

# **Quality Profile**

for the 2024-2025 School Year

Lakota's Quality Profile goes beyond the metrics of the State's annual report card, offering a broader look at the student experience and last year's biggest successes - plus a sneak peek at what's coming up in the year ahead.

### Lakota students continued to *Shine* on the national stage last school year.

The National Cyber League (NCL) competition included nearly 4,900 teams from high school and collegiate programs, as well as industry professionals. **Lakota Cyber Academy** teams from both East and West placed in the top 10 among all 600 high school teams and top 50 overall. Eight students ranked in the top 100 individually; Lakota East and West both earned top spots in the NCL Power Rankings; and West senior Lorenzo Karuppan earned one of just six spots in the National Cyber Signing Day line-up. The **Lakota East Animatronics Team** also took the top spot at the Technology Student Association national competition over the summer.

Students were celebrated for their creative achievements, too. The **Lakota East Spark newsmagazine** brought home its 18<sup>th</sup> National Pacemaker award from the National Scholastic Press Association, along with a Silver Crown Award from the Columbia Scholastic Press Association. **Lakota's Visual Arts program** saw six students earn Gold and Silver Key awards through the National Scholastic Art and Writing competition. East senior Grace Allan was selected as one of five nominees for the American Visions Award.

Some of our youngest learners represented Lakota at the national level too. Elementary teams from Adena and Union earned top-10 national honors in the **WordMasters Challenge**, showcasing exceptional vocabulary and critical thinking skills. Plus, Cherokee sixth grader Rujva Patel tied for spot No. 20 among 250 students who competed in the **National Spelling Bee.** 



**WordMasters Challenge** 







Lakota Cyber Academy



**Lakota East Animatronics Team** 

### TOGETHER

WE Can...



Lakota East Spark Newsmagazine





**Lakota Visual Arts Program** 

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# A MESSAGE FROM THE Superintendent

As we release this year's Quality Profile alongside the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce's state report card, we celebrate the collective spirit of our district — where "Together, WE can..." was a focus for the 2024-2025 school year.

This publication offers a broader, more personal view of the educational experiences and achievements that shape our schools and community, both last year and into the future.

Last year's theme, "Together WE can...", reflected our belief in the power of collaboration. It was a year defined by unity, innovation and shared purpose. Our staff, students, families and community partners came together to support personalized learning, a key pillar of our strategic plan. This approach ensures that every student receives the tailored support they need to succeed; it continues to guide our work in the new school year.

One of the qualities that contributes to our district's success is our unwavering commitment to educating the whole child. Our students thrive not only in the classroom, but also in the arts, athletics, extracurricular activities and community service. These experiences help build character, foster empathy and develop essential life skills. Their achievements extend beyond our district. Many of our students have earned recognition and accolades at the state level and beyond, demonstrating excellence in academics, fine arts and athletics. These accomplishments reflect the strength of our programs and the dedication of our staff to nurturing well-rounded individuals.

Our dedicated teachers and staff are the heart of our success. Their creativity, compassion and commitment to individualized instruction empower students to reach their full potential. Robust support systems

further ensure that every learner has access to the resources and guidance they need.

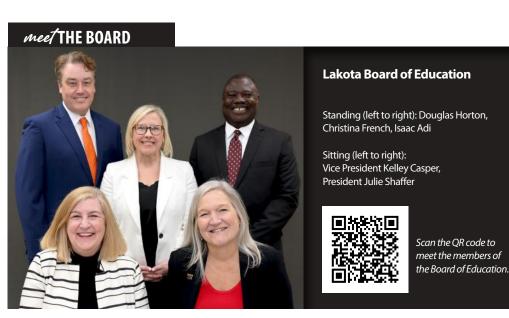
As we look ahead, our vision for a future-ready, student-centered learning experience remains strong. This year, we continue to build on the qualities that define Lakota, while embracing new opportunities for growth and innovation. This will culminate in a new strategic plan, with work beginning later this school year.

We also recognize that our school buildings play a vital role in supporting the programming we offer. The District has proposed a Master Facilities Plan (MFP) that includes additions, renovations and gradeband shifts. Details about the plan can be found on our website: www.lakotaonline.com/MFP.

Together, we celebrate the qualities that make our district exceptional—and look forward to another year of learning, leading and growing, as WE build OUR future, one piece at a time.

