



# THE VIKING

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## A SEASON OF THANKS

### RECOGNIZING THE GIFTS WITHIN THE LAKEWOOD SCHOOL COMMUNITY

As we gather to celebrate Thanksgiving, we reflect on the many gifts that enrich Lakewood Public Schools. We are deeply thankful for our dedicated teachers who inspire young minds every day. They pour out a passion for learning and believe that every child can reach their full potential. We are grateful for our students who strive for excellence both inside and outside the classroom. We appreciate our support staff, bus drivers, paraprofessionals, food service staff, administrative assistants, and custodial maintenance who work tirelessly behind the scenes to ensure that students' needs are met and that our schools run smoothly. We honor our coaches who instill valuable life lessons, and nurture our students' athletic abilities and character. We express gratitude to our parents, guardians, and families for their unwavering support, for volunteering in our classrooms and on our parent teacher organizations, and advocate for their child's education. We also extend our thanks to local business for their generous and continuous philanthropy that boosts opportunities for Lakewood students. We celebrate our close-knit community that forms a strong sense of support and creates a positive impact on our neighborhood schools, you are a beacon of hope for the future of our students. As we transition from the warmth of Thanksgiving to the magic of the holiday season, may your days be filled with joy, peace, and gratitude. We wish you a happy and healthy holiday season. THIS IS LAKEWOOD!

2

DISTRICT  
NEWS

Superintendent's Summary

3

SCHOOL  
NEWS

Early Childhood Center  
Lakewood Elementary

5

SCHOOL  
NEWS

Middle School

6

SCHOOL &  
COMMUNITY  
NEWS

High School  
What's Happening



## LAKEWOOD ONE COMMITTEE HIGHLIGHTS

### A Bond Initiative Update

Dear Lakewood Community,

As we approach the holiday season, I want to take a moment to recognize the dedication, positivity, and hard work our staff and families have contributed to making this a strong start to the school year. With conferences completed and a much-needed break behind us, I hope everyone has had the chance to recharge as we progress.

I want to update you on our upcoming bond program, which aligns with our Strategic Plan, specifically Target 5: "Operations" and Goal 2: Successfully pass a ballot initiative to secure financial resources for maintaining and expanding school facilities, instructional resources, and student programs.

The commitment, teamwork, and excellence demonstrated by each member of the One Lakewood Committee continue to inspire me. Their dedication is making a lasting impact, and I sincerely appreciate the hours they have invested in understanding Lakewood's needs and gathering community input to create a thoughtful bond program that will support the education of current and future students.

Throughout seven meetings in September and October, the committee collected valuable input from our community to refine the focus of the bond proposal. They utilized the "Five WHYS" to help shape this important initiative:

1. Fiscal Responsibility
2. Declining Enrollment
3. Educational Outcomes
4. Safety & Security
5. Decreasing Utilization

These priorities reflect the committee's commitment to crafting strategic improvements that will sustain and strengthen our district well into the future. On October 28, the One Lakewood Committee met with the Project Steering Committee and presented an update to the Lakewood Public Schools Board of Education. During this meeting, they shared their recommendation for our next bond proposal, scheduled for May 2025.

Our data indicates that enrollment continues to decline at about 2% annually. This year, our student count dropped by 45 students, which is slightly higher than the projected decrease of 38. While the difference of seven students may seem minor, it translates to a funding reduction of \$67,256. We currently use only about 76.6% of our available capacity across four buildings. This suggests that streamlining from four buildings to three could help maximize our resources.

Current Capacity Utilization					Future Capacity Utilization	
Building	Capacity	TS	23/24 Students	Current Utilization	28/29 Students	Projected Utilization
LECC (PK-1)	120	6	98	81.7%	113	94.4%
Lakewood Elementary School (1-4)	470	21	505	107.4%	438	93.1%
Lakewood Middle School (5-8)	713	31	488	68.5%	499	70.1%
Lakewood High School (9-12)	765	36	492	64.3%	432	56.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,068</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>1,583</b>	<b>76.6%</b>	<b>1,482</b>	<b>71.7%</b>



I understand that any transition may raise questions and concerns. While changes like this are never easy, this recommendation is based on carefully examining our enrollment trends, facility usage, and the Five WHYS. The Board of Education will spend the next month reviewing the bond proposal, asking questions, and gathering feedback, with plans to act on November 25, 2024. Please know that the district remains committed to a collaborative approach to managing logistics and making transitions seamless for our students and staff.

