



SPRING EDITION | ISSUE NO. 32
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YOU MATTER, YOU ARE ENOUGH. REMEMBER THAT Lakewood High School Staff Affirms Every Student

In a powerful display of solidarity, our high school staff donned shirts inscribed with the simple yet profound message, **'You Matter, and are Enough.'** This collective effort served as a tangible reminder to students that their presence and well-being are valued, that they are seen, heard, and supported within their school community. Staff visibly affirming students in this way is a small act that makes a monumental difference in reminding them of their inherent worth. The impact of this visible support on student mental wellness is immeasurable, creating a sense of belonging and trust, knowing they have a community at school who cares for them. The Mental Health Ambassadors and the staff held a meaningful special event to show their appreciation for their students.

Our staff, parents, and community's unwavering commitment to supporting one another is the very essence of what sets us apart – always present for one another and our schools. In Lakewood, that is our unique strength that sets us apart, making us truly special.



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NEWS

VOTE MAY 6, 2025

Bond Proposal: The WHY's

Dear Lakewood Community,

In this edition of the *Viking View*, you will find information to clarify the needs of the district to address operational equipment, including boilers and HVAC systems that have exceeded their expected lifespan, right-sizing and streamlining school spaces due to declining enrollment, and safety & security. As we prepare for the May 6, 2025 bond proposal, I want to reflect on our journey and share how we arrived at this point.

In November 2022, Lakewood Public Schools proposed a \$64 million bond at a zero mill increase when our millage rate was 7 mills. This plan included an athletic turf field, new track, a Community Center, a new Early Childhood Center with Daycare, and a new bus garage.

After this proposal did not pass, we returned with a revised plan in August 2023. By this time, our millage had **dropped from 7 mills to 4 mills**. To cover the proposed projects, the bonds were expected to result in a 1.2 mill increase, aiming for a projected total of 5.2 mills. This bond proposal focused on: a new Elementary school on 30 acres west of the middle school, a new bus garage, and a new track.

When the second proposal did not pass, the Board of Education regrouped to consider our next steps.

For this third attempt, we embraced a new approach. Partnering with Clark Construction as our Construction Manager and Wightman as our architectural team, we formed the One Lakewood Committee—a group of dedicated community members tasked with gathering input to build a thoughtful, community-driven bond proposal.

In October 2024, we held three community meetings focused on:

1. Streamlining facilities: Reducing from four buildings to three due to declining enrollment. Historically, our district has had a larger student population — for example, the Class of 2003 had 199 graduates, compared to 126 projected for the Class of 2025. Enrollment is expected to decrease by an average of 9% over the next five years, a trend seen across the state.
2. Prioritizing needs: Identifying the most pressing improvements for each building.
3. Exploring funding options: Reviewing various bond funding strategies.

With community input, the One Lakewood Committee and our bond partners established five core **WHYs** guiding the May 2025 bond proposal:



FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

Using funds efficiently to maximize impact and minimize long-term costs.

DECLINING ENROLLMENT

Aligning facilities with student population by streamlining from four buildings to three.

EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES

Modernizing learning environments to support student success.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

Enhancing building security, updating the track, and replacing the tennis courts.

DECREASING UTILIZATION

Right-sizing school spaces to better serve academic and extracurricular programs.

It's important to note that this bond proposal **does not include new construction**. Instead, it focuses on streamlining facilities by retiring Lakewood Early Childhood Center and prioritizing high-need projects at the elementary, middle, and high schools.

Stay informed by checking the latest updates in *The Lakewood News*, on Lakewood Public Schools' social media, and through Skyward communications sent directly to parents.

For more information and answers to your questions, visit www.lakewoodps.org and click on the Bond Proposal link

Warm regards – Let's Go Vikings!

Jodi J. Duits
 Jodi J. Duits
 Superintendent of Schools

LEARN MORE

Scan the QR code to learn more bond details and discover how this bond will benefit our students.



SAFE. WARM. DRY.

LAKEWOOD BOND OVERVIEW

VOTE MAY 6, 2025

THE WHY'S THAT SHAPED OUR VISION

Residents within the Lakewood Public School district will have the opportunity to vote in the May 6, 2025 election. Lakewood Public Schools is asking its voters to consider a bond proposal. This "Investing in Our Future Report" is intended to provide you with more details about the proposal.

We trust that you share our enthusiasm for fiscal responsibility and the future of Lakewood. This project presents a distinctive chance to invest in both our students and community.

