

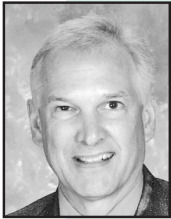
YOUR SCHOOLS

2016

Aurora City School District

From the Superintendent

By PAT R. CICCATELLI
Superintendent of Schools



It has been another great start to the school year. It is a pleasure to see our students return to school excited and anxious for a new year! I want to thank our faculty, staff and the parents and students for everything they have done to help us to hit the ground running towards another successful year.

We saw the enrollment of many new students again this summer, and we would like to welcome these families to our community. We enrolled just over 180 new students this summer! Our overall enrollment increased about 30 students since we graduated 75 more students than enrolled in Kindergarten and we had about 75 students withdraw. We currently have about 3,000 students in our district.

Congratulations to the students and staff at Leighton Elementary for their recognition as a national Blue Ribbon school! Only 329 elementary, middle and high schools in the country were awarded. The National Blue Ribbon Award was founded in 1982 by then U.S. Secretary of Education Terrel Bell, and was started to honor exemplary public and private American schools. Each year only a very small and select group of elementary, middle, and high schools across the country are recognized for

See Superintendent p. 4

LEVY RENEWAL PLACED ON NOVEMBER 8, 2016 BALLOT

The Aurora Board of Education has voted to place a five-year 7.33 mill renewal levy on the upcoming November 8, 2016 ballot. This is a general operating renewal levy that was originally passed in 1992. A renewal levy is the continuance of an existing levy with the collection rate at the same dollar amount as when the levy was originally approved; therefore, if passed, there would be **NO increase in taxes** for Aurora citizens.

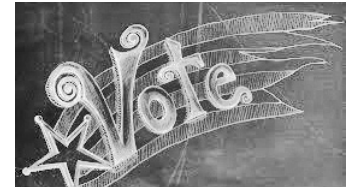
The Aurora City School District (ACSD), in a constant effort to be good stewards of the monies received by our community members, strives to continually look for ways to reduce their spending and maximize the dollars that are entrusted to the district.

With that in mind, there are numerous

ways that the district has gone about achieving notable monetary savings:

- Programs that have been cut throughout the district over the past five years include, German and Family Consumer Science, while other programs have been reduced (Middle School Spanish, Middle School Baseball, Softball and Boy's and Girl's Soccer). Staff positions have also been eliminated which include the Academic Office Secretary and two Instructional Technology positions.
- With the district-wide energy conservation program, the district has saved over \$500,000 in energy costs over the past four years. With the full integration of this program, an additional \$75,000 per year will be realized by the district due to the

Levy Renewal p. 3



AURORA HIGH SCHOOL AMONG NEWSWEEK'S TOP HIGH SCHOOLS 2016

Newsweek Magazine released their coveted list of America's Top High Schools for 2016. Aurora High School (AHS) was ranked among this elite class of only 500 schools nationwide that are doing a "stellar job of preparing students for college." AHS was ranked at #215 in the nation, 14th in the State of Ohio and #6 in the area. This ranking puts the high school



in the top 1% of high schools nationally. AHS was also named in the publication's Top Schools that are Beating the Odds 2016 in college prep for students who are in a more challenging economic environment listing.

Aurora Schools Superintendent, Pat Ciccantelli said, "Congratulations to the

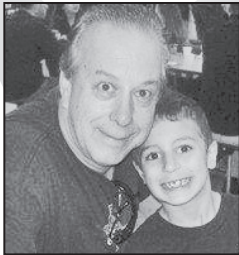
Newsweek p. 5

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

From the Superintendent.....	1	Auditor of State Award	3	Back to School.....	5
Levy Renewal.....	1	Quality Profile	3	Class Acts	6
<i>Newsweek Magazine</i> Top High Schools	1	<i>Cleveland Magazine</i> Rating.....	3	A Letter from the BOE President	6
Staff Spotlight.....	2	Who's Who & What's New	4	Sports Report.....	7
Leighton Blue Ribbon Award.....	2	ODE State Report Card.....	5	Drug Awareness Meeting	7