Thank you for your ongoing support. Let's maintain this positive momentum as we navigate this important journey together. Please feel free to ask any questions or express any comments or concerns.

Go Vikings!

Jodi J. Duits  
Superintendent of Schools





## A Fruity Fall Fieldtrip

### EARLY CHILDHOOD APPLE PICKING ADVENTURES



This fall, our students enjoyed some incredible trips to local apple orchards! Kinderstart students visited Country Mill, while our kindergarten classes explored Gull Meadow Farms. Both trips were a fantastic success, filled with apple picking, learning about orchards, and fun activities that gave students a hands-on experience with fall harvest traditions.

We were incredibly proud of our kindergarten teachers and students! In fact, we received an email from Gull Meadow Farms letting us know how *amazing* our group was during the field trip. The farm staff was very impressed with our organization, behavior, and kindness. In fact, they mentioned this was the first time in 15 years they felt compelled to reach out to a school to share how *wonderful* the experience was. A big thank you to Mrs. Rohdy for organizing the trip!

Back in the classroom, many students had the opportunity to turn their freshly picked apples into applesauce and other delicious apple treats, adding a tasty and educational follow-up to the field trips. As a whole school, we also participated in the Great Apple Crunch, where everyone bit into an apple at the same time to promote healthy eating!



## Buckle Up, Ride Safe: Bus Safety Day

### Lakewood Transportation Team Shares Tips with Young Riders



In October, students at LECC participated in an engaging and informative Bus Safety Week! Throughout the week, students learned valuable skills for staying safe on the bus, such as how to sit correctly to prevent injuries, why it's important to stay seated, and how to keep the aisles clear. They also practiced emergency evacuations, helping them feel confident and prepared should an unexpected situation arise. Each student received a bus safety coloring book, adding a fun, hands-on way to reinforce these important lessons. We extend a huge thank you to Mr. Chase and Mrs. Graham from the transportation department, who led our safety sessions, and to our fantastic bus drivers for making this learning experience both safe and enjoyable. We are grateful for their dedication to keeping our students safe on the road every day!

## A BALLOT BOX OF FUN

### Early Childhood Learners Explore Voting on Election Day



On Election Day, LECC students participated in an exciting, hands-on activity to learn about the importance of voting and the democratic process! In class, they explored what an election is, why voting matters, and how it helps people make choices that benefit the community. To bring this lesson to life, the students visited a special voting booth in the library, where they received their very own ballots and casted votes for their favorite book: Duck for President or Grace for President. Each student experienced the thrill of placing their ballot in the box and proudly wore an "I Voted" sticker afterward. This experience introduced them to the power of each individual's voice and the importance of democracy in shaping decisions in our great country. The activity not only made them feel involved but also sparked an interest in civic participation and responsibility!

## SECRET AGENTS OF FUN

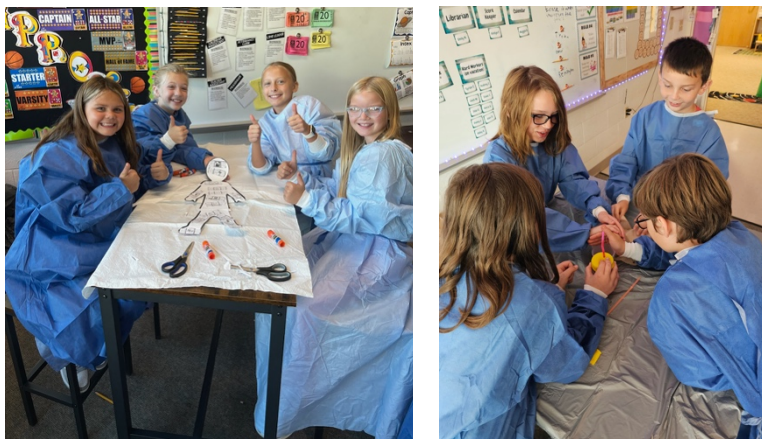
### LECC Teachers Go "Undercover" for Spirit Day



Part of learning is having fun. Our playful staff decided to shake things up before Thanksgiving break with an undercover spirit week! The kids were delightfully confused, and it led to plenty of laughs and memorable moments for everyone. Sometimes a little silliness is the perfect way to brighten the week!



