



This Week At Lakota

Instilling Pride. Igniting Passion. Infinite Possibilities.

February 17, 2017

Leading the Way

Featured Stories



Matthew Miller was named Lakota's new superintendent at a special Board of Education meeting on Feb. 10.

Lakota School Board Votes to Employ Miller as Superintendent

Board wants stability with energetic, innovative leader at top

The Lakota Local Schools Board of Education unanimously voted to employ Mr. Matthew Miller as the next superintendent of Ohio's eighth largest public school district on Feb. 10. The vote took place during a special meeting where Miller and his family were present.



Cherokee third grade students look on as the 3D printer creates part of the prosthetic hand they made to help a child in need.

Prosthetic Hand A Product of Levy-Inspired Elementary Technology Special

As part of the third grade curriculum for Lakota's elementary technology class, a direct result of the 2013 levy, Cherokee Elementary students learn about the functionality of a 3D printer along with the possibilities of what it can currently print. But perhaps the biggest lesson they've learned is how a 3D printer can impact their lives – and the lives of others.

"We are ecstatic to have such a tremendous educational leader at the helm of our school district," said Board President Ben Dibble. "He is a visionary leader who will not only help us create great opportunities for students, but will also maintain the great value our residents expect."

Miller's contract officially begins June 15, 2017 with 1.5 months as interim superintendent followed by five years as superintendent. He will be in the district up to 15 days as part of the transition prior to the official start of his contract Aug. 1. His base salary is \$169,900 and will be fixed at that rate for the entirety of the contract. In addition, the board included a longevity stipend that Miller only receives if he completes all five years of his contract.

"Mr. Miller is a highly sought after candidate," Dibble noted. "He's been named to the National School Boards Association's "Top 20 to Watch" in the nation and was also selected to present at the White House for the #GoOpen initiative on behalf of the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Education Technology. He is a national talker with TEDx and completed the Leadership Institute of Superintendents at the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

"We want this to be a long-term relationship so that Lakota students, staff, parents and community members can be assured that we will have strong and consistent leadership in our top position," Dibble said.

Mr. Miller's superintendent experience spans 12 years. He offers 17 years of administrative experience, serving as both a principal and director of student services and instruction before becoming a superintendent. He earned both his bachelor's and master's degrees in education from the University of Cincinnati.

"The board has been so impressed by the incredible level of talent displayed by all the candidates throughout this search," noted Dibble. "Mr. Miller distinguished himself as an energetic educator who could successfully lead our district for many years to come. We are excited to see the amazing opportunities he and the rest of the staff at Lakota Local Schools will create for our students and our community."

Miller and his wife, Kristy, have two children. Their son, Mason, is a junior at the University of Cincinnati and their daughter, Jessica, is a senior at Mentor High School. She plans to enroll as a freshman at the University of Cincinnati

After watching a short clip from PBS's "Design Squad" where a young boy made a 3D prosthetic hand for another child, some students were inspired to work with elementary technology teacher Jenny Haynes to be part of the "Prosthetic Kids Hand Challenge".



"In the engineering design process students learn how to think, create, solve problems, and design," said Haynes. "I felt that this was the perfect opportunity to allow my students to put their energy and thoughts into helping others through their study and knowledge of how a 3D printer works."

The hand challenge team consisted of 12 third-graders (two from each homeroom). The students met with Haynes during their recess time, and they made sure to share their progress with fellow classmates along the way.

To begin, the team researched the [Enable the Future website](#) (which hosts the hand challenge project) to explore how to put the hand together and decide how to share the work among the 12 students. The website provided step-by-step instructions and how-to videos from other students who have put hands together.

As part of the project, the students learned how to download a pre-designed file, print it, separate the pieces and then try to put the pieces together collaboratively. Haynes added, "Along the way, there were problems to solve and even a couple of times where we needed to make adjustments to the hand for stability which created a beautiful learning experience. We also discussed the importance of perseverance when working together and trying again if things didn't quite work out as we thought they should."

Haynes recently shipped the complete 3D prosthetic hand to "Enable the Future," where it will be inspected to ensure it functions properly, and then displayed along with other hands created from around the world. Once the challenge has ended, the hands will be sent to children in need.

in the fall. The Millers intend to begin looking for housing in the Lakota Local School District in the near future.

