

FALL 2019

# Quality Profile

for the 2018-19 School Year

#WEareLak@ta

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Students at Heritage ECS with Superintendent Matthew Miller in the school's Wonder Lab.



**Matthew J. Miller**  
Superintendent

Front cover: Students at Independence Elementary School explore their new Innovation Hub.

## WE are Looking Back

As our mission statement says, everything WE do is designed to provide a future-ready, student-centered learning experience for Every Single Child. That is what we strive to do every day. We achieve this because WE are Personalized, WE are Future Ready, WE are Fiscally Responsible and WE are In This Together.

Through personalized learning and being future ready, we prepare our students for success in the four Es after graduation: Enrollment in higher education, Employment, Enlistment and Entrepreneurship. We do this by tailoring the instructional environment to meet individual needs – and through innovative and engaging learning, bolstered by the use of leading-edge technology.

This publication, our third annual Quality Profile report, highlights our student and staff achievements from the 2018-19 school year, and looks ahead to the future. Inside these pages, you'll learn more about how our vision applies to a Lakota education. Expanding opportunities like all-day kindergarten and real world learning, plus the expansion of digital

learning, are just a few examples of how WE are future ready. WE are personalized in the way we support our students by meeting their individual needs, embracing diversity and providing a safe and secure learning environment. Fiscal responsibility on a daily basis is how WE are able to expand the opportunities we provide for our students. However, we can't do all of this alone, which is why WE are in this together. From partnering with businesses to provide real world learning opportunities, to encouraging professional growth among our staff, WE must all work together for our kids.

Our children are more than just a test score. This publication takes a deeper look at the education Lakota Local Schools provides to our children. I hope that you find our Quality Profile informative. As always, WE are grateful for the support you give Lakota Local Schools and our students.

*Matthew J. Miller*

**Matthew J. Miller**  
Superintendent

### Lakota Local Schools Board of Education

Standing: Vice President Todd Parnell, President Julie Shaffer, Brad Lovell  
Sitting: Kelley Casper, Lynda O'Connor



## State and National Honors



### ODE's Momentum Award

For the fourth consecutive year, the Lakota district received the Ohio Department of Education's 2018 Momentum Award. Five schools also received this honor, while two early childhood schools were presented with the All A Award. Both awards recognize districts or schools that have received A's on all the state report card's value-added scores, which measure student growth over the last year.



### ISTE Technology Partnership

Lakota's continued work with the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) fast tracked the district to become one of just eight districts worldwide to pilot the new ISTE District Partnership. Chief Technology Officer Todd Wesley and his team were recognized for their district-wide rollout of the partnership at the ISTE conference in June.



### Step Up to Quality

Lakota's 2018-19 preschool program continued to be awarded five stars by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services and the Ohio Department of Education's Step Up to Quality (SUTQ) rating program.

### International Telly Award

*Somos Lakota* was one of just seven videos in the "Branded Content General Education" category to win an international bronze Telly Award. The video portrayed the personal experiences of Lakota students in the English as a Second Language program to help staff adopt more culturally responsive teaching practices.

### National Communication Technology Award

The National School Public Relations Association (NSPRA) presented Lakota Superintendent Matthew Miller with the 2019 Communication Technology Award for Superintendents. The award recognizes a superintendent for leadership in redefining, upgrading and integrating cutting-edge communication technology to expand outreach and engagement.

### National Personalized Learning Honors

Lakota was honored as one of Ed Elements' national award recipients at the 2019 Personalized Learning Summit in May. The "Team Habits for Team Success Award: For Building a Responsive Team" recognized the district for its swift action in establishing a structure that promotes organization-wide leadership in support of personalized learning.

WE are Achieving Excellence

## Lakota Snapshot

Lakota is the largest suburban public school district in southwest Ohio serving West Chester and Liberty Townships.