## A HEART-PUMPING LEARNING EXPERIENCE 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Students Shine in Medical-Themed Learning



To celebrate the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter, Lakewood Elementary turned the 4<sup>th</sup> grade hall into a bustling Surgical Wing! Students rotated to different "Operating Rooms" throughout the day. They played a circulatory system escape room in Mrs. Mills' class, performed Text Feature Surgery in Mr. Wilcox's room, a challenging Math Facts Operation in Mr. Aldrich's room, created a pumping heart in Mrs. Smith's room, and checked out Case File Studies for math patients in Ms. James' room. Every student donned scrubs and embarked on a STEM exploration. This hands-on learning experience ignited their curiosity and sparked a lifelong passion for math and science.



## Mrs. Setter's Class Get into Turkey Trouble AN INTERESTING LITERARY AND ARTISTIC LESSON

Students in Mrs. Setter's class were given the task to help save the turkey and disguise him for Thanksgiving after listening to the story *Turkey Trouble*, by Wendi J Silvano. This fun book is about the kind of trouble where it's almost Thanksgiving...and you're the main course. But Turkey has an idea--what if he doesn't look like a turkey? Mrs. Setter's students got pretty creative designing turkey disguises! They locked in their learning by authoring a paragraph telling everyone why their disguised turkey should not be eaten for Thanksgiving. Mrs. Setter's lesson taught students about the joy of writing compelling stories and illustrating them.

## A Culture of Kindness: The Impact of Capturing Kids' Hearts



Capturing Kids' Hearts is in full swing at the elementary school! With weekly lessons and daily check in the students are developing new character skills and loving every minute of it. Each month is focused on new challenges. The students are using these new words in the classroom, playground, lunch room and outside of school. They are doing a fantastic job expanding their minds and becoming incredible Vikings!

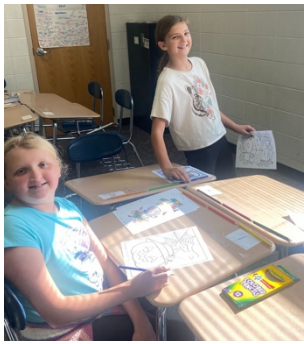


## A HAUNTINGLY GOOD TIME

### Lakewood Middle School Halloween Dance



Lakewood Middle School students had a great time at our Halloween dance. Students had the chance to dress up and dance the afternoon away with their friends. Students who did not want to dance were able to play basketball, volleyball, dodgeball or just hang out with their friends. Social events like dances and activities provide crucial opportunities for middle school students to connect with their peers, build friendships, and develop important social skills. We extend a special thanks to our 8<sup>th</sup> grade students in the Community Leadership Class who organized this fun event and helped to run the concession stand. Their leadership made the dance a A Spooktacular Soirée!



### Good Behavior Pays Off

#### STUDENTS ENJOY A FUN ACTIVITY DAY REWARD

At the end of each month, students are celebrated for their positive grades and behavior by having the chance to participate in various activities throughout the building put on by our teachers. Students have the option to play Ultimate Frisbee, make crafts, play basketball in the gym, participate in karaoke, bucket drumming, go for a nature walk and much more. We are proud of the hard work our students have put into school each day.



### MELODIES OF THE SEASON A Night of Song and Sound

The Lakewood Middle School choir and band performed a haunting and heartwarming concert, featuring Halloween-themed classics and patriotic anthems. The students' dedication and talent shone through each performance, captivating the audience with their musical prowess. The band's selection of Halloween tunes was accentuated with our musicians wearing their fun costumes. Our students' talented musicianship and stage presence is representative of the dedicated work of our choir teacher, Mrs. Smith, and band teacher, Mr. Walsh. We are proud of these wonderful performance that bring joy to our school community. We are also grateful for the support of our families and community members that is essential in fostering a thriving arts program.



