

January 11, 2019





MOMENTUM AWARD

2018

Lakota District, Five Schools Receive ODE's Momentum Award

Two Early Childhood Schools Also Earn All A Award from State

Lakota Local Schools, including five individual schools within the district, has received the Ohio Department of Education's Momentum Award for 2018. Additionally, two schools received the All A Award.

This annual recognition is given to districts or schools that have received A's on all Value-Added measures on the state report card. In addition, winners of the award must also have at least two Value-Added subgroups of students, including gifted, lowest 20% in achievement and students with disabilities.

This is the third consecutive year that Lakota has earned this award. Endeavor Elementary, Freedom Elementary, Lakota East High School, and Lakota West High School are receiving the notable recognition for the second time and Independence Elementary for the first.

"Receiving the Momentum Award is the direct result of the hard work and dedication of our teachers, staff and students," said Keith Koehne, Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction for Lakota. As reported at the release of the 2017-2018 district report card results, Lakota's overall 'A' for progress measures the growth that all students made in the last year, based on their past performance.

In a statement announcing the 2018 Momentum Award recipients, State Board of Education President Tess Elshoff says, "The State Board of Education is proud to recognize these students, teachers, administrators and parents for their accomplishments."

Only 57 schools in the State of Ohio have received the All A Award, including two in Lakota. The All A Award is given to schools or districts that have earned all A's on the state report card. Shawnee and Liberty early childhood schools have both earned this honor for the first time.

Superintendent Matthew Miller is proud of the district's performance. "Lakota continues to make great strides in the education of our students. While the state report card only tells part of the story, it does show that our students continue to grow every year," he said. "I am proud of our teachers and staff who show our kids every day that a good education is student centered. They are innovative in their teaching in order to engage their students in learning," he continued. "I am very happy to see seven of our schools being recognized at the state level for the hard work being done in our classrooms."



One-to-One Initiative Launches at High Schools, Freshman Campuses

Students at the freshman buildings and high schools returned from winter break only to receive one more present. Nearly 4,000 district-owned Chromebooks were distributed to students in grades nine-through-eleven as part of Lakota's WE are Empowered initiative.

A festive atmosphere greeted students as they entered their new innovation hubs to collect their laptops. Sometimes it was difficult to tell who was more excited - staff or students. "I loved seeing and feeling the energy in the room as students flowed in and out of the innovation hubs," said **Krista Heidenreich**, Director of Digital Learning and Professional Learning for the district. "Students were not only excited to be receiving their Chromebook, but were also intrigued and curious about the newly redesigned learning space - with some students even jumping right into the virtual reality stations." Each innovation hub is equipped with collaborative learning spaces, virtual reality and green screen technology - all designed to encourage innovation and imagination in the students' learning.

Once they received their Chromebooks, students were encouraged to login and explore the device. The attached stylus and the touchscreen were big hits with the end-users. **J.J. Jackson**, a freshman at West, was happy that the day had finally arrived. "We've been hearing about it for a long time," he said. "I think we'll have easier access to websites that we use...that will be closer to our fingertips," he said.

The district began the WE are Empowered initiative in the fall, distributing more than 2,500 devices to students at all four junior schools. **Jeff Rouff**, principal at Hopewell Junior School, is excited about the changes in student learning he has seen since the launch. “Since the deployment of our devices, it has been evident that student learning is taking place at any time and in any place,” he said.

Ben Brown, principal at Ridge Junior agrees. “Students and staff are now empowered with access to open resources to further personalize the learning experience. Teachers are no longer the ‘gatekeeper of content,’ but more the ‘curators of creativity,’” he explained. “Students and staff have really embraced use of the digital tools on the Chromebook to extend their learning and application.”

Lakota Superintendent **Matthew Miller** has focused on preparing students for one of the four Es after graduation from high school: Enrollment in higher education, Enlistment in the military, Employment or Entrepreneurship. “Information is available at your fingertips in today’s world,” he said. “Our teaching methods must incorporate the use of technology in the classroom to better prepare our students for life beyond high school.”

Twelfth grade students will continue to have access to the same educational experiences as the underclassmen through the use of devices currently available at each high school, as well as having the ability to bring their own device to class. This decision supports the district’s commitment to long-term financial sustainability, given the monetary investment needed to purchase devices for seniors who will be graduating in a few months.

