



This Week At Lakota

Instilling Pride. Igniting Passion. Infinite Possibilities.

September 23, 2016

Leading the Way

Featured Presentation



Lakota East's National Merit semifinalists are (from top to bottom, from left to right): Alexander Suer, Ryan McAlister, Emma Stiefel, Marika Thompson, Chelsea Bass, Blake Dodson, Paige Bentley and Zachary Thomas. Not pictured: Logan Beatty-Enderle (no longer attending Lakota).



Lakota West's National Merit semifinalists are (from left): Alice Brew, Amy Ballman, Vrishin Soman and Aditya Tewari.

Thirteen Lakota Seniors Take Top Honors, Named National Merit Semifinalists

Thirteen students from Lakota East and Lakota West high schools have earned positions as semifinalists in this year's National Merit Scholarship Program, recognizing the nation's most academically talented high school seniors.

The Lakota seniors are among the approximately 16,000 students nationwide being named National Merit Semifinalists for their performance on the Preliminary SAT (PSAT). About 1.6 million juniors in more than 22,000 high schools took the PSAT, so these

Congratulations to Lakota's National Merit Seminalists:

Lakota East

Chelsea Bass
 Logan Beatty-Enderle
 Paige Bentley
 Blake Dodson
 Ryan McAlister
 Emma Stiefel
 Alexander Suer

Lakota West

Amy Ballman
 Alice Brew
 Vrishin Soman
 Aditya Tewari

semifinalists represent less than one percent of U.S. high school seniors.

Zachary Thomas
Marika Thompson

“The class of 2017 is already making its academic mark with the announcement of our National Merit semifinalists,” said West Principal Elgin Card. “We are proud of their high achievement on the PSAT that they took last fall, and wish them the best as they move forward in the scholarship competition.”

East Principal Suzanna Davis is equally as proud of the nine East seniors who received the honor. "These students have demonstrated the highest level of academic commitment and achievement. On behalf of the faculty and staff at Lakota East we congratulate these outstanding students on their designation as National Merit semifinalists."

About 90 percent of the semifinalists are expected to attain finalist standing, and nearly half of the finalists will win a National Merit Scholarship. The program will ultimately award more than \$33 million in scholarships to about 7,500 students beginning next spring.

Around Lakota

Lakota's Enrollment Center Turned Data Center Welcomes Families, Saves Money



Lakota's Enrollment Center staff from left to right: Lori Nelson, Judy Martin, Noelia Hernandez, Kimberly Tobak, Paula Heinly, Lori Green and Pam Zeigler.

One might consider the small building tucked away on the south side of Cincinnati-Dayton Road one of Lakota's best-kept secrets.

The well-oiled machine that is Lakota's Enrollment Center – and quickly evolving into the district's main data center – wasn't manufactured overnight either. In fact, what makes up the warm, yet efficient operation one finds inside was built slowly and methodically by two women who had a vision for what the Center could be – and a team of five people who stuck with them through a very trying transition.

"We didn't just change the paint color," joked EMIS Specialist & Enrollment Center Manager Pam Zeigler, who was joined early on in her new role by Director of Fiscal Compliance & Accountability Lori Green. "We all worked together to change the whole environment."

That environment is one that combines a warm welcome to more than 700 new families each year *and* more recently, a new focus that has created a monumental shift in the way Lakota manages its staff and student data to maximize state funding allowances. For the first time, both functions have been brought under one roof, introducing efficiencies that translate to substantial cost savings.

"I equate the recent changes to the Enrollment Center's operations to hundreds of thousands of dollars in recovered funding and direct savings to the school district," said Lakota Treasurer Jenni Logan, who Green and Zeigler credit significantly with the vision for the Center's new dual-purpose role. "And I only expect that number to grow as we continue fine-tuning our processes."

[Read more](#), including how the Enrollment Center team managed to process 733 new enrollees and 350 information updates in the 26 days leading up to the first day of school.

Adena Running Club Fosters Healthy Habits, Friendships



Photo on left: An Adena Elementary student gets a "high five" of encouragement from a PTO member. More than 275 students have participated in some capacity in the new program thus far this year.

*Right photo: **Austin Stewart** and **Asher Perez** get some water after participating in Adena Elementary's new running club. The school's PTO supports the program, which encourages physical health and builds friendships and community.*

It takes six laps around the field to make a mile, but who's counting when you get to run with friends?

Adena Elementary recently started a running club to help promote a healthy lifestyle and provide students the opportunity to get plenty of exercise. In addition to the physical benefits, there have been other advantages to the program, according to Principal Jodi Leichman.

"We've noticed that many of the students like to run together with their friends and there is a lot of encouraging and support," she states. "As some students get tired, their classmates and even students in other grades are cheering them to keep going. It's building a sense of community and inclusion."

The club "meets" during recess, when second-, third- and fourth-graders opt to run laps around a designated area. "Instead of students viewing this as giving up their recess, they actually are excited to participate and enjoy tracking their progress," adds Leichman.