*Happy Holidays* From the  
LAKEWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOLS FAMILY!



## LEADING THE CHARGE: STUDENTS STEP UP Students Step Up to Leadership Opportunities



The combination of strong academic performance and the opportunity for students to develop leadership skills is essential for their growth. Such experiences not only enhance their confidence but also prepares them for future challenges. Encouraging students to take on leadership roles, participate in extracurricular activities, and engage in community service can foster a sense of responsibility and teamwork. It's also a great way for them to discover their passions and interests outside the classroom. Some of these activities include Seniors painting their parking spots and participating in first day of school sunrise, the marching band working alongside the Grand Valley State University Band, and a memorable night when students invited the Portland High School student section to join and cheer together with them in the second half of the football game to raise awareness for Mental Health. These mentions are only a few of the initiatives high school students are experiencing to develop lifelong leadership skills.



## Entrepreneurs in the Making DEER BLINDS BUILT BY SKILLED TRADES STUDENTS



Our Vikings in the wood shop are turning their class into a store. These growing entrepreneurs have been selling items to the community and are learning the business. In a unique and innovative program, our high school skilled trades students have been honing their carpentry skills by building deer blinds. Mr. Fritz, Skilled Trades Instructor, knows the power of student-driven ideas, so he asked his students for project ideas. This collaboration allowed his class to co-create their instructional experience. These outdoors enthusiasts decided to design and build deer blinds. This hands-on experience has not only provided them with valuable vocational training but has also sparked a passion for the skilled trades. At a time when our community faces a shortage of skilled workers, this program offers students a tangible opportunity to develop the skills needed to succeed in high-demand careers. As many schools are phasing out these programs, Lakewood High School is proud to offer this opportunity for students to refine their talents and explore potential career paths. The deer blinds, expertly crafted by our students, were available for purchase, providing both a practical solution for their outdoor adventures and a tangible demonstration of our students' exceptional craftsmanship. Funds from the purchase returned directly into the skilled trades program for materials and the needed tools of the trade. Mr. Fritz understands that students thrive in an environment where they are presented with an opportunity to pursue learning that matters to them. When students are allowed to collaborate on projects where they work interdependently and creatively, deep learning flows.

## A FASHIONABLE AND SUSTAINABLE SOLUTION

### Student Visionary Launches School Thrift Store



One of our inspiring students has taken the initiative to create a Viking Thrift Store, providing fun and affordable clothing options for fellow students. Andi Schrock's ingenious plan for a pop-up store empowers students to express themselves through fashion while promoting sustainability. Items are no more than a dollar for students to buy!

To fully realize Andi's vision, we are seeking donations to purchase display shelving, clothing racks, and other essential items to help organize and showcase the donated clothing. By supporting this student-led initiative, we can help launch the store's success as well as Andi's innovative mind and determined spirit!





## STRONGER TOGETHER

A Collaborative Effort Between Schools and Libraries to Enrich Lives in Our Communities



Our school district and local libraries are collaborating to create a vibrant learning community, offering a wide range of programs and resources to enrich the lives of our students and families. Middle School educator, Mr. Ryan King, and representatives from the Lake Odessa, Sunfield, Clarksville, and George Spindler Memorial Library libraries have been collaborating to promote library-hosted events and their presence in the schools. We were thrilled to see library representatives at the middle school parent-teacher conferences. Library officials are thrilled that this shared effort will provide families with access to a wealth of resources and programs that enhance their lives and promote lifelong learning. School and local partnerships strengthen our community and families.

