

Instilling Pride. Igniting Passion. Infinite Possibilities.

August 11, 2017

Back-to-School Edition

Feature Stories



Celebrate the New School Year with Our First Day Photo Contest



Lakota Student Shout-Outs Capture Staff Impact on Opening Day

It's difficult to put into words the impact an educator can have on a student's life. But Lakota challenged its students to do just that - and the result was a

Our back-to-school photo contest is back by popular demand – and with a new twist.

Lakota staff, students and parents are invited to help celebrate a new school year, and Lakota's new hashtag, with our **#WEareLakota First Day Photo Contest!**

Participating is as easy as posting your first day photos to Facebook or Twitter using the hashtag #WEareLakota and tagging the Lakota Facebook page ([@LakotaSchools](#)) or Twitter account ([@LakotaDistrict](#)).

The owners of the three photos on Facebook and Twitter with the most votes, or "likes," after a full week of school (Aug. 24 at noon) will receive a #WEareLakota T-shirt. Plus, we'll share the winning photos with the Lakota community through social media, Lakota Online and other district communications.

The new school year begins Wednesday, August 16. So get ready to capture those special first day moments at the front stoop, at your bus stop, with your carpool group, or in your classroom.

It's a fun and easy way to celebrate our students', staff's and even parents' smiles on the first day of school.

It's Easy to Participate:

1. Whether you're a student, a parent or a staff member, determine what part of your first day you want to capture and share with others.
2. Post your photo to Facebook or Twitter using the hashtag #WEareLakota. Be sure to also tag the Lakota Facebook page ([@LakotaSchools](#)) or Twitter account ([@LakotaDistrict](#)).
3. Share it with your friends to rack up the most "likes," or votes.
4. The owners of the three posts getting the most likes on Facebook will receive a #WEareLakota T-shirt; the top three winners on Twitter will also receive a T-shirt.
5. Search for #WEareLakota on Facebook or Twitter to see the full gallery of entries and cast your votes.

video presentation that made for an emotional and energetic Opening Day Celebration for Lakota staff.

From the front office to the classroom to the cafeteria – and everywhere in between – it's no surprise that our students have great stories about those Lakota staff who make them smile and have left a lasting impression. Those stories were shared through both written and video testimonials, all compiled into a staff shout-out video shared for the first time with Lakota staff Aug. 11 at Lakota East High School.

"It hasn't taken me long at all to realize that all of you in this room are the heart and soul of this school district," said Lakota Superintendent Matt Miller in his address to staff.

"I've had countless interactions already with students, parents and people out in our community," he continued. "Every conversation seems to come back to great things made possible by the energy and dedication of our educators, and all those supporting them. That's why we decided to hand the mic over to our students for a bit."

[Click here to view the Lakota Staff Shout-Out Video.](#)

Thank you to everyone who took the time to recognize a Lakota staff person through this project!

Here's to a great new school year - and lots of your photos to help document the first day back!

Around Lakota

School Spotlights



It's that time of year again! Summer is coming to a close and beginning Wednesday, August 16, Lakota teachers and support staff will be welcoming back new and returning students. Here is some important information to keep in mind as you and your family gear up for the new school year.

When is the first day of school?

Wednesday, August 16 – Grades 1-12
August 16-18 - Kindergarten phase-in days (vary by building)

What school will my child attend?

Use Lakota's [interactive map](#) to enter your address and view a listing of all the Lakota schools associated with your attendance zone.

What are my school's hours?

[Click here to view a complete list of arrival and dismissal times for each Lakota school building.](#)

Does my student receive bus services?

Lakota provides transportation to all students in kindergarten and first grade. Eligible students in grades 2-6 who live more than one mile from their school will receive transportation. Eligible students in grades 7-8 will receive busing if they live more than two miles from their school. Lakota does not provide busing at the high school level. [Click here to check transportation eligibility by address.](#) Please visit Lakota's [Transportation page](#) for more information.

