



THE VIKING

VIEW

WINTER EDITION | ISSUE NO. 27
www.lakewoodps.org



NON-HOMESTEAD OPERATING FUNDS: A LIFELINE FOR LAKEWOOD SCHOOLS

The Critical Need for Non-Homestead Operating Millage for Schools

The complex web of funding sources, varying state regulations, and diverse community needs makes public school funding a complex and ever-evolving landscape. In the intricate tapestry of funding that supports public education, non-homestead operating millages play a vital role in ensuring the continued success of our schools. These millages, levied on businesses and non-primary residential properties, serve as a crucial source of revenue that supplements state funding and allows schools to maintain essential programs and services for all students.

At the November 13 Regular Meeting, the Lakewood Public Schools Board of Education approved a resolution calling for an election on a proposal to renew the current operating millage of 17.973 mills on **non-homestead** properties. Most non-homestead property taxes are levied on **industrial, commercial, business, rental properties, and second homes**. Voters who reside in the Lakewood Public School District boundaries will be asked to renew our current Non-Homestead Operating Millage that expires in December 2024. There will be a special election held on either Tuesday, February 27, 2024 [the "February Primary Date"] or Tuesday, March 12, 2024 [the "March Primary Date"] as designated by law. **This millage does not affect the tax rate on homeowners' primary residences.** Without the successful passage of this Non-Homestead Operating Millage, Lakewood Public Schools **will lose just over \$2 million annually**, which will have a critical adverse impact all educational programming. The proposal will allow Lakewood Public Schools to continue to levy not to exceed 17.973 mills on all property, except principal residence, qualified agricultural property, and other property exempted by law, required for the school district to receive its revenue per pupil foundation allowance and renews millage that will expire with the 2024 tax levy.

In the months ahead, more information will appear in The Lakewood News, Lakewood Public School's social media and website. Additional communication will be sent to parents via district Skyward communications.

2 DISTRICT
NEWS

Superintendent's Summary
Board of Education Notes

3 SCHOOL
NEWS

Early Childhood Center
Lakewood Elementary

5 SCHOOL
NEWS

Middle School

6 SCHOOL &
COMMUNITY
NEWS

High School
What's Happening



NEWS

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT: VALUING COMMUNITY INPUT

Thank You Lakewood Residents for Feedback on Bond Initiative

Board members, administrators, staff, and project steering committee members are grateful for our community members that took the time to complete the bond survey. Thank you! It is important to hear community feedback to enable our district to determine how best to move forward. Your voice does matter! We had about 360 surveys completed. It is important to share the results with our stakeholders to be transparent and share how our community feels. Our project steering committee is scheduled to meet this month to review the results from the survey. Please keep in mind that unanswered survey questions will impact percentages below. The survey questions are in bold and the results below:

Which best describes your household?

38% Students enrolled in Lakewood Public Schools
17% Grandchildren enrolled in Lakewood Public Schools
41% No grandchildren in Lakewood Public Schools

What method did you use to vote on August 8?

55% Voted in Person
32% Voted by Mail/Other Early Voting Opportunity

How did you vote on the August 2023 LPS bond Proposal?

60% Yes
26% No
12% Did Not Vote

How did you receive information regarding the August 2023 ballot proposal?

75% Mailers
50% Yard Signs
58% Social Media
61% Lakewood News
15% In-Person Community Forums

Of the following projects in the August 2023 bond program, which would you be supportive of including in a future bond proposal?

- Construct safe and secure entrances at LES, LMS, & LHS
86% Yes 12% No
- Purchase 30 acres west of the middle School
52% Yes 40% No
- Construct a new upper elementary on new property
49% Yes 43% No
- High School Track Replacement
80% Yes 16% No
- Construct New bus garage at middle/high school campus:
79% Yes 18% No
- Replacement of school buses
82% Yes 13% No
- Replacing school boilers and other HVAC
91% Yes 7% No
- Renovate/Reconfigure parking lots
59% Yes 30% No

Are you supportive of creating a unified campus?