**23**

schools,  
grades pre-K-12

**63**

square miles



16,700 Students  
4,700 Employees



100% of students have access  
to innovative learning spaces



97% Graduation Rate  
- Class of 2018 -



98.5% Attendance Rate



94% of 3rd graders met Ohio's  
Third Grade Reading Guarantee



# Real World Learning

A host of district-level projects last year laid the foundation for making real world learning a cornerstone of the Lakota student experience.

## Completing the 4Es:

This past year, Lakota added "Entrepreneurship" to the list of options awaiting students after graduation. Programming now supports students' exploration of these 4Es:

EMPLOYMENT	ENROLLMENT	ENLISTMENT	ENTREPRENEURSHIP
<b>4,200</b> students participated in Butler Tech's satellite and on-campus trade programs.	<b>81%</b> of graduates pursuing higher education.	<b>812</b> college-level courses taken for credit.	<b>64</b> students committed to a branch of the U.S. military or a military academy.
			<b>COMING UP...</b> Lakota is developing a new Business Solutions pathway to include entrepreneurial course-work & skills training.

## Portrait of a Graduate

Inspired by input from students, parents, administrators and the district's business and community partners, the district completed Lakota's very own Portrait of a Graduate. The portrait, rolling out in the 2019-20 school year, is a visual reminder of the skills that every Lakota graduate should possess to successfully pursue one of the 4Es.

The goal is for graduates to not only possess these skills by the end of their senior year, but to have mastered them. That's why aspects of the Portrait will be incorporated into the Lakota learning experience from kindergarten to graduation.



## Expanding Opportunities

Expanding curricular offerings, across all grade levels, demonstrated Lakota's commitment to providing every student with ample opportunity to explore their passions and gain real world learning skills.



All-day kindergarten, without a lottery system, made its grand entrance into Lakota last year. Our youngest learners enjoyed a full range of specials, while also receiving increased enrichment and intervention. Lakota's kindergarten enrollment grew by about 170 students.



Students in grades K-6 enjoyed the return of **year-round specials**, enjoying activities in art, music, gym, STEAM/Wonder Lab, health/wellness or technology every day.



The junior schools saw **expanded electives**, like Media Design & Communication, to complement their new one-to-one technology program, while Lakota's high-schoolers began to help reimagine the high school experience. Teachers and students collaborated during a three-day LakotaNEXT design challenge last fall, working to design a high school master schedule that fosters more personalized learning.

## A National Collaborative

Lakota administrators and teachers spent last year helping to lead the Real World Learning Challenge Collaborative through Digital Promise's League of Innovative Schools. Lakota was **one of just five districts nationwide** tasked with creating a roadmap to help educators bring authentic, life-relevant opportunities into the classroom. The online tool is being launched in beta form this fall.



## Real World Learning in Action

Events like Lakota East's inaugural "4E Day" last year encouraged students to take an afternoon to explore the full range of post-graduation options available to them. More than 70 professionals represented both traditional and non-traditional career paths. Younger learners had similar opportunities, attending events like "Patriots Pick Day" at Independence and "Passion Project Day" at Cherokee (pictured above). Project-based learning activities double as real world learning too, including one at Liberty Junior that encouraged language arts students to put their research of an environmental issue into action.

WE are Future Ready



### COMING UP...

As a first step in bringing LakotaNEXT to life, high-schoolers received the option to take advantage of Lakota's expanding course offerings by extending their school day by one period during the 2019-20 school year. Lakota's new Cyber Academy, in partnership with Belcan, LLC, kicks off this year, giving 155 students the opportunity to earn up to six industry certifications in cyber security, a field expected to have about 3.5 million unfilled jobs by 2021.

# WE are EMPOWERED

WE are Future Ready

## Empowering Students & Staff

Lakota's WEareEmpowered initiative expanded access to personalized learning, purposefully supported by technology. The program's success hinges on three elements: student and staff devices, modern learning spaces and innovative instruction that uses technology as a tool.