[Click here to learn more about the Board of Education's process to select Mr. Miller as Lakota's new superintendent.](#)

[Click here to hear what students thought about the project and about the plans to create another prosthetic hand with VanGorden fifth-graders.](#)

Thanks to the support of the community, Lakota elementary technology classes continue to provide students in grades 1-6 with a solid foundation of technology skills that can easily be incorporated across disciplines. The creation of these elementary technology classes was part of Lakota's Instructional Technology Strategic Plan, a 2013 levy promise.

Around Lakota

School Spotlights

Junior High Gifted Programs Partner with UC to Combine Learning, Service



Gifted students at Lakota's junior high schools recently competed in a project that stretched their thinking and will benefit a local non-profit. Hosted by the University of Cincinnati's Economics Center, teams of students were to select a non-profit, then create a T-shirt design to be sold so the proceeds can support that organization.

According to Patty Piron, gifted support advisor for grades 7-12, "This was a true, real life application experience for all of the gifted students involved. For this enrichment opportunity, students were required to create and market a product along with researching and choosing a non-profit organization."

"We emphasized the story behind why the group chose a specific non-profit," says Lauren Webb, gifted service advisor for grades 7-12. "The T-shirt design was secondary to the thought behind why the group chose that specific organization to support. The focus really was on the opportunity for the gifted students to engage in a service learning project while honing their decision-making, teamwork and presentation skills."

***Ava Nguyen, Wendi Reffner, Gabrielle Mathis and Rebecca Jones**, students at Hopewell Junior, show off their winning presentation in a recent project for Lakota's gift junior high school students. Their T-shirt design supporting The Animal Friends Humane Society will be printed and sold at all of the junior high schools.*

More than 25 groups from all four of Lakota's junior highs participated in the competition with one team from each school then moving on for the final judging. The finalists presented to a panel of judges, in front of their peers and their parents. Judging was based on delivery of the presentation, the oral presentation, originality of the T-shirt design, and attractiveness of the presentation.

"We wanted the teams to detail their reasons for choosing the organization, looking at their research and how they tied the design to that specific non-profit. Their presentation needed to create empathy for the organization and get the audience vested as well as show creativity and inventiveness," adds Webb.

Congratulations to **Rebecca Jones, Gabrielle Mathis, Ava Nguyen and Wendi Reffner**, the team from Hopewell Junior who won the competition. Their T-shirt design supporting The Animal Friends Humane Society will be printed and sold at all of the junior high schools. The proceeds, an estimated \$1.50 per shirt sold, will then be donated to the local non-profit.

Lakota First Lego Team Headed to World Championship



Countless hours of hard work since the start of the school year are paying off for a group of Hopewell Junior students. They are part of the Lakota neighborhood First Lego team called Scientific Touch. Out of 512 registered teams in Ohio, Scientific Touch was one of just two teams that advanced on to the First Lego League World Festival in St. Louis, Missouri.

Scientific Touch will continue to work on their robotics project until it goes up against 108 teams from all over the world in April.

In addition to earning the second place championship at the state competition, Scientific Touch also received the Championship & Robot Performance Awards at the regional level and the Judges Award at the district level.

The First Lego League allows teams (up to 10 members, grades 4-8) to research a real-world problem such as food safety or recycling and are challenged to develop a solution. They also must design, build, program a robot using Lego Mindstorms®, and then compete on a table-top playing field.

*Top row (left to right): Sam Vessel - Bethany School, **Ryan Cheng** - Hopewell Junior, **Jude Saddler** - Hopewell Junior*

*Bottom row: (left to right): **Sudiksha Mukherjee** - Hopewell Junior, Esha Reddy - Mason District, Arushi Sharma - Sycamore District and **Samiksha Mukherjee** - Hopewell Junior*

Liberty ECS Collects "Pennies for Patients" as Community Service Project

Liberty Leaders



Liberty Leaders, along with counselor Dana Hallgarth (at right, back row) were instrumental in leading the school's "Pennies for Patients" efforts. The school raised more than \$3,480 to support the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society.

Penny by penny, coin by coin – the jars quickly filled, thanks to the generosity of students and staff at Liberty Early Childhood School.