Every year, Lakota's transportation department reviews the district's bus routes for possible efficiencies and opportunities to maximize services and shrink our standard exclusion zones, always working within our financial boundaries. If a student isn't eligible but will be receiving services this year, they will be contacted by Lakota's transportation department.

How do I communicate my child's transportation arrangements?

If your child lives in a transportation exclusion zone, will be opting out of bus services, or will be served by a child care provider at an address other than your home, you must complete a [transportation/child care information form](#). You are not required to submit this form if you 1) utilize Lakota's bus transportation from your home address or 2) already have one on file and your transportation circumstances aren't changing this year.

How do I look up my student's bus route and teacher assignment?

Bus route information is now available from Lakota's bus provider. You are able to view bus and ECS/elementary teacher assignments for the 2017-2018 school year on the registration page of [Home Access Center \(HAC\)](#). A link is prominently posted from the district's homepage.

What is Home Access Center and how do I access it?

[Home Access Center](#) (HAC) is a communications tool to help keep students and parents up-to-date and in contact with their teachers throughout the year. Use HAC to find daily assignments and scores, interim reports and report cards, schedules, attendance, and more.

In preparation for the new school year, HAC will be inaccessible to parents and students. Accessibility to 2017-2018 information will be restored according to the following schedule:

- ECS/Elementary Schools – Wednesday, Aug. 9 @ 8 a.m.
- Junior High Schools – Thursday, Aug. 10 @ 8 a.m.
- Freshman Schools – Wednesday, Aug. 9 @ 8 a.m.
- High Schools – Thursday, Aug. 10 @ 8 a.m.

Families new to the district will receive their usernames and passwords by mail from their schools. Returning families who lost their login information should contact their school's main office.

[Review this new user guide](#) for more details on how to take full advantage of HAC.

Home Access Center is also available in a mobile app, allowing you to view all information from any mobile device. [Click here](#) for more information about the app or search for "eSchoolPLUS Family" in your app store.

Check out the [Parents section](#) of Lakota's website for a listing of other helpful resources.

What are my student fees and how do I pay them?

Individual student fee balances will be posted to students' EZPay accounts by Aug. 15 for ECS and elementary students and in early September for junior high and high school students.

Lakota will again offer a student fee holiday, which eliminates the \$2.00 convenience fee typically required of any online payments. As both an incentive to remit payment early and promote the convenience of online payment, the student fee holiday will extend through Oct. 31. [EZPay](#) is available to pay student fees, add to your child's lunch account, or check the balance.

A detailed breakdown of both academic and extracurricular will be posted in early September on the [student fees webpage](#).

I'm new to Lakota. How do I enroll my student?

Visit our [Enrollment Center](#) page for everything you need to enroll your child at Lakota, including office hours and required documents. If you are planning to have your student start the first day of school, please have all of your documents to the Enrollment Center by the end of the business day on Friday, August 11.

How do I update my home address?

To update your address, please visit Lakota's Enrollment Center at 8735 Cincinnati-Dayton Rd. See the [Enrollment Center](#) page for office hours and required documents.

How can I update my preferences for receiving mass communications from Lakota?

Lakota is proud to offer a powerful mass notification system for delivering important school and district news and announcements via email, phone and text message. We encourage parents, employees and community members to take full advantage of the platform, which provides these important benefits:

- Customize your notification preferences. Choose which phone numbers and email addresses should receive which types of communications – emergency, weather-related or general school/district news and announcements.
- No more annual updates. For current parents, guardians and staff, the new system automatically recognizes your associated school(s), grade level(s) and even language preference, and will update as this information changes in our databases to ensure you receive information pertaining to those associations. If you wish to sign up for general school communications outside of your immediate school associations, you will want to create a second account through our [self sign-up portal](#).
- Manage your sign-ups from a single platform. While we still ask that parents and guardians keep their information in Home Access Center updated for one-on-one communication needs, all mass notification sign-ups happen through School Messenger.

