

This year, Lakota Local Schools introduced a new series of community fanfare events supporting student achievement. The concept, derived from a first day of school tradition at Hopewell Junior School, brings community and school leaders together to send a message of support to Lakota students.

Throughout the school year, community residents and businesses have been joining school staff for a fanfare-like welcome to school for students. The group's task is a simple one: Line the school's entrance and give students high-fives and words of encouragement as they're filing into school. The new tradition aims to provide students with a visual display of all their supporters during times like testing and the start of a new semester, for example.

And what an experience it has been! It has been a wonderful to see the excitement on the students' faces as they enter their school building and get a glimpse of the line of parents, business professionals and community members. The energy is contagious, with lots of smiles, high fives and joy all around.

Now, to some, it is a question of why bother with such a non-academic function. Research shows that students who receive encouragement from others are much more successful in school. Such support often comes from their families, but we know that children also benefit from knowing others are vested in their education and achievements. The simple act of greeting them to start their day and urging them to do their best allows all of our students know there are people supporting their academic efforts and that they are part of a community that wants the best for our children.

The fanfares have proven so popular with the schools and the community that every Lakota school will hold at least one this year. If you have not yet had the opportunity to attend one, I highly recommend that you do so. All are welcome and you can: [Click here to sign up for any of the remaining fanfare events:](#)

April 18, 2017 @ 9 a.m. - Heritage Elementary

May 11, 2017 @ 8:15 a.m. - Freedom Elementary

May 22, 2017 @ 9 a.m. - Wyandot Early Childhood

May 24, 2017 @ 6:45 a.m. - Lakota West Freshman Campus

Now, as we near the end of the school year, another new tradition is being launched – the parade of graduates. Imagine a parade of graduating seniors, dressed in their caps and gowns, walking past elementary-aged students. On Monday, May 15 that is exactly what will take place in each Lakota elementary building.

The younger students will line the halls, cheering and celebrating the seniors as they pass. During the parade, seniors will receive congratulatory letters of advice and encouragement written by the elementary students as a souvenir of the event. This initiative from the Champions for Change program celebrates the achievements of our graduating students as well as provides role models for those in the elementary grades.

All are invited to attend the Parade of Graduates at the elementary school in their attendance zone.

Parade of Graduates

All Lakota elementary schools

Monday, May 15

Guests should start arriving at 9:40 a.m.

Parade will begin approximately 10 a.m.

Robb Vogelmann is the acting superintendent for Lakota Local Schools.