TECHNOLOGY + MODERN LEARNING SPACES + INNOVATIVE INSTRUCTION = PERSONALIZED LEARNING

## 1:1 Device Rollout

The district's one-to-one technology pilot rolled out first at Lakota's four junior schools last fall, followed by grades 9-11 at the start of second semester. In all, Lakota issued district-owned Chromebooks to more than 6,500 students, giving them 24/7 access to a tool that encourages real world learning through communication, creativity, collaboration and critical thinking.

Lakota also launched its "WE are ConnectED" program, now supported by more than 30 local businesses that allow Lakota students to use their WiFi networks. Partners signal their participation with a "WE are ConnectED" decal in their window.

## Innovation Hubs

To further support personalized, future-ready learning, the media centers at all eight Lakota junior schools and high school campuses were reinvented last year. The new Innovation Hubs provide a flexible space for teachers and students to collaborate, innovate and learn.

Complete with virtual reality stations, sound recording studios, video production equipment inside green screen rooms, collaboration stations and even 3D printers, the spaces have been designed to foster creativity among students.

## COMING UP...

Starting in the 2019-20 school year, Lakota is expanding the 1:1 technology program to sixth-graders, giving this group access to their own device during the school day only (the same ones last year's eighth-graders used). Elementary students are exploring their old media centers turned Innovation Hubs, while Heritage ECS takes the lead as the pilot school for a similar transformation at the early childhood schools.

## Innovation Specialists

Last year, innovation specialists worked with teachers, inspiring them to consider how technology could transform learning in their classrooms. They also filled the important role of connecting teachers with the professional development they needed to use their new tools.

The result of their efforts were hundreds of new approaches to old lessons, like those used in both high schools' American Sign Language classes. East and West teachers discovered new ways to use technology to connect their students across campuses and apply their skills by signing back and forth without sound (pictured at right). Alternatively, English as a Second Language students at West Freshman School used virtual reality to tour common spaces like the grocery store and practice everyday language.



"Since the deployment of our devices, it has been evident that student learning is taking place at any time and in any place."  
- Jeff Rouff, Principal, Hopewell Junior School



"Students and staff are now empowered with access to open resources to further personalize the learning experience. Teachers are no longer the gatekeeper of content, but more the curators of creativity."  
- Ben Brown, Principal, Ridge Junior School



WE are Future Ready



4 athletic state championships, including East girls track pictured here, and 2 state runners-up hailing from Lakota East, plus 24 more state qualifiers at both East and West.

# Encouraging Exploration

Arts and athletics only scratch the surface on Lakota's wide range of electives and extracurricular experiences that encourage exploration beyond the classroom. Of course, awards and accolades are part of the success stories of such programs, but the most important lessons for students come in the form of soft skills like teamwork, communication and creativity.



**70** More than 70 after-school clubs and activities offered at Lakota's two high schools.



**600** 600 students participated in theater productions staged by Lakota's junior schools and high schools.



**7** Lakota students brought home 7 medals in the National Scholastic Art & Writing Awards, representing the top one percent of 340,000 national submissions.



**73** 73 student-athletes committed to playing their sport at the college level.



**1300** More than 1,300 students participate in Lakota's high school music programs.



**2** Both Lakota marching bands consistently earn superior ratings at the OMEA State Marching Band Finals and have had multiple finalist performances in Bands of America events.



**18** 18 East and West musicians were selected to participate in OMEA All-State Ensembles, and two West students were selected to perform with the NAfME All-National Honor Band.



**40** Both high school choir programs prepare a combined 40 performances at school and around the community.



**18** One of Lakota's Destination Imagination teams, "The Space Oddities," placed first at the state competition and tied for 18th out of 77 teams at Global Finals.



# Supporting our Students

## Gifted Learners

Thirty-five percent of all Lakota students have been identified as gifted learners in the areas of reading, math, social studies, science and cognitive. Lakota challenges their learning through an extensive gifted education program.

Clustering in language arts (grades K-5), advanced math classes (grades 3-5) as well as Tutoring and Enrichment (grade 6) bolsters advanced learning during the primary grades. At the secondary level, students are enrolled in advanced coursework to support their gifted learning.