STAFF SPOTLIGHT



PAUL KOVACH WITH GRANDSON AUSTIN

Craddock School Custodian Paul Kovach with Grandson Austin

Paul Kovach, beloved custodian at Craddock Elementary School, has been employed at the Aurora City School District for the last 28 years. Prior to joining the custodial staff, "Mr. Paul" (as he is known at Craddock School) was a mechanic and a bus driver. He has two daughters, Rachel and Erica, who are both graduates of the Aurora City Schools. Now his grandson Austin is attending Leighton Elementary School in the 3rd grade. In his free time Mr. Paul loves to ride his motorcycle and has entered it in local shows and has done quite well. What he likes even more than his motorcycle though, is working at Craddock School. Mr. Paul explained, "The children keep me young at heart." Craddock School Principal, Julie Troman, said, "Mr. Kovach (better known as "Mr. Paul") is an incredible asset to our school. Not only does he work hard to help keep our school clean and safe, but he has been a guest reader, a frequent visitor to classrooms, and truly embraces the idea that we are all contributing to the students' education. He always goes above and beyond the call of duty to be an important part of our Craddock village!"

LEIGHTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL EARNS NATIONAL BLUE RIBBON SCHOOL 2016 AWARD



The Aurora City School District's Leighton Elementary School has been named a National Blue Ribbon School 2016 by the U.S. Department of Education. Leighton Elementary School is one of among only 279 public and 50 private schools receiving this honor nationally making it one of the top schools in the nation.

U.S. Secretary of Education, John B. King, Jr., made the announcement that Leighton School had earned the award on September 28, 2016. Leighton Elementary School was nominated for this honor by the Ohio Department of Education and was one of only 14 Ohio public schools to be nominated by the ODE for the 2016 award. Leighton was then required to complete a comprehensive application regarding school practices.

National Blue Ribbon Schools are described by the ODE as "public and non-public elementary, middle, and high schools that are producing outstanding results for all students. They have demonstrated consistent excellence, and made progress in closing gaps in student achievement. The National Blue Ribbon Schools recognition program is part of a larger U. S. Department of Education effort to identify and disseminate knowledge about effective school leadership and promising instructional practices."

Regarding the Blue Ribbon Award, Aurora Schools' Board of Education President, Gerald Kohanski, stated, "The Board of Education is very proud of the efforts of the Leighton School teachers, administrative team, support staff, and students whose hard work and excellent



efforts have earned this prestigious award. We are very happy to have Leighton join Harmon Middle School and Aurora High School as National Blue Ribbon schools. The Aurora community can be justifiably proud of this rare achievement of having three Blue Ribbon schools in our district."

Leighton School Principal, Paul Goodwin, said, "The 2016 National Blue Ribbon Award earned by Leighton Elementary School is the culmination of at least five years of continued academic excellence. It is the result of well-developed educational plans being put into practice by excellent teachers and staff who understand the significance of what we do in this district. Our job is to help every student succeed to the best of his or her ability. We believe we work exceedingly hard to make that happen. It is such a privilege to be part of this learning environment. What a terrific and wonderful honor for this staff, this school district and this community."

Aurora Schools' Superintendent, Pat Ciccantelli, stated, "Leighton Elementary was one of only 329 schools in the country, and one of only six elementary schools in Ohio to earn this recognition! Congratulations to the Principal, Mr. Paul Goodwin, the faculty, staff and all of the students. We would also like to thank and congratulate the parents who play a significant role in Leighton earning this award. Lastly, we would like to thank the

See Leighton p. 5



YOUR SCHOOLS

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Editor: Stacey DeAnna

Your Schools is a publication of the Aurora City School District. Its purpose is to keep residents of Aurora informed of current events and progress in the Aurora City Schools and to foster pride and a continuous communication link between the schools and the community.

Your Schools has been awarded the "Mark of Excellence" and "Best of the Best" Awards by the Ohio Chapter of the National School Public Relations Association for service as a school district newsletter. *Your Schools* is a quarterly publication, mailed to all residents of Aurora. For information, comments, or story ideas, e-mail Editor Stacey DeAnna at: yourschools@aurora-schools.org.

