and custodial staff were working on a special "welcome back" gift: a new staff lunchroom.

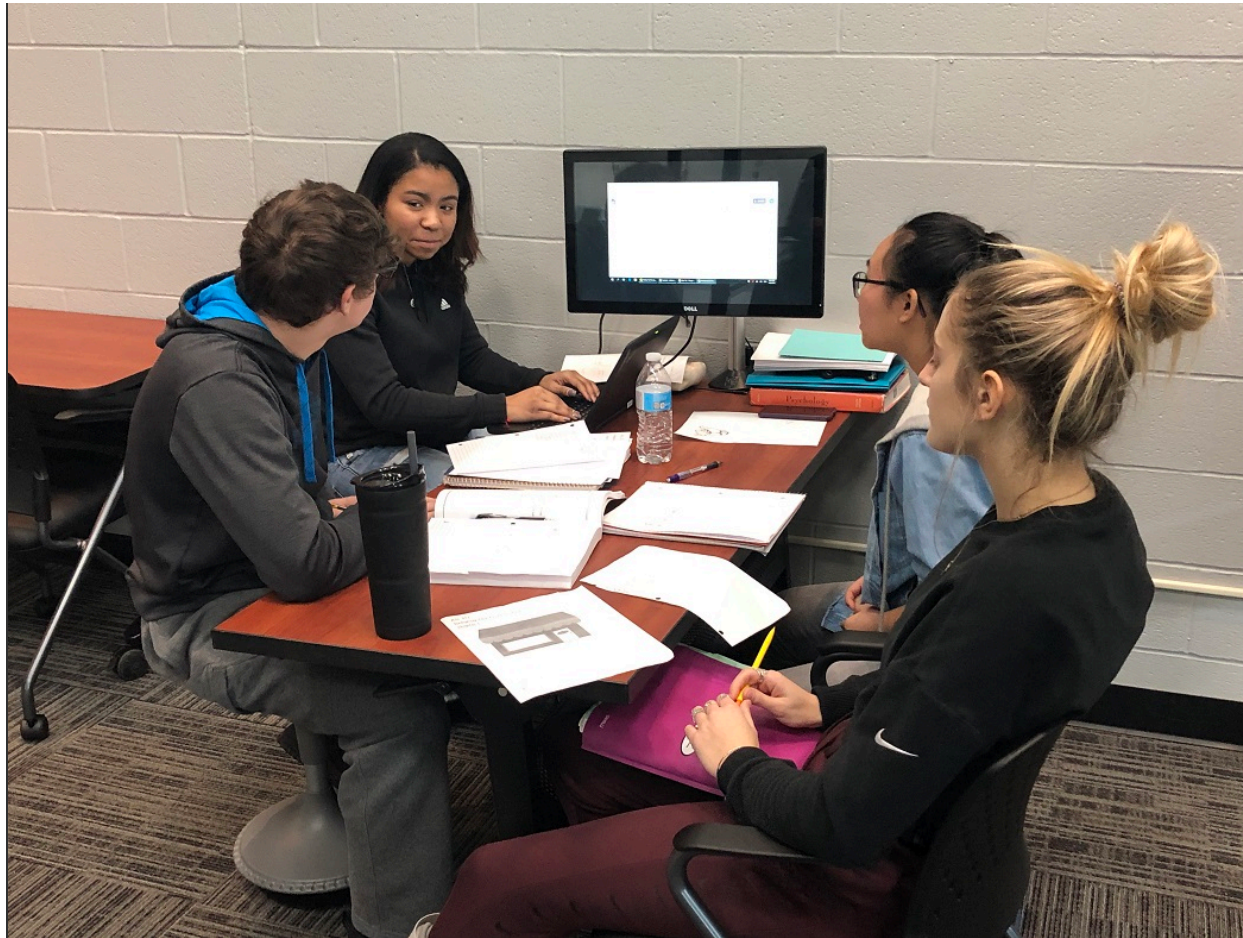
The renovation was the brainchild of the PTSO Staff Appreciation Co-Chairs, **Amy Macenski** and **Susanne Page**. "We were looking for a unique way to show our appreciation to our wonderful staff at HJS, so we combined our staff appreciation budget from last year and this year to create a more sustainable and long impacting to our school community," said Page.

District maintenance staff and the school's custodians helped with deconstruction and constructional work, while the PTSO team, Hopewell families, students and principals helped paint, clean, shop, assemble furniture and decorate. The school's main fundraiser, the Hopewell Junior Color Run, created most of the funds for the project.