## Students with Disabilities

Lakota's 2,021 students with disabilities are supported by intervention specialists, school psychologists, instructional aides, a behavioral specialist and a parent mentor. Twenty-eight specialized learning environments include:

- 10** social communication classrooms.
- 15** multiple disabilities classrooms providing instruction in academics, basic life skills and communication.
- 3** classrooms that focus on behavioral and emotional disabilities.

## English Language Learners

Lakota promotes a welcoming and equitable experience for all students, and a culture that values diversity in all its forms through inclusive dialogue, interpersonal experiences, intercultural appreciation, and targeted professional development. During the 2018-19 school year, services for our English Language Learners were expanded to every Lakota school.

“By accessing our ESL services, students are supported as they grow in both their knowledge of their new environment as well as their receptive and expressive communication skills.”

– Margaurita Cueva, Ridge Junior School  
English as a Second Language Specialist



Students visit the Wonder Lab to broaden their learning.

**35%**  
Gifted Learners

**74 + 115 = 189**  
Whole Grade Accelerated      Subject Accelerated      Accelerated Students



The district's Work Study program allows students with special needs to learn employment skills while also gaining experience in a social setting.

74 students were placed at 42 local companies, including Lakota schools and Central Office.



Students at Endeavor Elementary School celebrate their heritage at their annual Culture Day.

WE are Personalized



# Building a Positive Culture

## LODI

The Lakota Outreach Diversity and Inclusion (LODI) department works tirelessly to ensure that every student is part of a safe, secure and supportive learning environment that is free from all forms of discrimination, harassment and intimidation. LODI's "Champions for Change" division, comprised of representatives from every school, meets regularly for training on topics like cross-cultural communication, understanding poverty and barriers to the achievement gap. These leaders are charged with sharing their learnings and strategies with the rest of their colleagues, promoting a culture of empathy and understanding among all students and staff.



*In partnership with Lakota's District Parent Council and PTA/PTOs, LODI has built a resource pantry at every school. Through donations, each pantry is stocked with snacks, school supplies and personal hygiene items that students may need during the school day.*

## E+R=O

Starting with our youngest learners through our seniors, students and staff learn that E+R=O (en event + your reaction = outcome). This model encourages our students and staff to press pause and consider how their response might affect the outcome.



## WE are Diverse

**33%**

of students are non-caucasian or of a different ethnic background

**5%**

of students identify English as a second language

**12%**

of students speak a language different than English at home

**55**

languages are spoken by Lakota families

**20%**

of students are economically disadvantaged



## COMING UP...

Twenty-six teachers embarked on a 16-week program to learn what it means to be a culturally responsive teacher. To earn a CRT certification, teachers presented a project on what they learned. They will share their project with their teaching teams and implement it in the 2019-20 school year.



# Keeping Safety Top of Mind

## Safety & Security

The number one priority at Lakota Local Schools is the safety and security of its students and staff. Safety plans are never complete, with the District Safety Committee meeting throughout the year to evaluate protocols. The committee, comprised of school and district administrators, school resource officers and first responders, continues to implement best practices at Lakota. Safety drills, drug searches, safe and secure entrances and strict visitor guidelines are only a few of the district's safety protocols.



During the 2018-19 school year, new initiatives were introduced and several current ones expanded. In the fall, the district introduced Raptor, a visitor management system that runs an instant background check on every visitor at each school.

## School Resource Officers

Through its partnership with the Butler County Sheriff's Office and West Chester Police Department, the district increased the number of school resource officers (SRO) from 10 to 18, placing one full-time law enforcement officer on every campus.



Deputy Doug Hale, school resource officer at Lakota East High School, was named Deputy of the Year by the Butler County Sheriff's Office. The school celebrated the announcement by holding a "ticker tape" parade down Main Street in Hale's honor.



