

A Look Around Lakota

BACK-TO-SCHOOL 2023-2024

Lakota
Local Schools



welcome

**TO THE 2023-2024
SCHOOL YEAR!**

Elizabeth J. Lolli

ELIZABETH J. LOLLI
Interim Superintendent



I am very excited to join Lakota Local Schools and look forward to having our buildings filled with staff and students in the coming weeks.

I feel very fortunate to be leading a district with such an influential presence and to be part of the work that will continue defining Lakota as a well-respected and future-ready school district. As our mission statement says, "Everything WE do is designed to provide a future-ready, student-centered learning experience for every single student."

I am proud to join a district that puts our students' educational success at the center of every decision we make.

Ensuring our students' success in the classroom, and once they cross the graduation stage, is paramount. It takes many people joining together to support our students. How fortunate we are to have such dedicated teachers, staff, administrators, families and community members working to do what's best for our students.

It is proof that together, WE are Lakota.

If we have not had the chance to meet yet, I hope that we will soon. Keep an eye out for opportunities in the coming weeks on Lakotaonline.com.

I look forward to meeting you soon!

WE are Lakota.



what's trending @LakotaDistrict

Lakota Listens: A Community Resource

Have a question, comment or concern? Lakota Listens is available to help students, staff, parents and community members get accurate information or resolve problems. Visit www.lakotaonline.com/LakotaListens to get started. #WEareLakota



1 2 3

Introducing SchoolLinks

News Alert: Lakota upgraded from Naviance to SchoolLinks over the summer. Secondary students and parents can find the new tile in OneLogin starting Aug. 1. Request transcripts, plan courses, apply to college and find scholarships, plus endless resources for career planning. #WEareLakota #WEareFutureReady



1 9 36

Transportation Reminder

Is your bus pick-up or drop-off location different from your home address? Aug. 3 is the deadline to communicate this and receive transportation to/from an alternative address on the first day of school. Missed the deadline? Update in FinalForms now to get your stop moved beginning Sept. 5. #WEareLakota



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FROM THE TREASURER

WE are Fiscally Responsible



Adam Zink
Treasurer/CFO

Being fiscally responsible isn't something we just say... it's something we prove with every financial decision we make, while still ensuring that our mission statement holds true: "Everything WE do is designed to provide a future-ready, student-centered learning experience for every single child."



SCAN TO VIEW OUR FINANCIAL PROSPECTUS



I am very excited to welcome back our staff and students in the coming weeks! While many enjoy the slightly slower pace of the summer, Lakota's finance team has been very busy closing out the last fiscal year while we prepare for this new school year.

Lakota's finances continue to be very strong. Not only did we end fiscal year 2024 with our eleventh consecutive balanced budget, but we also received our ninth consecutive Auditor of State Award with Distinction. Additionally, we are not predicting the need for an operating levy in May's five-year forecast, continuing our long streak of not asking our taxpayers for additional funding since 2013.

As we move into this new school year, we are pleased to once again be able to provide student supply kits and waive student fees. This is a result of the COVID-19 relief that Lakota was granted through the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) dollars. However, this is the final year that we will be able to use ESSER funds to pay for these supplies.

As we finish our last minute work before the start of the new school year, I want to say thank you to everyone who completed the enrollment process this summer. Not only have you kept our Welcome Center team very busy, but early registration also helps us be better prepared with staffing and planning for the new school year.

I hope that you were able to look over our annual Financial Prospectus that was mailed to our residents and businesses earlier this summer. If you missed it, please use the QR code above to access the electronic version.

If you have any questions about Lakota's finances, I encourage you to reach out to me. I am always happy to have a conversation with our community members.

ADAM ZINK
Treasurer/CFO



Community Curriculum Advisory Team Seeks Feedback

Lakota's new Community Curriculum Advisory Team (CCAT) is looking for feedback from parents, students, staff and community members.



"This group is much broader than just a curriculum audit or a curriculum review," Board President Lynda O'Connor said at the May 1 regular board meeting.

"We're hoping to wrap this (work) into a proactive piece that will bring different curriculum pieces through this team and

provide some feedback and recommendations," said Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction Lori Brown. "But, we're also looking to be responsive within this team and have a process for handling any kinds of concerns that come to the table related to any of Lakota's curriculum."

Over the summer, the group requested that the district gather input from the community about Lakota's curriculum.

1 2 3

Lakota Creates Community Diversity Council

The Lakota Board of Education approved the creation of the Lakota Community Diversity Council at its June 5 meeting. The Council, which replaces the Board's diversity committee, will help support the district's nearly 17,500 students in their educational experience. Board President Lynda O'Connor and member Kelley Casper will serve as representatives.

The Council's mission statement says: "The purpose of the Lakota Community Diversity Council is to establish a supportive and welcoming school environment for Lakota students and staff of all backgrounds. WE will work to make sure all students have the same opportunities for success. WE will work to break down barriers to student learning for all students."

Participants of the council will be representatives of many different cultures, backgrounds, perspectives, learning styles and religions. "Part of the thinking is to bring some new faces to the table, as well as some who have been previously involved or are currently involved in the district," O'Connor said.