The room was designed to reflect the culture at Hopewell and create a relaxing and efficient space for a balanced rest and work environment. Principal **Jeff Rouff** thinks the new lunchroom does

just that. "It is so welcoming, and I see lots of collaboration going on in the new space. Teachers are finding it to be a great area to problem solve and be innovative."

Teacher Katie **Treherne** agrees. "Our PTSO families are awesome, and so is our new lunchroom space!"



Students and staff met last year to reimagine the high school experience and, as a result, this year new course offerings and zero bell options are available.

Students Taking Advantage of New Course Offerings

During the 2018-19 school year, district leaders, staff and students worked together to reimagine the high school experience. Teachers and students collaborated [during a three-day LakotaNEXT design challenge](#) last November, working to answer the question: How might we design a prototype of a high school master schedule that fosters the core principles of personalized learning?

The result? New course offerings and expanded zero bell options at both Lakota East and West high schools.

"We have heard the request for more choice during zero bell from parents and students," said **Keith Koehne**, Lakota's executive director of curriculum and instruction. "We are excited that we have been able to do just that this year."

Previously, choices for zero bell were limited to English and social studies. After group presentations at the design challenge, district leaders evaluated the master schedule and were able to offer zero bell classes based on student demand. While initially offered a zero or seventh bell option, the vast majority of students requested zero bell. "When evaluating course requests, we made the decision to schedule bells zero through six," said Koehne. "We must be able to justify that each of our decisions is not only good for the students, but also makes sense financially. The small number of late bell requests did not justify the financial investment in offering a seventh bell this year."

Overall, there has been a 30-percent increase in zero bell enrollment this year. Thirteen classes are being offered at Lakota East and 16 at Lakota West. In addition to English and social studies,

students are taking classes such as American sign language, biology and financial literacy and planning.

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FEATURED PHOTOS



Wondering what a senior year at Lakota is like? Tate Fishman (West) and Kelly Johantges (East) are capturing their senior year on GoPros.



Tuesday's day off for students served as the first Lakota Learning Day of the school year for the district's 1,700 staff members. To mirror the personalized approach Lakota teachers are taking in their classrooms, the Curriculum & Instruction department structured the day with individualized needs in mind. Staff chose

the pathway of personalized learning they wanted to explore further and then spent the day researching and building their "play" to take their teaching to new levels.



September Social Media Contest

Lakota Friendships

*We are celebrating new and continuing friendships around Lakota!
Snap a selfie with a Lakota student, co-worker, family or community
partner you value. Be sure to tag #LakotaFriendships and
#WEareLakota. Winners receive Lakota spiritwear!*



#WEareLakota

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.

NEW BUSINESS

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

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.

You will be notified by email when your shipment has arrived and is available for pick-up at the Lakota building you selected during checkout. In general, apparel runs true to size, with the exception of performance wear (runs small). No refunds or exchanges will be accepted for size changes.

Lakota's online spiritwear shop is open 24/7. It offers a wide range of customized Lakota-branded options, including apparel in men's, women's and youth sizes. Other branded items like headwear, bags and blankets can be customized to display the design and color of your choice. As part of the district's partnership with Rokkitwear, 15 percent of all sales will be applied to student programming.

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

Two students will be matched with an occupational therapist, speech therapist, or physical therapist for the internship, but will have exposure to all three areas of therapy throughout the experience. Applications due Sept. 30.

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

The student will help teach K-6 children basic cookie decorating skills through a fun, enriching experience after school. Applications due Sept. 9.

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

Five students are needed to help write bios for honorees at the annual Women of Excellence event. Applications due Sept. 23.

Ali Wolfe Photography: Photography Internship

Students will learn about the photography industry, small business ownership, and industry standards by shadowing and working alongside an industry professional. Applications due Sept. 30.

Lakota East: Innovative Design (Marketing/Communications)

Five to seven students will assist in the design, coordination and execution of innovative projects targeting all Lakota East stakeholders. Applications due ASAP.

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

Lakota Learning Blog: Defining #WEarePersonalized

If you're wondering what personalized learning actually looks like in Lakota's classrooms, look no further than this school year's first post on the "Inside Lakota Learning" blog. Lakota's assistant directors of instruction, Emily Hermann, Regina Kirchner, Deana Moss, Lauren Webb and Justin Wilson, all contributed to the latest post, citing real examples of how personalized learning is taking shape in their respective grade bands.

