

A Look Around Lakota: E-News Edition

November 30, 2018



WE are Lakota



One Night Only

Dec. 12

7:00 p.m.

Cincinnati

Marriott

North

LAKOTA CYBER ACADEMY

Parent & Student Information Meeting

Lakota to Launch New Cyber Security Academy

Computer hackers beware! A new wave of cyber security analysts will be coming from Lakota Local Schools. Beginning in the fall of 2019, the new Lakota Cyber Academy program will launch for sophomores, juniors and seniors.

Partnering with Belcan Corporation, Lakota Schools is introducing this new curriculum for students interested in computer science. "We are excited for the start of the Lakota Cyber Academy," said **Keith Koehne**, executive director of curriculum and instruction. "This program will open doors to our students after graduation, should they choose to continue their studies in higher education, enlist in the military or enter the workforce."

Ron Ford, vice president of cybersecurity at Belcan, agrees. "We very much support Matt Miller's objective of his three Es," said Ford, who is working with district administrators to build the coursework. The Cincinnati-based company has a large cybersecurity recruiting division, which students will have access to, should they choose to enter the workforce after graduation.

Industry experts predict there will be 3.5 million jobs in cybersecurity by 2021 that will go unfilled. Students enrolled in the district's new program will be able to earn up to six industry certifications and will qualify for internship opportunities. With next year's seniors only having one year in the program, an accelerated Cyber Sprint option will be available to help them complete as much of the course as possible.

Students interested in enrolling in the Lakota Cyber Academy will need to complete an application process, including an interview. A small pilot program will take place during second semester. **David McCain**, a computer science teacher at Lakota East, is excited for the new program and sees great opportunities for the students. "Cyber Academy is a great addition to the IT offerings for students in Lakota," he said. "It is amazing that high school students will be able to graduate with the certifications necessary to be employable in the cybersecurity field immediately upon graduation."

An information night for parents and students will take place on Wednesday, Dec. 12 at the Cincinnati Marriott North in West Chester. The program will begin at 7:00 p.m. with representatives from both Lakota and Belcan leading the event. Those interested in attending are asked to respond at <http://tinyurl.com/LakotaCyber>.



Lakota West's
Viviana Vargas
Wins Grand Prize
in Photo Contest



Lakota East
Marching Band
Goes to
Grand Nationals



Kathy Cook
Julie Shaffer
Megan Zahn
Named

Lakota East Marching Band Makes Historic Appearance at Grand Nationals

The Lakota East Marching Thunderhawks made an historic first-time appearance at the Bands of America Grand National Semi-Final Championship on Nov. 10. They were one of only 110 bands from 23 states to earn an invitation and ultimately placed 31st in the nation.

“Their 2018 show, ‘Line, Shape, and Color,’ shows a sophistication, yet an approach that is still accessible to the audience,” wrote Andy Schamma in an article titled “Andy’s Top 5 BOA Shows Heading to Grand Nats”. “It’s very easy to follow along as each new element is added into a Mondrian-esque aesthetic across the props in the backfield. This band’s size also makes them a blast to listen to when they open up all the way.”

East band director **Rob Tanis** says the team’s historic success this season doesn’t even begin to tell the complete story. “The season was about laughter with friends, pride in what WE can accomplish, tears of joy and sadness, the rush of adrenaline that performing gives, the rehearsals that were too hot, too cold, too windy or too wet, the new friends we made, the old friends that we got to hang out with for one more season, or the life lessons and lifetime memories. Our season wasn’t about the show and it wasn’t about winning, but it was about every single student taking this journey together as a family. Working for a common goal and having a blast doing it!”

Student, Volunteer and Board Member Named Women of Excellence

The West Chester-Liberty Chamber of Commerce recently held their 17th annual Women of Excellence Awards, and three of the honorees have close ties to Lakota. Congratulations to **Megan Zahneis** (West Class of 2015), parent volunteer **Kathy Cook**, and Board of Education President **Julie Shaffer**, who were celebrated for having a positive impact on the lives of people in the region through their employment or volunteer work.

Megan Zahneis, a senior journalism major at Miami University, was recognized for her work with Children’s Hospital and the Ohio Youth Leadership Forum as well as founding Miami’s Students with Disabilities Advisory Council.