Dr. addey White

**Dr. Ashley Whitely**Superintendent





# MAXIMIZING potential

We strive to support students at every stage of their educational journey. This means offering students tailored supports that meet their individual needs and maximize their potential.





### **ABOUT MTSS**

MTSS, or Multi-Tiered Systems of Support, is Lakota's main driver behind personalized learning, tracking the trends behind students' academic, social and behavioral progress to help inform decisions.

Lakota's K-8 staff lean on a tool called Branching Minds. The resource helps track everything from attendance and discipline records to academic and mental health supports for every single student. Educators can more methodically make programming and resource decisions based on what the data says is and isn't working for any given student.

Last year, Lakota used Branching Minds data to create 2,549 personalized plans supporting student progress in reading, math and behavior skills.



#### EXDI VINING THE

### Report Courd Components

### ACHIEVEMENT

Measures overall student performance on state tests against established thresholds for core content areas. It is based on the District's Performance Index, which is calculated by categorizing students into one of seven weighted categories, based on their performance.

Of Note: Students who do not take state tests because they opt out or are absent automatically score a zero and impact the final score.

### PROGRESS

Measures overall student growth from one year to the next, compared to the State's threshold for expected growth. It is based on scores in English language arts (ELA), math and science for grades 4–8 and ELA II, algebra I, geometry, biology, American history and government for high-schoolers.

### **GAP CLOSING**

Measures how well sub-groups of students are meeting performance expectations through their state tests, as compared to *all* students. Subgroups include those detailed in the "Past to Present" chart on page six of this publication.

Of note: Beyond the subgroups' performance and growth on ELA and math tests, also weighing into the final grade are factors like graduation rates and chronic absenteeism improvement.

# MAXIMIZING potential -

### **SIGNS OF SUCCESS**

#### **ATTENDANCE**

Because attendance is directly tied to a student's academic success and Lakota's performance on the state report card, it is a major data point monitored and addressed through Lakota's MTSS efforts. Over the last two years, Lakota's rate of chronic absenteeism (students absent 10% or more) dropped from 16% to 13.6%, still well below the state average.

### 2024-2025 CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM

**LAKOTA** 

13.6%

STATE **AVERAGE**  25.1%

#### **EARLY LITERACY**

addition to their core instruction.

Through continuous data review, Lakota's approach to early literacy is truly personalized. Last year, every K-12 teacher and licensed administrator completed training on the Science of Reading, the evidence based research the Ohio Department of Education and



Workforce requires schools to follow for literacy instruction. Phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, comprehension and fluency are delivered through whole-group and targeted small-group instruction. Lakota also introduced new instructional materials for English language arts in grades K-6.



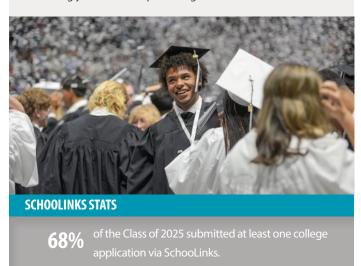
### MATH GROWTH

In grades K-8, 83% of Lakota students performed above the national 25th percentile on the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) math assessment.

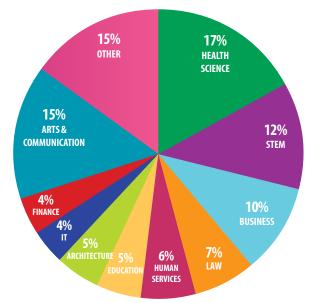
This means they scored in the average or above average range.

### **FUTURE PLANNING**

Lakota gives students in grades 7-12 access to SchooLinks, a personalized tool for college and career readiness. The online platform assists students with exploring career interests and post-graduate options, then planning their Lakota classes accordingly to meet their personal goals.



Since introducing SchooLinks two years ago, 10,000 over 10,000 Lakota students have set career goals within the platforms.



LAKOTA STUDENTS' TOP CAREER CLUSTERS

### COMING UP...

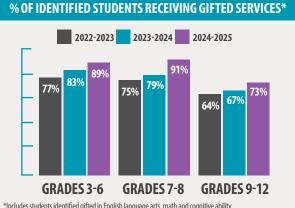
and grade-band shifts that will help decrease class sizes.

### **GIFTED SERVICES**

The more we invest in *all* of our teachers to teach at just the right level for every single student - the more *all* students win.