The WE are Empowered initiative gives students more access to real world learning through collaboration with peers and online content. “Technology is not going away,” Miller notes. “It is our responsibility to make sure that our students have the skills they will need to be successful when they graduate. Incorporating technology in our classrooms through the WE are Empowered initiative is another way we are preparing our kids for the future.”

Tanya Kukreja, a junior at East, was thrilled that the district has taken this step. “This levels the playing field for people who don’t have internet access at home,” she explained. “It shows that our school is advancing with society. It shows the progressive nature of (the district).”

Rouff echoed Tanya’s sentiment about equity. “Our teachers are more accessible, content is at their fingertips, and all students have the same access to both. This has been a game changer for our students and an opportunity to personalize instruction more effectively for our staff.”

Lakota’s teachers have participated in professional development sessions to help prepare them for this shift. “This is such a great opportunity to enhance and even transform the student learning experience through the blending of best practices both from a traditional and now digital, more modern approach,” Heidenreich added.

Todd Wesley, Chief Technology Officer for the district, is behind WE are Empowered. “(This) initiative is designed to empower our students by providing the tools, access, instruction, spaces and opportunities to dramatically expand personalized learning and directly support future ready skills for our students,” he said. “We are looking forward to the amazing ways our students and teachers personalize, empower, and enhance student learning!”

SHOUT-OUTS



Lakota West's Record-Breaking Swimmers

Two long-standing Lakota swimming records were broken in December at the state-wide Canton Christmas Invitational. Competing against more than 40 schools, two West swimmers are now in the history books at Lakota.

Freshman **Paige Striley** (pictured top center) broke an 18-year old Lakota West record in the 50-yard freestyle, finishing fourth in the race. Completing the race in 24.32 seconds, she surpassed the previous record of 24.38 set in 2000 by Katie Severson.

Grace Glosson (pictured top left) followed Paige's lead, breaking the 20-year old 100-yard backstroke record of 58.86. Grace completed the preliminaries in 58.56 seconds and finished sixth in the invitational finals. The original West record of 58.86 seconds was set in 1998 by Kelley O'Hara.

Lakota's Tech Department Leading the Way

It's been all hands on deck as Lakota's technology department, led by **Todd Wesley**, has prepared for the launch of the one-to-one "WE are Empowered" initiative at the high schools this month. The department has worked tirelessly to prepare nearly 4,000 district-owned Chromebooks for students in grades nine through eleven.

This follows the launch of the program at the junior schools in the fall where over 2,500 laptops were distributed. The successful launch at this level enabled the initial date for the high schools to be moved up to January.

Curriculum Director Koehne Selected as National Panelist

Keith Koehne (pictured top right), Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction at Lakota, was selected to participate on a national panel about personalized learning at national publication Education Week's Dec. 6 online summit.

Koehne was asked to speak about why the district feels passionately about personalized professional development, what obstacles they've encountered, and what lessons they've learned along the way. Last year, under Koehne's leadership, the district changed its approach to professional development. Now, teachers have more choice in sessions they attend, which are mostly teacher-led. Like the district's personalized approach to student learning, Lakota has recognized the need for more personalized professional learning and has restructured its Lakota Learning Days to fill that need.

AROUND LAKOTA



Lakota West freshman Lora Broz infused ideas from a language arts project into the recent transformation of the school's media center into an Innovation Hub. Her work included leading a group of volunteers to paint the new space for three days over winter break.

Student Reimagines, Transforms West Freshman Innovation Hub

Lakota West freshman **Lora Broz** did more than just reimagine her school's media center, recently turned Innovation Hub. She made her vision a reality, rolling out the red carpet for her classmates' return from winter break *and* just in time for the school's rollout of Chromebooks to every student.

The idea first took shape through a project in Lora's language arts class, for which she chose to research the environmental factors that improve student learning. She focused a lot on the impact of color, discovering that green is "relaxing and improves concentration", while blue "makes you think outside the box." Other factors, like furniture selection and configurations, were among her research, too.

Lora wasn't initially basing her research around any particular space at West Freshman or elsewhere. But when her teacher, **Catherine Bella**, saw its potential application to the school's up-and-coming Innovation Hub, she encouraged her to take it a step further. Lora presented it to a committee comprised of school and district leaders overseeing the school's media center transformation. The response from the group was overwhelmingly positive, giving her the green light to bring her ideas to life in West's new Innovation Hub.

“Honestly, my first reaction was that she had bit off more than she could chew!” said West Freshman Associate Principal **Jason Jackson**. “The size of the room, the timeline we needed to follow and all the moving parts that went along with the conversion of the media center to the Hub was a huge task.”

