

2018-19 School Year Changes

Frequently Asked Questions

All Programs

- ***What changes are being made for the 2018-19 school year?***
 - All-day kindergarten will be offered to all students, eliminating the lottery system.
 - ECS and elementary students will participate in year-round daily specials.
 - Grades K-2 will be located at the early childhood schools and grades 3-6 at the elementary schools.
 - Heritage and Hopewell elementary schools will become early childhood schools to accommodate all-day kindergarten. Lakota Local Schools will now have eight elementary schools and six early childhood schools.
 - A pilot program introducing 1:1 devices at our junior high schools will further support personalized learning for our students, followed by our high schools once the program has been proven successful.

- ***What role did community feedback play in making these changes?***

Since the fall, our new superintendent along with school board members, have embarked on a listening tour with the staff and community. As a result, we have chosen three areas to use as a starting point to move the district forward, beginning with the 2018-19 school year: all-day kindergarten offered to every student along with daily specials for students in grades K-6, all without significant financial impact. We are also looking at increased access to technology for secondary grades, beginning with a pilot program at the junior schools.

- ***Why are these changes being made?***

Our focus is always on doing what is best for our students. A Lakota education is always student-centered, and these initial changes put us in a position to continue enhancing our students' educational experience in a way that competes with the very best districts in Ohio.

- ***What is the financial impact?***

We are committed to implementing these changes in a fiscally responsible manner. After careful and extensive studies, we have determined that these changes can be introduced without having a negative impact on our bottom line and long-term financial planning.

The district is committed to implementing these changes with our current Lakota teachers and support staff. We will only add staff members if needed to maintain our current teacher:student ratio: 1:24 K-2 and 1:26 3-6, on average.

By eliminating most half-day kindergarten classes, the district will see a significant cost savings in excess of \$400,000 in annual transportation costs, as there will no longer be a need for mid-day bussing.

1:1 devices at the junior high schools builds on our levy commitment to increase instructional technology and will come from our permanent improvement funds. Current devices will be repurposed for our younger learners in grades K-6.

- ***What changes will be introduced at the high schools?***

Pending the successful introduction at the junior high schools, our 1:1 technology program will be introduced at our high schools. A specific date has not been set at this time.

- ***When are these changes going into effect?***

These changes will be in effect with the 2018-19 school year.

Building Realignment to Meet the Instructional Needs of Students

- ***What is the benefit of a K-2 and 3-6 structure?***

There are many benefits of a K-2 and 3-6 grade structure. This building configuration will better align with Lakota's curriculum structure for our students. It will aid in early intervention for our youngest learners, giving teachers more opportunity to prepare for the state-mandated third grade reading guarantee. In addition, high achieving students in our primary grades will see an increase in opportunities. By this more efficient structure at each level, we will be able to better design a master schedule. This will allow for more flexible and cluster

grouping for specialized instruction for high achieving students in K-6. This structure also provides teachers with increased collaboration time.

- ***What school will my child attend?***

Please refer to our updated [interactive attendance zone map](#), where you can enter your home address to see your assigned schools.

- ***Why are Heritage and Hopewell elementary schools becoming early childhood schools?***

After an in-depth facility usage study was completed, we have determined that our four current ECS buildings cannot accommodate all-day kindergarten for every student. As a result, Heritage and Hopewell elementary schools will become ECS buildings in the fall. These buildings were chosen due to their size and location.

- ***Why is redistricting necessary?***

With Heritage and Hopewell elementary schools becoming ECS buildings, we will need to adjust our attendance boundaries for our primary grades.

Building realignment allows us to utilize our current resources to improve the offerings to our students while being fiscally responsible.

- ***How will this affect preschool?***

We are hopeful to have preschool at all of our early childhood buildings, but are still in the planning stages.

- ***Will the teacher-student ratio change?***

No. We will maintain the current teacher:student ratio which, on average, is 1:24 for K-2 and 1:26 for grades 3-6.

- ***Why is second grade moving to the ECS buildings?***

To better align the structure of our curriculum to meet the needs of our students, our building configuration will change to a K-2 and 3-6 model. This will also allow for continuity and consistency with early intervention.

- ***Will my assigned junior high or high school change?***

While the majority of changes will apply to K-6 students, please refer to our attendance zone maps to confirm school assignments. Our current high school boundaries remain unchanged.

- ***Will open enrollment and alternative school of choice still be an option?***

As long as space is available, open enrollment for students living outside of the district will be an option. Likewise, parents may still request an alternative school of choice, providing space is available. Please keep in mind that resident students have priority.

For the 2018-19 school year, due to the changes with attendance boundaries, all K-6 requests will be considered a new request. As long as space is available, requests for returning students will be given priority over new requests.

- ***How will this impact my child's transportation services?***

No changes to transportation exclusion zones are anticipated. Building realignment may result in shorter bus routes for our early childhood students.

- ***The attendance boundary changes have my current seventh-grader moving to another junior high school for one year. Can they remain at their current school?***

Yes. For one year only, any current seventh-grader changing schools next year as a result of attendance boundary changes will be permitted to remain at their current school. Students in this situation who are currently receiving transportation will retain transportation next school year. These students will need to complete an alternative school of choice form.

- ***How will this impact school start times?***

Our new school times for the 2018-19 school year are listed below.