58% Yes
38% No

Please indicate whether or not you feel Lakewood Public Schools is performing well in the following areas:

Academics	62% Yes	22% No	15% No Answer
Administrative Leadership	56% Yes	26% No	17% No Answer
Safety and Security	51% Yes	32% No	17% No Answer
Building Relationships	42% Yes	37% No	21% No Answer
Transportation	54% Yes	29% No	17% No Answer
Athletics	56% Yes	25% No	19% No Answer
Technology	55% Yes	23% No	22% No Answer
Career & College Prep	49% Yes	29% No	22% No Answer
Skilled Trades	35% Yes	46% No	19% No Answer
Communication	54% Yes	28% No	18% No Answer

Are you aware our track is past its useful life, and we are unable to host home athletic events?

90% Yes

Would the idea of shorter bus routes affect your support of a unified campus?

45% Yes
51% No

Are you supportive of consolidating our District from four buildings to three buildings? The consolidation would include:

- Sell LECC & C.O. in Woodland
 - LES would house early childhood through second grade
 - LMS would become grades 3-6
 - LHS would become 7-12
- 48%** Yes
47% No

Through the two questions on the survey, there were several concerns with the idea of moving our 7th and 8th graders to the high school in the event we did consolidate to three buildings.

In the event of consolidation, would you be supportive of renovating our current buildings to accommodate new/additional grade levels?

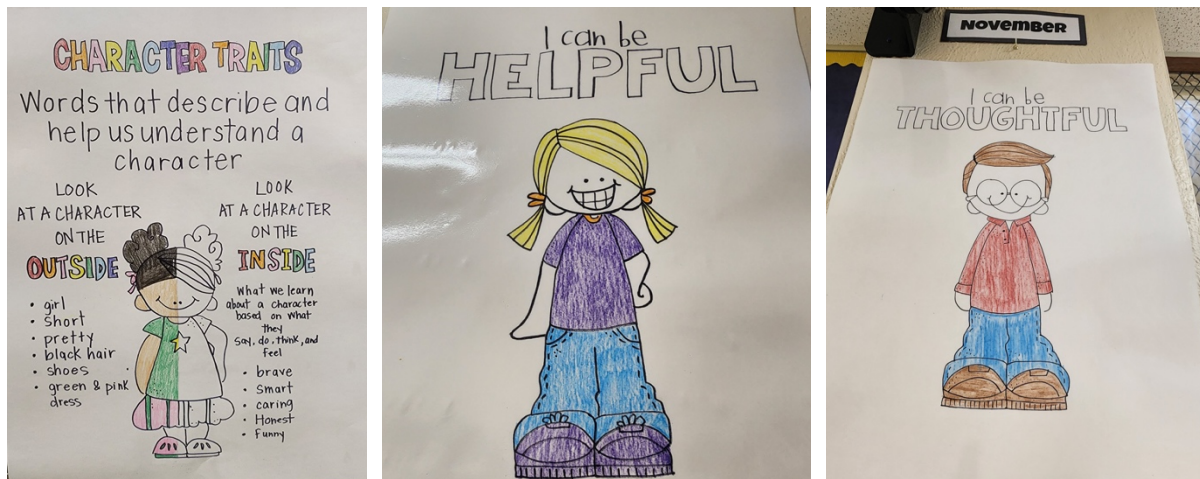
64% Yes
30% No

As a community, we have two funding options to address our short- and long-term needs:

9% Bond
23% Sinking Fund
55% Both a Sinking Fund and a bond
13% Neither

EARLY CHILDHOOD STUDENTS CULTIVATE CHARACTER TRAITS

Little Vikes Building a Foundation for Life

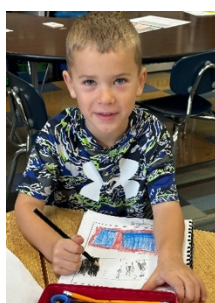


Lakewood Early Childhood students are learning that character traits are what we learn about a person based on what they say, do, think and feel. Each month, our youngest students will be introduced to a new character trait. In October, students explored how to be HELPFUL! Collecting toiletry items for Manna's Market was one of the ways they practiced this new and important skill! They worked to collect many items that would be helpful to people in our community. Our Little Vike's Club members assisted with this project, and the items have been delivered to some very grateful families. By cultivating positive character traits, early childhood students lay the foundation for a fulfilling and successful life. The rewards of growing character traits extend far beyond the classroom; they empower early childhood students to become the architects of their own success and the builders of a bright future.

