

Instilling Pride. Igniting Passion. Infinite Possibilities.

October 7, 2016

Leading the Way

Lakota Gives Back with 'Reach In for Reach Out Lakota' Food Drive



The food drive is sponsored each year by Lakota's Board of Education. Shown here are last year's eastside and westside storage containers filled with donations for Reach Out Lakota. Pictured (left to right) Lakota Board member Ray Murray, State Senator Bill Coley, State Representative Margy Conditt, Lakota Board Vice

Lakota's west side schools won the district-wide food drive competition in 2015. Pictured here are Lakota West students accepting the traveling trophy on behalf of Lakota's west side schools at the East vs. West varsity football game.

Who will take home the trophy this year?

Bring your donations to any school from Oct. 17 through Oct. 26 or bring them to the football game on Oct. 28.

President Todd Parnell, Lakota Board President Lynda O'Connor, Lakota Board members Ben Dibble and Julie Shaffer, West Chester Township Trustee and Vice President Mark Welch, Liberty Township Trustee and Vice President Tom Farrell and West Chester Township Trustee and President George Lang.

Eastside vs. Westside Competition Benefits Reach Out Lakota

Starting Oct. 17, you can show your Westside or Eastside pride by taking part in the ninth annual district-wide food drive benefitting Reach Out Lakota.

Each year the 'Reach In for Reach Out Lakota' food drive, hosted by the Lakota Board of Education, plays off the spirit of the East vs. West football game, pitting Lakota's East side schools against the West side schools.

"This annual event began as a board project eight years ago. The intent was to offer our students a district-wide opportunity for community service, and to address hunger and food insufficiency issues affecting many Lakota families," said Board of Education President Lynda O'Connor. "Some may not realize that there are deep pockets of need within our own community, and Reach Out Lakota provides help for families right here in West Chester-Liberty."

'Reach In for Reach Out Lakota' is the single largest source of donations all year long for the local non-profit food pantry. Last year the drive brought in between 12,000 and 15,000 pounds of donations and stocked Reach Out Lakota's shelves through February.

Nonperishable food items and personal care products will be collected at all Lakota schools from Oct. 17 through Oct. 26. Each school designs their own programs and competitions to encourage donations. For example, last year students from Creekside Early Childhood School students had fun with the 'Reaching Out from A-Z' food drive activity. Letters of the alphabet were displayed in the hallways and when students brought in a donation, they had to place the canned good by the appropriate letter of the alphabet.

All items collected will then be taken to Lakota West, site of this year's East vs. West football game. Community members can also bring items to place in the Eastside or Westside storage containers before the start of the Oct. 28 football game. The winner of the food drive will be announced during the halftime ceremonies. Last year West side schools took home the coveted trophy – who will it be this year?

[Click here to view a food drive flyer](#) that includes a list of items most needed by Reach Out Lakota.

All year long, Lakota students and staff work tirelessly to support causes that make a difference in the lives of others right here in West Chester and Liberty townships. After all, the best way to show our appreciation for a community that gives our schools so much is to give right back to it. Look for more "Lakota Gives Back" stories as the year continues.

Around Lakota

School Spotlights

Lakota East Rolls Out New Homecoming Traditions

Learning "What it Means to be a Thunderhawk"



Click the image to view a video of the Class of 2020 singing the fight song together for the first time.

If the student section at Lakota East's Homecoming football game this year seemed louder than normal during the Thunderhawk fight song, it could be attributed to a rehearsal at East Freshman earlier that day.

Lakota East's freshman campus started a new Homecoming weekend tradition last Friday. To kick off the weekend's festivities, about 700 students packed the stands in the school's gymnasium. Choir teacher Becky Huddilston led the Class of 2020 in their first introduction to the school's fight song.

"From the moment students step foot on the freshman campus, we want them to understand what it means to be a Thunderhawk," said Lakota East Associate Principal Jennifer Ulland. "While we may be situated on two separate campuses, we are one school community, and that means learning different traditions like the fight song."

The fanfare was complete with a visit from the East cheerleading squad helping lead the cheer.