The recent community service project blasted through the goal, raising \$3,488.97, which is a school record. “We had to keep increasing our goal, since we just kept pushing through it,” says Dana Hallgarth, counselor at Liberty ECS. “They did a great job collecting coins for a meaningful cause. Kids helping kids is always amazing!”

All of the coins were forwarded to the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, specifically to support their Pennies for Patients efforts. Throughout the collection, Liberty ECS incorporated various activities in order to boost the donations.

“We had a friendly competition during our Math Night with each grade collecting coins,” adds Hallgarth. “It was close, but our first-graders brought in the most, with \$474.26 donated just that evening.”

The Liberty Leaders helped a lot with the project, encouraging other students to get involved and helping to spread the word to Liberty families. “We also had a generous donor who gave \$1,200 because the students reached the school-wide goal. She wanted to match their efforts and, as a non-Hodgkin’s Lymphoma survivor, it was a way for her to give back while encouraging our students.”

Plains Junior's Beta Club Earns National Beta Club School of Distinction Award



*Pictured are Plains Junior Beta officers with Mrs. Wade (left to right): **Jacob Beall**, **Arani Wanigasekara**, **Julieta Ramirez**, Mrs. Kim Wade and **Brooke Blackburn**.*

It's a record year for the Beta Club at Plains Junior School. The club is 127 members strong this school year – the highest count ever. The growth of the group has earned the club the National Beta School of Distinction Award.

The Beta Club is an honors and service club open to Plains' eighth grade students who meet strict academic requirements. Members volunteer individually and as a group at activities and events such as the animal shelter/pet supply drive at Plains Junior, the Martin Luther King Community celebration, The Dragonfly Foundation, The West Chester Great Pumpkin Fest and Breakfast with Santa events, Cherokee Pages and Paws events, Matthew 25 Ministries disaster relief prep, West Chester R.A.S.K.A.L.S. clean-up, and much more.

At the halfway point of the school year, the club has already logged over 500 community service hours.

National Beta is the nation's largest independent, non-profit educational youth organization. The organization is committed to recognizing and promoting high academic achievement, rewarding and nurturing worthy character, improving student leadership skills, and encouraging service to others.

All Lakota National Merit Semifinalists Advance to Finalist Standing



The Lakota School District is proud to announce that all Lakota East and Lakota West high school students who were named semifinalists advanced to the next level in the 2017 National Merit and National Achievement Scholarship programs.

In March, the National Merit Scholarship Program will begin awarding 7,500 scholarships from the group of more than 15,000 finalists based on test scores, overall academic record and recommendations.

Lakota East

Chelsea Bass
Paige E. Bentley
Blake Dodson
Ryan F. McAlister
Emma C. Stiefel
Alexander D. Suer
Zachary M. Thomas
Marika J. Thompson

Lakota West

Amy Ballman
Alice Brew
Vrishin Soman
Aditya Tewari

[View All
District News](#)

New Business

Announcements & Opportunities

Lakota Hosting Inaugural Job Fair March 11

While teachers deliver on the instructional side of the Lakota student experience, critical to Lakota's daily operations is a deep and dedicated staff supporting the work happening in

On The Radar

Quick Links & Reminders

Join Us for Coffee Connections

the classroom. Support staff positions such as custodians, nurses, guidance counselors and cooks, for instance, provide valuable services to the overall learning environment.

In an effort to fill all types of positions with more quality employees, the district is hosting its inaugural Employment Job Expo Saturday, March 11 from 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. at Lakota West High School, 8940 Union Centre Blvd.

“This is a great opportunity to learn more about types of positions with one of the area’s largest employers. We’re looking for energetic, dedicated, diverse workers for a range of classified and professional staff openings,” says Rob Kramer, executive director of Human Resources for the district.

He adds, “The expo will be a time for prospective employees to meet with representatives from many job categories, such as child nutrition, custodians, bus drivers, registered nurses, instructional aides, coaches, maintenance workers, translators, teachers and others. Positions include full, part-time and/or substitute employment options.”

[Click here](#) for more information about working at Lakota.