Kathy Cook's work in the Lakota community is far-reaching. She's volunteered with more than 30 area organizations and clubs in the past 20 years, including everything from serving on five different parent-teacher organizations to co-chairing the Rhythm and Brews Festival to benefit the Boys and Girls Club.

Julie Shaffer has been a long-time Lakota volunteer, being part of nearly every PTO event at Endeavor Elementary and she has helped with projects at the district level as well. Julie has been on the Lakota Board of Education for six years and currently serves as president. She was also recognized for her work with The Dragonfly Foundation.

Lakota West's Viviana Marcus Takes Grand Prize in Photo Contest

Congratulations to all Lakota East and West students who won top honors in the 4th annual High School Photo Contest sponsored by the West Chester Photo Club and Miami University VOA. **Viviana Marcus's** photo won the grand prize out of 132 entries. All photos are on display until Dec. 19 at Miami VOA.

AROUND LAKOTA



Many early childhood students throughout the district start their day off with a program called Mindful Music Moments, which combines classical music and mindfulness to calm and focus the mind.

ECS Students Start the Day Calm, Focused and Ready for Learning

Every single day, over 600 Wyandot students start their morning calm and focused, ready for learning. Many other Lakota early childhood students begin their school day the same way. It's because of a program called Mindful Music Moments.

The program is a collaboration between an organization called City Silence, the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra and the Cincinnati Opera. Mindful Music Moments combines classical music and mindfulness to calm and focus the mind while creating a lasting relationship with music. It's a growing program, now reaching more than 22,000 students across the region.

Every morning at the end of announcements, students and teachers listen to classical music and are led through a mindful meditation.

Students can choose their own way to follow along... some close their eyes and hold their hands in a meditative pose, some rest their head on the desk, while others have their eyes open or even continue their work quietly.

The Mindful Music Moments daily ritual averages just four minutes, making a powerful impact without sacrificing academic time. Grants are used to cover the cost of the program.

Through mindfulness practices, students learn that they are the boss of their own brain. They've learned that when they are experiencing a "thumbs-down" feeling, to push pause and take a break using deep breathing to help calm down the brain. Most classrooms even have a calming corner equipped with items like fidget spinners and stress balls to help calm students and allow them to refocus their minds.

"Mindful Music Moments aligns perfectly with the Lakota's district culture based on $E + R = O$ (Event + Response = Outcome) and mindfulness," said Wyandot counselor **Jen Gillum**.

Gillum said that the program also connects well with monthly health lessons she shares with students, which often cover mental health wellness.

“Students are learning at an early age that they can’t make the best decisions when their brains are in a certain place, and we are giving them tools to help them reset their minds,” said Gillum. “The whole goal of brain breaks is to rest and get back to problem-solving mode.”

Teachers are seeing more and more of a need to reset minds and Mindful Music Moments can be accessed again throughout the day if needed. The program is just one of many tools that teachers use to help their students focus.

“I really like the community aspect of Mindful Music Moments,” said Wyandot principal **Liz Gruber**. “It is something that the whole school does together. I love that both students and staff start their morning in the same place with their minds calm and ready for the day.”



Plains Junior students build relationships doing classroom activities as well as spending time together in the gym and in the lunchroom.

'Above the Line' Volunteers Build Special Relationships

Each day from 10:45 to 11:50 a.m., you'll see Plains Junior students building special relationships by working together on academic activities, getting some exercise in the gym and moving through the lunch line side-by-side.

“This program began organically over two years ago when a few seventh-grade students wanted to share some of their free time with our Multiple Disabilities classes,” said **Brenda Paget**, the school's guidance counselor. “Some of the students had supported their friends in elementary school and wanted to continue their friendships in junior high school.”

The program has evolved into a coveted volunteer opportunity at the school, requiring participants to have at least a 3.8 GPA, a teacher recommendation and to be overall good role models in the building. A dozen students are part of the group informally known as “Above the Line” (the term comes from the district culture that encourages students and staff to choose behavior that is intentional, skillful and respectful).

The Above the Line volunteers rotate monthly between two specialized classrooms, and they work with different students on a weekly basis so that they can really get to know each student. Teachers **Caroline Brady** and **Anne Broshear** provide the volunteers with a variety of classroom activities ranging from educational games to sensory exploration and simple cooking opportunities.