A Veteran's Day Salute!

Nurturing Gratitude for our Nation's Heroes

Students at LECC eagerly engaged in a meaningful exploration of Veterans Day. In the Rainbow Room, they learned about the different branches of the military and how we honor the brave individuals who have served in the armed forces. All classrooms created thank you cards that were delivered to the VFW for our local veterans. From these lessons, our students gained a deeper sense of patriotism and empathy, recognizing the importance of honoring and remembering the men and women who have dedicated their lives to safeguarding our nation's values. Thank you, Veterans!



Sparkling a Lifetime of Fire Safety

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION IGNITES AWARENESS

Laying a foundation of fire safety knowledge is crucial for safeguarding young lives. By introducing fire safety concepts in a playful and engaging manner, children can learn to identify fire hazards, understand the dangers of fire, and know how to react appropriately in case of a fire. Our students visited the Woodland Fire Department for Fire Prevention month! Local firefighters showed off their protective gear. They explained that although they might look and sound scary when they are all suited up, they are ready to help and that kids should never hide! The firefighters reinforced the importance to have a family discussion of what to do if there is a fire in their home. Please talk to your youngsters about a meeting place they should go to find you after getting out!

Mrs. Johnson's class locked in the learning by journaling about their visit back in the classroom. Special thanks to Woodland Fire Department for their pivotal role in fostering a culture of fire safety among our students.

LAKEWOOD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CELEBRATES PBIS TO FOSTER POSITIVE BEHAVIOR AND ACADEMIC SUCCESS Helping Students Strive to be Their Very Best



Lakewood Elementary students have been working hard on their behaviors with Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS.) PBIS is a proactive approach schools use to improve school safety and promote positive behavior. The focus of PBIS is prevention, not punishment. We recognize that students can only meet behavior expectations if they know what the expectations are. Everyone learns what's considered appropriate behavior. And they use a common language to talk about it. Throughout the school day — in class, at lunch, and on the bus — students understand what's expected of them. PBIS rewards are a great motivator for kids. So, when a child is seen doing something good they get a ticket. Our elementary students have been working and earning tickets by demonstrating positive behavior at school. They were able to then spend those tickets at our school PBIS store, which had so many options! The PBIS reward items are donated, if you wish to support positive behavior and we've made it easy to donate with an Amazon Wish List. Simply inquire at the main office. Keep working hard, you guys are awesome!!

Strategies for Reading Success Targeted Instruction to Strengthen Student Skills



Elementary reading intervention blocks provide targeted, systematic instruction to help students strengthen skills to become proficient readers. Lakewood Elementary School has just finished their first round of intervention blocks. Over the course of the past six weeks, students in first through fourth grade could be found working in small groups in the area of reading. Teachers, Para Educators and Interventionists invested their time into ensuring every student received exactly what they needed to be successful. We are so proud of the determination and grit in our students, their progress shows. Keep up the good work!

THANK YOU LAKEWOOD ELEMENTARY PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION

Lakewood Elementary PTO hosted a fall fundraiser, Hustling into Autumn. Our students participated in fun and engaging outdoor activities including running laps around the cornstalks, apple toss, sac race, and hula hoop pumpkin race. The students were able to raise money for the school and enjoy time outside. We are very grateful for all the work put into the day by our PTO!

PTO's are the backbone of our schools. School Parent-Teacher Organizations (PTOs) are powerful forces for positive change in education. They bring together parents, teachers, and other stakeholders to create a supportive and enriching learning environment for all students. Get involved! Our PTO works to raise funds for essential programs and resources, volunteers time and expertise to support school activities, and promotes communication and collaboration between parents and teachers.