- 1** **FISCALLY RESPONSIBLE**
Efficiently allocating funds to maximize impact and minimize long-term costs.
- 2** **DECLINING ENROLLMENT**
Right-sizing facilities to align with student population trends.
- 3** **EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES**
Creating modern, developmentally appropriate learning environments.
- 4** **SAFETY & SECURITY**
Enhancing building security & emergency preparedness.
- 5** **DECREASING UTILIZATION**
Optimizing school spaces to support academic and extracurricular programs effectively.

INVESTING IN OUR STUDENTS & SCHOOLS

The Lakewood Bond Capital Improvement Program is designed to right-size our facilities with future student needs, align learning environments, enhance security, and make fiscally responsible use of our resources.



Middle School: HVAC/Chemical Dispenser



Middle School: Fire Protection





Uneven surfaces and cracks on the tennis courts

Bond Funds Use Requirements



Bond Funds CAN Be Used:

- To purchase, erect, complete, remodel, and equip school buildings, structures, athletic fields, playgrounds, or other facilities
- To acquire, install, or equip school buildings for instructional technology that drives improved student learning outcomes,
- Building renovation, replacing roofs; resurfacing athletic tracks ensuring safe and optimal conditions for student athletes and community use
- safety and security upgrades including entrances, wiring for Wi-Fi security systems like cameras, video and intercom entry systems

Bond Funds CANNOT Be Used:



- Training, consulting, service contracts, or other software support
- Employee salaries, wages, or benefits
- Classroom supplies such as textbooks
- Utilities
- Other operating costs

Track & Field Event Areas Unsafe
Numerous Cracks, Depressions, Uneven Performance Surface



AN INVESTMENT IN THE FUTURE.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The proposed improvements focus on enhancing safety, security, and infrastructure. In terms of safety and security, measures include addressing traffic congestion at Lakewood Elementary, improving parking, and upgrading security equipment and entrances. Academic learning spaces are set to be revamped to ensure that our learning environments align with current and future student needs. The student athletic experience will be improved to address current unsafe, uneven surfaces. The proposal includes a track replacement and new fencing around track and removal/replacement of tennis courts [post tension concrete.]



Middle School Original Boilers, Circa 1998 Boiler Condensation



Traffic Congestion Lakewood Elementary at Arrival and Dismissal



Middle School Original Boilers Circa 1998



High School: Leaking H2O Softeners Circa 1998



After 27 years and numerous patchwork repairs, the middle school roof has far exceeded its expected lifespan.

MAY 6, 2025 OVERVIEW

The current school operational equipment, including boilers and HVAC systems, have exceeded expected lifespan and requires replacement to maintain safe and efficient building operations. The school's track and tennis surfaces exhibit conditions that compromise student safety during competition.

This bond proposal will be on the ballot for the May 6, 2025 election. If approved by voters, this bond would provide \$29,950,000 in funding, with an expected net tax increase of 1.70 mills from the 2024 levy. Currently, our debt millage rate stands at 3.25 mills, and the proposed increase would bring it to a projected 4.95 mills.

The \$29,950,000 bond will be divided into two series:

SERIES 1

\$16,185,000

allocated for high school improvement projects.

SERIES 2

\$13,765,000

designated for projects at the elementary and middle schools.



Extensive cracking, uneven surfaces, and depressions pose safety concerns for student athletes.



These boilers have exceeded their expected service life [rusted components, corroded pipes.]



Chiller at Lakewood Middle School Installed 1997



Chiller at Lakewood Elementary School Installed 1998

**LAKWOOD
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

BOND
SAFE. WARM. DRY.

March is Reading Month

CAMP READ-A-LOT AND FAMILY NIGHT ADVENTURES MAKE STORIES COME TO LIFE



March is Reading Month and we have turned LECC into Camp Read-A-Lot! The halls are filled with lights and décor that will foster a love of reading for all ages! Camp Read-a-Lot launched with Family Reading Night where families were able to come to play literacy games, listen to camp fire songs by Libby Kinsey, and so much more.

March is filled with fun from mystery readers visiting each classroom, to wacky and fun days, and to Fridays where all the students reading all at the same time. Lakewood Early Childhood Center will end the month with a school wide celebration where students will spend time “camping” in the gym while reading their favorite book.

GO, SLOW, WHOA.....

