WINTER 2024-2025 NEWSLETTER

LAKEWOOD LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Reimagining education, instilling community pride, inspiring future success.






Lakewood Schools Community,

It is hard to believe that we are already three-quarters of the way through this school year, and our students are preparing for their final quarter of 2024-25. Many great achievements have happened since the Fall newsletter and I'm happy to share them with you.

First, as I'm sure you have heard, I have decided to accept the position of permanent Superintendent of this district beginning next school year. I have said this many times, but I love our district's families and educators and look forward to continuing to build on the fine work of so many who have come before me. I cannot imagine a better way to head into the last chapter of my career in education than to be Superintendent of Lakewood Schools.

The winter brought some loss and sadness to our community, but I know that we are stronger together and supporting each other than alone. This quarter also brought much to celebrate across our district. LHS Senior Lilah Ball recently won the National Center for Women & Information Technology's Award for Aspirations in Computing. Lilah is our IT program's fifth winner since 2013 and we are so happy for her! Mrs. Brittany Baker received the 2024-25 Leaders for Learning Award from the Licking County Foundation...congratulations to her! Congratulations also to Miss Mandy O'Dell for receiving the Coughlin's "You Made A Difference" Award. Miss O'Dell was nominated by sophomore Gracie Burns and presented her award at a ceremony at C-TEC on March 13. The JV Girls Bowling Team finished 1st in the Licking County League (LCL) and the Varsity Team finished as LCL and District Runner Up, and 16th in the OHSAA DII State Tournament, with Riley Bloise rolling a high game of 212 at the state contest! Boys Wrestling sent six qualifiers to Districts and one (Cohen Shinault) to State. The Girls Swim team finished 4th at LCLs; Senior Scarlett Yugovich finished 15th in the 50 Freestyle with a PR of 26.66 and 18th in the 100 Freestyle with another PR of 59.18 at the District Championship – she finished her high school swim career as the record holder for both events at LHS!

As we move into Spring, many exciting things are on the horizon. The LHS and LMS spring musicals, Seussical the Musical and Annie Jr., respectively, are coming up. The LHS production will take place during the weekend of April 11-13, while the LMS production will be on May 8. We're also looking forward to the spring sports season, with Lancer Baseball, Softball, and Track & Field programs striving for continued success. Lastly, the Class of 2025 will end their Lakewood Lancer career with Commencement on Friday, May 23, from The Court in Lakewood High School at 6:30 p.m. Please join me in wishing them well as they plan for their future beyond high school!

Thank you for your continued support of our Lancer students and staff members. With their hard work and dedication, and your encouragement, we are well on our journey to making Lakewood Local Schools the best we can be.

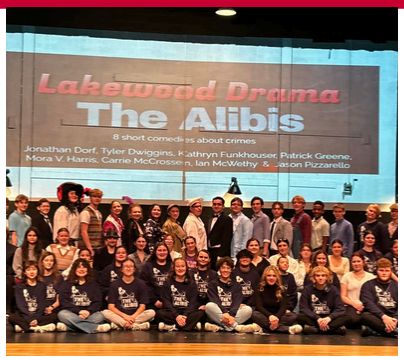


Let's go, Lancers!

Sincerely,

Scott Coffey
Interim Superintendent
Lakewood Local Schools

Lancer PRIDE Spotlight




(From left) LHS students Kade Antunes and Alex Taylor; LMS students Daisy Maynard, Mason Bush, and Alena Baker performed with the OMEA District 10 Honor Bands in December. LHS Production of The Alibis in November and LMS Production of Seussical, JR. in December; LHS Winter Choir Concert performance.



Lakewood Elementary created a 2nd grade student advisory group. The student advisory group along with administration have been brainstorming ideas to ensure students feel more involved and valued in our school community. This advisory group held a 2nd grade competition, creating a new Pride Tag that would be used throughout the school. Kindergarten and 1st grades voted on their favorite one. The winner of this competition was Mrs. Sims' class titled "Kindness". They received a trophy with the Pride Tag attached to it. The students enjoyed this so much that we are going to hold this competition twice a year. The trophy will travel to the winner's room. Congratulations Mrs. Sims' class!





(Left) Brittany Baker was selected as a recipient of the 2025 Leaders for Learning Award given by the Licking County Foundation.

(Below) Miss Mandy O'Dell was Lakewood's 2025 winner of the Coughlin Cars "You Make a Difference" Award. She was nominated by LHS student Gracie Burns.







(Above) Lilah Ball is the 2025 NCWIT Aspirations in Computing High School Award Ohio Affiliate Winner! She will be honored on April 12.