This philosophy has guided Lakota's unique approach to Gifted Services in recent years. By giving more teachers the training they need to differentiate their teaching and challenge the students in their classroom who need more rigorous work, the wider we can cast our net to serve more gifted students across more classrooms.

This commitment to training, combined with more advanced level course options and a concerted effort to get more students on an advanced path earlier, has yielded big results for Lakota. More and more students are participating in higher level learning - and more importantly, they are showing high rates of academic achievement and growth.



\*Includes students identified gifted in English language arts, math and cognitive ability.

### ADVANCED COURSE ENROLLMENT **HS ADVANCED COURSE OPTIONS GRADES 6-8 GRADES 9-12** 63 60 4,604 2022-2023 7.581 2022-23 2023-24 2024-25 5,140 **AP STUDENTS EARNING 3 OR HIGHER** 2023-2024 8,146 7,264 2024-2025 9,251 86% 2024-2025 2022-2023: 75% 2023-2024: 83%









### COMING UP...

impact the future of gifted education. The changes, to be implemented during the 2025-2026 school year, will naturally complement Lakota's current gifted education model. Changes such as more collaboration between educators and parents and among a district's gifted service providers have the potential to further amplify the impact of Lakota's current systems and processes for delivering gifted education.

### empracing DIVERSITY

Part of creating a welcoming and personalized learning space for every single child is responding to student differences. Lakota offers a range of supports to address unique needs driven by language barriers, socioeconomic status, physical and cognitive ability and more.

### **SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES**

Lakota is committed to meeting the unique needs of students with disabilities. This responsibility extends beyond students attending a Lakota school, meeting the needs of homeschooled and parochial students too, for example. Within each of the disability categories, the continuum of services - or the different delivery models to provide specially designed instruction - is personalized to each student via an Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Over the past several years, Lakota has responded to a significant increase in the identification of students with autism. In fact, autism accounts for about 20% of all Lakota students with disabilities, putting Lakota about eight percent higher than the state average. Many students with autism require highly specialized services and support. This has implications for additional teaching staff, related services, classroom space and specialized training.

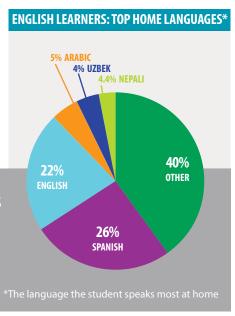
#### K-12 STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES BY CATEGORY **12%** SPEECH/LANGUAGE DISABILITIES 18.6% 8.7% ALL OTHER DISABILITIES\* OTHER HEALTH **IMPAIRMENT** 4.4% MULTIPLE DISABILITIES \*Deafness, Deaf-Blindness, **4%** EMOTIONAL DISTURBANCE 20.2% Hearing Impaired, Traumatic Brain Injury, Orthopedic Impairment, Visual Impairment (including **AUTISM 3.6%** INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES blindness) and developmental 28.7% During the 2024-2025 school year, Lakota also provided services to 202 preschoolers with disabilities.

### ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS

Eight community liaisons actively work in Lakota's schools daily to help fulfill basic needs for our district's rapidly growing population of economically disadvantaged students. This work involves partnering with numerous local agencies and even efforts like the daily summer lunch program hosted by Lakota Child Nutrition, which delivered over 1,700 meals to Lakota students in need last summer.

### **ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS**

(ELs), about 10% of the total student population, speak 76 different languages.



### WE celebrate OUR DIFFERENCES

of students are non-Caucasian or of a multicultural background.

of students are economically disadvantaged.

of students in grades 2-12 identify as gifted.

of families identify a language other than English as their home language.

of students receive services for their disabilities.

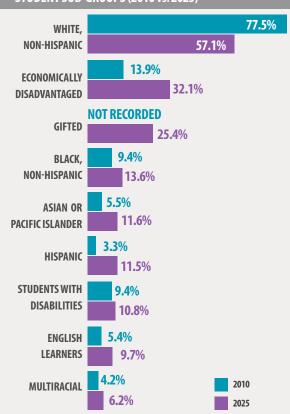
of students identify English as a second language.

home languages identified by Lakota families.



### **PAST TO PRESENT**

### STUDENT SUB-GROUPS (2010 vs. 2025)



### supporting our students

Personalized learning also includes prioritizing the safety, health and well-being of every student.



### SCHOOL NURSES & CLINICS

Lakota is fortunate that every school clinic is staffed by a full-time registered nurse. These individuals are vital to meeting the daily health needs of our students, serving not only as medical professionals but also as advocates for the well-being and safety of all students and staff.