Catch Program Initiative Promotes Habits



The CATCH (Coordinated Approach to Child Health) program, a whole-child wellness initiative, aims to promote physical activity, healthy eating, and a positive school environment to improve student health and well-being. Lakewood Early Childhood students are talking about GO-SLOW-WHOA foods this year. Our **GO FOODS** are fruits and vegetables. **SLOW FOODS** (think pretzels, some granola bars) are foods that are not as healthy for us as GO Foods, but better for us than our **WHOA FOODS**. **WHOA FOODS** are foods that we should only eat occasionally (think French fries, chips, ice cream.) There are no, **NO** foods, all food in moderation. At school we are working hard to ensure that students’ minds and bodies are ready for learning each day. In addition to the hard work our teachers and staff do every day to prepare students for success in the classroom, we can also work to encourage healthy eating and physical activity, leading them to lifelong success.

Parents/guardians should:

- Honor their child’s birthday by sending non-food treats such as stickers or pencils
- Ensure all food sent to school for birthday celebrations promote healthy food choices
- Ask your child’s teacher what non-food or healthy rewards/incentives they are utilizing in the classroom

LAKEWOOD EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER

KINDERGARTEN ROUND-UP

REGISTER NOW!

www.lakewoodps.org

WELCOMING LITTLE VIKINGS!



Lakewood Early Childhood Center 2025 KINDERGARTEN ROUND-UP

Do you have a child entering kindergarten in the fall?
Let's Get Started!

ROUND UP [BY APPOINTMENT]
April 23 and April 24, 2025



3 CONVENIENT WAYS TO REGISTER

- Via LAKEWOOD APP
- ON-LINE REGISTRATION OPENS MARCH 28 at www.lakewoodps.org/roundup
- Call: 269.367.4935 to Schedule Your Afternoon or Evening Appointment

For PRESCHOOL INFO
Please Contact Ionia
Intermediate School
District @ 616.527.4900

REQUIREMENTS:

- Student born on or before September 1, 2020
- Student’s state/county endorsed birth certificate [original with seal]
- Bring student to Screening Appointment
- Make a doctor/health department appointment to update immunizations BEFORE school starts in August
- Hearing & Vision Assessment Before School Starts in August



learn with us.
register today
269.367.4935



Elementary Students Rope in the Donations
ANNUAL JUMP FOR LES FUNDRAISER



Lakewood Elementary students are skipping their way to success with a fun-filled jump rope fundraiser, raising funds for Lakewood Elementary while promoting healthy activity. With stations set up in both the gym and cafeteria, students enjoyed jumping, limbo, balancing, hopscotch, Chinese jump rope, and so much more! It was an action-packed day full of energy and excitement. We loved seeing our students get their bodies moving – after all, staying active is just as important as keeping our minds sharp! Special thanks to our amazing gym teachers, who organized this fun fundraiser, the kids had a blast! A huge thank you to everyone who volunteered, pledged, participated and supported this fantastic annual event!

Elementary Swim & Water Safety

Building Water Confidence in Lakewood Kids



Our Swim Safety Weeks have come and gone, and our third graders had an amazing time learning about the important aspects of water safety with the YMCA in Ionia! Each class took a trip to the high school in Ionia, where they learned essential water safety skills and participated in fun, hands-on activities in the pool. The students practiced their skills and gained confidence in the water, all while learning how to stay safe. We are so grateful for the incredible opportunity to partner with the YMCA and provide this valuable experience for our students!

LAKEMOOD ELEMENTARY GLOW MATH NIGHT
Vikings Light Up Math Learning!



Just like the ever popular Reading Night, Lakewood Elementary added something new and exciting this year – **GLOW Math Night!** Families and students joined us for an unforgettable evening where they explored the world of math in a fun, hands-on way! With interactive math stations spread all across the school, everyone had the chance to solve puzzles, play games, and discover cool new math ideas. Families made their way around to all the stations, experiencing math in a whole new light. It was a night full of learning, laughter, and glowing excitement. Thank you to everyone who came out to GLOW with us at Math Night! Because of your support, it was just the right formula for a mathematical Glow-Up!

PATHWAY TO POSSIBILITIES

8th Grade Students Visit Eaton RESA Career Prep Center



Lakewood Middle School 8th graders had an opportunity to learn and explore career paths at their visit to Eaton RESA. After a warm welcome session, students visited three program pathways offered at the career preparation center. In order to prepare for the trip, students were provided the options to explore and registered for their occupation of interest. To lock-in learning, they were provided with an array of hands-on experiences and catch a glimpse of future pathways. We are grateful to our friends and partners at Eaton RESA for helping students discover boundless possibilities!

Sweet Science

Building Edible Cells = Middle School Biology Fun!