After working on classroom activities, everyone heads to the gym for an exercise break that gives students time to practice gross motor skills, communication skills, and social skills while playing 1:1 or in small groups. Volunteers then accompany the students to the lunchroom, helping as needed and encouraging independence.

The relationships that are built often carry outside the classroom. Last year some students went to Kings Island together, had picnic lunches together or joined each other for socials outside of the school day.

“Perhaps these growing relationships will continue to create lifelong friendships like many in former years,” said Broshear. “My favorite part of this program is knowing that ALL the kids are benefiting socially and that they are going to take these experiences and memories with them as they move up to high school and eventually into the community. We are fortunate to have all of these students, no matter the ability level, working together in our classrooms, schools, and communities. Great students turn into great people.”



East Teacher's Passion Project Delivers Engineering, Technology Career Day

It's not every day that the school gymnasium doubles as a holding place for robots, augmented reality, a topographical sand pit, model bridges and other representations of career paths marked by technology and engineering skills. But on Nov. 16, this was the scene at Lakota East High School as about 15 local businesses put their best work on display.

It was a scene that physics teacher and lead facilitator **John Severns** had envisioned for many years. But it wasn't until he was challenged to select a passion project through his involvement in Lakota NEXT - a district committee tasked with re-imagining the high school experience - that he decided to turn his idea into a reality. It's representative of Lakota's increasing commitment to draw the connection between learning and real world applications, especially as they relate to post-graduation options.

"I am passionate about helping students explore career opportunities," said the former P&G scientist of his project that allowed every single East science student to attend the career fair. "By bringing in professionals and educational experts, I hope students walked away with some new ideas about what they might pursue as a career."

Among the exhibitors was a particularly strong showing by Cincinnati State's Center for Innovative Technology, which showcased two-year programs ranging from electrical, mechanical and civil engineering to aviation maintenance and environmental technology. Severns noted that many students were surprised by the options available through a two-year program.

Associate Dean **Kim McMillan** was grateful for the opportunity to expose students to the possibilities of a field with "more open positions than there are qualified people to fill them." She noted the increasingly "invisible" programs in which the engineer's work is more behind the scenes and not always something a student realizes as a career possibility.

"Engineering is a general field, but there are so many different focal points that students can consider," McMillan said. "Oftentimes, a two-year degree can give them the edge they need to start off in a troubleshooting role or doing something more hands-on operationally." She thought the career fair was a great first step in getting students to answer basic questions like what they might do or where they might work should they choose a career in technology or engineering.

Severns commented that students were encouraged by how passionate the exhibitors were about their jobs and also excited to see the technology behind some of the things they take for granted on a daily basis.

East sophomore **Ryan McConnell** has always taken more of an interest in biology, but enjoyed seeing another side of science-minded careers. “I didn’t know much about engineering fields, but it was cool to see how they directly apply to so many everyday things.”



Adena Elementary Principal John Mattingly is joined by Lakota West Freshman and Eagle Scout hopeful Matthew Hollowell and two Adena students for a ribbon cutting to dedicate the school's new greenhouse learning space.

Adena Has High Hopes for New Greenhouse Learning Space

Adena Elementary has big plans for a new greenhouse just gifted to the school by Eagle Scout hopeful and Lakota West Freshman **Matthew Hollowell**.

“You did something for 620 kids in a whole school community,” said Adena Principal **John Mattingly**, following a ribbon cutting ceremony at the school this week. “It was a first and it’s a big deal. You should be very proud.”

The idea originated during a trip to Pittsburgh last year where Mattingly and other Lakota administrators were exploring new learning spaces. Six months, 170 hours, 8 volunteers and \$5,000 in donations later, Holloway made the idea a reality at Adena. While they are still in the planning stages, other Lakota elementary schools are aspiring toward the same outcome.

“This is just another area outside of the four walls of the classroom where students can explore and gain new experiences,” Mattingly said. “A lot of our kids have never planted anything before. They’ve never had a garden and don’t understand what all happens to food before it reaches their dinner table.”

The fifth grade team at Adena has been helping students gain a better understanding of this process and anticipating the arrival of the new learning space all school year. In fact, teacher **Melissa Doll** has led the charge in making sure every single fifth-grader plays a role in planning for and bringing the school’s new greenhouse to life.

