

Lakewood School District: Strategic Changes for 2025-2026

FEBRUARY 18, 2025

- ▶ The Lakewood School District understands that change can bring uncertainty, and we recognize the deep impact it can have on our students, families, and staff.
- ▶ Our top priority is ensuring that every student continues to receive the high-quality education and support they deserve.

- ▶ As we prepare for the **2025-2026** school year, we are implementing necessary changes to sustain the programs and opportunities that strengthen our schools. This process will be carried out with transparency, careful planning, and a steadfast commitment to prioritizing the needs of our students and community.

Why Are These Changes Necessary?

LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY:
ENSURING THE FINANCIAL AND
OPERATIONAL STABILITY OF OUR
DISTRICT.

**ENHANCED LEARNING
ENVIRONMENTS:**

PROVIDING AGE-APPROPRIATE
FACILITIES TO OPTIMIZE STUDENT
SUCCESS.

EFFICIENT USE OF RESOURCES:
STREAMLINING SCHOOL STRUCTURES
TO MAXIMIZE FUNDING AND SUPPORT
ESSENTIAL PROGRAMS.

Decreasing Enrollment

School Year	Student Enrollment	Decrease
2024-2025	4,241	-197
2023-2024	4,438	-140
2022-2023	4,578	-349
2021-2022	4,927	

Enrollment decrease of 686 students in the past three years.

Grade Reconfiguration

To better serve our students and ensure continuity in education, we are restructuring grade levels:

SPRUCE STREET SCHOOL –
PRESCHOOL STUDENTS

OAK STREET SCHOOL –
KINDERGARTEN THROUGH GRADE 2

CLIFTON AVENUE GRADE SCHOOL
GRADE 3 THROUGH GRADE 5

LAKWOOD MIDDLE SCHOOL
GRADES 6 THROUGH 8

LAKWOOD HIGH SCHOOL
GRADES 9 THROUGH 12

Will there be a Reduction in Force?

- THERE WILL NOT BE A REDUCTION IN FORCE OF **CLASSROOM TEACHERS OR PARAPROFESSIONALS**, AS THE DISTRICT HAS MAINTAINED OVER THE YEARS, REGULATORY CLASS SIZES AND STAFFING, AS PER **ADMIN. CODE (6A:13-3.1)**

Will there be a Reduction in Force?

- THERE **MAY BE** A MINIMAL NUMBER OF STAFF WHO RECEIVE A RIF NOTICE, HOWEVER, THIS CAN CHANGE DUE TO RETIREMENTS, RESIGNATIONS AND/OR NON-RENEWALS, ELIMINATING SUCH A LIST.
- THIS WILL INCLUDE POSITIONS IN WHICH THERE WOULD BE A DUPLICATION OF SERVICES DUE TO THE COMBINING OF TWO BUILDINGS.
- THIS WOULD INCLUDE POSITIONS SUCH AS: SECRETARIES, SCHOOL NURSE, GUIDANCE COUNSELOR, ADMINISTRATORS, ETC.

Will there be Non-Renewals?

- ▶ As always, non-renewals will be based on performance, at the recommendation of Administration.

- ▶ Additionally, **Piner Elementary School** will house **preschool classes** for the **2025-2026** school year; however, the lease will not be extended beyond this period.
- ▶ These classes will be moved to **Spruce Street School** for the **2026-2027** school year.
- ▶ As of September of 2025, there will no longer be Preschool classes housed in a Modular.

School and Land Sales

- ▶ To align with our district's sustainability goals, the following properties will be sold:
 - ▶ Ella G. Clarke School
 - ▶ Lakewood Early Childhood Center, Campus 1 and 3
 - ▶ Block 209, Lot 1.01 (Lakewood High School property)

What this Means for Staff

- ▶ As in the past, school reassignments will be based on the grade level you are currently assigned.
- ▶ A request in teaching/school assignment can be requested, as per the LEA contract.

What This Means for Students & Families

- ▶ **Students and Families:** We understand this transition will impact the school community. We will communicate with families to ensure they are informed and supported through this process.

We Value Your Input

- ▶ Your thoughts and concerns are important to us. If you have any comments or questions, please reach out to:

Dr. Laura A. Winters

Superintendent of Schools

✉ Email: Lwinters@lakewoodpiners.org

- ▶ While these adjustments may be challenging, they are essential for the long-term success and sustainability of the Lakewood Public School District. We appreciate your understanding, patience, and support as we move forward in this process together.
- ▶ Thank you for being a valued part of our school community.

2025-2026 School Schedule

School	2025-2026 Grade Span	School Hours
Spruce Street School	Preschool	8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Piner Elementary School	Only Preschool (Last year of Lease)	8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Oak Street School	K-2	8:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Clifton Avenue Grade School	Grades 3-5	7:45 a.m. - 2:15 p.m.
Lakewood Middle School	Grades 6-8	7:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
Lakewood High School	No Change	7:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.