

Inside Your Schools

Great Opportunities. Great Value.



LAKOTA'S NEW CAREER READINESS ACADEMY

Lakota East senior Ana Quezada isn't your typical 18-year-old. She has her own mortgage, car payment, and grocery bill, and a full-time job to cover it all.

That's precisely why Lakota's new Career Readiness Academy is the answer to her ambition to graduate and continue her education at the University of Cincinnati. "Without it, I'd have to choose between graduating and paying my bills," Ana said.

The alternative high school program, introduced as an option to both Lakota East and Lakota West students this year, is the definition of personalized education. While there is little flexibility in the graduation requirements (students are held to the same requirements as any other Lakota student), a more flexible format allows students like Ana to self-pace their education.

Most students spend about three hours a day on site working independently and with the Academy's small academic team. The remainder is spent online, matching their individual circumstances and goals.

"There's no cookie cutter profile for the type of student

who benefits from this option," said Academy Director Nicole Isaacs.

For some, she explains, the smaller environment conquers the social challenges that come with attending a large high school. (The Academy maintains its autonomy with a separate entrance and workspace inside Lakota West.)

For others, the flexible work schedule allows students to fulfill personal obligations that tend to compete with the traditional school day, like work or medical care. And still, for others, the access to one-on-one teacher support and a pace that matches their own allows them to catch up on credits.

"Our job is to make education accessible and personalized to every single student," said Lakota Acting Superintendent Robb Vogelmann. "Whether that comes in the form of advanced courses, fine art electives or an alternative program, it comes down to

creating options that will set any student up for success."

Soft skill development and regular exposure to post-graduation options are pillars to the Academy's focus on career readiness. At the start of their Academy experience, every student maps out a plan for reaching their personal definition of success.

"It's the smaller environment within a larger one that gives them the best of both worlds," said Isaacs, referencing main campus resources like the guidance office and extracurricular options. "It's that sense of family and community we're able to create here that makes some students feel more comfortable and accountable to their goals."



Ana Quezada is thriving at Lakota's Career Readiness Academy.

Scan with any mobile device to watch a video about Academy students' experiences.



STUDENT SUCCESS STORIES



Cameron Anderson

His Story: A senior with sophomore status when he came to the Academy, who is now on track to graduate with his class this spring.

Future Plans: Study marketing and business at Cincinnati State.

His Words: "I wouldn't have made it to graduation. It helped me do a full 180."



Payton Porterfield

His Story: A three-sport student-athlete juggling school work and responsibilities to help care for a family member.

Future Plans: Attend Hocking College on a football scholarship to study engineering.

His Words: "My teachers are like parents to me. They taught me that if I put my mind to it, I can get the job done."



Sierra Durante

Her Story: A junior overwhelmed by the sheer size and fast pace of main campus who has thrived in a smaller environment.

Future Plans: Pursue her passion for cars in the automotive industry.

Her Words: "The Academy staff really care about me and my future."

OTHER SUCCESS INDICATORS

Percentage improvement for Academy students' first semester compared to previous semester on main campus.

ATTENDANCE RATE
26%
INCREASE

COURSE CREDITS
22%
INCREASE

FIRST GRADUATES
2 DEGREES COMPLETED AFTER ONE SEMESTER IN PROGRAM.

Matt Miller, talks with Lakota staff before the Feb. 10 special board meeting where he was officially announced as the district's next superintendent.

(Photo courtesy of Journal-News, Greg Lynch)

Lakota Welcomes A New Leader

"I can already tell that Lakota is a special place where a high-quality education with ample opportunities for students trumps all else."

A highly competitive process and strong community input yielded an excellent outcome for the Lakota Board of Education's search for Lakota's next superintendent.



Matt Miller

Last month, the school board voted unanimously to employ Mr. Matt Miller as Lakota's next leader. He will join Lakota on an interim basis June 15, before

officially beginning his five-year contract as superintendent August 1.

"Mr. Miller is a visionary leader in public education who will not only help us create great opportunities for students, but will also maintain the great value our residents expect," said Board President Ben Dibble.

"He repeatedly demonstrated his commitment to using innovation and community partnerships as a means for maximizing student opportunities in a fiscally-conscious manner," Dibble continued. "We heard these same themes over and over again from our staff and

community feedback sessions."

The board began its search process in September by hiring K-12 Business Consulting Inc. as a consulting firm to help guide the board through this process and encourage educational leaders to apply for the position. The board then held more than a dozen listening sessions where stakeholders could share what characteristics they were looking for in the next leader.

The community also had the opportunity to share input with the board online. Hundreds of submissions ultimately shaped a candidate profile that attracted 17 leaders from across the Midwest to Lakota's candidate pool. The first round of interviews included a session with a cross-section of 24 community leaders including parents, staff, business partners and residents who provided feedback to the board.