Levy Renewal - Continued from p. 1

discontinuation of the contract with the provider after this year. Both administrators and teaching staff have received minimal raises over the past five years.

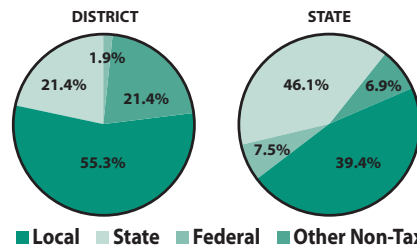
- The district has reduced their purchase services budget over the past five years. This has led to a 16.9% decrease in the district's non-personnel expenditures from fiscal year 2011 through fiscal year 2015.
- The ACSD is a member of a large insurance consortium that helps to keep insurance coverage costs lower. A voluntary employee wellness program was adopted, which has led to a district cost savings of over \$150,000 during the last three years.

While continually striving to implement cost saving measures, the ACSD has also faced a decrease in state funding. The district has lost a cumulative total of \$3.45 million in state funding when compared to fiscal year 2010. An additional \$2.80 million in state funding will be lost from fiscal year 2017-2020 for a total loss of \$6.25 million over that ten year period. This cumulative loss of \$6.25 million in state funding is the equivalent of 10.25 mills of property tax revenue. During this same ten year

time period, it is important to note that the district's enrollment has remained constant.

The Ohio Department of Education (ODE) ranks the Aurora City Schools at #571 out of 613 school districts in Ohio in total state revenue per student which means that over 93% of the districts in Ohio receive more state money than the Aurora Schools. Since the ACSD does not receive the majority of its revenue from federal or state funding, the district is very reliant on local dollars for support.

Despite the decrease in state revenues for the ACSD, the school system remains a great value to the community. Local property owners in Aurora receive a tremendous value for the investment in their schools. According to ODE calculations there is no other district in the State of Ohio that spends less per pupil while achieving more in student performance. Superintendent Pat Ciccantelli explained that, "There is not a district in Ohio that is outperforming us that isn't spending considerably more money than we do."



	Fiscal Year 2016	Fiscal Year 2017	Fiscal Year 2018	Fiscal Year 2019	Fiscal Year 2020
Beginning Balance	6,899,415	7,460,681	6,766,231	4,822,343	2,009,224
+Revenue	33,837,154	33,844,494	31,691,912	29,818,474	30,183,327
+Proposed Renew/Replacement Levies	-	-	2,206,883	4,434,112	4,471,213
+Proposed New Levies	-	-	-	-	-
-Expenditures	(33,275,888)	(34,538,945)	(35,842,683)	(37,065,704)	(38,207,641)
= Revenue Surplus or Deficit	561,266	(694,450)	(1,943,888)	(2,813,119)	(3,553,100)
Ending Balance	7,460,681	6,766,231	4,822,343	2,009,224	(1,543,876)



Congratulations once again to the Aurora City School District Treasurer's Department for earning their 5th consecutive Ohio Auditor of State Award. They received the 2015 award for, "exemplary financial reporting in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP)." This is the 5th consecutive year they have received this honor.

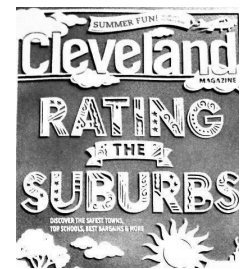


QUALITY PROFILE

The Aurora City School District has released its updated 2015-16 comprehensive "Quality Profile." The profile is a companion document to the Ohio Department of Education's (ODE) School District Report Card. The content of this Quality Profile examines in greater depth those qualities that our community deems important for a high quality public education. It can be found under "Quick Links" on our district homepage.

CLEVELAND MAGAZINE RATES AURORA SCHOOLS AT #4

Cleveland Magazine has released its June 2016 annual *Rating the Suburbs* issue. The 2016 edition analyzed



77 Northeast Ohio communities on several key components including, education, housing, safety, taxes and walkability. The Aurora City School District was ranked at #4 for 2016 out of these 77 Northeast Ohio communities. Congratulations to the Aurora School District for another excellent ranking.



"We rise by lifting others."

