



— Lakeview Local Schools — **LAKEVIEW LEDGER**

January 2026

From the Desk of the Superintendent

Dear Lakeview Families,

Welcome to 2026. I hope you were able to slow down a bit over winter break and enjoy time with the people who matter most. As we begin the new year, I want to take a few minutes to share with you about recent legislation signed into law by Governor DeWine in December and what it means for Lakeview.



Here in Ohio, several bills were signed that significantly change how public schools are funded from property taxes. The impact is real, it's not abstract. When funding formulas are weakened, when local levies are put at risk, the pressure builds. We're asked to do more with less, to stretch further, to absorb it quietly and keep moving forward. But the truth is this: the warning signs are no longer hypothetical. They're right in front of us.

If the erosion of public education funding continues, it won't just hurt a system, it will limit opportunity for our students. It will show up in programs that build confidence and belonging. In classes that spark curiosity and future careers. In the support systems that catch kids before they fall behind.

The staff at Lakeview isn't giving up. We will continue to be here for every child who walks through our doors believing school should be a place of safety and growth. At the same time, we are asking those making decisions at the state level to truly look at what's happening in our schools, and we are asking our families and community to stand with us and advocate for public education in Columbus.

Thank you for continuing to support Lakeview and the students we serve every day.

At the end of this issue of the Lakeview Ledger, you can see an update from Treasurer Armstrong on how this new legislation will impact Lakeview.

Educationally,
Ashley Handrych
Superintendent

NEWS YOU CAN USE:

New Addition to the New Gym



Lakeview High School's new gym is now home to a state-of-the-art digital LED board that is already making a powerful impact on our student-athletes, fans, and community. Designed to celebrate Bulldog pride and elevate the game-day atmosphere, the board is being used to recognize our athletes, share highlights, and bring added energy to every home contest.

What makes this addition especially meaningful is how it came to life. The Lakeview Girls Basketball program is purchasing the board from the district and using it as a long-term fundraising opportunity to directly support the program. Rather than relying on short-term or traditional fundraisers, the LED board allows the program to generate sustainable support that benefits student-athletes throughout the season and beyond.

The board is featured prominently during games for player introductions, in-game recognition, special moments, and community features. It also provides an opportunity for local businesses, families, and community members to partner with Lakeview Athletics through advertising and shout-outs displayed during events. Funds raised will support uniforms, equipment, league fees, camps, summer opportunities, and resources for athletes in need.

Beyond fundraising, the board represents something bigger: investment in student experience. It adds excitement, builds pride, and creates a high-energy environment that our athletes feel the moment they step onto the court. Just as importantly, younger students sitting in the stands can now imagine their own names and photos on the screen one day, strengthening the future of the Bulldog program.

Community members or businesses interested in advertising on the LED board and supporting Lakeview student-athletes are encouraged to contact Girls Basketball Coach Jason Lee at jason.lee@lakeviewlocal.org.

Season of Service: Lakeview Students Spreading Joy Across Generations

Throughout the holiday season, Lakeview students embraced the true spirit of giving by participating in a variety of service activities that brought joy, connection, and meaning to our wider community. One especially powerful theme this season was the time our students spent at Ohio Living, where multiple student groups visited residents to share conversation, creativity, laughter, and companionship.

From art activities and games to simple moments of storytelling and listening, these visits created something special, an authentic connection between generations. For our students, stepping into Ohio Living offered a

meaningful opportunity to slow down, engage face-to-face, and learn from individuals whose life experiences span decades. For the residents, the presence of young people brought renewed energy, smiles, and a sense of being seen and valued during the holidays.

Bringing youth and elderly together is more than an act of service; it is a bridge between generations. These interactions strengthen our community by reminding us that connection does not have an age requirement. Students learn that service isn't always about grand gestures. In return, residents share wisdom, stories, and perspectives that students can't find in a textbook or on a Chromebook.



For our students, these experiences are rich with lessons that extend far beyond the holiday season. Time spent serving others helps build empathy, compassion, patience, and gratitude. Students begin to understand the impact of loneliness, the value of human

connection, and the responsibility we all share in caring for one another. Many walk away with a deeper appreciation for their own lives and a clearer understanding of how small acts can make a lasting difference.

These service opportunities reflect Lakeview's commitment to developing well-rounded students who lead with heart, character, and purpose. Whether through organized clubs, classes, or athletic teams, our students continue to demonstrate that being a Bulldog means serving others and strengthening the community we call home.

Attendance Matters: Partnering to Keep Students Learning Every Minute

Regular school attendance is one of the strongest predictors of student success. When students are present, they are connected to learning, to peers, to trusted adults, and to the routines that support growth both academically and socially. At Lakeview, we want our students with us for every minute of the school year, and we know that reaching that goal requires a strong partnership with families.

During the 2024–2025 school year, Lakeview's chronic absenteeism rate was 17.8%, meaning nearly one in five students missed a significant portion of instructional time. The Ohio Department of Education's target rate was 16.4%, and while we made progress, we did not meet that goal. This data matters, not as a label, but as a call to action.