If you are the official parent or guardian of a current Lakota student or a current employee with a valid Lakota email address, [please log into School Messenger](#) to make sure the phone numbers and email addresses being automatically pulled from Home Access Center (parents) and active directory (staff) are accurate and up-to-date. For your username, use the primary email address associated with your personal Home Access Center account (parents/guardians) or your Lakota email address (staff).

[Click here](#) for more information on how you can sign-up, view or change your communication preferences.

How do I check my school's calendar?

From the [Lakota website](#), click on "Select a School" to visit your school website and view your school's calendar for open house, orientation and curriculum night dates, as well as other upcoming building events. The [district's online calendar](#) can be used to view district-wide events only.

What's for breakfast and lunch?

[Breakfast and lunch menus](#) for August, September and October are available. Use [EZPay](#) to add to your child's lunch account or check the balance. Learn more about applying for [free and reduced price school meals](#) and reporting [special dietary needs and food allergies](#) to the Child Nutrition department.

How do I find my student's school supply list?

Early childhood, elementary and junior high school supply lists can be found on the district's [supply list webpage](#). High school students will receive supply lists from their teachers on the first day of school.

How else can I stay connected to Lakota all year long?

- Be sure to check out [Lakota's website](#) which presents vital information through sections such as "Trending Now," "Quick Links" and "District News" as well as video and photo galleries. The homepage also quickly links to school-specific pages, so you can keep up on all the great things happening district-wide and with your student's school.
- Follow [Lakota on Facebook](#). Receive daily updates on important announcements, upcoming events, photos, videos, news stories and more. Be sure to participate in the annual back-to-school photo contest on Lakota's Facebook page, too. Submit your proudest first day photos for inclusion in the official contest gallery. Then share them with your friends to rack up the votes, or "likes," for a chance to win. You may also want to follow [Lakota Superintendent Matt Miller on Facebook](#) for his frequent posts.
- [Connect with Lakota on Twitter](#) and follow [Superintendent Matt Miller](#) on his new Twitter account.

If you have additional questions, please contact your school's main office or the Lakota Central Office at 513-874-5505.

[View All
District News](#)

New Business

Announcements & Opportunities

On The Radar

Quick Links & Reminders

Lakota District Now on Twitter

Over the summer, Lakota launched a new Twitter account. Follow [@LakotaDistrict](https://twitter.com/LakotaDistrict) for an inside look at what's happening all around Lakota.

We also went to our community for help in deciding on a new district hashtag. When put to a vote, the community selected **#WEareLakota**. Follow this hashtag and put it to use to see all the latest and greatest action in our schools and around our community.

You can also follow Lakota Superintendent Matt Miller via his Facebook page ([@LakotaSuper](https://www.facebook.com/LakotaSuper)) or Twitter account ([@LakotaSuper](https://twitter.com/LakotaSuper)).



First Day Marks Return of Student Fanfares

Last year's Student Fanfare events were so popular with students, their families and community members, that we are bringing them back for the 2017-18 school year.

The concept is a simple one: Line the school's entrance and give students high-fives and words of encouragement as they are filing into school, providing students with a visual display of all their supporters during times like testing and the start of a new semester. The concept, derived from a first day of school tradition at Hopewell Junior School, brings community and school leaders together to send a message of support to Lakota students.

Every Lakota school will host a fanfare at some point throughout the school year. Please plan to join others at one or more scheduled during August:

August 16

Hopewell Junior School
7 a.m.

August 16

Update Your Lakota Communication Preferences

Lakota Local Schools uses a comprehensive mass notification system, SchoolMessenger, for delivering important school- and district-wide messages via email, phone and text message. SchoolMessenger provides parents, guardians and staff with a convenient way to manage their preferences for receiving weather-related, emergency and general notifications from Lakota and its schools.