Lakota to Induct 8 Members into the Athletic Hall of Fame

The 19th annual dinner and induction ceremony to honor the newest members of the Lakota Athletic Hall of Fame will be held on Thursday, March 23 at 6:00 p.m. at the Wetherington Golf & Country Club. This popular community event will welcome the following 2017 Inductees:

Lindsay Bodeker Youngstrom - Softball (Lakota West Class of 2006)

Josh Chichester - Football, Basketball & Track (Lakota West Class of 2006)

James Dews - Basketball (Lakota East Class of 2006)

Meagan Dooley Dimond - Volleyball (Lakota West Class of 2006)

Scott Fetzer - Head Wrestling Coach (Lakota West)

Alex Hoekstra - Volleyball (Lakota East Class of 2006)

William Johnson - Track (Lakota East Class of 2006)

Casey Keefer - Cross Country, Basketball & Track (Lakota East Class of 2006)

Whether you have a specific question or idea, or simply want to hear more about the district's biggest priorities, challenges and successes, please consider attending the upcoming "Coffee Connections".

These informal coffee chats out in the community are typically held on the last Wednesday of each month. For an hour, Lakota leaders are available for drop-in conversation with parents and residents at local coffee houses (rotating between West Chester and Liberty Township locations) as part of an initiative called Coffee Connections.

Our next session will be held Wednesday, Feb. 22 2-3 p.m. at Cavu Coffee, 7755 Cox Lane, West Chester. Come enjoy a coffee and make connections as you learn about your school district.

[Click here](#) for more information about the Coffee Connections program.

Kindergarten Registration Information Now Available

Registration forms and applications for Lakota’s half-day and full-day kindergarten are now available. Beginning Feb. 27, families will be able to register at the Lakota Enrollment Center according to the building-by-building schedule. Parent Information Nights will be held at each Lakota early childhood school prior to enrollment. [Click here for more information](#) and details on the

The cost to attend is \$25 per person (which includes dinner); the deadline for registrations is March 16. For more information on the event, view the [Lakota Athletic Hall of Fame Dinner and Induction Ceremony Flyer](#).

Reds Opening Day Tickets Among High-Profile Raffle Prizes at Summer Fun Fair

Lakota's fifth annual Summer Fun Fair events are just over a week away!

Over 100 organizations offering summer youth activities will line the hallways of Lakota East and West -- [click here](#) to see the growing list of exhibitors ranging from summer camps, learning centers and childcare facilities to athletic leagues, art programs, recreation activities and volunteer opportunities. Vendors have also graciously donated raffle items that will be given away at each of the two open house events. Over \$2,000 in prizes will be raffled off each evening, including free camp registrations, gift baskets, gift certificates and memberships.



Make plans now to attend either of two events, each featuring almost the same exhibitors:

Monday, Feb. 27
Lakota East High School
6-8 p.m.

Parent Information Nights and registration schedule.

Student Panel Night Set for March 9

On Thursday, March 9, several Lakota High School seniors will share their perspective during student panel night. The presentation is an opportunity for underclassmen and junior high students to ask questions about all aspects of high school: academics, sports, clubs, extracurricular activities and more.

The event is geared toward students in grades 6-8 and their families, however all are welcome to attend. The panel, which is hosted by Lakota's Gifted Services, will be held from 7-8 p.m. at the Lakota Central Office, 5572 Princeton Road. [Click here for a flyer with more details.](#)

Upcoming Community Conversations

Since 2012, Lakota's Board of Education and administration have been hosting Community Conversations as an ongoing way to hear from our local residents. Mark your calendar for these upcoming events:

Wednesday, March 1
Lakota West High School
6-8 p.m.

Concessions will be on site to grab a quick dinner, snack or dessert. Live performances and demonstrations by some organizations will also provide extra entertainment throughout the evening. Mark your calendars now to be part of the fun!

Hot Topics & Hot Coffee: Stress and Strategies

Stress and strategies for effectively managing both good and negative stressors will be the focus of the upcoming “Hot Topics & Hot Coffee” session presented by Lakota’s Gifted Services. The session, which is geared to parents and guardians of all grade levels, will be held Monday, March 13 from 9:45 a.m. to 11:15 a.m. at Lakota Central Office, 5572 Princeton Road.