But Jackson and others were impressed by the speed with which Lora moved and the tenacity with which she inspired others to help her transform the space to match the shared vision of her project and that of district and school leaders. She recruited more than 25 student volunteers, along with parents and staff members, to give up three days of winter break to paint the huge space.

The fresh paint made way for a completely re-configured space, replacing the room that was once full of bookcases with all different collaboration stations, multiple green screen production studios, a 3D printer and virtual reality stations.

“I feel like the 1:1 idea is going to empower us to create more and share more ideas. I hope this space gives us a place to come together and do those things,” said Broz, describing the revamped space as “uplifting and relaxing.”

The most recent improvements are just laying the foundation for the school’s new Hub, designed to support hands-on, application-based learning through collaboration, creativity and digital learning. While the school awaits a delivery of furniture to replace some of the decades-old pieces, Lora still hasn’t seen through other ideas in her plan that give students ownership of the space. This includes giving each class one of the space’s pillars to make their own and leave their mark.

One thing’s for sure though; Lora has left her own mark on Lakota West Freshman.

“The fact that this was a student led project makes a huge difference in how I view that space. I think that’s probably true for everyone involved,” Jackson said. “This is a student who invested heavily into something that she will only get to use for a few months, but other groups will use for years to come.”

“That is what a community is about and Lora and the others who helped have led by example,” he continued. “Besides being a great resource for our students’ learning, the Hub is a physical example of what our students are capable of if we let them follow their vision.”



At the kick-off session for the 10-week medical speaker series, Lakota East students get a taste of rehab services, literally taste testing a drink that is frequently used by speech therapists with their patients.

West Chester Hospital Medical Series Takes Off at East, West

This week's spotlight on the rehab services industry blazed the trail for a first-ever 10-week medical speaker series that UC Health West Chester Hospital is hosting at both Lakota East and Lakota West high schools.

"Face time with local professionals is absolutely invaluable to the high school student experience," said **Katie Bauer**, Lakota's strategic business partnerships coordinator. "No one can get through to our students better than someone who has been there and done that in a particular field and can answer all the questions our students are curious about."

The first session, which is offered during each school's extra help bell, tackled everything from education requirements and employment trends to skill sets and technical responsibilities of a physical, occupational or speech therapist.

"I didn't know that speech therapy was part of the rehab team," said West junior **Jessica Sylvester**, whose field experience has been mostly limited to physical therapy. "It definitely piqued my interest, so I'm going to look into that career, especially because I know I want to work in a hospital."

West sophomore **Nathan Koenes** appreciated the chance to test his interest in physical therapy and learn more about the schooling required of such a career. "I know I want a job that keeps me active, so it was interesting to hear about what it looks like to do a specific job and also to evaluate whether or not you have the personality for it," he said.

East senior **Grace Phair** may already have her heart set on becoming a physician's assistant in the minority health field, but still finds value in the option to explore and learn about different pathways. "I have a lot of respect for how each part of the healthcare system works and contributes to the whole," she said. "It's really interesting to see how it all fits together."

West Chester Hospital was the first partner in Lakota's growing internship program and the speaker series is a natural extension of that, giving even more students the opportunity to learn about the healthcare field and all its parts.

"On behalf of everyone at UC Health's West Chester Hospital, we are proud to support this important educational program that will teach our youth about a variety of careers that are available within the healthcare industry," said West Chester Hospital Chief Administrative Officer **Tom Daskalakis**. "Our hope is that this special collaboration will help students find their passion and meaningful career opportunities."

The series continues next week with Pharmacy, on Jan. 16 at Lakota East and Jan. 7 at Lakota West. Other areas to be explored include: operating room, nursing, intensive care unit, emergency department, imaging, operations, lab and maternity. View the series flyer for the [complete schedule at Lakota East](#) and the [complete schedule at Lakota West](#). Pre-register for one or more sessions at [Lakota East](#) or [Lakota West](#).



about

Elapsed Time
Practice Problem

Sun
The Sun is a yellow dwarf star.
It is the center of our solar system.
It is made of hot gases.
It is very hot.

Sharks: cool but dangerous animals
By: Archer Simonte

Instead of traditional 'homework', Independence third graders were asked to work on a Personal Learning Project (pictured: Hailey Hovenga and Archer Bimonte).