The system integrates with current student and staff data, automatically updating your account to receive communications based on your current school(s) and/or grade level. Log into your account today to review and modify your preferences for receiving Lakota news.

If you are the official parent or guardian of a current Lakota student, [please log into SchoolMessenger](#) to make sure the phone numbers and email addresses being automatically pulled from Home Access Center are up-to-date and linked with the types of communications you wish to receive. For your username, please use the primary email address associated with your personal Home Access Center account.

If you are a current employee with a valid Lakota email address, [please log into SchoolMessenger](#) to set your communication preferences, and add at least one phone

Independence Elementary
9 a.m.

August 18

Adena Elementary
8:15 a.m.

August 21

Freedom Elementary
8:15 a.m.

August 30

VanGorden Elementary
8:15 a.m.

Free Microsoft Office Suite Available to Students

Digital productivity and creation skills are a key component of our students' college and career readiness and a strong focus for our staff and students. Lakota continues to offer the most used digital productivity suite in the world, Microsoft Office, free to our students at no cost to our families or Lakota Schools. This will allow Lakota students in grades 2-12 to use a full version of Microsoft Office on up to five devices.

Software versions include the latest version of Microsoft Office for PC, Mac, iPhone, iPad and Android. This is a great complement to our Bring Your Own Technology initiative. This is a great complement to Lakota's "Bring Your Own Technology" initiative. [Please click here for more information](#) or [click here for instructions](#) on how to install Microsoft Office.

Save the Date: Ice Cream Social for New Families Sept. 6

For those families new to Lakota Schools this year, the district is offering an opportunity to meet other new families and get to know the Lakota community a little better. Lakota's COMMUNITY Ambassadors invites all new families to its annual ice cream social on Wednesday, Sept. 6 from 5-

number, for receiving staff-related district and school communications. For your username, please use your Lakota email address to access your staff account.

Important note: If you are also a Lakota parent/guardian, you will need to access a separate account for parent-directed communications tied to your child's school(s). For this account, you will need to adjust your HAC email address to be something different than your Lakota email.

If you are neither a parent nor an employee – or if you are and just wish to sign up for school communications outside of your immediate associations, please create another account through our [self sign-up portal](#).

[Click here for step-by-step instructions](#) on how you can sign up, view or change your communication preferences. For easy, on-the-go access for managing your account settings, download the "SchoolMessenger" mobile app from your app store.

Bus Routes and ECS/Elementary Teacher Assignments Available in HAC

Bus route and ECS/Elementary teacher

7:30 p.m. The gathering will take place at Union Centre Square, or in case of rain. the MidPointe Library's community room.

Make connections with district leaders, families and community organizations to learn about what resources and opportunities exist, at their school and all around the district, to help students get off to a good start at Lakota. All family members are welcome to come and enjoy ice cream sundaes, games and activities.

The host group, Lakota's CommUNITY Ambassadors, works within our schools to build stronger communities and increase parents' involvement in their child's education.

Lakota Bands Tag Day on Aug. 26

Annual Fundraiser for Lakota Bands

Lakota East and Lakota West High School band members will go door-to-door through West Chester and Liberty Township neighborhoods on Tag Day, Aug. 26, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. asking for tax-deductible donations for their respective band booster programs. Tag Day is the biggest annual fundraiser for Lakota East and Lakota West High School band booster programs.

All proceeds benefit and go directly to each high school's Upbeat Club, the Lakota East and Lakota West band booster organizations. The collected funds go toward uniform purchase, maintenance and other items beyond what the school district supplies.

On Tag Day, band members wearing band apparel will knock on community doors. On-the-spot donors receive a "tag" (tax-deductible receipt). If no one is at home, band members will leave packets of Tag Day information about how to contribute after Aug. 26. Between Lakota East and Lakota West High Schools, grades 9-12, there are 10 concert bands, six jazz bands and two large Class AA marching bands. In the many band-related events in which both high schools' bands compete, Lakota East and Lakota West consistently earn Superior ratings.

assignments for the 2017-2018 school year are now available.