Partnering with Greater Cincinnati's Grant Us Hope, Hope Squads have been established at both main and freshman campuses of Lakota East and West. This peer-to-peer suicide prevention program trains student-nominated members to identify at-risk students, provide friendship and seek help from an adult. During the 2018-19 school year, Hope Squad members made 11 referrals to school counselors.



Lakota's partnership with MindPeace continued to grow, increasing student access to high-quality and affordable mental health services. The gradual rollout expanded to 15 schools with over 200 students accessing care during the school year. The partnership helps place a licensed therapist in our schools without any financial investment by the district.

### COMING UP...

The district invested in 1,200 Bearcade Door Locking Systems for classrooms at the start of the 2019-20 school year. This time-saving device allows teachers to secure their classrooms within seconds, should the need arise.

Cameras at both high schools have been upgraded and plans are being made to continue this work at junior schools during the school year. The district will continue to upgrade cameras at the primary buildings in the coming years.

In June, district administrators and representatives from every building participated in the first-ever county-wide safety exercise. One of 11 districts, Lakota's safety plans were put to the test in this active-shooter simulation.

WE are Personalized



# Community Connections



## Coffee Chats & Community Conversations

The superintendent continued hosting monthly community coffee chats, giving parents and residents an opportunity to learn more about what's happening in the schools, ask questions or share thoughts and ideas. For the seventh consecutive year, Community Conversations gave the Lakota school board and district leaders an opportunity to get feedback and gauge the community's values around public education. All together, this multi-year listening program has amounted to over 200 community meetings.



## State of the Schools

As part of its commitment to being transparent with the community and providing an update on district accomplishments and future plans, Lakota hosted its second annual State of the Schools address last March. Following a new school showcase that put on display innovative learning practices at each of Lakota's 23 schools, Superintendent Matthew Miller was joined by several student and staff presenters.



## Philanthropy

Lakota schools partner with countless local and national causes all year long to share their talents and make a difference in the lives of others. Last fall's district-wide food drive stuffed nearly four school buses with about 35,000 pounds of canned goods and other non-perishable items, enough to stock the shelves at Reach Out Lakota through the winter months. Since 2017, over 700 staff have contributed more than \$64,000 to local causes through "Casual for a Cause," a staff giving program that turns the tradition of casual Fridays into an overwhelming display of community support.

In 2018-19

**27**

community listening sessions

**139**

district-level parent & community engagement events

**173**

articles posted to the district website

**2.3 Million**

email messages delivered

**17,700**

social media followers

**12,000**

downloads of Lakota's new mobile app

# Partnerships with a Purpose

Real world learning can happen inside or outside of the classroom. From project mentors and classroom guests to tours and internship experiences, we appreciate our community partners who choose to invest in our students and give them another outlet for exploration.

## Internships

Ali Wolfe Photography joined Lakota's growing portfolio of 20-plus internship partners. Their year-long internship gave students hands-on experience in not only photography best practices, but also the requirements of small business ownership.



## Guest Speakers

A first-ever 10-week medical speaker series, hosted by UC Health West Chester Hospital, brought a range of medical professionals to both Lakota East and Lakota West high schools to introduce students to their industries and answer questions.



## Project Mentors

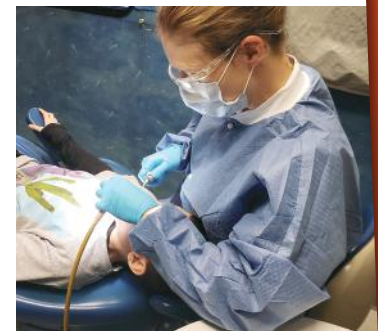
The science department at Plains Junior School partnered with a local manufacturer of fluid power technology, Hydrotech, to bring the National Fluid Power Action Challenge to the school. Designed to introduce students to fluid power careers, it demonstrated the real world application of technology like hydraulics and pneumatics.



## Programs & Services

A new partnership with the Primary Health Solutions Mobile Dental Program provided many early childhood and elementary school students with a full dental exam without ever having to leave their school.