Indy Third-Graders Explore Passions with Personal Learning Projects

Did you know that human DNA is 50 percent identical to the DNA of bananas? Third grade students at Independence Elementary School learned interesting facts like this and more while researching their Personal Learning Projects (PLP).

“During the time from Thanksgiving break until winter break, the third graders at Indy have no ‘formal’ homework,” explained **Annette Long**, a third-grade teacher at the school. “Instead, we asked students to work on a Personal Learning Project.”

Sometimes called Genius Hour or Passion Projects, PLPs are a chance for students to explore a topic they are interested in and present their findings. The students hosted a gallery walk prior to winter break to share the information they learned. “This lets you learn about something you love,” said **Hailey Hovenga**, a student in Mrs. Haker’s class. “I love space and want to be an astronaut,” she explained as she talked about the solar system she created.

Archer Bimonte used the PLP as an opportunity to learn more about hammerhead and great white sharks. His display included models of the sharks he created using the school’s 3D printer. “This educates you on something you’re interested in,” he said.

An interest in technology was also apparent. **Nathan Lee** enjoys using the coding LEGOs in the school’s STEAM² lab. “It caught my interest so I wanted to learn more about it,” he said. Nathan proceeded to write a code that not only writes numbers up to one million, but also notes which number is odd or even. When asked how long it took to write, Nathan shrugged and said, “About 10 minutes.”

Visitors at the gallery walk were able to learn about a wide-range of topics, from a student’s family tree, to pandas, to how ice cream is made. “This is the best thing we’ve done,” said Long.



Playtime is More than Meets the Eye at Wyandot ECS

For the kindergarten team at Wyandot Early Childhood School, right up there with reading, writing and math is open playtime - which is exactly why they've created something this year called "Play Workshop."

Almost every day, for about an hour, their students are able to choose how they want to spend their time. Students are given the creative flexibility to experiment with whatever materials they can get their hands on - playdough, paint, legos, blocks, ipads, books, shaving cream, props for dramatic play and more. Besides taking turns and cleaning up, their only rules are to create and play. The classroom is their playground.

But if you ask any of their teachers, the lessons behind each student's choice in play are limitless. They cite everything from communication, problem-solving and confidence to motor skills, teamwork and even basic social and language skills.

"Play gives children exactly what they need right now," says teacher **Melissa Lattire**. "It helps them guide their own thinking and create without direction. The children are each other's teachers. They learn from their peers and are more likely to try new ideas because the kids are just like them. They are more likely to take risks and try new things."

While open play stimulates young learners by giving them the freedom to express themselves while also exploring things they're curious about, teacher **Rachel Contois** points out that it also reinforces concepts taught through the regular curriculum.

"Purposeful play is so critical to students at this age because it gives them a chance to play without the distractions of TV or electronic devices - just traditional play," says Contois. "Their minds can slow down and they can think and be creative. They can try out new skills they have learned in the classroom, make new friends, and gain confidence."

Teacher **Abby Dechter** cites the example of a student who chooses to color. When she sits down to color with that student, the conversation that takes place between them is as much a moment of growth as the fine motor skills associated with coloring.

Another teacher on the Wyandot team, **Laura Elam**, emphasizes the "mini lessons" that they creatively weave into each workshop, citing the impromptu problem-solving moment she created one day when an art station wasn't cleaned up. "These types of lessons teach social skills like kindness, empathy and persistence."

"Play is simply how they learn," Lattie says. "It's what they know and understand. Purposeful play allows them to be kids and learn as they go."

FEATURED PHOTOS



PhotoVideoCollage

Lakota East High School's "Hope Week," led by the school's student-directed Hope Squad for suicide prevention, included a high-spirited fanfare on Thursday morning down Main Street. Students were welcomed to school by a tunnel of cheers and high fives from Lakota staff and community members. Student fanfares have become an annual tradition around Lakota, traveling from one school to the next all year long.



Holiday cheer was spread in Mrs. Hoffman's class at Woodland Elementary by members of Michael's Journey and former Cincinnati Bengal David Fulcher. The students had a dance party and received some special gifts before winter break.



Jan. 9 was Law Enforcement Appreciation Day. We certainly appreciate all of our school resource officers as they help to keep our students safe and our buildings secure.

NEW BUSINESS

Lakota Learning Blog: The Why Behind 1:1

If you're wondering why Lakota is placing such a high priority on every secondary student having his or her own Chromebook, look no further than the latest post on the "Inside Lakota Learning" blog.