"It was really fun to be with everybody and feel like part of the main campus," said East Freshman **Olivia Wiles**.

"I play football and basketball, so I'll be hearing the fight song a lot," said East Freshman **Mark Krajewski**. "It was cool to learn the meaning and the actual words of the song."

Another new East Homecoming tradition welcomed back the band alumni to perform alongside the Marching Thunderhawks during pre-game. Former Marching Band Director Bill Thomas returned to direct the National Anthem.

'Food with Friends' Brings Families Together to Promote Healthy Eating



Working side-by-side, a Woodland Elementary family learns about healthier meal choices, including proper ways to chop various vegetables, all part of the recent 'Food with Friends' program which is a collaboration between C3 and Lakota's Child Nutrition Department.

Twenty-three families walked away with much more than the ingredients and tools to prepare five meals at the recent 'Food with Friends' event held at Woodland Elementary.

The event brought families together to build community -- and to learn more about healthy lifestyles, how to eat on a budget, and how to shop and prepare nutritious and tasty meals.

'Food with Friends' is a pilot program hosted by the Caring Community Collaborative (C3) and Lakota's Child Nutrition Department with the help of many other community organizations that donated supplies to make the event possible.

Lakota Board of Education President and C3 Board Member Lynda O'Connor spearheaded the event, which began as an offshoot of the Empty Bowls project (which raises funds for Reach Out Lakota and the Faith Alliance's Outreach for the Summer Lunch Program). "We wanted families to learn practical ways to promote healthy lifestyles, and build stronger families as a result."

The evening program was led by Chris Burkhardt, Lakota's Director of Wellness and Child Nutrition. He shared shopping tips, new recipes, and even demonstrated knife skills to help prepare ingredients. Each family was given a cutting board, knives and ingredients to follow along. The idea was to provide basic ingredients (chicken breasts, beans, onions, peppers and zucchini) and then pair them with a starch or a sauce to make five different meals. "This program is just one initiative that will help the Lakota community make healthier choices, both at school and at home. Providing healthier choices can have an impact on long-term eating habits," said Burkhardt.

Parents and older students worked side-by-side preparing the ingredients to take home. Younger students participated in a number of fun and educational activities centered around making healthy food choices.

Attendees of the pilot program have high praise for 'Food with Friends'. Amber Smith, parent of a Woodland fourth-grader, said she was able to take away a lot of healthy tips for her children. "It was a great

atmosphere; they should do it once a month!" Woodland parent Vicky Arand agreed. "It was a fun way to learn how to prepare healthy foods."

Organizers hope to garner enough community support to offer programs like this at other venues in West Chester and Liberty Township.

[View All District News](#)

New Business

Announcements & Opportunities

Mark Your Calendar: Lakota Fills October with Community Conversations

New Video Gathers Reactions from School Board Members

October is a busy month for the Lakota Board of Education's community listening program.

["Community Conversations"](#) continues into its fifth year, giving parents, residents and business owners a venue for providing input to district leaders on the future direction of Lakota Schools.



Earlier this year, residents, staff and parents gathered for a "Community Conversation" about character education in our schools, hosted by the West Chester Liberty Character Council.

On The Radar

Quick Links & Reminders

Gifted Services Hosts Hot Coffee and Hot Topics Oct. 14

Hot Coffee and Hot Topics will be held Friday, October 14 at Lakota's Central Office, 5572 Princeton Road. Parents of gifted learners in grades K-6 will gather from 9-10 a.m., then parents of students in grades 7-12 will convene from 10:15-11:15 a.m.

This session, which is the second in the three-part series, is designed as an informal time to discuss the social and emotional aspects that go along with being gifted.

For questions, please contact the Gifted Services department at 513 644-1186 or email giftedservices@lakotaonline.com; or visit www.lakotaonline.com/gifted.

A hundred-plus meetings over the years have covered such topics as career-based education, character development, parent engagement, gifted services, diversity and more. Most are conducted in an open-ended format, letting participants take the discussion in the direction of the group's interests and passions.