~ Robert Ingersoll

Who's Who & What's New

Check out the new link to the latest **COMMUNITY UPDATE NEWSLETTER** on the Aurora Schools' website. The quarterly flyer can now be found online under the Community Portal and locally at Heinen's Grocery Store, the Walker Building, and the Aurora Library.



FREE & REDUCED LUNCH INFORMATION - The Aurora City School District offers healthy lunches every school day. Your children may qualify for Free or Reduced Price Meals. If you think you may qualify, please fill out the Free and Reduced Price School Meals Family Application that can be found online under the aurora-schools.org website under Homepage - Quick Links - Forms & Links or at the Board Office.

HOMECOMING ROYALTY CROWNED

This year's Homecoming King and Queen were announced on September 30, 2016. Congratulations to seniors **MARY ELLIOTT** and **RYAN MARKOWITZ** who were crowned during the Homecoming football game festivities at Veterans Stadium.



HARMON SCHOOL SUBSTATION UPGRADE CONSTRUCTION

The **OHIO EDISON HARMON SCHOOL SUBSTATION RELIABILITY UPGRADE** is scheduled to begin with contractors mobilizing the week of October 3rd. Work will officially be under way the week of October 10th with below grade activities that include fencing, trenching and conduit work. Contractors are scheduled to work between 7:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. (school building traffic patterns should not be disrupted). Above grade work is scheduled to

begin in January and will include new breakers, steel structures and a control house. Completion of this project is scheduled for July 2017. If anyone has any questions, comments or concerns, please do not hesitate to call the project hotline number at (888) 340-3588.

The **AURORA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION** inducted its newest members on September 30, 2016. **DR. EDWARD HALL** (1968) was inducted into the Hall of Fame as a Distinguished Alumni, while **PHIL QUINN** (1987) and **JAMES SJOSTROM** (2000) were inducted as Hall of Fame athletes. Congratulations to the newest Hall of Fame inductees

SCOOPING ICE CREAM DELIGHT



PRESCRIPTION DROP OFF LOCATION

It is very important that, in light of the nationwide opioid addiction epidemic, households do not keep unused/leftover prescription drugs, especially painkillers, in the home. Painkiller usage is one of the most common practices fueling the opioid addiction crisis. Homes are one of the most common places where addiction begins or is perpetuated and having opioid prescriptions available and easily accessible can increase the likelihood of abuse. The City of Aurora has a prescription drop off location outside of the entrance to the police station located at 100 S. Aurora Road. The labeled metal box can be found outside and to the right of the main entrance door. This service is provided to residents in hopes that prescriptions will be disposed of properly, instead of throwing them out or flushing them into the water supply.

Superintendent - Continued from p. 1

the exemplary academic performance of their students. Five years of data is collected and high performing schools are asked to apply. An application is completed and when the final data is available, the Secretary of Education announces the winners. This award is due to the great work done at Miller Elementary, Craddock Elementary and the collaboration with our parents, as well as the outstanding staff at Leighton.

We recently received our test data from the Ohio Department of Education from last year. Although scores statewide were down significantly this year due to higher standards on state assessments and a more challenging curriculum, Aurora students continued to achieve at the highest level in the state. Our performance index score ranked us 10th in the state out of the 613 public school districts in Ohio. Aurora's high ranking statewide is the result of our district-wide alignment to classroom best practices and a rigorous curriculum. Our state report card scores demonstrate that students are meeting these higher standards and are college and career ready. Congratulations to our students, staff, families and community on these excellent results!

Our students continue to shine in extracurricular activities. Many of our fall athletic teams are in the race to earn Suburban League championships this fall. The football team is also looking to qualify for the state playoffs for the 12th consecutive year! Our marching band shows have been fantastic each Friday night and our fall Orchestra and Choir concerts were outstanding as well.

Want to find out more about all of the great things our students have accomplished? Our district produced a Quality Profile again this year. You can access it on our website at www.aurora-schools.org. It highlights many of the qualities and achievements that make our district so special. It includes the academic achievements of our students, their success in the fine arts and athletic programs and more. Also, each month I host various members of our school community on the Cable 9 "Spotlight on the Aurora Schools" show. Check the listings as this show is run several times each month.