This has taken the form of a student-led project-based learning activity during students’ daily enrichment time. After researching the farm-to-table process, Doll asked her students to pick the part that most piqued their interest and then answer one question: How would Adena go about using a greenhouse to bring the farm-to-table concept to our cafeteria?

From there, they have taken ownership of researching, documenting and presenting their ideas for everything from composting to a pipe-based watering system. Some students have been tracking the sunlight to recommend the types of plants they can grow while others have developed a plan for how to get the Adena community on board with composting.

“Each group has discovered different things that even after 27 years of gardening, I didn’t even know were possibilities,” laughs Doll.

According to Doll, the greenhouse will serve as an invaluable tool for applying concepts that cross multiple subject areas. This includes healthy eating habits in health and concepts like seeds, parts of a flower and photosynthesis in science. Even more impactful, says Doll, is teamwork and problem-solving.

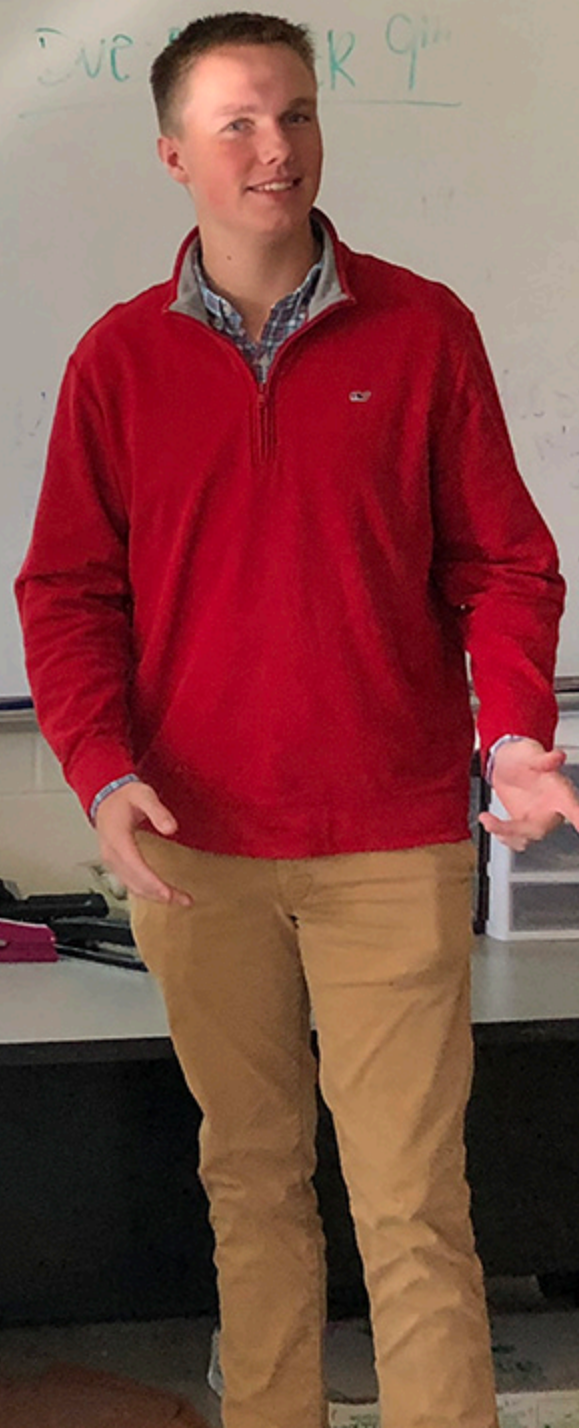
“One of the biggest skill sets they’re learning is give and take,” Doll said. “If their friend has an idea and they have an idea, how can those ideas come together?”

When March rolls around, the students will be planting their first plants in the greenhouse and laying the groundwork for bigger aspirations like a farm-to-cafeteria model and maybe even a farmer’s market one day. “The possibilities are endless,” Doll said.

123 User Jet

Mrs. Cumberledge

Firebirds Helping Firebirds 1st session



As their semester-long society impact project, Lakota West seniors Bailey Lindeman and Trey Schwieterman developed "Firebirds Helping Firebirds," a group for bridging the gap between students with multiple disabilities and the rest of the student population at Lakota West.

West Sociology Students Tap into Passions to Make Impact

As part of their semester-long sociology class, students in **Taylor Cumberledge's** two classes at Lakota West High School are taking the study of people and society one step further. They're trying to make an impact.