This month kicks off a series of meetings, designed specifically to get input on the qualities, traits and experience different stakeholders would like to see in a new leader of Lakota Schools. Superintendent Dr. Karen Mantia is currently on medical leave, but the search process was scheduled to begin this fall in anticipation of this being the final year of her contract.

"Hearing from our community about what they see as important in the next superintendent and for the future of the district will help to develop the profile of the kind of person we're looking for and set us up for a search process that will begin later this school year," said Lakota Board president Lynda O'Connor.

Mark your calendar for any one of this month's Community Conversations. Although some specify audiences, all are open to the public.

Wednesday, Oct. 12 @ 10 a.m.

Topic: New Superintendent Search

Host: Lakota's District Parent Council and President's Council

Location: Lakota Central Office (5572 Princeton Rd., Liberty Twp.)

Friday, Oct. 14 @ 11:30 a.m.

Topic: New Superintendent Search

Host: West Chester Liberty Chamber Alliance

Location: Chamber's Office (8922 Beckett Rd., West Chester)

Monday, Oct. 17 @ 7:15 p.m.

Host: Lakota West Boosters

Location: Lakota West High School (8940 Union Centre Blvd., West Chester)

Wednesday, Oct. 19 @ 7 p.m.

Topic: New Superintendent Search

Audience: Lakota administrators

Location: Lakota Central Office (5572 Princeton Rd., Liberty Twp.)

Help Plan Pi Day 2017

Save the date of March 10 for Pi Day 2017!

Do you feel passionate about bringing hands-on math and science activities to Lakota students? Lakota LEADS is kicking off its planning for Pi Day 2017 and would love to have you share your enthusiasm and energy with the team!

Join LEADS on Thursday Oct. 13 at 6:30 p.m. at Coffee Beans & Brew (7041 Yankee Rd, Liberty Township). Please contact Robyn Knappenberger at Robyn.Knappenberger@gmail.com if you would like to help but aren't able to attend on the 13th or if you have any questions.

Extracurricular Fees Reduced; Apply for Lower Family Cap

In an effort to expand student access to opportunities beyond the classroom, the Lakota Board of Education approved at a special board meeting the lowering of athletic, marching band and winter/color guard fees for junior high and high school students. The extracurricular fees for students in grades 7-12 will be exactly half the current amount, effective for students participating in the winter and spring

Wednesday, Oct. 26 @ 6:30 p.m.

Host: Boys & Girls Club of West Chester/Liberty

Location: Boys & Girls Club (4845 Smith Rd., West Chester)

Thursday, Oct. 27 @ 6:30 p.m.

Topic: New Superintendent Search

Audience: All Lakota staff

Location: Lakota's Central Office (5572 Princeton Rd. Liberty Twp.)

Wednesday, Nov. 2 @ 6:30 p.m.

Host: Reach Out Lakota

Location: West Chester Presbyterian Church (8930 Cincinnati-Dayton Rd., West Chester)

[Click here to watch a video](#) with reactions from Lakota's board members about the value of this program to their daily decision-making.

Visit the [Community Conversations webpage](#) for a complete schedule of upcoming meetings and other resources.

Community Members Needed for 'Be the Difference'

Here's a volunteer opportunity that is guaranteed to have a big impact on student participants and adult volunteers alike.

Lakota East is looking for community members to take part in 'Be the Difference', a program where students participate in unique activities that challenge them to break down stereotypical barriers resulting in inclusion, respect, and a more positive school environment.

This year the program will be offered to the entire sophomore class over three one-day sessions on Nov. 18, 21 and 22. In order to facilitate this large number of students, 45 adult group leaders are needed each day to lead 5-6 students through the activities. The attire is casual and lunch will be provided. If you are interested in participating, please visit the following link in order to sign-up: <http://bit.ly/2drUg6>.

sessions. Fees paid for the 2016 fall season will be applied to the family cap for the 2016-2017 school year.