The MidPointe Library West Chester put a new spin on the traditional school media center experience, rolling its bookmobile up to every K-6 school every few weeks.



**230+** business partners, compared to 20 the previous year

**300%** attendance growth from business partner kick-off to year-end celebration

“ My sincere desire is to help everyone understand that the road available is not a one way street through college or higher education. There are many ways to achieve success and fulfillment in your life after high school. ”

– Brian Miller, Farmers Insurance Group, Lakota East 4E Day guest speaker

WE are In This Together

# Encouraging Professional Growth

Lakota recognizes that some of the best educational practices are embedded in our staff's everyday teaching.

That's why we've created opportunities throughout the year for staff to take the lead, share their work and collaborate with their peers district-wide as well as at the regional, state and national levels.



At last year's Ohio School Boards Association Capital Conference, students and administrators presented their experience in bringing Hope Squads to Lakota.

**24**

average hours, per employee, spent participating in district-led Lakota Learning Days

**15**

staff-led, district ed chats on Twitter last year

**60%**

of staff have worked at Lakota at least 5 years

**77%**

of teachers have earned advanced degrees

**14**

years average teaching experience

## Lakota Learning Days

Lakota Learning Days are professional development days led by staff and for staff. Two district-wide learning days last year featured nearly 160 sessions hosted by Lakota staff. Two others consisted of collaboration among buildings of similar grade bands.



## Summer Learning Series

Every Wednesday throughout the summer, Lakota innovation specialists hosted learning sessions for teachers planning for the upcoming school year. More than 120 teachers representing every Lakota school attended the weekly help sessions, amounting to nearly 1,300 hours.



## Chamber U

Last year was the kick-off for the Chamber University Leadership Academy (CULA), a collaboration of the West Chester Liberty Chamber Alliance with Cincinnati State and Lakota Local Schools. The program, which included a mix of administrators and local business people, offered leadership skills that can be carried into the schools to positively impact students.



## COMING UP...

Next summer, Lakota has been asked to host 2,000-plus educators at the Summer Institute for High AIMS, a consortium of 30 public school districts in southwest Ohio.

WE are In This Together

# Good Financial Stewards

Choosing to operate in a fiscally responsible way allows us to provide exceptional academic offerings to our students, while continuing to be good stewards of our residents' tax dollars.

## Lower Taxes.

By refinancing and lowering our debt service payments in a growing community, the amount of taxes we collect from individual residents and businesses has lowered, decreasing Lakota's bond millage by one mill.

## Honored.

Lakota earned the prestigious Auditor of State Award with Distinction for the fifth consecutive year, one of the highest financial honors at the state level for outstanding financial accountability.

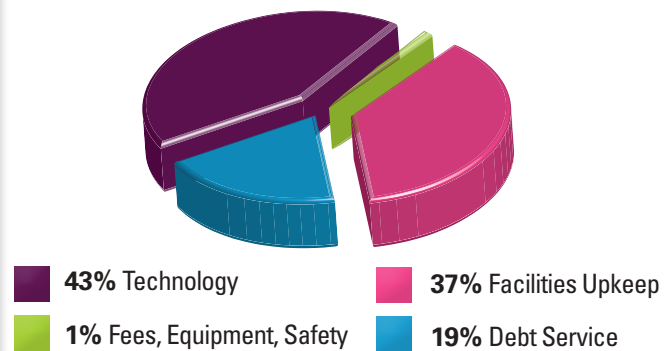
## Highly Rated.

Lakota continues to receive an Aa1 bond rating by Moody's Investors Service, one of the highest possible bond ratings.

“Our excellent financial health and the re-prioritizing of expenditures has allowed us to expand the educational opportunities for our students without raising taxes.”

