

# Friends & Neighbors



LAKEWOOD  
SCHOOL DISTRICT

JANUARY 2020

Sharing news from our schools that every community member should know....

From Superintendent Scott Peacock to you.



ASB President, Alex Jensen and Senior Ethan Stapleton at the Lakewood High School Holiday Helpers assembly.

## Caring and Love is Alive and Well in Lakewood

As holiday celebrations approached, support and love swelled across the Lakewood community.

Gifts poured in at all of our schools and throughout departments—Transportation, Business, Human Resources, Special Services, Teaching and Learning and the Superintendent's office. Community members sought out families to adopt. All of that energy was in support of gift-giving through our Holiday Helpers program.

Kelsey Mitchell, Lakewood's school district nurse, headed up the program alongside Trisha Kellar and Jolene Cox. "The generosity of Lakewood staff, students, and community members was astounding this past holiday season. Due to their exuberant efforts, about 130 individuals received items such as clothing, food, toys, and basic necessities during the holiday season. Although this area's population is growing every day, the Lakewood community still holds fast to its small-town values and community connections."

Holiday Helpers is truly a community effort in which everyone looks out for their friends and neighbors. Thank you to all who participated.

## Conversations with the Superintendent

Meet the superintendent at the Paddle Pub Restaurant (4915 Lakewood Rd.) on Monday nights from 5-6 p.m. or at IHOP on Friday mornings from 7:30-8:30 a.m.



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## Lakewood Introduces a New Safety Reporting System

Lakewood School District is among the first in the State of Washington to partner with the Sandy Hook Promise Foundation in the use of the new Say Something Program. This program promotes awareness of safety concerns throughout the school community.

Say Something empowers us all to recognize signs and signals presented by individuals who may want to hurt themselves or others. Individuals often show warning signs and share information personally or on social media before they become violent, attempt suicide, or make threats. However, not everyone knows how to recognize these warning signs or how to take action.

Say Something helps us learn how to interpret warning signs and take immediate action. In addition to the educational portion of the program which includes guides and digital videos Lakewood has also adopted Say Something's Anonymous Reporting System (SSARS). This system allows individuals to submit secure and anonymous safety concerns to help identify and intervene with at risk individuals before hurting themselves or others.

SSARS operates 24/7 and is monitored continuously by professional crisis counselors. Tips can be reported anonymously via SSARS mobile app, Say Something website, or by phone. Reports are then shared with the identified school or district administrators for quick follow up.

We need to support one another in the effective use of this program. We are excited to be able to provide this resource to our community. It will ensure that our schools continue to be safe, secure, caring places for students and staff.

# SCHOOL FUNDING PRIMER

## Lakewood's Bright Financial Outlook

### Lakewood School District Sees a Financial Rating Upgrade



Moody's Investors Service recently upgraded Lakewood School District's bond rating (comparable to a consumer credit score) from A1 to Aa3, representing an independent stamp of approval concerning our financial practices and outlook.

Moody's, Standard & Poor's, and Fitch Group are the three largest firms that rate investor securities. Bond ratings provide investors with information about the financial outlook of institutions, like school districts or municipalities, who issue bonds. Lakewood's new rating is the highest available to a school district of our size.

The rating upgrade to Aa3 was, in part, due to the district's prudent budgetary practices and healthy reserves as we navigate short term funding gaps created by changes in state funding rules. The rating upgrade also reflects an expectation that the district's strong financial position will be sustained as we temporarily draw on our fund balance (savings account) over the next few years to bridge state funding gaps. Projected growth in the Lakewood tax base, continued enrollment increases, along with decreases in debt over the next several years further support the positive financial outlook for the school district.

Those of us in the Lakewood administration who serve as stewards of district resources and taxpayer support are proud of this rating and the confidence it conveys.

#### Non-Discrimination Notice:

In accordance with RCW49.60, the Lakewood School District does not discriminate in employment and schools. The Lakewood School District provides Equal Educational and Employment Opportunity without regard to race, creed, color, national origin, sex, handicap/disability, sexual orientation including gender expression or identity, creed, religion, age, veteran or military status, use of a trained dog to guide or service animal by a person with a disability, and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and designated youth groups. The district complies with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations to include, but not limited to, Title IX, Title VI of the Civil Rights Acts, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, RCW 49.60 "The Law Against Discrimination," and RCW 28A.640 "Sex Equity," and covers, but is not limited to, all district programs, courses, activities, including extracurricular activities, services, access to facilities, etc. Inquiries regarding compliance procedures should be directed to Lakewood School District, 17110 16th Drive NE, Marysville, WA 98271, Attention: Title IX and Civil Rights Officer, Daniel Lee, 360-652-4500, [dlee@lwsd.wednet.edu](mailto:dlee@lwsd.wednet.edu) or ADA Compliance Officer and Section 504 Compliance Officer, Amie Verellen-Grubbs, 360-652-4500, [averellen-grubbs@lwsd.wednet.edu](mailto:averellen-grubbs@lwsd.wednet.edu).