### In 2024-2025, school nurses managed:

**74,240** clinic visits

25,466 treatments

**57.106** medication administrations

**20.255** health screenings

**R** CPR certification classes for Lakota staff

### COMING UP...

### **Safety and Security**

For the first time, Lakota dedicated an entire all-staff professional development day this September to school safety training. This ful day initiative reflects our priority to creating safe, secure learning environments for every student and staff member.

Lakota's Master Facilities Plan calls for renovations to all remaining schools, including the addition of safe and secure entrances at locations where the main entry leads right into the front office, improvements to ADA compliance and other safety features. Fewer schools would allow Lakota to designate one school resource officer (SRO) for every school. Some SROs are currently shared between schools





### **MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORTS**

Strong mental health plays a vital role in a student's growth and success. Programs supporting this mission include:

- A partnership with MindPeace to place at least one licensed therapist in every school (27 total), providing students with onsite access to high quality and affordable mental health services at no cost to Lakota.
- Eleven therapy dogs that provide cognitive, social, emotional and physical support to both students and staff.
- "Sources of Strength" and "Hope & Strength" are peer-topeer, student-led programs in the junior and high schools, respectively. The after-school program promotes positive school culture, healthy decision-making and mental health awareness.



### 2024-2025 Impact

**1,100** students referred for school-based therapy.

students received school-based group prevention through Envision Partnerships.

students assisted with grief support by our partners at Companions on a Journey.

243 reports of student suicide ideation or self-harm

successful student transitions to local treatment centers for partial and inpatient hospitalizations as a result of an increased focus on collaborating with other area mental health providers.





### BUILDING BRIGHTER futures

Preparing students for life beyond high school is more than a goal – it's a shared commitment. The Portrait of a Lakota graduate outlines the essential skills that every graduate should possess to pursue a path toward Enrollment, Enlistment, Employment or Entrepreneurship.

Nearly 39% of first-time college students do not complete their degree within eight years, underlining the importance of sharing all post-graduation options.

# **EMPLOYMENT**

campus or participated in a satellite course

offered at a Lakota school.

students with disabilities received on-the-

job training through the District's work

study program, thanks to 18 local business

partners and 12 Lakota schools.

### **ENROLLMENT**

### **ENLISTMENT**

### **ENTREPRENEURSHIP**



3,600+

College Credit Plus courses were taken by Lakota students, earning a collective 11,000 college credits and saving over \$900,000 in tuition for Lakota families.

of Lakota East and West 2024 graduates are pursuing higher education and were offered over \$12 million in scholarships.

Lakota seniors were celebrated in Military Commitment ceremonies for committing to serve our country after graduation by joining a branch of the military or attending a military academy.

hours of mentorship were provided by business partners to support Lakota's INCubatoredu@Lakota entrepreneurship classes. These high school students develop their own products or services and present them during "Pitch Night," where they compete for funding to bring their ideas to life.

Lakota joined the Greater Cincinnati Business Advisory Council to expand internship, career exploration and work-based learning opportunities for high school students.

#### **RISE UP**

Lakota continues to partner with the National Retail Federation's RISE Up program as an alternative graduation pathway for seniors. Taught by a collaboration between Lakota and Butler Tech teachers, students learn customer service, math and interviewing skills, as well as an understanding about retail industry fundamentals.

Once again, Lakota students enrolled in RISE UP had a 100% success rate, earning this valuable 12-point industry credential.



Students will have access to an online experienceship platform called LinkedUp Connect to provide realworld learning experiences.

### **EXPLAINING THE**

Report Card Components

### GRADUATION

The state report card measures both the four- and five-year graduation rates, which are calculated by the number of students who graduate within four or five years of starting ninth grade.

### OLLEGE, CAREER, WORKFORCE AND MILITARY READINESS

This is the first year the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce has scored the College, Career, Workforce and Military Readiness (CCWMR) component on the state report card. This grade, designed to measure the preparedness of a graduating class, is based on how many graduates engage in at least one of the required experiences. This includes earning at least 12 College Credit Plus (CCP) credits, earning a minimum remediation-free score on the ACT or SAT, enlisting in the military or earning one of the six honors diplomas, just to name a few.