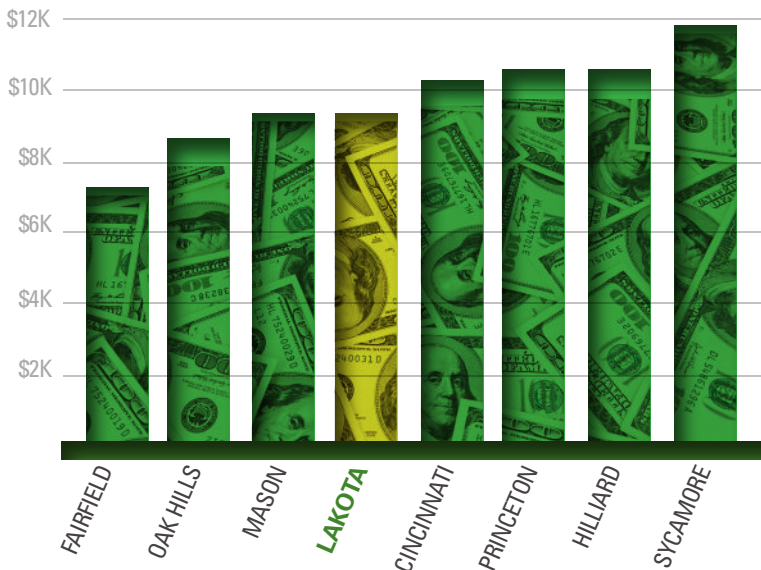
–Jenni L. Logan, Treasurer/CFO

### PERMANENT IMPROVEMENT EXPENSES



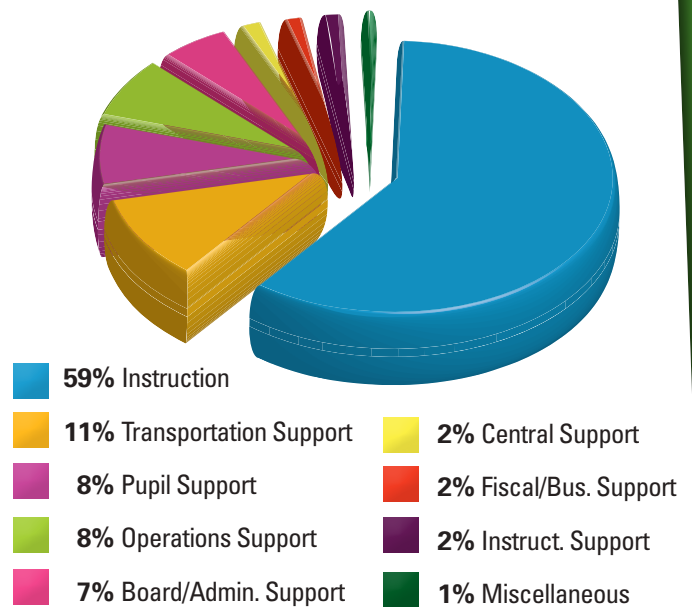
We spend 80% of our permanent improvement fund on technology and the upkeep of our facilities.

### SPENDING PER PUPIL



Lakota's per pupil spending is on par with similar districts, evidence that we know how to live within our means.

### GENERAL FUND EXPENSES BY AREA



69% of our general fund is spent on instruction, pupil and instructional support.

WE are **Fiscally Responsible**



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## WE are Here for YOU



A Tribute to Our Why



Matthew Miller  
Superintendent

Jenni Logan  
Treasurer/CFO



**We are Here for You**  
A series capturing our "why"



**A Look Around Lakota**  
Monthly video updates



**Somos Lakota**  
International Telly  
Award winner



**Why WE are Lakota**  
What makes Lakota  
a special place



### 2018-19 Highlights

Scan the QR codes to see what made last  
school year a year to remember!



Search for "Lakota Local Schools"  
on YouTube to watch more  
Lakota stories unfold.



**WE are Future Ready**  
Media centers turned  
Innovation Hubs



**Educators of Excellence**  
Meet last year's top  
educators



**Honor Flight Tri-State**  
Honoring our veterans



**WE are All in  
This Together**  
School bus karaoke  
Lakota style