The annual family cap has also been reduced by half, helping offset the cost difference for those students who participated in fall activities under the current rate. This allows these students to participate in more activities at no additional cost. Click here to view the [Family Cap FAQ](#) or the [Family Cap application](#). [Click here](#) for more information about the revised fees.

Student Fee Holiday

Lakota has introduced a three-month student fee holiday, which eliminates the \$2.00 convenience fee typically required of any online payments for student fees or lunch accounts. As both an incentive to remit payment early and promote the convenience of online payment, the student fee holiday will extend through Oct. 31. [Click here](#) for more information about student fees.

JTHF Book Drive Continues Through October

Every October, the Lakota community comes together to brighten the holiday

Please consider taking part in this incredible program and making a difference in the lives of Lakota East students. If you have questions about 'Be the Difference', please contact Michelle.Kohler@lakotaonline.com.

season for patients at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Liberty Campus in memory of one of its former students, 13-year-old Jeff Hayden who lost his battle with brain cancer in September 2004.

During the month of October, Lakota early childhood, elementary and junior high schools will be collecting new books, stickers (any type), journals, music CDs, movie DVDs (no VHS tapes), art supplies and small unopened dollar store toys. For questions about the drive, contact Zoe Kelley at jthbookdrive@hotmail.com or 404-4977. Click here to learn more about the [Jeffrey Thomas Hayden Foundation](#).

Photo of the Week

Tony-Award Winning Actor Visits with Lakota West Acting Classes



Ben Davis, a Tony-award winning actor (currently starring as Captain von Trapp in the national tour of *The Sound of Music*), stopped in to meet with Lakota West's acting classes. He spoke with the students about his background, answered questions and even sang *Stars* from *Les Miserables*.

"I am so happy to be able to come and meet with students -- and even hear a few of them sing," said Davis. "Both times I've been to Lakota West (he also visited back in 2008), I left impressed with the faculty, facilities, and students."

Theatre teacher Justin McCombs added, "The Acting 2 and Acting 3 classes were awestruck by the opportunity to meet and talk with Ben Davis. It was great for them to hear that Broadway performers use the same methods and tools they've been learning in class. I don't think any of the students will ever forget meeting him."

Upcoming Events

Event Spotlights

- [Monday, October 10](#)
Lakota Board of Education

Lakota In The News

Community Coverage

Latest E-Flyers

What's News This Week?

As a reminder, E-Flyers is Lakota's way of distributing information about programs,

Meeting (Central Office)

7 p.m.

- **[Wednesday, Oct. 12](#)**
[Community Conversation](#) - New Superintendent Search, hosted by Lakota's District Parent Council and President's Council, Central Office, 10 a.m.
- **[Friday, October 14](#)**
End of First Quarter
- **[Friday, October 14](#)**
Community Conversation Hosted by West Chester-Liberty Chamber Alliance - Topic: New Superintendent
11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.
- **[Friday, October 14](#)**
Hot Coffee, Hot Topics, hosted by Gifted Services, Central Office
- **[Monday, October 17](#)**
No School for Students (Professional Development Day)
- **[Monday, October 17](#)**
Community Conversation Hosted by Lakota West Boosters (at Lakota West High School)
7 - 8:30 p.m.
- **[Monday, October 17-October 28](#)**
'Reach In for Reach Out Lakota' Food Drive

Hamilton Journal-News

[High School Juniors Headed Toward "Cliff" Warns Hamilton School Leader](#)

[Acts of kindness: Teens pump parking meters at Liberty Center](#)

classes, events and opportunities happening in our schools and around the community. Rather than sending flyers home with students, we are now posting all approved information on the E-Flyer page, making it easy for families to access all current opportunities. Here is a listing of all of the new district and community-sponsored flyers for this week.

District-Sponsored:

- ['Reach In for Reach Out Lakota' Food Drive \(Oct.17-28\)](#)

Community-Sponsored Flyers:

- [Empty Bowls Event Sponsored by C3 \(Nov. 5\)](#)
- [Harvest Day at Forest Run Metropark \(Oct. 29\)](#)
- [October Community Volunteer Force Opportunities](#)

See Full
Calendar

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