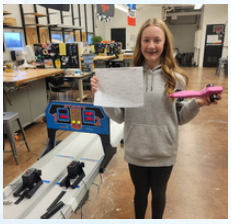
Career Technical Education Equipment Grant Update:

Lakewood Local Schools is a recipient of the State of Ohio Department of Education and Workforce's Career Technical Education (CTE) Equipment Grant Program, which helps schools purchase up-to-date equipment to better prepare students to be career-ready upon graduation.

LMS purchased 12 career-ready labs in the following areas: welding, electricity, robotics, flight & drones, home maintenance fundamentals, home maintenance systems, 3-D printing, laser technology, materials processing & design, computer graphics & game design, design & marketing and research & development.





District Goal Areas for 2024-25

At the start of the school year, I communicated to families that the Board of Education and I would be focused on five priorities areas, and I have provided an update to them each quarter, as well as in our last community newsletter. You can find another update below. -Interim Superintendent Scott Coffey

Rigor in Teaching & Learning

Our curriculum is broad, balanced and aligned with Ohio's Revised Learning Standards. There is a clear progression of knowledge and skills that is flexible and responsive to each student's needs and interests. Our focus is on student growth, mastery of material, and achievement.

Work continues in several content areas this year to update and align our curriculum. Subjects under review this year are Science, Family and Consumer Science, Health and Physical Education, Engineering and Manufacturing, and Career-Based Intervention. Mrs. Pickering, our Director of Teaching and Learning, has been leading this process to ensure that our content is engaging and fully aligned with the rigor of the Ohio standards.

Student Behavior

Student and staff safety is a top priority in Lakewood Local School District. We take this responsibility very seriously and appreciate the partnership of students, staff, families, community members, and our first responders to keep everyone safe.

This area continues to be a work in progress. While we are seeing improvements in our data overall, there are simply too many infractions of this type still occurring in our buildings. I am grateful to the staff members and administrators who continue to hold students accountable for their actions and help them to make better decisions moving forward. The vast majority of our students continue to do an amazing job.

Athletic Culture

Athletics are an important part of student development, proven to support academic performance, teamwork, mental health, leadership and more. We will be focused on making sure our athletes are representing our values in every contest, our athletic department and programs are running smoothly and efficiently, and that concerns are addressed and resolved.

We are currently just beginning our Spring Athletics season and already our teams are showing promise. That should not be a surprise to anyone, as our Spring Sports have always excelled and been a source of pride in our school and community. Join me in showing up to games and meets to cheer on our Lancers!





School Attendance

This year, Lakewood is raising the bar on student attendance. We must maximize the amount of time students have with our instructors to make the school year more meaningful and productive. We cannot grow students who are not present in our classes.

As I have said previously, I believe that school attendance rate is one of the best predictors of academic success. Even with the tremendous amount of illness we've endured this year, we are ahead of last year's mark for attendance, which means we are ahead of last year's mark for time spent learning as well. The hard work of principals, staff, parents, and students in getting our learners to school continues to pay off.

Restoring Pride

In our strategic plan, our Community Pride & Engagement goal areas statement says that "Lakewood Local Schools creates and fosters a school community whose members are engaged, communicative, supportive, and proud to be Lakewood Lancers."

I am as proud as ever of our district and the improvements that are being made in this area. I am more proud of our students, our employees, and our community with each passing day. I am proud to call Lakewood my home and look forward to spending the rest of my career caring for its students. As always, I welcome your suggestions for how we can make improvements that strengthen our district and grow our Lancer Pride!





Strategic Planning

In addition to everything above, all of our Strategic Plan Goal Areas, will continue be a focus. We believe that if we are accountable to these goals as a district and as a community, we will continue to improve, achievement will increase, and decisions about doing what is best for students will be clear.



Lancer Athletic Highlights




Lancer Swim District Qualifiers: 400m relay - Olivia Bukalski, Kara Weekly, Khloe Antunes, and Scarlett Yugovich and 50m Free & 100m Free - Scarlett Yugovich




Girls Varsity Bowling: 2025 LCL & District Runners up & State Qualifiers. Girls JV Bowling: 2025 LCL Champions.















LHS & LMS Winter Sports

LAKEWOOD Lancers

Boys Varsity Wrestling: Lakewood freshman Cohen Shinault State qualifier; LHS District qualifiers. LMS: Grayson Debevoise, placed third in the Middle School State Wrestling Tournament; Daniel Clary Junior High State qualifier.