Students in Mrs. Francisco's Science class created candy plant and animal cells. They embarked on a fascinating journey into the microscopic world, meticulously studying cell diagrams. They explored the intricate structures of plant and animal cells, and understanding their vital functions. Through hands-on activities with candy plants, they gained a deeper appreciation for the complexity and wonder of these fundamental building blocks of life. After learning all of the cell parts and their functions, students were able to dive in and have fun crafting a cell diagram of their own, from candy of course! Students determined which candy best represented each part of the cell and then labeled the cell diagram. Mrs. Francisco's instructional approach not only solidified their understanding of cellular structure, but also honed students' scientific illustration skills, bringing the intricate world of biology to life!

THEY BROUGHT THE BEAT

Annual Valentine's Dance Recap



Lakewood Middle School students had an evening of fun and fellowship at the 2025 Valentine's Day dance and activities! This annual event lets kids be kids in a fun and safe way. They enjoyed basketball, dodgeball, board games and dancing with friends. We LOVE seeing our students build community and enjoy free time together.

LET'S GO VIKINGS!

55th Annual America & Me

A FARM BUREAU INSURANCE CONTEST WITH HEART



We're proud to announce that three Lakewood Middle School students were named local winners in the 55th annual America & Me Essay Contest, sponsored by Farm Bureau Insurance. This year's winners competed against more than 3,000 other students from nearly 200 Michigan junior highs and middle schools. Students write about their personal Michigan heroes—someone they know personally who encouraged and inspired them to live better and achieve more. The three students who earned first, second and third place are, Madelyn Decker, first, Dallas Everett, second place and Dylan Bishop third place. As the first place winner Madelyn's name will be engraved on a plaque for permanent display in the school. Madelyn's first place essay now advanced to the state level competition! Congratulations to our winners!

MARCHING ON Displaying Alumni's College Band Success



We are excited to announce that Lakewood High School is establishing a tradition to honor our esteemed former band members! As part of our "Marching On" program, we want to celebrate the impact that LHS Band alumni have made in their musical journeys. We want to recognize Vikings who have moved onto the college stage to perform at the university level.

We will honor these former Lakewood High School Band alumni who have achieved this honor by placing a plaque with their photo on the wall for all to see. Furthermore, we will also honor them with a ceremony to show honor their commitment to the arts.



MICHIGAN INTERSCHOLASTIC FORENSIC ASSOCIATION

Lakewood Student Award Recipients



The Michigan Interscholastic Forensic Association empowers students to become proficient and ethical communicators, critical thinkers, lifelong learners, and leaders in a democratic society through interscholastic speech, theater, and debate activities for middle and secondary school students. We are fortunate to have students perform admirably at the state competition. Congratulations to all!

- **Excellence Awards - Individuals:** Carter Bradley (Acting), Justin Coulson (Acting), Garrett Wortley (Acting)
- **Full Company:** Characterization, innovations, stage mechanics, tempo & pacing, material cutting, and overall presentation
- **Superior Awards - Individuals:** Sydnee Reuter (Acting), Aurora Rice (Student Direction) Madilyn Taylor & Audi Tobin (Costume Design), Aurora, Madilyn & Audi (Costume Execution), Madilyn Taylor, Alexis Stoneburner, Carla Berry, Clayton Sayer and Aurora Rice (Stage Crew) and Audi (Sound Tech)
- **Full company:** Acting, Properties, Sound, Costumes & Make up
- Clayton Sayer 1st in Pop & Broadway Solos
- Addison Sayer & Audrey Fisher 2nd in Broadway Duet
- Carter Bradley & Audrey Fisher 2nd in Broadway Solo
- Ren Minard & Jay Tichvon 3rd in Pop Duet
- Zoie Brummette, Mackenzie Crawford, & Kyearston Miller 1st in Inspirational Trio, 2nd in Broadway Trio
- Averyion Santos, Boone Hubbell, Jamie Hammond, Jay Tichvon 2nd in Jazz Ensemble
- Madilyn Taylor, Adrionne Bond, Ava Hammond, Rhylee McElHaney, Kendra Fruchey 1st in Pop Ensemble
- Clayton Sayer, Garrett Wortley, Carter Bradley, Scarlett Shettler, Carla Berry, Addison Sayer, Ren Minard, Audrey Fisher 1st in Classical Ensemble

Winterfest, 2025 A NIGHT OF FROSTY FUN



Winterfest hopefully marks the end of all of our winter weather! While it was bitter cold outside, inside Vikings were staying warm. Lakewood's high school gym transformed into a winter wonderland for the annual Winterfest dance. The evening provided a perfect escape from winter's chill, creating lasting memories and strengthening the bonds of friendship within our school community.