You can view bus and ECS/elementary teacher assignments for the 2017-2018 school year on the registration page of [Home Access Center \(HAC\)](#).

Please note that teacher assignments are being made available at varying times for individual buildings. If your child's teacher assignment does not appear among your results, please check back later for that information.

Note that the time listed for each bus stop is approximate -- traffic, road construction, and other factors can affect the actual bus stop time, especially during the winter weather. Please allow a 5-10 minute window of time around your posted pick-up and drop-off times. You may also check with your bus driver periodically throughout the school year for the most current bus stop time.

For further information on contributing a tax-deductible donation to the Lakota East and Lakota West Upbeat Clubs, please visit their websites at lakotaeastbands.org and lakotawestbands.org.

Photo of the Week



Staff Kicks Off New School Year at 'Opening Day'

An Opening Day Celebration was held at Lakota East on Aug. 11 to help Lakota staff kick off the 2017-18 school year. It's the one time a year Lakota's entire staff comes together.

New Superintendent Matt Miller led the festivities, sharing his top priorities as he settles into his new role: lots of listening and asking questions. "I want to get to know as many students, staff members, parents, residents and community and business leaders as I can. I want to take the time to have a real conversation with as many people as possible so I can get to know you and learn more about the priorities of this great community."

Superintendent Miller also introduced Lakota's hashtag **#WEareLakota** and a new initiative called "Casual for a Cause" that gives staff members a way to give back to philanthropic partners in the community. The celebration started with an energetic presentation by Lakota East's Marching Thunderhawks and ended with some very special messages from Lakota students across the district (see feature story above.).

[Click here to view the Opening Day Facebook photo album.](#)

Welcome back, Lakota!

Upcoming Events

Event Spotlights

- Monday, August 14
[Teacher Professional Development Day](#)
- Monday, August 14
[Board of Education Meeting](#)
at Lakota Central Office
7 p.m.
- Tuesday, August 15
[Teacher Professional Development Day](#)
- Tuesday, August 15
[1st Grade Open House](#)
10 a.m.- noon
- Tuesday, August 15
[2nd-6th Grade Open House](#)
1 - 3 p.m.
- Wednesday-Friday, August 16-18
[Kindergarten Phase In Days](#)
- Wednesday, August 16
[First Day of School for Students in Grades 1-12](#)
- Wednesday, August 16
[Student Fanfare at Hopewell Junior \(Community Invited\)](#)
7 - 7:30 a.m.

Lakota In The News

Community Coverage

Hamilton Journal-News

[Thousands pack Lakota gym for giant rally to kick off school year](#)

[5 things you may not know about Lakota Schools](#)

[School resource officers will return to Lakota, Butler Tech](#)

[Lakota East grad earns \\$200,000 scholarship to Princeton](#)

[Butler County home to big high schools: What you need to know](#)

Local 12

[Lakota East HS kicker raising money to fight childhood cancer](#)

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 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:

[Fall Classes at Gold Medal Archery \(Classes start August 26\)](#)

[Free Dental Clinic at Lakota Hills Baptist Church \(August 18-20\)](#)

[Free Health Clinic at Lakota Hills Baptist Church \(August 14-15\)](#)

[Gavin Myers Kick Cancer Fundraiser](#)

[Grace Chapel Archery Fall Sessions - Begin September 11 \(All ages\)](#)

- Wednesday, August 16
Student Fanfare Event at Independence Elementary (Community Invited)
9 - 9:30 a.m.

- Monday, August 21
Student Fanfare Event at Freedom Elementary (Community Invited)
8:15 - 8:45 a.m.

[See Full Calendar](#)

[Lakota Optimists Run for Youth - October 7](#)

[Thunderbird Select Basketball Sign-up Information \(Grades 2-6\)](#)

[All Current E-Flyers](#)

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