Culvers Donate Leadership Awards and Kid's Meals to Students Generous Hearts Honor Future Leaders



Lakewood Elementary and Culvers of Hastings/Ionia partnered up in the spirit of growing future leaders. Culvers graciously donated awards to our aspiring students. One award was for perfect attendance and the other a leadership award. Each teacher has the opportunity to give the Culver's Leadership Award to deserving students who exhibit hard work and positive attitudes. What makes this accolade special is that it comes with a free kid's meal and other fun items!

Community partnerships play a crucial role in enhancing the educational experience and overall well-being of students. These partnerships foster a sense of connection and shared responsibility between schools and the communities they serve. By involving local businesses, organizations, and individuals in school activities, partnerships promote a sense of ownership and investment in the education and well-being of the next generation. Special thanks to Culvers of Hastings and Ionia for growing future leaders!

LOCAL VETERANS RECEIVE A LAKEWOOD HERO'S WELCOME

A Student-Led Veteran's Day Celebration



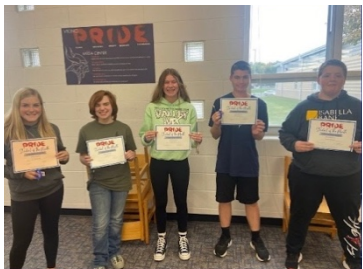
Lakewood Middle School Vikings celebrated our veterans by hosting a Veteran's Day Assembly. Our Community Leadership Class, led by Mrs. Cobb, planned and executed this event, inviting all of our community veterans to attend. Eager student hosts, their faces beaming with admiration and respect, held doors open as they awaited the arrival of the veterans. A sea of American flags was on prominent lawn display; each one signified money raised by the leadership class for the Disabled Army Veterans, a cause that provides needed support and help from no-cost rides to medical appointments to securing services for homeless veterans. We extend much gratitude to the entire Lakewood Community for helping to raise \$1407.00 for this important cause. At this patriotic themed assembly, students read a touching poem to our veterans, thanking them for their service to our country. We are proud of our students, veterans, parents, and community members who participated!

Aggie the Pawsome Therapy Dog GIVE BACK THROUGH AGGIE'S PACK

Wednesdays have been dedicated to Aggie, our service dog. For the last two school years, Aggie has served as a faithful friend and companion to all at Lakewood Middle School, providing support to students as needed. This year, Aggie is working to overcome health obstacles of her own. In order to show our love to Aggie (and her owner Ms. Keller) and to help off-set medical costs for Aggie's needs, t-shirts were sold to students and staff. On Wednesdays for the remainder of this semester, we ask our students and staff to wear their "Aggie's Pack" t-shirt to school.



LAKEWOOD
MIDDLE SCHOOL



PBIS IN THE SPOTLIGHT

PRIDE Awards Encourage Positive Behavior

At Lakewood Middle School, students are asked to demonstrate Viking PRIDE, aka, be proud, respectful, show integrity, be determined and enthusiastic. We are working hard to instill Viking PRIDE into our students. This initiative is part Positive Behavior Interventions and Support (PBIS), which is a school-wide approach to make schools safer and improve student behavior. These proactive strategies encourage good behavior and success in each and every student. At the end of each month, our teachers award students in each grade for demonstrating these important traits. The PRIDE award is given to students at our monthly grade level meetings, where the administrators have a chance to meet with the entire grade of students and talk about upcoming events, procedures that are in place, and present the award to the students of the month. Keep up the great work LMS Vikings!



Middle School Storytellers in Ms. Stirling's Video Journalism

This year at Lakewood Middle School we are excited to showcase Video Journalism, as a new elective option that was added to our course list. This class, led by Ms. Jennifer Stirling, create weekly broadcasts that report on a variety of school happenings and interview teachers, administrators and peers. Students in this class have a chance to practice gathering information from sources, and express their findings in written and verbal forms. They also learn about journalism laws and policies to ensure that reporting is done properly and respectfully. Each week our students look forward to the newest edition of LMS 10 that is broadcasted on Mondays during PRIDE time.



COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS INITIATIVES

We Equip Students for Success in College and the Workforce

Lakewood High School has been working hard to support our students in preparation for their future. Vikings have made visits to Michigan State University, Grand Valley State University, and a few other colleges. In addition, our annual Viking College Game Day was a success, with college reps, counselors, and military recruiters ready to meet with students pursuing their dreams. Our skilled counselors were on site to assist with college applications and paperwork for the next steps. Prizes and merch made it fun for students. Vikings were also provided the opportunity to attend the Ionia High School Career Fair. We are proud that so many students took advantage of this valuable time to learn and grow as they chart their post-secondary path!

Drumroll, Please!

LAKEWOOD VIKING BAND WINS 1ST PLACE AT HIGH SCHOOL BAND COMPETITION

Lakewood's Viking Band snagged 1st place at competition, competing against a large field of bands at East Kentwood. Our nine band seniors were also celebrated at senior showcase. The high school band had been practicing for months for this competition. They had worked hard on their marching drills, their music, and their overall presentation. They were confident and excited to take the field, and it showed. In formation, they played their music, and clearly, the judges were impressed. Their hard work, dedication, and talent is a testament to their success. Lakewood High School band is a source of pride for our school and our community. Special thanks to Mr. Langlois for his stellar instruction and leadership, and a grateful "thank you" to the band boosters for their strong support of our program. Congratulations on your impressive first place win! The Lakewood High School Marching Band ROCKS! GO VIKINGS!!



RESTART THE HEART, A GLOBAL CAMPAIGN

Students Learn Lifesaving First-Hand First Aid

First Aid students joined the Red Cross for the sixth annual World Restart a Heart (WRAH) Day. This global campaign aims to increase public awareness of cardiac arrest, including the importance of learning CPR and how to use an automated external defibrillator (AED). Students were given the task of presenting and teaching life-saving skills to a small group of their peers. The students walked away with the knowledge, confidence, and skills to help someone who may be in cardiac arrest. This meaningful experience is learning for a lifetime.



ELAYNA HAWKINS

ELAINA TACEY

CONGRATULATIONS TO THESE NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED VIKINGS

Every student's profile is unique, and it comes to life through their efforts and achievements during high school.

These Lakewood High School Vikings earned academic honors from the College Board National Recognition Programs. These programs celebrate students' hard work in high school and showcase their strong academic performance.

We are thrilled to celebrate our students and recognize them for their great work they've been doing. We are proud of their strong academic performance in the classroom and on their PSAT, SAT, and AP exams they have taken each spring. These students carry a GPA of a 3.5 or higher, score in the top ten percent in the nation on PSAT and SAT, and earn college credit with their AP exams.

Congratulations to these Vikings for their hard work and dedication.

AUTUMN WILLIAMS

AUDREY HILLARD

BigFuture

Our selection

College Board National Recognition Program Awardees!



Viking Equestrian Champs

A Must-See for Equestrian Fans

The Lakewood Equestrian Team of Katelyn Steele and Mylee Wiers beat ten other teams last weekend to win the Division D State Championship! The high school equestrian champs are a celebration of the best and brightest young equestrian athletes who have dedicated years of their lives to training and competing in equestrian sports. These athletes come together and celebrate their shared love of horses and equestrian sports. We are proud of the hard work, dedication, and passion of these young athletes. LET'S GO!

Empowering Educators, Transforming Classrooms

LAKEWOOD EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION NAMES GRANT RECIPIENTS

Recognizing the dedication and creativity of educators, the Lakewood Educational Foundation presented classroom grants to deserving teachers, empowering them to bring innovative and engaging learning experiences to their students. At the November Board of Education meeting, formal announcement of the grant recipients was made to passionate Lakewood educators, providing them with the resources to transform their classrooms into vibrant hubs of learning and discovery.

Lakewood Educational Foundation's mission is to provide the "extras" in education, enabling Lakewood teachers to offer innovative programs, enhance classroom resources, and foster a supportive learning environment for all students. Supplementing traditional funding sources through grants provides teachers with innovative tools that enhance their teaching capabilities and create a dynamic, stimulating learning environment for Lakewood students.