Preschool	9:10 - 11:55 a.m. (Morning session) 1:15 - 4:00 p.m. (Afternoon session)
½ Day Kindergarten	9:10 - 11:55 a.m.
Early Childhood Schools (All-Day K-2)	9:10 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Elementary Schools (3-6)	8:20 a.m. - 3:10 p.m.
Junior High Schools (7-8)	7:25 a.m. - 2:10 p.m.
Freshman Campuses (9)	7:15 a.m. - 2:25 p.m. (no change)
High Schools (10-12)	8:05 a.m. - 2:40 p.m. (no change)

- ***Will English as a Second Language (ESL) services be available at my new school?***

Yes. ESL services will be available at every Lakota school, beginning in the 2018-19 school year.

All-Day Kindergarten

- ***Why is all-day kindergarten a priority at Lakota?***

Research has shown that all-day kindergarten improves student achievement, as well as social and emotional skills. Currently, first-graders have had different kindergarten experiences. Academically, the majority of our kindergarteners will now receive the same amount of learning time, putting them on more equal ground when they transition to first grade the following year. All-day kindergarten allows these students to have daily specials, providing different learning experiences every day through art, physical education, music, technology and more.

- ***Can my child still attend half-day kindergarten?***

Requests for half-day will be accommodated through AM kindergarten. Schools offering AM kindergarten will be finalized once registration is complete. Half-day kindergarten will focus on academics to ensure these students are prepared for first grade and will not participate in daily specials.

- ***How will my student benefit?***

All-day kindergarten has been shown to improve student achievement, as well as social and emotional skills. Currently, first graders have had different kindergarten experiences: half-day, extended-day and all-day. By eliminating the lottery system, all of our incoming kindergartners will have the option to attend school for a full day. All-day kindergarten also allows these students to have daily specials, providing different learning experiences through art, physical education, music, technology and more. In addition, the all-day option will provide more of our youngest learners with increased enrichment and intervention as they're beginning their formal education.

- ***Why hasn't Lakota moved to all-day sooner?***

In the past, school districts were responsible for funding their all-day kindergarten programs. We were able to end tuition-based kindergarten once the state approved funding for all-day kindergarten. With our comprehensive facilities study and building realignment, we have determined that we are now able to offer all-day kindergarten to our incoming students.

ECS/Elementary Specials

- ***Why are year-round specials a priority at Lakota?***

Year-round specials in early childhood and elementary school are an important part of the educational experience for students. Students learn in different ways. Being able to express themselves in related arts, physical education and technology provides an opportunity for students to use different parts of their brains. These classes also teach important skills that students may not experience in their core classes, such as sportsmanship and creativity.

- ***What will specials look like at my child's school?***

Daily specials will be offered for all-day K-6 grade, with scheduling to be determined at the building level. The specials will provide different learning experiences in areas like art, physical education, music, technology and more. Children attending half-day kindergarten will not receive specials in order to focus on academics.

- ***How will my student benefit?***

Students excel in different areas of learning. Offering daily specials for our students will help to develop more well-rounded individuals. Specials offer a break from core curriculum during the day, while still teaching our students needed skills. Increased specials also offer our teachers the opportunity to collaborate across subject areas.

Expanded Technology at the Secondary Level

- ***What does 1:1 technology mean?***

One-to-one (1:1) technology refers to students receiving a school-owned laptop to be used during the school year, both in school and outside of school. Teachers will use technology to enhance their lesson plans, student projects and assignments to further personalize student learning.

- ***Who will receive a device?***

Our junior high school students will receive a device as part of our pilot program during the first semester of the 2018-19 school year.

1:1 devices will be introduced to our high school students once the pilot program has proven to be successful.

- ***How will this change the instructional experience and benefit my child?***

Lakota made a commitment to digitally enhance our student learning experience as part of the last tax levy. Providing a device to each student further supports this commitment and dramatically expands the access to instructional, collaboration and communication content and opportunities both inside and outside the classroom. This will ensure our students have the experiences required to develop the skills necessary for the technical and global world of today and tomorrow.

- ***What kind of device will my student receive?***

Lakota is focusing on Chromebooks for this pilot.

- ***How many devices is the district purchasing and what's happening with current devices?***

Lakota will be purchasing enough devices to provide one to each of our seventh and eighth graders in the 2018-19 school year. Current devices will be re-allocated to other Lakota schools or disposed of if they have reached the end of their investment cycle.

- ***How is the district funding these devices?***

Lakota will be using Permanent Improvement funds already allocated to our next technology replacement cycle to fund this initiative. Our schools are currently at a 2:1 student:device ratio. Falling device costs and volume pricing aids in our expansion of this 1:1 student:device ratio at our junior schools and eventually our high schools.

- ***How and when will this change be rolled out to students?***

Students will receive their district-owned device at their school sometime in the first semester of the 2018-19 school year. The process will be communicated to our students and parents well in advance.

- ***What will be expected of my child with this new device?***

Your child's school 2018-19 handbook will be updated with clear expectations for responsible use of these devices, as well as disciplinary actions. These will also be highlighted on the parent/guardian agreement form, which will be required for each student to receive a device. School staff will assist all students to ensure a smooth transition.

- ***What if my child doesn't have access to the internet at home?***

We are aware that not all of our students will have internet access at home. We are looking into several different options to assist these students.

- ***Will my child's fees increase?***

At this time we do not anticipate an increase in student fees as part of this pilot program.

More details will be coming later this year for our 2018-19 junior high families.