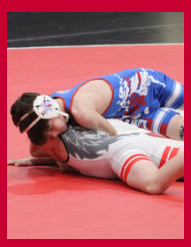























District Finances

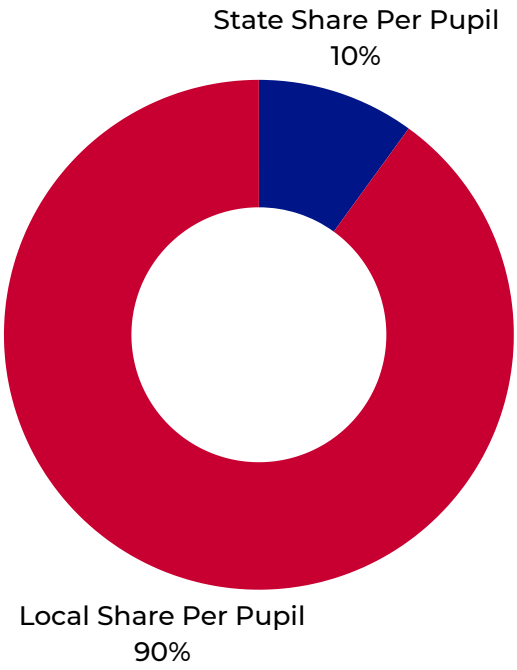
SCHOOL FUNDING AND STATE BUDGET

During deliberations about the state budget, there is a great deal of discussion happening around the Fair School Funding Plan and property taxes. One key point in these discussions revolve around a school district's cash balance. A healthy cash balance ensures stability for educational programming, particularly during periods of fiscal uncertainty or economic downturns. The cyclical nature of levy approvals necessitates the buildup of reserves to sustain operations between levy cycles. These reserves reflect conservative budgeting practices and the need to prepare for uncertainties. Temporary increases in cash balances were also driven by one-time federal ESSER stimulus dollars, not ongoing revenue. Lakewood Local School District (LLSD) is managing resources responsibly. Rather than engaging in excessive spending, we have carefully managed our budget to sustain essential programs despite rising costs in key areas such as: building maintenance and utilities; transportation; educational materials and technology; and special education services. We prioritize fiscal responsibility while continuing to meet the needs of our students.

Another key point in state budget discussions includes per-pupil funding and state funding guarantees. The initial budget proposed no increase in per-pupil funding (base cost) and reductions to "hold harmless" guarantees that protect districts from receiving less state money than in previous years. Lakewood is currently on a guarantee funding of $1.3 million in FY 2025. The guarantee is projected to grow to $2.1 million in FY 2026 with no increase in per pupil funding. Without an increase in per pupil funding (base cost), the state's per pupil share goes down and our guarantee continues to grow. Updates to current base cost is needed to stay aligned with the increases to property values and residents' income, which the state updates regularly in the formal calculations. The proposed budget is also looking to reduce guarantees which would reduce state funding to the district.

FY 2025 PER PUPIL BASE COST

The Base Cost Per Pupil is the amount the state determined that it costs to educate each child. The Per Pupil Base Cost for FY 2025 is $8,413. Of that amount, the state is paying LLSD 10% ($841), and the remaining 90% is paid by our local taxpayers. Local Capacity measures each school district's ability to raise revenue locally. This measure uses both property wealth and resident income in its calculation.



Did you know?

- Lakewood Local School District's Total Annual Budget is $36.2M.
- The LLSD Treasurer's Office has received the Government Finance Officers Association Award for 21 consecutive years.
- The last operating levy passed in the district was for 10.3 mills in 2022 (currently collecting at 7 mills).
- The district's current PreK-12 enrollment is 1,579.

If you have questions, please reach out to the District's Treasurer, Glenna Plaisted, at (740) 928-1928 or gplaisted@lakewoodlocal.k12.oh.us.

LAKEWOOD LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Planning Ahead

Learning Resources

- **Camp Invention Activities for Families:** https://www.invent.org/programs
- **The Works Event Calendar:** https://attheworks.org/calendar-events/
- **Highlights for Kids:** https://www.highlightskids.com/
- **Preparing for College:** www.lakewoodlocal.k12.oh.us/schools-page/lakewood-high-school/counseling-office
- **IXL (LMS student resource to practice math, social studies, science and ELA):** http://ixl.com/ (and login)

Remaining Key Dates for 2024-25 School Year

- **April 11-13:** *Seussical the Musical*
- **April 18**: No School (Good Friday)
- **May 4:** LHS Spring Choir Concert
- **May 8:** *Annie, Jr.*
- **May 21:** LMS Spring Choir Concert
- **May 23:** Graduation (6:30pm)
- **May 26:** No School (Memorial Day)
- **May 29:** Students' Last Day
- **Late Start Dates:**
  - April 30

www.lakewoodlocal.k12.oh.us/calendars.aspx

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