000000000

Lakota continues to expand CCP offerings to maximize student credits and opportunities to earn industry certifications. The District is also exploring additional industry credential options beyond those offered through Rise Up. These opportunities help Lakota students be better prepared for their post-graduation plans and improve their likelihood of success and degree completion.



### Where Exploration Meets Education

Lakota's new K-2 English language arts curriculum blends traditional instruction with hands-on learning labs, giving students time to apply and explore concepts creatively. Following classroom instruction, students move to the labs where they deepen their knowledge with a hands-on activity. Teachers report increased engagement, with students confidently using academic language and making meaningful connections to their lessons.



### Hands-On Learning Builds Real-World Understanding

Fifth graders at Independence Elementary got a hands-on lesson in democracy by participating in a virtual Senate simulation hosted by the Edward M. Kennedy Institute. Students took on the roles of U.S. senators—researching legislation, hearing from expert witnesses and debating a bill about extending the school day. The experience culminated in a vote, where students thoughtfully considered an amendment to eliminate homework in exchange for longer school hours. This immersive activity brought government to life, helping students connect classroom learning to real-world civic engagement.





### **Creative Thinking Meets Core Math Concepts**

"Next Generation Stats" is transforming how junior school students experience math by connecting classroom concepts to real-world projects. From designing 3D cities to simulating the stock market, students are applying geometry, algebra and statistics in creative, hands-on ways. The course emphasizes personalized learning, collaboration and critical thinking—helping students build confidence and see math in everyday life. Teachers are already seeing the impact, with students making meaningful connections between the elective and their core math classes.





### **Building Pathways to Student Success**

Lakota high school students benefit from a wide range of advanced and career-focused courses, including 25 AP classes and 18 College Credit Plus options. Electives in fields like engineering, Artificial Intelligence, cybersecurity, biomedical science, business and digital media help students apply learning to real-world interests. These opportunities build college readiness and career skills. It's a dynamic approach that empowers students to explore their passions while preparing for future success.

### **ACTIVITIES & CLUBS**

### **ATHLETICS**

### FINE ARTS

### **VISUAL ARTS**



With nearly 100 clubs to choose from between Lakota's three high schools and over 30 at the junior schools, students can also participate in opportunities sponsored by parent support organizations.



Over 120 high school and more than 40 junior school teams are available to studentathletes. Last year, 75 student-athletes committed to play their sport at the college level.

Lakota's award-winning choral, band and theater programs engage over 1,000 students, building artistic skills, confidence and teamwork—while delighting the community with outstanding performances.



Lakota's visual arts program encourages creativity and exploration, starting with 'specials" in grades K-6 and expanding to a wide range of electives in grades 7-12. Students experiment with different artistic media while building confidence and self-expression.

### COMING UP...

The Master Facilities plan aims to alleviate overcrowding in our schools, opening up space to introduce new elective courses and a consistent rotation of specials. For example, data from the career exploration program, YouScience, helps match students' natural aptitudes with potential career paths. The District will use this insight to guide future programming decisions.

## COMMUNITY connections

### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN 2024-2025



rate district communications average to excellent (fall 2024 community survey)



news articles posted to the district website



unique Peachjar e-flyers delivered



website views



social media



participants in district surveys



million

email messages delivered



average open rate for district e-news



total reach on Facebook & Instagram (unique users on each platform)







### **LIGHT UP LAKOTA**

Lakota held its third annual "Light Up Lakota" event in the spring, inviting parents, students, staff and community members to learn more about what's happening across the District. All 23 schools, along with the preschool program, took part in a district-wide showcase, each highlighting a program or initiative unique to their school.

The event also featured student talent through performances, presentations and an art gallery, giving the community a closer look at the Lakota learning experience.

### COMMUNITY LISTENING

For the thirteenth consecutive year, Community Conversations gave the Lakota Board of Education and district leaders an opportunity to get feedback and lead discussions about important topics.

In addition to five Community Conversations, Superintendent Ashley Whitely hosted more than 100 listening sessions with students, parents, staff and the community. During these sessions, she gathered insight on the District's strengths, areas of improvement and expectations for Lakota's future.

### PHILANTHROPY & PARTNERSHIPS

Lakota's schools partner with countless local and national causes all year long. Lakota students, staff and families collected almost 60,000 items for Reach Out Lakota in its "Stuff the Bus" food drive, more than doubling the previous year's total and the most ever in the program's 17-year history. The effort also yielded a new record for the most items ever collected by a single Lakota school.