"They are learning firsthand that everything in our society is a social construct that we have made," Cumberledge explains. "But they're learning that they have the ability to change it, if they have the passion and drive to do so."

Presented as a passion project in which students have the latitude to choose a project based on their interests and passions, Cumberledge challenged her students to identify one area in their school, their community, their state or their world where they could make a positive change. It forces students to personalize the lessons they've learned this semester and really think about the impact society has on them and that they can, in turn, have on their society.

One student has set her sights on promoting cultural awareness in and around Lakota West, while another is focusing on what they can do, personally, to create more positive learning environments for their peers struggling with depression and anxiety. Another pair of students are working together to help bridge the gap between West's students with multiple disabilities and the rest of the school community.

Others have stepped out into the larger community, one working to create a 5K that promotes women's health and another connecting West students with classes in Japan through video. Still, one other is partnering with a local non-profit to make an impact on the the process of transporting health drinking water to areas hit by natural disasters.

"Many of my students have said that they are learning long-term and short-term goal planning strategies," Cumberledge added.

The top projects from the semester will be on community display at a showcase in Lakota West's community room on Dec. 13 from 4:30 - 6:30 p.m. All are welcome.

[View All
District News](#)

FEATURED PHOTOS

Bottles
Cups
From Broken Water Guns

Random:

Papers
Cups
Fur Dusters
Iron Spools
Red Tomato Cage
Paper Bags

Egg Cartons
Magazines
Furnace Filters
Wood Pallet
Card Boxes



Bowmann's Barnyard Sets Stage for America Recycles Day at East

To follow up on a recent recycling unit, Lakota East special education teacher Ellen Bowmann and instructional aide Linda Toirac joined their students with multiple disabilities in creating "Bowmann's Barnyard" - an impressive display of farm animals made entirely out of recyclable materials. The class sought materials from other East students and staff and then as a way to celebrate and promote America Recycles Day, displayed their final creation on Main Street the whole week.



'Tis the Season for Giving

Lakota athletes do great things on and off the court. The Lakota West Girls Basketball team was recently spotted shopping for a family they adopted through Reach Out Lakota.



Heritage ECS First-Graders Celebrate Pioneer Day

First-graders at Heritage Early Childhood School learned firsthand about life as a pioneer, participating in such activities as candle making, weaving, square dancing and butter making. Two special visitors included a chicken and a sheep from local farms. Students also took a short trip over to the old Hughes Schoolhouse adjacent to Liberty ECS to get a glimpse at the original student experience.

NEW BUSINESS

Community Conversation: The School Experience for LGBTQ Students

Lakota will be hosting a “Community Conversation” that will focus on the school experience of our LGBTQ students, and the role of the district in ensuring they can pursue an excellent education and to be a valued person in the Lakota community. This meeting, which is open to all, will be from 6:30 - 8 p.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 5, at Plains Junior School. The session will be held in the Innovation Hub. Signs will be posted to guide visitors to the room.

The Community Conversation program, now in its seventh year, allows school board members, the superintendent and other school district leaders to get input about schools and education, and the challenges and opportunities for young people, from all stakeholder groups.

Lakota's Community Conversations use a unique format. They are led by a professional facilitator, so that our school leaders can focus on listening and not on running the meeting. Most of the talking will be done by you, the students, parents and residents who are there. We will also spend time in small groups, where many people are more comfortable sharing their ideas.

The sessions are engaging and energizing and have led to new and innovative ways Lakota can best meet the needs of our students and larger community.

View Lakota's November Video Update

In this month's "A Look Around Lakota" video, Superintendent Matthew Miller is joined by Treasurer Jenni Logan to provide a special update about Lakota's recent five-year financial forecast.

As always, they share just some of the other highlights and happenings around Lakota in November, including:

- Both high schools' active participation in a recent Tri-State Honor Flight;
- Lakota's stand-out presence at the Ohio School Boards Association;

- Wyandot ECS's participation in the "Global Read Aloud" program; and
- Ridge Junior School's upcoming production of Annie Jr.

[Click here to watch this month's edition](#) and stay tuned for more video updates as the year continues.