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.](#)

Fellas & Fiction Reading Program Continues Sept. 10

Every month, all Lakota boys in grades 1-6 are invited to "Fellas & Fiction," a special community-sponsored early literacy program hosted by Lakota's Outreach, Diversity & Inclusion (LODI) department. The next program will take place on Tuesday, Sept. 10 at 6 p.m. at X-Quiste Cutz (located at 7324 Kingsgate Way, Unit F in West Chester).

In partnership with a local barber shop, the program fosters a love of reading in young men while emphasizing the importance of relationship building. On the second Tuesday of every month, young readers are encouraged to bring with them a male role model with whom they can read. Each reader receives a free haircut and book, made possible by the Community Foundation of West Chester Liberty. [View the Fellas & Fiction event flyer.](#)

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. Innovative learning spaces paired with personalized instruction is bringing a whole new meaning to digital learning.

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 WMKVFM.org or download the WMKV app. The interview will be available as a podcast on the station's website after the first air date. WLHS/WMKV is a member-supported public radio with its studios located at Maple Knoll Village in Springdale.

Sept. 19: 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 the third Thursday of each month, 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 a Lakota principal share one of his or 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. Principal hosts for the next few months are scheduled as follows:

Sept. 19 - Gail Allshouse (VanGorden Elementary)

Oct. 17 - Linda Pavlinac (Creekside ECS)

Nov. 21 - Mary Brophy (Hopewell ECS)

August Video Update

WE are back! In our first video edition of "A Look Around Lakota" for the 2019-20 school year, Superintendent Matthew Miller shares just a few of the highlights and happenings from the first two weeks of school, including:

- The opening of the new school year;
- Important safety updates;
- The Lakota Cyber Academy; and
- A look ahead at a special senior project.

[Click here to view the August video update.](#)

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 9
Board of Education Meeting
at Plains Junior Media Center
6:30 p.m.
- Tuesday, September 10
Fellas & Fiction
at X-Quisite Cutz
6 p.m.
- Saturday, September 14
District Ice Cream Social for New Families

ON THE RADAR

Announcements & Opportunities

District-Wide Ice Cream Social for New Families Sept. 14

For families new to Lakota Schools this year, the district is offering an opportunity to meet other new families and get to know the Lakota community a little better. The Lakota Outreach Diversity and Inclusion (LODI) department invites all new families to its annual ice cream social on Saturday, Sept. 14 from 1-3 p.m. The gathering will take place at Heritage Early Childhood School, located at 5052 Hamilton-Mason Road in Liberty Township.

at Heritage ECS

1 - 3 p.m.

- Thursday, September 19
Storytime with a Lakota Principal
(Gail Allshouse - VanGorden)
at IKEA West Chester
6:30 - 8 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.

Attendees will be able to make connections with district leaders, families and community organizations to learn about what resources and opportunities exist, at their school and all around the district. All family members are welcome to come and enjoy ice cream sundaes, games and activities. The host group, LODI, works within our schools to build stronger communities and increase parents' involvement in their child's education.

Tonight: Future Hawk and Firebirds Night

Calling all future Thunderhawks and Firebirds! Tonight Lakota East & West high schools have planned some special activities for you at their home varsity football games.

Activities for Future Hawks will begin at Lakota East 5:30 p.m.; East-Side Early Childhood and Elementary schools will be providing music, games and give-a-ways. At 6:10 p.m., students will gather with their school community for a Future Hawks parade around the Hawks Nest, and then will join the Marching Thunderhawks on the field to form a tunnel as the football players rush onto the field. Students will then be returned to their families to enjoy the 7 p.m. game and amazing half-time show.

- Wednesday, October 2
Coffee Chat with the Superintendent
at Einstein Bros. Bagels
8 - 9 a.m.
- Friday, October 4
Shawnee Student Fanfare
at Shawnee ECS
8:45 a.m.

The Lakota West Athletic Boosters will be hosting their annual Pig Roast and Future Firebirds events on Sept. 6. The Future Firebirds night will begin at 5 p.m. and last for an hour. Future West students from Heritage, Creekside, Shawnee, Cherokee, Endeavor, Freedom, and Adena may attend the game for free. There will be inflatables and snacks free of charge for the kids. The Boosters are also hosting a Pig Roast in the West Auxiliary Gym starting at 5:30 p.m. through the start of the 7 p.m. football game.

**See Full
Calendar**



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