The fall 2023 grant recipients are:

LAKEWOOD EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER

- Kristin Heinze - Art: Mystery Science Material
- Jody Pung/Pat Reece - Library Improvements
- Jennifer Barnes - GSRP: Sensory Garden Equipment for Playground

LAKEWOOD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

- Melissa Wilcox – 3rd grade: Squid deep dive
- Shelley Homolka – 1st through 4th Grade PBIS store
- Shelly Homolka – 1st through 4th Grade Sensory path tools
- Katie Grove – 1st Grade: Reading Sound Tubs
- Beth Foltz 1st – 4th Grade: Clever Touch 65"
- Rhonda Smith – 4th Grade: Clever Touch 65"

LAKEWOOD MIDDLE SCHOOL

- Melanie Baker - Special Education: Hands-on Math
- John McKenney - STEM: Graphic Design Tools
- Amber Simons - Art Supplies
- Amanda Smith - Music: Keyboard Lab
- Ericka Mitchell - Band: Instrument Grant

LAKEWOOD HIGH SCHOOL

- Christine Grunewald - 11-12th Grade: Budget/investing
- Matthew Langlois - Band: New Tubas

Thank You!!



LAKEWOOD EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION

for **2023 Teacher Grants**
that are Providing the
Innovative Extra's

Learn more.

www.lakewoodeducationalfoundation.org

LAKEWOOD
COMMUNITY



LAKEWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

**WE'RE
LOOKING FOR
NEW FACES**

CONTACT
616.374.8043



PASSIONATE ABOUT WORKING WITH KIDS? WORK WITH US.

NOW HIRING & TRAINING SCHOOL BUS DRIVERS

- \$20.50 per hour
- \$20,000 Life Insurance

NOW HIRING PARAPROFESSIONALS

We're hiring part-time para-professionals! Our para-pro's work when kids are in school, that means no evenings, weekends, or breaks when kids are not in session.

- \$14.02 per hour
- \$20,000 Life Insurance

NOW HIRING SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

Work when you want to work! This flexible job provides help to our educators when they are out of the classroom for professional development, illness or personal leave.

- \$135.00 per day

HEALTH CARE AIDES

Support a student with special needs in group and one-to-one activities. Assist a student throughout the day: arrival, lunch, recess, and dismissal. Regular and substitute positions.

- \$14.02 per hour
- \$20,000 Life Insurance
- Fingerprinting costs reimbursed

JOIN OUR TEAM!

INTERESTED IN DRIVING OUR FUTURE?

Call 616.374.0759

MAKE A DIFFERENCE, SUPPORT OUR STUDENTS

Call 616.374.8043

NO WEEKENDS, NO HOLIDAYS,
YOU CAN'T TAKE YOUR WORK HOME

*Happy
Holidays!*

From the
LAKEWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOLS FAMILY!

LAKEWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

223 West Broadway
Woodland, Michigan 48897



THE VIKING VIEW

ADMINISTRATION

Jodi Duits, Superintendent
Jammie Sprank, Director of Finance
Valerie Behm, Communication Design & Editor

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Jamie Brodbeck- Krenz, President
Melissa McClelland, Vice President
Darin Weller, Secretary
Kerry Possehn, Treasurer
Wendy Behrenwald, Trustee
Jami Manszewski, Trustee
Paige O'Mara, Trustee

CONTACT US

223 W Broadway, Woodland, MI 48897
Phone | 616-374-8043

UPCOMING REGULAR BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

December 11, 2023 LHS Media Center, 7 p.m.
7223 Velte Rd, Lake Odessa, MI 48849



www.lakewoodps.org

DISTRICT CALENDAR 2023-2024

DECEMBER

No School - Winter Break | December 25-29, 2023

JANUARY

No School - Winter Break | January 1-5, 2024

FEBRUARY

No School - Mid-Winter Break | February 9-12, 2024

MARCH

No School | March 11, 2024

No School - Spring Break | March 29, 2024

APRIL

No School - Spring Break | April 1-5, 2024

No School | April 29, 2024

MAY

No School - Memorial Day Extended Weekend | May 27, 2024
½ Day for Students in a.m. - Last Day of School | May 31, 2024

* Calendar may be modified to accommodate for excessive snow days