In fact, more than 275 students have participated in some capacity thus far this year. For every five miles a student completes, he or she receives a token for the school's upcoming festival. The goal is for students to achieve 25 miles at the school and then participate in the one-mile "fun run" during the Cincinnati Flying Pig Marathon.

The school's PTO assists by providing adult monitors during the Thursday sessions, as well as water to keep the students hydrated. Many of the PTO members also run with students, sharing tips on running style and encouraging students to complete their personal best.

Leichman adds, "For many of our students, this is a tangible way for them to understand how their effort ties to their achievement. They are proud of what they are accomplishing and we're seeing them apply such learnings to the classroom."

East Student Selected for Tournament of Roses Parade

Allison Zimmerman to March in the 128th Annual Parade



For Lakota East senior **Allison Zimmerman** the 5.5 mile parade route is nothing compared to the path it took to get there. Zimmerman has been selected as a member of the Bands of America (BOA) Honor Band, which will march in the 2017 Tournament of Roses parade.

She was selected from among hundreds of applicants across the nation for membership in this prestigious national honor band. The BOA Honor Band, a program of Music for All, is a 300-piece ensemble with winds, percussion and a flag and dance team.

In late December, Zimmerman, a clarinet player, will spend a week in southern California, where she will have rehearsals, performances at the Tournament of Roses Bandfest and Disneyland, special activities and a featured appearance in the world-famous parade.

The 128th Rose Parade will take place on Monday, January 2, 2017, and will be broadcast on ABC, Hallmark Channel, HGTV, NBC, RFD-TV and Univision. The parade is seen in more than 200 international territories and countries.

"Receiving the opportunity to march alongside some of the most talented high school musicians across the country is such an honor, I'm looking forward to this once in a lifetime experience," Zimmerman states.

"As far as we know, Allison is the first student at Lakota to have auditioned and been selected to participate in Bands of America," states Suzanna Davis, Lakota East High principal. In addition to a taped audio audition showcasing their musical skill, applicants must submit a letter of recommendation from their band director and exhibit qualities such as leadership, teamwork and dedication to musical artistry.

Zimmerman is excited about the adventure, ready to both play during the parade and to meet students from around America.

According to Lakota East band director Rob Tanis, "This is a great honor and adventure and we are so proud of Allison. She is devoted to developing her performance skills and has a true love for music. We'll be watching the parade to see her share her music as she represents Lakota and our state."

Lakota Board Lowers Band, Athletic Fees to Expand Student Access

Complete Analysis of Other Student Opportunity Fees to Follow

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.

It's only the first step in the board's complete analysis of all student opportunities and associated fees to continue into October. To potentially expand the footprint of this reduction and promote increased participation in all activities for more students, the board will soon be reviewing and considering potential changes to the fee structure for other student opportunities, too.

"Rather than waiting until next school year, we wanted to expedite this change for a more immediate benefit to our students and families this year," said Chief Operating Officer Chris Passarge. "We hope this change, and any additional changes to follow, will encourage more students to explore more activities."

The decision followed a recent comparative review of athletic fees for all other schools participating in the Greater Miami Conference.

"Even after our efforts to lower fees as promised through the last levy, Lakota students are still paying more than double the closest rate among our GMC competitors," said Lakota Treasurer Jenni Logan.

"Other financial efficiencies since then have put us in a much more stable financial position," continued Logan, noting such efforts as continuous bond refinancing and the district's annual efforts to lower the cost of employee healthcare benefits. "We know the financial burden extracurricular fees introduce to our families and we are always pleased to redirect a portion of our savings in other areas to expanded student opportunities."

The overall financial impact to the school district will be about \$750,000 annually, or just half a percent of the district's total annual budget. With the fee reduction, the district is now covering about 75 percent of each student's total participation cost, according to the district's total operational cost for athletics and marching band - up from 50 percent under the old fee structure.

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 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 will also be reduced by half, helping offset the cost difference for those students who participated in fall activities under the current rate," said Logan, noting the opportunity for such students to participate in more activities at no additional cost.

"Until we see the complete financial impact of all fee reductions, we can't commit to any potential credits or refunds to fall athletes or marching band

students, but that will certainly be considered as part of our ongoing review," said Logan, noting such variables as scholarships and the family cap that make impossible any clean-cut refund or credit for any student. "We need to consider how we might manage those kinds of complexities."

The new fee schedule will be enforced on a sliding scale for economically disadvantaged students who qualify for free and reduced lunch.

Revised Fees

Junior High School Athletics (Grades 7-8)	\$150 per student/per sport
High School Athletics (Grades 9-12) Marching Band, Color/Winter Guard	\$200 per student/per activity

Revised Annual Family Cap

1 student	\$400
2 students	\$600
3 students	\$800
4 students	\$1,000

Click here to view the [Family Cap FAQ](#) or the [Family Cap application](#).