# LAKEWOOD COMMUNITY

### LAKE ODESSA LIBRARY EVENTS

#### DECEMBER

- 3 Christmas Craft for ages 5-11 @ 4 PM
- 5 Dungeons & Dragons/Chess Teen Game Night for ages 11-17, 5-7 PM
- 10 Gingerbread House Creation for ages 9-16 @ 4 PM, RSVP
- 12 Dungeons & Dragons /Chess Teen Game Night for ages 11-17, 5-7 PM
- 13 Santa at the library immediately following the Village Parade
- 19 Dungeons & Dragons /Chess Teen Game Night for ages 11-17, 5-7 PM

#### JANUARY

- 2 Dungeons & Dragons /Chess Teen Game Night for ages 11-17, 5-7 PM
- 9 Dungeons & Dragons /Chess Teen Game Night for ages 11-17, 5-7 PM
- 16 Dungeons & Dragons /Chess Teen Game Night for ages 11-17, 5-7 PM
- 21 STEM w/ Mr. Mike for ages 11-16, 3:30-5 PM
- 23 Dungeons & Dragons /Chess Teen Game Night for ages 11-17, 5-7 PM

#### FEBRUARY

- 6 Dungeons & Dragons /Chess Teen Game Night for ages 11-17, 5-7 PM
- 11 P.O.O.P. Party for ages 5-11, 4 PM
- 13 Dungeons & Dragons /Chess Teen Game Night for ages 11-17, 5-7 PM
- 18 STEM w/ Mr. Mike for ages 11-16, 3:30-5 PM
- 20 Dungeons & Dragons /Chess Teen Game Night for ages 11-17, 5-7 PM
- 27 Dungeons & Dragons /Chess Teen Game Night for ages 11-17, 5-7 PM

#### MARCH

- 6 Dungeons & Dragons/Chess Teen Game Night for ages 11-17, 5-7 PM
- 13 Dungeons & Dragons/Chess Teen Game Night for ages 11-17, 5-7 PM
- 18 STEM w/ Mr. Mike for ages 11-16, 3:30-5 PM
- 20 Dungeons & Dragons/Chess Teen Game Night for ages 11-17, 5-7 PM
- 27 Dungeons & Dragons/Chess Teen Game Night for ages 11-17, 5-7 PM

*If Lakewood Public Schools is closed due to the weather, all library programs are canceled for that same day.*

### CLARKSVILLE LIBRARY EVENTS

#### DECEMBER

- 2 Candy Land Scavenger Hunt Begins
- 3 Adult Book Club Discussion & Treats, 6pm-7 pm
- 5 Storytime, 10 am
- 9 Coffee & Coloring, 10 am-11 am
- 10 Family Candle Making, 5pm-7pm
- 12 Storytime, 10 am
- 19 Storytime, 10 am
- 23 Candy Land Scavenger Hunt Ends

#### JANUARY

- 2 Storytime 10 am

### Candyland Scavenger Hunt

**From Dec.  
2nd to Dec.  
23rd!**

*Play an enlarged version of the game by going on a scavenger hunt throughout the library to find all the pieces and get a prize. The game will be for all ages so kids might need a little help.*



## FAMILY CANDLEMAKING

**DECEMBER 10TH IN CLARKSVILLE &  
DECEMBER 11TH IN SARANAC FROM  
5-7PM!**

**JOIN US FOR A FUN CANDLE-MAKING WORKSHOP! WHETHER SOLO OR WITH FAMILY, YOU'LL HAVE THE CHANCE TO MAKE THREE TYPES OF CANDLES. MELT WAX, CHOOSE SCENTS AND COLORS, AND POUR INTO CONTAINERS WITH WICKS. FOR A HANDS-ON OPTION, DIP A WICK IN COLORED WAX TO CREATE A PILLAR CANDLE, OR ROLL WAX SHEETS AROUND A WICK FOR A SAFER, KID-FRIENDLY PROJECT. HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!**

## LAKEWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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# THE VIKING VIEW

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### NOVEMBER

No School - Thanksgiving Break | November 25-29, 2024

### DECEMBER

½ Day for Students in a.m. | December 13, 2024

School - Winter Break | December 23-31, 2024

### JANUARY

No School - Winter Break | January 1-3, 2025

No School | January 20, 2025

### FEBRUARY

No School - Mid-Winter Break | February 7-10, 2025

### MARCH

No School | March 21, 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

# 2024-2025