Lakota Innovation Specialists **Heidi Adams** and **Michelle Miranda** author “The Why Behind 1:1,” a short read about a device’s role in creating the most personalized learning experience for students who are future ready by graduation.

“Ultimately, we are leading with learning and the learning is driving our use of technology for the teachers who are designing learning experiences, for the students who need to innovate and for better equipping all students for a future that has yet to be imagined,” they write.

Lakota educators are the voice behind the “Inside Lakota Learning” blog. Contributing authors are bridging the gap between how learning strategies in the classroom can be reinforced at home. [Click here to read this latest post and to subscribe to alerts for future posts.](#)

Jan. 24 & 30: Alternate Credit Information Nights for Secondary Students

For students entering seventh through twelfth grade in the 2019-2020 school year, information sessions about Lakota’s [College Credit Plus](#) (CCP), [Credit Flexibility](#), [Summer School](#) and [PE Waiver](#) options are being hosted at both high schools. Representatives from area colleges and universities will be available to answer questions about the CCP program.

Parents and students are invited to attend either session, as the same information will be shared each evening.

Thursday, January 24 - Lakota West

- College Credit Plus (5:30 - 6:30 p.m.)
- Alternate Options for High School Credit (6:30 - 7:30 p.m.)

Wednesday, January 30 - Lakota East

- Alternate Options for High School Credit (5:30 - 6:30 p.m.)
- College Credit Plus (7:30 - 8:30 p.m.)

[View the Alternative Credit Information Sessions flyer for more information.](#)

East, West Host Try Band Open Houses for Future Musicians

Both the Lakota East and Lakota West band programs are offering open houses for any and all fifth and sixth grade students who want to come and TRY BAND!

Future Plains & Ridge Junior School Students

Lakota West Freshman School

Saturday, Jan. 26
10 -11:15 a.m.

Future Hopewell & Liberty Junior School Students

Lakota East High School

Saturday, Jan. 26

10:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.

High school band students will be on hand to demonstrate and allow students to explore the different instruments they could play in 7th grade band. They'll even get to play the instruments! Beginning at 11:30 at the West event, you'll want to stay for a concert where your student may even get the chance to conduct the band. Don't miss this awesome opportunity!

Thunderhawk Theater Performs 'Letters to Sala' Jan. 31

In a true story of survival, hardship, perseverance, and family, follow Sala Garncarz through her life in the labor camps of the Holocaust. Listen as she recounts the discovery of her forbidden letters in modern-day New York.

The Lakota East Thunderhawk Theater brings her letters to life in their production of Arlene Hutton's *Letters to Sala*. You will be transported through time to experience Sala and her life from the 1940s to modern day New York. You will meet her allies, witness her heartbreaks and feel her determination to survive.

Performances are at Lakota East High School Jan. 31 through Feb. 2, daily at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$10 and can be purchased online or at the door.

Jan. 26 CommUnity University Focuses on Social & Emotional Learning

Lakota's monthly learning series, Family & Parent CommUnity University in partnership with Miami University Voice of America, continues with a session focused on social and emotional learning.

Lakota parents, staff and residents are encouraged to attend Saturday, Jan. 26 from 8 a.m. to noon at Miami VOA Learning Center, located at 7847 VOA Park Drive.

Hosted by Lakota's Outreach Diversity and Inclusion Department, each monthly session is led by expert Lakota staff and community partners and is designed to provide training and resources to parents, relatives, staff, community members and others who play a role in helping educate our youth. Each

session is live streamed and includes breakfast, compliments of Overhead Doors, and free childcare provided by student volunteers. The sessions are free and open to the public, but registration is encouraged.

Lakota Launches Into 2019: Here WE Go Social Media Contest

Lakota is launching in 2019 and has a lot to look forward to in the new year! We'd love to hear from the Lakota community about what you are trying new this year or about what you are looking forward to in 2019.

During the month of January, share your new year's thoughts and ideas on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or all three!

Be sure to tag Lakota Local Schools ("Lakota Schools" on Facebook, @LakotaDistrict on Twitter and Lakota_District on Instagram) and include #hereWEgo in your posts.

Share your photo with your friends to rack up the "likes", or votes. The post at the end of the month with the most "likes" will win a special New Year's surprise! Join and follow the conversation by searching #hereWEgo.