[View All District News](#)

New Business

Announcements & Opportunities

East's Hawks for the Cure Kicks Off Next Week

Over the last seven years, the Lakota East Athletic Department has hosted a series of events to support Susan G. Komen of Greater Cincinnati and the fight against breast cancer. Upcoming events include:

On The Radar

Quick Links & Reminders

Opt-in for School, District Text Messages

If you wish to receive Lakota text message notifications for closures/delays, emergencies and other urgent

Volleyball

Sept. 29

Doors open at 4 p.m.; games start at 5 p.m.

This is a big event with lots of fun activities.

Girls Soccer

Oct. 4

Gate opens at 4:30 p.m.; games start at 5:30 p.m.

Football

Oct. 14

Gate opens at 5:30 p.m.; game starts at 7 p.m.

"Hawks for the Cure" t-shirts are also available in the Lakota East Athletic Department for \$10. Every penny that is collected through "Hawks for the Cure" is donated to the fight against breast cancer.

Parent Meeting Sept. 27 Focuses on Transition of Students with Disabilities

Lakota's Special Services department will be hosting a new series of monthly information nights to support students on Individualized Education Plans (IEPs). The meetings are part of Lakota's "Transition to Work" program, which focuses on helping students gain employment after graduation.

The information nights will feature Butler County support agencies and transition programs, giving parents and students the chance to learn about employment opportunities and receive collaborative assistance as they plan for their future.

The first information night will be held on Tuesday, Sept. 27 from 6:30-8 p.m. at Lakota's Central Office, 5572 Princeton Road. Butler Tech will present information on their Project Life and Project Search programs, designed for students that have met graduation requirements, but are choosing to continue to develop employment skills, daily living skills and self-advocacy skills as they prepare for a competitive workforce.

school/district alerts, please pay close attention to this notice.

Even if you've already selected text message preferences through your notification account setup process, to officially begin receiving text messages via our new notification system, you must opt-in each mobile device from which you wish to receive text messages. Simply text "Y" to the short code 67587. [Click here for more details.](#)

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.

Sept. 30 Deadline for Athletic Participation Grants

The Community Foundation of West Chester/Liberty is offering Lakota families assistance with their children's athletic

Parents and students are welcome to attend the meeting. Future dates will be posted on the district calendar. For further information, please contact the Lakota Special Services office at 513-644-1212.

Lakota West PTSO Arts & Crafts Show Oct. 1 & 2

With over 200 indoor booths, the Lakota West Arts & Crafts Show, hosted by the PTSO, has been going strong for almost 40 years and is known as one of the premier arts & crafts shows in the area. Here are the dates and times for this year's show:

Saturday, October 1
10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Sunday, October 2
11 a.m. - 4 .p.m

Admission is \$2 and parking is free. All proceeds benefit student programs and scholarships. Make plans to attend and get an early start on your holiday shopping!

participation fees. The grant is funded by private donations and available to students in grades 7-12.

The deadline for consideration of the Community Foundation grant for Winter sports is Friday, Sept. 30. [Click here for more information and to download the application.](#)

Photo of the Week



COSI Visits Cherokee Elementary

COSI on Wheels brought lots of fun, interactive stations to Cherokee Elementary on Wednesday to help fifth and sixth grade students learn more about ecology.

Here fifth-graders use real cross-section samples from trees to explore how scientists can calculate the age of trees and use that information to track habitat changes over time.

The PTO sponsored the visit, and will bring COSI on Wheels back to the school two more times this year so that all grades will have an opportunity to extend their learning of important science concepts. Many Lakota early childhood and elementary schools use COSI on Wheels programs.

In addition to "Exploring Ecology", COSI offers programs such as "It's Simply Chemistry" or "The Incredible Human Machine".

Upcoming Events

Event Spotlights

- [Monday, September 26](#)
Lakota Board of Education

Lakota In The News

Community Coverage

Today's Pulse

Latest E-Flyers

What's News This Week?

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

Meeting (Central Office)

7 p.m.

- [Monday, October 10](#)
Lakota Board of Education Meeting (Central Office)
7 p.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.
- [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.

[See Full Calendar](#)

[Lakota East student selected to perform in Rose Bowl Parade](#)

Hamilton Journal-News

[School cafeteria inspections reveal flaws, historic trend](#)

[Lakota superintendent: Read beyond state report card letter grades](#)

[Butler County school districts receive six-figure refunds](#)

[Butler deputy honored after pulling driver from burning truck](#)

[Lakota student's book promotes positive self-image to young girls](#)

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.

Community-Sponsored Flyers:

- [Geary Family YMCA Swim Team Trials \(Ages 5-18\)](#)
- ["Dark Art of Political Ads": VOA Museum \(Sept. 28\)](#)

To view all of the current flyers, please [click here to go to Lakota's E-Flyers page](#).

[All Current E-Flyers](#)

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