"The expectation is that all who serve must be willing to listen and to consider all sides (and) must be able to discuss collaboratively and respectfully what's best for students," O'Connor said.

The quarterly meetings will be led by a third-party facilitator as the Council works to remove barriers to education that may exist for the diverse makeup of students who call Lakota home.



FinalForms Makes Updates Easy

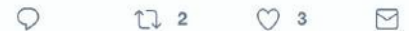
Reminder: We expanded FinalForms last year for parents to more efficiently complete most back-to-school forms and waivers, plus make updates all year long. Sign into FinalForms via OneLogin to review and update contact information, emergency contacts, medical information and more. #WEareLakota

FINALFORMS



Off to a Staggered Start

Similar to recent years, students will begin the new school year with a staggered start. This model helps put teachers and students in a smaller group setting and accelerate relationship building. Check the district's academic calendar on Lakota's website for more details. #WEareLakota



Free/Reduced Meals Application

Families who may qualify for free and reduced meals based on income or other qualifying factors need to complete the meal benefits application at www.LunchApplication.com. IMPORTANT: This must be re-submitted each year. #WEareLakota



First Day Photo Contest

Get in on this year's back-to-school photo contest! Share your best first day moments using #WEareLakota. The post with the most votes – or "likes" on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram – will win some Lakota swag!



CCAT Wants to Hear from You!

Scan the QR code to participate in a ThoughtExchange regarding Lakota's curriculum. The exchange is open through Aug. 31.



The ThoughtExchange opens Aug. 1 and will run through the end of the month. Participants will be asked to answer the question, "With regard to Lakota's curriculum, what is working well, what opportunities are there for improvement and what questions do you have?" CCAT will use the responses to set their priorities for the new school year.

Learn more about CCAT at www.Lakotaonline.com/CCAT.

In addition to **Lori Brown** and her assistant curriculum directors, **Christina French** and **Andrew Wheatley**, the team is comprised of the following community members appointed by the Board:

- **Michael Albrecht** (recommended by Board member Julie Shaffer)
- **Regina McCall** (recommended by Board member Kelley Casper)
- **Ian Murray** (recommended by Board Vice President Isaac Adi)
- **Vanessa Wells** (recommended by Board member Darbi Boddy)
- **Dr. Diane Wiater** (recommended by Board President Lynda O'Connor)



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IMPORTANT BACK-TO-SCHOOL DATES



PRESCHOOL

Open House | Aug. 15
AM Students Only | Aug. 22
PM Students Only | Aug. 23
First Day with all Preschool Students | Aug. 24

KINDERGARTEN

Open House | Varies by school
Last Names M-Z Only | Aug. 16
Last Names A-L Only | Aug. 17
Half of Kindergartners (details provided by school) | Aug. 18
Half of Kindergartners (details provided by school) | Aug. 21
No School for Kindergartners | Aug. 22
First Day with All Kindergartners | Aug. 23

GRADES 1-12

ECS Open House (Grades 1-2) | Aug. 14
Elementary Open House (Grades 3-6) | Aug. 14
Junior & High Schools Orientation/Schedule Pick-up | Varies by school
Last Names M-Z Only | Aug. 16
Last Names A-L Only | Aug. 17
First Day with all 1-12 Students | Aug. 18

UPCOMING DISTRICT-WIDE DATES

Staff PD Days | Aug. 11, 14 & 15
No School (Labor Day) | Sept. 4
Ice Cream Social for New Families | Sept. 9

BACK-TO-SCHOOL CHECKLIST

- Enroll your child online** by Aug. 4 to start on the first day of school: www.lakotaonline.com/enroll.
- Buy school supplies.**
- Attend open house or orientation.**
- Complete new school year forms** in FinalForms via OneLogin. Alternative bus pick-up & drop-off locations must be submitted here by Aug. 3 to be honored on first day.
- Submit any updated immunization records** to your school nurse.
- Add funds to your child's meal balance via EZPay.**
- Complete your annual free/reduced meals application** if you think you qualify.
- Check teacher assignments** and student schedules on Home Access Center (HAC) in early August.
- Opt into Lakota text messages.**
Text "Y" to 675-87 from any mobile phone number you've provided in FinalForms.
- Find bus routes** in HAC beginning Aug. 7 at 3 p.m.
- Bookmark your school's website** and subscribe to the calendars of your choice.
- Download Lakota's mobile app** (search "Lakota Schools" from your app store) and select your schools to customize your calendar, news feed and push notifications.
- Follow district and school social media accounts** cataloged on our website.
- Participate in the first day photo contest on social media!**



BACK-TO-SCHOOL HUB
 All your questions answered:
lakotaonline.com/BackToSchool

meet your LAKOTA BOARD OF EDUCATION

Standing: Darbi Boddy, Julie Shaffer, Kelley Casper

Sitting: Vice President Isaac Adi, President Lynda O'Connor



SCAN TO VISIT THE
 BOARD OF EDUCATION
 WEBSITE