MILESTONES ON THE MAT



The Viking wrestling team had an impressive season! The journey to the Elite 8 is no small feat, and having strong senior leadership can make a significant difference in a team's performance. Celebrating the milestones achieved by these seniors not only reflects their hard work and dedication but also sets a powerful example for underclassmen. Congrats Joel Simon and LJ Rogers!

STRONGER TOGETHER

A Collaborative Effort Between Schools and Community

LAKE ODESSA LIBRARY EVENTS

APRIL

- 3 Teen Game Night for ages 11-17, 5-6:50 PM
- 8 Color Our World Book Discussion for all readers, Iceberg by Jennifer Nielsen, 12:30 PM, RSVP
- 9 Color Our World Family Story Time, all ages, 10:30 AM
- 10 Color Our World Diamond Painting for ages 6-16, 10:30 AM, RSVP required
- 11 Color Our World Family Movie & Popcorn for all ages, Inside Out 2, 2 PM
- 15 STEM w/ Mr. Mike for ages 11-16, 3:30-5 PM, RSVP

MAY

- 20 STEM 4th Annual Quiz Bowl w/ Mr. Mike for ages 11-16, 3:30-5 PM, RSVP

JUNE

- 3 Through **August 29** Gather 2 Grow Summer Lunches served Tuesday-Friday, 11 AM - 1 PM, free for all youth (18 and under) and disabled adults up to age 26

17-21 Summer Library Programs Registration Week for K-12thGraders, during library open hours.

Follow our Facebook page for all our exciting summer events!



1007 4th Avenue
Lake Odessa, MI
616.374.4591
info@lakeodessalibrary.org
www.lakeodessalibrary.org

Forging Relationships. Connecting Community.
Sunfield Brethren Church
KIDS' HOPE USA



THANK YOU FOR ALL YOU DO TO SUPPORT OUR STUDENTS.

Forging Relationships. Connecting Community.
Andrea Nurenberg
PRESIDENT, LAKEWOOD BAND BOOSTERS



THANK YOU FOR ALL YOU DO TO SUPPORT OUR STUDENTS.

Forging Relationships. Connecting Community.
Dinner Theatre Support Team



THANK YOU FOR ALL YOU DO TO SUPPORT OUR STUDENTS.

LAKEWOOD COMMUNITY

8th ANNUAL HALL OF FAME CEREMONY

APRIL 23, 2025, 6:00-8:00 PM, LAKEWOOD HIGH SCHOOL ATRIUM

 MIKE WINKLER 2017	 RON MARTIN 2017	 BILL ECKSTROM 2017	 RON COPPES 2018	 PHIL REED 2018		
 ROGER BUXTON 2018	 JILL VAN ZYL 2019	HALL OF FAME inductees		 LOIS FRANITZ 2019	 MARY ROSSLER 2019	
 MIKE OMARA 2019	 MARK FARRELL 2022			 SHEILA VEITCH 2022	 DOUG SCHMUCK 2022	 ELIZABETH KINSEY 2022
 DENNY ACKERSON 2024	 JIM BEHRENWALD 2024	 GERALD RAIRIGH 2024	 LARRY HILTON 2025	 LYNNE HILTON 2025	 DENNIS RICHARDSON 2025	 BILL BRADLEY 2025

MULLIKEN DISTRICT LIBRARY

EASTER EGG HUNT

April 12, 2025 - 10:30 am
Mulliken Park Pavilion, Main St. Mulliken, MI 48861

Hop your way down to the annual Easter Egg Hunt where you will find eggs and prizes galore! There will be two age groups for this event, ages 0-8 and ages 8 and up. Both groups will hunt for eggs at the start time in different designated areas. Once all eggs are collected be sure to claim your extra prizes!

BIKE RAFFLE

We will feature a bike raffle, so be sure to enter the drawing. Winners will be drawn the following Monday, April 14.

More information to come as the event approaches

FREE COMMUNITY EVENT



LAKWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

223 West Broadway
Woodland, Michigan 48897



THE VIKING VIEW

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Lauren Christensen, Director of Instruction
Scott Brown, Director of Finance
Valerie Behm, Communication Design & Editor

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CONTACT US

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2024-2025

APRIL

No School - Spring Break | April 4-11, 2025
No School | April 18, 2025

MAY

½ Day for Students in a.m. | May 2, 2025
Commencement | May 22, 2025
No School – Memorial Day Extended Weekend | May 26, 2025

JUNE

½ Day for Students in a.m. – Last Day of School | June 4, 2025

* Calendar maybe modified to accommodate for excessive snow days