Lakota also partnered with the Fitton Center for Creative Arts to host the first-ever Colors of Creativity Lakota Art Showcase. During the nearly month-long exhibition, student art was on display at the Liberty Center Foundry.

Another unique partnership is underway with the USS Cincinnati Peace Pavilion at the Voice of America MetroPark. A team of Lakota teachers have begun collaborating with other local educators to write the curriculum for the learning stations at the pavilion.



### encouraging PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

Being effective educators requires our teachers and staff to be lifelong learners, which is why Lakota is committed to a robust professional development (PD) program.

**ABOUT OUR STAFF** 

2,027 total employees **69**%

of staff have worked at Lakota at least five years

69%

of teachers have earned advanced degrees

**12.7** years

average teaching experience





### **SUMMER LEARNING**

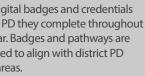
Now in its 11<sup>th</sup> year, Lakota offers weekly summer support for staff.

During these sessions, teachers collaborate with teacher leaders and other colleagues to plan, design and learn for the year ahead.

A similar model has been designed for administrators, also including a week-long bootcamp. In addition, Lakota also held a comprehensive "Launch Day" for new teachers.

### CHALLENGE ACCEPTED **PLATFORM**

Lakota continued with its credentialing platform, "Challenge Accepted," which allows teachers to earn digital badges and credentials for the PD they complete throughout the year. Badges and pathways are designed to align with district PD focus areas.



badges designed for grades K-12

12,080 badges awarded



### **CELEBRATING OUR STAFF**

Lakota celebrated 15 dedicated educators in the District's Personalized Learning Academy who successfully completed the Marzano High Reliability Teacher (HRT) training over the past two years. Their commitment to personalized learning and instructional excellence exemplifies the spirit of innovation and growth that the District values.

The "Lakota Gem Award," introduced in the 2024-2025 school year, shined the spotlight on some of the District's most precious gems every month. The selection committee received over 400 nominations and awarded gems to 51 staff members who are truly a cut above the rest.

### **TEAM INSPIRE**

Lakota's Team Inspire consists of 22 teacher leaders who support and provide professional growth opportunities to Lakota's 1,000+ teachers. The team provides job-embedded training and instructional coaching within the classroom. They also design and facilitate district-wide professional development days.

Learning opportunities occur at school or in small professional networks - and independently or while teaching alongside teacher leaders. This allows teachers to quickly respond to student needs, making a huge difference in student learning.

### **COMING UP...**

Teacher leaders were trained on a model of student-centered coaching that used research-based strategies from Diane Sweeney. After a successful pilot during the 2024-2025 school year, it will be fully implemented in the 2025-2026 school year.



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Lakota Schools



Lakota Local Schools



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### WE ARE ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE

Lakota Local Schools continues to demonstrate strong performance on Ohio's state report card for the 2024-2025 school year, maintaining a high overall rating of 4.5 out of five stars for the second year in a row. This achievement comes amid the rollout of all-new curriculum materials for K-12 math and English language arts.

High markings in student achievement (how students perform against established thresholds), progress (how students improve individually) and gap closing (how our diverse learners perform, compared to all students) reflect Lakota's commitment to personalized learning.

The District also introduced a more challenging literacy screening tool to better assess early reading skills, as well as a core phonics program. After two full years of use, next year's report card will more truly represent performance in these areas. And while the brand new metric for college and career readiness (CCWMR) suggests room for growth, it takes time to make progress in these areas and Lakota is moving in the right direction. The District continues to expand opportunities for students to meet one of the qualifying criteria through more College Credit Plus course offerings, industry credentials and more intentional counseling support for these options too.

"Our decisions are based on doing what's best for students, not just meeting the report card measurements," reiterated Lakota's Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction Lori Brown.

. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 2024-2025 REPORT CARD Results





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★★★☆ Progress







Look inside for an explanation of each component, plus other successes beyond what gets measured by the report card.



2024-2025 **LAKOTA SNAPSHOT** 

**Top 10** 

largest Ohio public school districts

63

square miles serving West Chester & Liberty townships

Schools (grades pre-K to 12) 17,477 Students



Graduates

99%

Graduation rate (East/West) 94% (Central)

Information about the Master Facilities Plan, bond issue and permanent improvement levy is available by scanning the QR code or visiting our website.

www.lakotaonline.com/mfp