"Mr. Miller distinguished himself as an energetic educator who could successfully lead our

district for many years to come," Dibble said.

In a letter to parents and community members, Miller shared his early impression of Lakota and his ambitions for its future.

"I can already tell that Lakota is a special place where a high-quality education with ample opportunities for students trumps all else," Miller said.

"I see what staff, parents and the larger community have all built together – through innovation, dedication and collaboration – and still the incredible potential that remains to provide an even better value to this community," he continued. "That kind of potential is possible only with the right combination of staff talent, parent engagement and community support – and I see all those qualities in the Lakota community."

Meet Matt Miller

An experienced educational leader with national acclaim and local ties.

12+ Superintendent experience spanning 12 years. Plus 11 more years of teaching and administrative experience.

Completed the Leadership Institute of Superintendents at the **Harvard Graduate School of Education.**



Named to the National School Boards Association's "Top 20 to Watch."

Selected to present at the White House for the #GoOpen initiative on behalf of the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Educational Technology.



A national speaker with **TEDx Talks.**



Bachelor's and master's degrees from the **University of Cincinnati.**

Grew up on west side of Cincinnati.

He and his wife, Kristy, have two children, including a junior and incoming freshman at the University of Cincinnati.



FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

FROM THE TREASURER

Strong and Stable Finances Produce Great Value



Over the last few years, Lakota Local Schools has made significant changes to the way we operate our schools. Thanks to the fiscally-conscious mindset we apply to every decision we make, we've not only met our levy commitments from 2013, we've exceeded them. Providing greater student opportunities while also restoring a stable outlook for our financial future, is no easy feat given today's school funding challenges. But it's all part of the great value Lakota provides to the community.

At Lakota we understand what it means to live within our means. That's why we spent \$13.8 million less last year than we did back in 2010 – all to maintain a balanced budget while still being able to create more opportunities for students. Even through the financial ups and downs of the last decade, Lakota has kept its 2013 promise to voters and held the line on expenditures to stabilize our financial outlook.

We've been able to keep these commitments by doing things differently. We've done things like restructure the school day for better efficiency and our staff members have

done their part by making changes to their compensation. We've introduced in our buildings a range of energy efficiency practices. We've re-financed bonds and taken advantage of lower interest rates to save taxpayers millions of dollars. We are even changing the way we collect school fees to be more efficient. Bottom line: We are doing things differently and it shows in our stable bottom line.

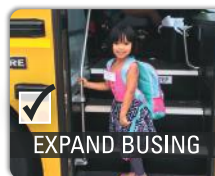
All of these things are prolonging Lakota's traditional levy cycle. Lakota's latest five-year forecast in October 2016 shows no signs of a need to return to the ballot through at least 2021. Eight years after our latest levy passage, that stands in stark contrast to Lakota's last cycle, when our first attempt came just five years later.

At Lakota we are committed to strong fiscal management. We have saved taxpayers millions of dollars by changing the way we operate our schools, we have met our 2013 levy commitments and stabilized our financial outlook, and we are extending the life of the levy well beyond previous levies. All of this, paired with a high-quality education, contributes to the great value our residents receive from their home school district.

JENNI L. LOGAN
Treasurer

MEETING & EXCEEDING
LAKOTA'S LEVY COMMITMENTS

The following represents just a sampling of Lakota's follow-through on the 2013 levy commitments approved by the community.



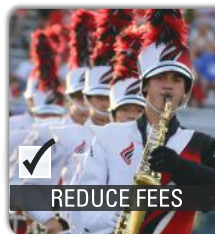
EXPAND BUSING

WE PROMISED

Expand transportation coverage areas to provide more than the state minimum in grades 2-6.

WE DELIVERED

Expanded busing beyond the post-levy coverage areas to positively impact even more students across more grade levels (K-8).



REDUCE FEES

WE PROMISED

To encourage more participation, introduce a family cap and reduce extracurricular fees for athletics, band and winter guard by \$150 (high school) and \$50 (junior high).

WE DELIVERED

Reduced fees by \$350 (high school) and \$200 (junior high), and cut new family cap amounts in half.



INCREASE SPECIALS

WE PROMISED

Add one day of art, music or PE in grades 4-6.

WE DELIVERED

Added grades 1-3 to expansion of specials, and added a technology rotation at all elementary grade levels.



BOOST SECURITY

WE PROMISED

Increase law enforcement presence and enhance school building security.

WE DELIVERED

Tripled number of school resource officers and modified 11 school entrances.



MODERNIZE

WE PROMISED

Expand and modernize curricular opportunities and enhance student experience through instructional technology.