Now, and throughout the year, please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns you may

See Superintendent p. 5

AURORA CITY SCHOOLS' REPORT CARD RELEASED BY ODE; DISTRICT RANKS IN TOP 1-2% IN STATE

The Ohio Department of Education released the State of Ohio school district report cards for the 2015-16 school year on September 14, 2016. Aurora Schools' Superintendent Pat Ciccantelli stated, "As has been the case in the past, we are very proud of the academic accomplishments of our students. This year the report card scores from districts around the state reflected a significant downturn in the overall grades; our report card grades are a bit lower than last year, but our slight decline was much less than that experienced by most other districts. That being said, the scores still reflect achievement levels and student growth levels that rank us in the top elite academic performance tier in the state. The state report card results are just one set of data that we use to measure our students' learning. As has been mentioned in the past, we also look at our ACT & SAT scores, our Advanced Placement scores and other district data such as our own summative assessments. The outstanding scores on these assessments help confirm that our students and staff are doing an incredible job."

Ciccantelli explained that, "The report card grades, especially in the area of the

Value Added or Progress score require some insight. In two of our subgroups, our grade is a "C". Although a "C" grade is not our goal, this grade reflects one year's worth of growth. The grade of "A" in our overall value added score and in the gifted subgroup reflects over 2 years' worth of growth in a single school year. Although we are not satisfied with the "C" grade, it does reflect at least an expected year of learning. On the achievement side our scores still rank us in the top one to two percent among districts in the state despite the fact that we earned a "B" as an overall mark. Only a very few districts in the entire state earned an "A" on this measure."

Ciccantelli added, "We use the data from the report card to celebrate our achievements and to evaluate and reflect on our challenges. We will continue to work hard to provide the very best education possible for the students of this district. Our students continue to perform at very high levels and we are proud of their accomplishments."

Aurora School Board President Gerald Kohanski stated, "Aurora continues to maintain its position as one of the outstanding districts in the state. This

achievement includes three national Blue Ribbon schools and Middle and High Schools that are highly ranked by national publications. Schools today are faced with the challenge of many different ranking systems, the criteria for which are continuously evolving and changing. The one constant for Aurora's schools is the continuing outstanding performance by its students, no matter what rating system is used. The Board of Education is extremely proud of our students, teachers, staff, and administrators, and believes we continue to offer excellent value in education and opportunities for student growth."

District	County	Performance Index Percent
Solon City	Cuyahoga	92.2
Ottawa Hills Local	Lucas	90.8
Madeira City	Hamilton	89.7
Oakwood City	Montgomery	89.7
Beachwood City	Cuyahoga	89.5
Rocky River City	Cuyahoga	89.2
Indian Hill Exempted Village	Hamilton	88.9
Brecksville-Broadview Heights City	Cuyahoga	88.1
Wyoming City	Hamilton	87.1
Aurora City	Portage	87.1

Superintendent - Continued from p. 4

have. My door is always open and I encourage feedback and ideas. My goal as superintendent is to move the district forward in our quest to not only continue, but to exceed our current excellence. I am looking forward to a terrific year!

Pat Ciccantelli
Superintendent

Newsweek - Continued from p. 1

students, parents and staff at Aurora High School for the tremendous achievement of ranking as one of the top high schools in the nation! We are very proud of the great teamwork between the schools and the community that has helped produce these remarkable results. I would also like to thank the faculty and staff from our K-8 buildings for all their hard work preparing our students to have this level of success in high school."

Leighton - Continued from p. 2

faculty and staff at Miller and Craddock Elementary for providing the foundation for these students to achieve at the necessary levels to earn this distinction. This award is given to schools based on their overall academic excellence or their progress in closing achievement gaps among student subgroups. These schools demonstrate that all students can achieve to high levels. We are very proud of earning this award! Aurora High school earned this distinction in 2007 and Harmon earned this award in 2013."

Principal, Paul Goodwin, and Leighton Media Specialist, Jennifer Kinkoph, will be representing Leighton Elementary School at the awards ceremony in Washington, D.C. in early November.