The session will cover stress and anxiety in students, including the differences between good and bad stress and techniques for managing both. Discussion points will include why stress is so common in gifted learners and suggestions on what parents can do to help themselves and their child cope with these stressors and still enjoy life while striving for excellence. Reservations are encouraged and can be made through [Eventbrite](#) (password is Lakota).

[Click here for the flyer.](#) For questions, please contact Lakota’s Gifted Services at 513 644-1186 or email giftedservices@lakotaonline.com.

West Chester Police Offering S.A.F.E. Classes for College-Bound Students

Safety at college is a concern of many parents; that’s why the West Chester Police Department is offering a free program focused on teaching practical skills for campus safety to female high school seniors and recent graduates.

Wednesday, March 1
5:30 – 7 p.m.
Hosted by the Edge Teen Center
(7568 Wyandot Lane #2, Liberty Township)

Friday, March 17
7:30 a.m.
Hosted by Finance Committee and Business
Advisory Council
(Lakota Central Office)

[Click here for more details](#) about Community Conversations.

Parents, Community Welcome at Student Fanfare Events

The concept is a simple one: Line the school’s entrance and give students high-fives and words of encouragement as they’re filing into school. All are welcome!

Join us for one or more of the upcoming fanfares:

Tuesday, Feb. 21 @ 9 a.m.
Union Elementary

Friday, Feb. 24 @ 9 a.m.
Creekside Early Childhood School

The class, which is held in cooperation with Lakota Schools, is designed to provide first-time college students with the tools to help them protect and defend themselves from possible threats. S.A.F.E. (Self-defense and Awareness through Fundamental Education), was created as a result of requests from parents and with input from faculty of Lakota Schools.

The focus is on prevention, sharing what they can do to prevent any personal crime and then, if necessary, how to defend themselves. The majority of the time is spent in rigorous self-defense training. Sessions also cover rape prevention and awareness, personal protection and self-awareness.

The program is free, but the class requires advance registration as spaces are limited. Students can take the 10-hour class at either location. There is no charge for the classes however students are expected to attend every day.

- Lakota West will be April 3 – April 7 from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. in the wrestling room. [Click here](#) to register for this session.
- Lakota East will be April 24 – April 28 from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. in the wrestling room. [Click here](#) to register for this session.

For more information, contact Officer Michelle Berling with the West Chester Police Department at (513) 759-3985.

Pi Day 2017 is Almost Here

Mark your calendar for March 10 from 6:30 - 9 p.m. for Lakota's annual Pi Day featuring over 40 hands-on math and science stations.

Pi Day 2017 will be held at Lakota East High School and is geared toward students in grades K-8. It is a free event, but donations at the door to support future enrichment events would be appreciated.

Plan to come to Pi Day where you can:

- Explore macroinvertebrates under a magnifying glass

Monday, Feb. 27 @ 8:15 a.m.

Hopewell Elementary

[Click here for the complete schedule through May and to commit to one or more fanfare events.](#)

Feb. 20: Last Day for Input on Academic Calendar

Lakota staff, students, parents and community members are invited to review the current draft of the 2018-2019 academic calendar before any final recommendation is presented to the school board in late February 2017. [Please click here to view the calendar and provide your feedback](#) by completing and submitting the online survey form by Monday, Feb. 20.

- Touch a human brain
- Try your hand at robotics
- Shoot an arrow and explore the laws of physics
- Race your friends in Tangrams
- Meet your favorite Star Wars characters

Pi Day is sponsored by the Lakota LEADS parent organization.

Photo of the Week



19-Year Valentine Tradition Adds Up to Joy for 90,000 Local Seniors

Since 1998 Lakota early childhood, elementary and junior high students have been creating hand-made valentines for area senior citizens. The valentines are distributed by the Council on Aging through the "Meals on Wheels" program and other home-delivered meal programs in Butler, Warren, Clermont and Hamilton County. Last year students made about 3,900 valentines bringing the 19 year total to almost 90,000 Valentines delivered.

Here, Shawnee Early Childhood School students **Anastasia Somi** and **Ezra Couch** get creative with their cards.