Smart911 Service Available in Butler County

Over 80% of calls made to 9-1-1 come from mobile phones. When you dial 9-1-1 from a mobile phone, the 9-1-1 call takers have very little information to help you – only your phone number and a very general sense of your location. This can pose a serious problem in an emergency when seconds count, particularly if you or your loved ones have medical conditions, or are unable to safely speak.

With Smart911, you can provide 9-1-1 call takers and first responders critical information you want them to know in any kind of emergency. Smart911 is a free service that is paid for by public agencies ensuring free and equal access to all citizens of the community at no cost to them. Butler County has subscribed to this service.

[Click here to set up your Smart911 safety profile.](#) When you call 9-1-1, your Smart911 Safety Profile displays on the 9-1-1 screen and the 9-1-1 call takers can view your addresses, medical information, home information, description of pets and vehicles, and emergency contacts. You can provide as much or as little information as you like. You can also use the service to alert emergency managers that you need special assistance when a disaster strikes and to stay informed of weather, traffic and emergencies in your community.

Smart911 is a national service meaning your Smart911 Safety Profile travels with you and is visible to any participating 9-1-1 center nationwide.

Lakota West Swing Dance Dec. 7

Lakota West bands will hold their annual swing dance on Dec. 7 from 7:30 to 10 p.m. in the West Main Campus cafeteria.

Entertainment will be provided by West's jazz musicians, with swing dance instructors on hand to provide some lessons. There will be a dance contest, raffle items, and food available as well.

Attendees are encouraged to bring items for Reach Out Lakota in exchange for raffle tickets for door prizes. Tickets are available at the door for \$10.

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, December 3**
[**Most Likely to Succeed Showing**](#)
at Lakota West Main Campus
6:30 p.m.
- **Tuesday, December 4**
[**Fellas & Fiction**](#)
at X-Quisite Cutz
6:00 p.m.
- **Wednesday, December 5**
[**Coffee Chat with the Superintendent**](#)
at Einstein Bros. Bagels
1 - 2 p.m.
- **Wednesday, December 5**
[**Community Conversation: LGBTQ Issues in Schools**](#)
at Plains Junior
6:30 p.m.
- **Monday, December 10**
[**Board of Education Meeting**](#)

ON THE RADAR

Announcements & Opportunities

Dec. 5: Coffee Chat with the Superintendent

Join us on Wednesday, Dec. 5 for this month's Coffee Chat. Superintendent Matthew Miller will be on hand from 1-2 p.m. at Einstein Bros. Bagels (9216 Allen Road) 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.](#)

Fellas & Fiction Reading Program Continues Dec. 4

Every month, all Lakota boys in grades 1-6 are invited to "Fellas & Fiction," a special community-sponsored early literacy program hosted in partnership with Lakota Schools. The next program will

at Plains Junior
6:30 p.m.

- **Wednesday, December 12**
[Cyber Academy Info Meeting](#)
at Cincinnati Marriott North
7 p.m.
- **Thursday, December 20 - Tuesday, January 1**
[Winter Break \(No School\)](#)
- **Wednesday, January 2**
[No School for Students/Teacher Professional Development Day](#)

**See Full
Calendar**

take place on Tuesday, Dec. 4 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 Lakota early literacy program fosters a love of reading in young men while emphasizing the importance of relationship building. On the first 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, made possible by the Community Foundation of West Chester Liberty.

[View the Fellas & Fiction event flyer to learn more.](#)

Dec. 3: Special Documentary Showing of Most Likely to Succeed

Lakota Local Schools invites our parents and community members to attend a special showing of the documentary feature film *Most Likely to Succeed*. The movie looks at the challenges facing America's education system in today's world and explores innovative approaches to re-imagine what school could look like for our children. A discussion will take place following the movie with district personnel.

The final opportunity for parents of all grade levels to attend the screening is December 3 from 6:30 - 9:00 p.m. at Lakota West.

#GiveLakota Through the Lakota Schools Fund

The Lakota Schools Foundation was established at the Community Foundation of West Chester/Liberty to build a sustainable source of funding for current and future needs in the district beyond normal budget constraints, and provides an avenue for community members and alumni to support a strong future for Lakota schools.

#GivingTuesday was just the opening day of the giving season; you can #GiveLakota all season and all year long.

The Lakota Fund accepts grant applications throughout the year. Please visit www.wclfoundation.com for more information. [To learn more, get involved and donate, visit the "Give Lakota" page on the Community Foundation's website.](#)



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