WE DELIVERED

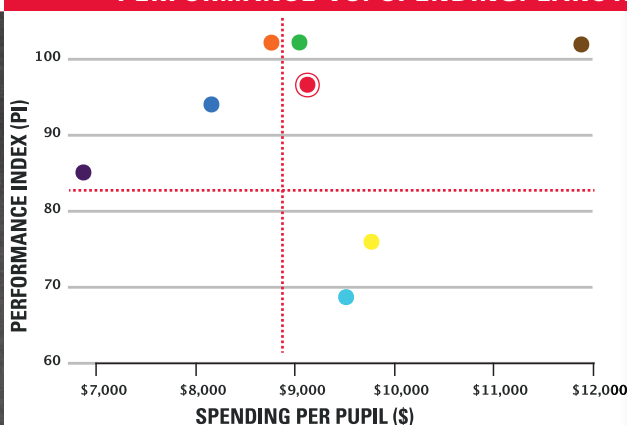
- New technology infrastructure to support thousands of new, modern devices.
- A Digital Learning Team providing standards-based support for staff's effective use of new technology.
- 5 new Advanced Placement courses.
- 3 four-year pathways for career exploration.
- 21 internship programs.
- 7 elementary STEAM labs.
- Alternative high school program.
- And more...

Great OPPORTUNITIES
+ Great FINANCES
= Great VALUE!

With a per-pupil spending rate comparable to the state average, Lakota's academic performance is well above the state average and even falls among the 20 percent of public districts with the highest academic performance index scores.

*Comparison districts represent combination of similar districts, both geographically and as ranked by the Ohio Department of Education.

PERFORMANCE VS. SPENDING: LAKOTA & AREA DISTRICTS*



STATE AVERAGE

Lakota School District
5572 Princeton Road
Liberty Twp., OH 45011-9726

Website: lakotaonline.com
Facebook.com/LakotaSchools
Email: lakota@lakotaonline.com
Phone: 513-874-5505 (Central Office)

Non-Profit Org.
US Postage
PAID
Cincinnati OH
Permit #967

DID YOU KNOW?

\$13.8 million

*is how much less Lakota
spent last year, as
compared to 2010.*

LAKOTA LOCAL SCHOOLS • lakotaonline.com

ECRWSS

Local

Postal Customer

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



2017 Fanfare Schedule

MARCH 17, 9 A.M. Cherokee Elementary	APRIL 7, 9 A.M. Independence Elementary
MARCH 20, 8:15 A.M. Adena Elementary	APRIL 18, 9 A.M. Heritage Elementary
MARCH 22, 7 A.M. Plains Junior	MAY 11, 8:15 A.M. Freedom Elementary
MARCH 24, 7 A.M. Ridge Junior	MAY 22, 9 A.M. Wyandot Early Childhood School
MARCH 27, 8:15 A.M. Woodland Elementary	MAY 24, 6:45 A.M. Lakota West Freshman
MARCH 27, 7 A.M. Liberty Junior	

STUDENT FANFARES

High Fives All Around

It's amazing the difference a crowd of cheers and high fives can make on a child's – and an adult's – day. That's the idea behind a new school-community tradition.

Lakota Local Schools, in partnership with the West Chester Liberty Chamber Alliance, has introduced this school year a new series of

fanfare events supporting student achievement through community engagement. The concept brings community and school leaders together to send a message of support to Lakota students during times like testing or the start of a new semester, for example.

Through the end of the school year, the district is

inviting Lakota parents, residents and businesses to join school staff for a fanfare-like welcome to school for students at each of its 22 schools. The group's task is a simple one: Line the school's entrance and give students high-fives and words of encouragement as they're filing into school.

HIRING

Join Lakota's Team

As Ohio's eighth largest public school district, every hiring season at Lakota is a busy one.

There are countless opportunities to do work that makes a difference in kids' lives. Lakota is seeking candidates of diverse backgrounds who are interested in a wide variety of both teaching and support positions. Opportunities range from substitutes to full-and part-time employment.

lakotaonline.com/employment

We're in need of:

- Cooks & cafeteria staff
- Coaches
- Custodians
- Instructional aides
- Maintenance staff
- Office personnel
- Registered nurses
- Teachers
- Transportation staff

In the Words of Our Community

"As a business, supporting our schools and our future workforce is really important to us. Plus, it was a really fun way to start the work day."
- Ron Hotchkiss, Manager, Valley Central Bank (Liberty Twp.)

"Not only did I get to jump start my day with a high energy boost of positivity, but I got to meet several district officials and local families."

- Margaret Del Favero, Family Placement Manager, College Nannies, Sitters and Tutors (Mason & West Chester)