It's important to understand how attendance is measured. Attendance is not just about full-day absences. Every minute counts. When students arrive late, leave early for appointments, or miss chunks of the day, that time is calculated cumulatively in hours and minutes across the year. Even small, seemingly routine absences can add up quickly and impact learning outcomes, classroom momentum, and student confidence.

The effects of chronic absenteeism are real. Students who miss school frequently are more likely to struggle academically, feel disconnected from school, and fall behind their peers. Just as importantly, consistent attendance helps students build habits of responsibility, resilience, and commitment, skills that extend far beyond the classroom.

Lakeview is actively working to improve attendance through targeted programs, student supports, and building-level initiatives focused on engagement and connection. We are reviewing data more closely, strengthening communication, and identifying ways to support students who may be struggling to attend regularly.

However, we cannot do this work alone. Parent and family partnership is essential. Families play a critical role in prioritizing school attendance, scheduling appointments outside of school hours when possible, encouraging punctuality, and communicating with schools when challenges arise. When schools and families work together, students benefit.

Our shared goal is simple and powerful: to have students present, engaged, and learning for every possible minute of the school year. By working together, we can reduce absenteeism, meet state goals, and, most importantly, give our students the consistency they need to thrive.

Chronic Absenteeism

17.8%

Of students were chronically absent in the
2024–2025 school year

Chronic absenteeism is defined as missing at least 10 percent of instructional time for any reason – excused or unexcused. The annual performance goal for the 2024–2025 school year is 16.4%.

Students Show Compassion Through Holiday Animal Shelter Project

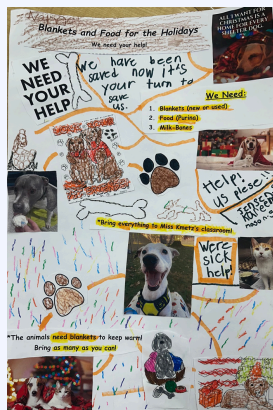


At the end of December, Mrs. Kmetz's class successfully completed their *Blankets and Food for the Holiday Shelter Project*, a service-learning initiative designed to support a local animal shelter during the holiday season. The project allowed students to make a meaningful impact while learning about responsibility, empathy, and community involvement.

Students were actively involved in every stage of the initiative. They began by writing persuasive letters to their principal, Mr. Mackiewicz to explain how and why their project was important. The class then met with him to discuss their plans and goals, gaining a better understanding of how community partnerships help support local organizations. To further promote the project, students created posters and spoke with other teachers to help spread the message throughout the school.

Thanks to their dedication, the school community responded generously. The class collected giant bags of food, warm blankets, toys, and treats to help care for animals at the shelter. In addition, more than \$70 in monetary donations was raised to further support the shelter's ongoing needs.

Through this project, students not only helped animals in need, but also developed important skills such as teamwork, communication, and leadership. Mrs. Kmetz's class demonstrated how compassion and initiative can make a lasting difference—especially for animals who need it most during the holiday season.



A Message from our Treasurer

It has been a pleasure to be part of Lakeview Schools my first five months here as Treasurer. I want to commend the students, staff and entire school community for their commitment to excellence. Not only does all of their hard work and support pay off with opportunities for growth and achievement but for the first time the State of Ohio has provided a performance supplement as part of school funding.

Due to the continued high achievement on academic performance measures here at Lakeview Local Schools the district is receiving \$73,861.73 in performance supplement funding. This "supplement" is in state law for this school year and next school year and we hope if it remains and that our district will continue to benefit from these funds.

We also continue to try and expand our leveraging of grant dollars in the district. This year we will receive over \$1.2 million dollars in grant dollars which helps fund several programs for students as well as has helped upgrade our high school building. We will continue to pursue all outside revenue to help provide opportunities for our students and meet financial needs of our district.

In future months we will provide additional information regarding the impact of the property tax reform approved by the legislature and signed into law by the Governor. Lakeview Local Schools is projected to continue receiving the same funding received in property taxes the first year of implementation due to the State of Ohio providing funds to supplement any loss of revenue year then will see less revenue from local property taxes each year.

According to the Legislative Service Commission in Ohio, Lakeview Local Schools is projected to receive -\$1,002,311 less annually in property tax revenue beginning in Tax Year 2026 and again in Tax Year 2027, totaling over \$2 million dollars less in that two-year period. These are preliminary numbers provided by the State of Ohio and we will update as we receive continued clarity.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact me at terry.armstrong@lakeviewlocal.org.

Respectfully,

Terry Armstrong, Treasurer
Lakeview Local Schools

Important Dates:

- ▶ JANUARY 14th : 5th Grade Band Concert, 6 PM
- ▶ JANUARY 19th: **NO SCHOOL**, MLK Day
- ▶ FEBRUARY 12th : K-8 Parent Teacher Conferences
- ▶ FEBRUARY 13th - 16th: **NO SCHOOL**, Presidents Day Weekend
- ▶ FEBRUARY 19th : LHS Parent Teacher Conferences
- ▶ FEBRUARY 26th : LHS Band Concert