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

ON THE RADAR

Announcements & Opportunities

- Monday, January 14
Board of Education Meeting
at Plains Junior School
6:30 p.m.
- Thursday, January 17
Storytime with the Superintendent
at IKEA West Chester
6:30 p.m.
- Monday, January 21
No School: Martin Luther King Day
- Tuesday, January 22
Community Conversation: Role of Band, Instrumental Music in the K-12 Experience
at Plains Junior School
6:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, January 23
Community Conversation: Role of Schools in Trauma-Informed Care
at Plains Junior School
6:30 p.m.
- Thursday, January 24
Alternate Credit Options Information Sessions
at Lakota West Theatre
5:30 p.m.
- Saturday, January 26
CommUnity University: Social & Emotional Learning
at Miami VOA Learning Center
8 a.m.
- Saturday, January 26
Try Band for Grades 5-6

Jan. 21: Community MLK Celebration

The entire community is invited to the 20th annual celebration of Martin Luther King, Jr. on Jan. 21. The March for Unity will begin at 10:15 a.m. at Union Centre's Clock Tower and conclude at Lakota West, where the program, beginning at 11:15 a.m., will lead into a free lunch donated by local restaurants.

As part of the celebration, a contest was recently held that challenged students to address how we can unite in a world that is divided and polarized in so many ways. All student entries will be on display at Lakota West, and winning essays, skits, songs, artwork or videos will be presented during the program.

2019-20 Preschool Registration Open through Jan. 31

The registration application for Lakota's tuition-based preschool program is now available and will run through Jan. 31.

An informational meeting for parents will be held on Jan. 23 at Liberty Early Childhood School at 6 p.m. in the gymnasium. Staff members will be available to answer questions and to give an overview of the program.

All applications must be received or postmarked by Jan. 31 to be considered for the lottery.

Parents can [visit the preschool enrollment webpage](#) to download the application and access more detailed information about the enrollment process and preschool program. Applications are also available at any of the six early childhood schools. Please direct any questions to the preschool office at (513) 870-5378.

Call for Summer Fun Fair Exhibitors

Does your business or organization offer a summer program or activity that's perfect for kids? Are you looking for ways to keep your kids active this summer?

at Lakota West Freshman School
10 a.m.

- Wednesday, January 30

Alternate Credit Options Information Sessions

at Lakota East Theater
5:30 p.m.

[See Full
Calendar](#)

Lakota Local Schools will partner with more than 100 local businesses and organizations to host its seventh annual Summer Fun Fair this March 4 and 6. The event features local organizations with programs and services to keep students in grades K-12 active this summer. Vendors range from summer camps, learning centers and childcare facilities to athletic leagues, art programs and local parks and recreation.

The open house event features representatives from both for-profit businesses and non-profit organizations. They will be available all at one time and in one location to share information and answer questions about their summer offerings.

For convenience, families and exhibitors are invited to attend either of two events:

Monday, March 4

Lakota East High School
6-8 p.m.

Wednesday, March 6

Lakota West High School
6-8 p.m.

There is no cost to exhibit or attend. Exhibitors are encouraged to participate both evenings and will be provided with a table and chairs.

Learn more at www.lakotaonline.com/summerfair. To register, contact Cindy.Zahneis@lakotaonline.com or at 513-644-1203 before Feb. 25.

Upcoming Community Conversations

The Community Conversation program, now in its seventh 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.

The sessions are engaging and energizing and help guide school leaders in making decisions. All are welcome to these upcoming conversations.

Tuesday, Jan. 22

**Role of Band, Instrumental Music
in the K-12 Educational Experience**

6:30 p.m.

Plains Junior School (Innovation Hub)

Be part of a conversation with school district leaders that will focus on band, and instrumental music in general, and its unique role as part of the K-12 educational experience. It is not necessary to currently be part of the band or any music program in order to attend and take part in the conversation. [Click here to pre-register for the band Community Conversation.](#)

Wednesday, Jan. 23

**Understanding Trauma-Informed Care
and Education**

6:30 p.m.

Lakota West Community Room

Students' social-emotional well-being goes hand in hand with academic success. Join a conversation about how students experience stress at different ages, and what families and schools can do to help students do their best. Joining us for the evening will be Sarah Buffie, MSW, LSW, who specializes in trauma-responsive care. She teaches effective strategies that can be applied in the classroom and at home.

Storytime with the Superintendent Jan. 17

As part of its ongoing efforts to build community support around early literacy, Lakota Superintendent Matthew Miller will continue to host "Storytime with the Superintendent" this school year.

On the third Thursday of each school year month (except for March), Lakota elementary 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 Superintendent Miller share one of his 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.

We hope to see you on on Jan. 17!



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