According to Joanne Pinder, a teacher at Hopewell Elementary and coordinator of the Valentine's project, "Students have worked hard to make Valentine Cards

with kind words to share with our community members. It is truly amazing to see the effort and compassion our students have shown through their words on these cards! I am very proud of them."

And their effort does make a difference! Just read these comments from a local resident about the project:

"My name is Teresa and I wanted to thank the Hopewell Elementary students for sending a beautiful Valentine card to my elderly mother! She was so pleased to receive it. It really made her day! She said how kind it was for the students to think of others on a day that represents Love.

My mother receives Meals On Wheels which is a service that brings her food for her dinners for the week. The card came with her food. She sometimes is a bit lonely when family can't be around. Your card was like a ray of sunshine!

Thank you for thinking of others and for taking the time to be so kind. Keep up the awesome work.

*Most sincerely,
Teresa*



Kindness Challenge Week Activities Take Place Across the District

National Acts of Kindness Day is February 17, and it has grown in popularity since beginning back in 1995. In fact, many schools and organizations now celebrate Kindness Challenge Week filled with activities centered on helping others.

For Kindness Challenge Week, some Wyandot Early Childhood School classes wrote "How To's" during Writer's Workshop with advice on being kind to others. The school also collected new coloring books and crayons to donate to Butler County Children's Services in honor of Firefighter Patrick Wolterman. Sherry Mattingly's first-graders create a heart in the photo above in honor of the special week.

Upcoming **Events** 

Lakota In The **News** 

Latest **E-Flyers** 

Event Spotlights

- Friday, Feb.17
No School for Students
- Monday, Feb. 20
District Closed/President's Day
- Tuesday, Feb. 21
[Student Fanfare Event](#) at Union Elementary (Community Invited)
8:15 a.m.
- Wednesday, Feb. 22
[Coffee Connections](#) at Cavu Coffee
2 - 3 p.m.
- Friday, Feb. 24
[Student Fanfare Event](#) at Creekside ECS (Community Invited)
9 a.m.
- Monday, Feb. 27
[Student Fanfare Event](#) at Hopewell Elementary (Community Invited)
8:15 a.m.
- Monday, Feb. 27
[Summer Fun Fair](#) at Lakota East High School
6 - 8 p.m.
- Monday, Feb. 27
[Board of Education Meeting](#) at Lakota Central Office
7 p.m.

Community Coverage

Journal-News

[Program is path to job for special needs Lakota students](#)

[5 Questions with Lakota's new superintendent](#)

[Young Lakota wrestlers help in cancer](#)

[Lakota weighs superintendent choice in 8-hour meeting](#)

[Lakota committee prefers 1 of 2 superintendent finalists](#)

[Lakota students get inside look at career in policing](#)

WCPO Channel 9

[Lakota school board selects Matt Miller as superintendent](#)

What's News This Week?

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

- [Lakota Athletic Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony \(March 23\)](#)

Community-Sponsored Flyers:

- [Camp Invention - June 19-23 \(Grades K-6\)](#)
- [Camp Invention Leadership Intern Program - June 19-23 \(Grades 9 and up\)](#)
- [Camp Invention Counselor-in-Training Program \(Grades 7-9\)](#)
- [Learn Archery at Grace Chapel \(All ages\)](#)
- [TechFest at Sinclair Community College \(Feb.18-19\)](#)
- [Lifeguard Class at Geary YMCA \(Feb. 26/ Mar. 4\)](#)

- Wednesday, Mar. 1
[Community Conversation](#) at Edge Teen Center
5:30 - 7 p.m.
- Wednesday, Mar. 1
[Summer Fun Fair](#) at Lakota West High School
6 - 8 p.m.

[See Full Calendar](#)

- [Lakota Jets High School Rugby Football Club](#)

[All Current E-Flyers](#)

Lakota Central Office

5572 Princeton Road
Liberty Township, OH 45011-9726

Phone: (513) 874-5505

Lakota@lakotaonline.com



Lakota Local School District would like to continue connecting with you via email. If you prefer to be removed from our list, please contact Lakota Local School District directly. To stop receiving all email messages distributed through our SchoolMessenger service, follow this link and confirm: [Unsubscribe](#)

SchoolMessenger is a notification service used by the nation's leading school systems to connect with parents, students and staff through voice, SMS text, email, and social media.