CLASS ACTS

Aurora 5th Grade Teacher **Keri Stoyle** (2016 Martha Holden Jennings Foundation Master Teacher Award Winner) and Dan Keenan attended the Martha Holden Jennings Foundation reception.



Mrs. Will's Class Steps Up to the Marshmallow Challenge



Girls: **A. Geller** (left) and **O. Salgado** (right)
Boys: **Z. Williams** (left) and **T. Ramirez** (right)



Colin Health and **Jared Ruehr** are our **AHS 2017 National Merit Semifinalists!** They are among the top 16,000 of 1.6 million test takers (top 1%) nationwide. Our **National Merit Commended** students this year (the most in school history!) are: **Nadia Abass, Ian Doemling, James Kristell, Samantha Marotta, Alexandra Mehallis, Gabrielle Risko, Tyler Thieding** and **Julia Weber**.

ONE MILLION ACTS OF KINDNESS

The Aurora Schools' Service Learning Class got a visit from **Bob Votruba** and his dog, Bogart, who arrived in Votruba's One Million Acts of Kindness bus. After Votruba purchased the bus, approximately sixty family members, friends and neighbors helped paint it. He then set out on a ten-year journey visiting college campuses and locations across the country spreading his message.



Votruba presenting to the class

His lifetime goal is one million acts of kindness; a goal for each person to commit one million acts of kindness in their own lifetime. He is trying to offer inspiration to people who



Bob Votruba and Ethan Walker talk next to the bus

want to better themselves by leading a life of constantly spreading kindness to others. Votruba reaches out to children, teens, and young adults to teach them kindness, generosity, and empathy for others. His hope is to remind the younger generation that they are good and to let them know they can make a difference in the world. They are part of something new, a beginning, of what he refers to as the "Generation of Kindness".



The Service Learning Class stands next to the bus

9/11 SPEAKER ADDRESSES HARMON SCHOOL STUDENTS

Students at Harmon School were treated to guest speaker **George Sleigh**, a September 11, 2001 World Trade Center twin tower survivor, on Friday, September 9, 2016.

This was done in remembrance of the 15th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks. Sleigh detailed his experiences on that day and explained what it was like to have one of the airliners crash into the building directly above his head. The students then asked Sleigh questions following his presentation.



Students lined up to speak with Sleigh after his presentation

Recent AHS graduates, **Connor Bowen** and **Samantha Miller**, completed a fantastic mural on the AHS entryway wall as a part of their internship last spring. The mural depicts the "root" analogy the high school uses to describe the greenhouse environment which creates strong "roots" for student success.



ACADEMIC LETTER AWARD RECOGNITION

Aurora High School students who earn a GPA of 4.0 or higher for the entire school year are invited to attend an **Academic Award Ceremony** where they receive their academic letter in recognition of this outstanding achievement. This fall, on October 4, 2016, over 100 students received their letter and award recognition.



A LETTER FROM THE BOE PRESIDENT

I recently had the opportunity to attend and speak at the Aurora Alumni Association's annual luncheon at which they honored three accomplished alumni.

Aurora has had alumni in the last few years who have gained national recognition as performers in the Broadway theatre and on national television, as senior executives in national sports leagues, and at a local level, as executive director of the Cuyahoga County Republican Party assisting with the planning for that party's national convention recently held in Cleveland.

As impressive as the accomplishments of these alumni are, I would like to take a broader view. In my nineteen years on the board of education and seventeen years as president, I have seen thousands of Aurora students graduate and move forward with their lives. Although we are not able to honor all of these graduates individually, it should be recognized that their lifetime accomplishments and contributions to society are no less significant. Whether they were honor graduates or average academic students, athletes who were not starters but played on scout teams, or special needs students who overcame their challenges and graduated, all of them are contributing to society in many different and important ways.

These people have the legacy and culture gained as an aurora graduate to pass on to their children and grandchildren, a community culture that is worthy of enduring many years into the future.

In the November general election, aurora voters will be asked to renew a 7.33 mill operating levy to support the schools' general fund. This levy will not increase taxes and the operating funds generated will be used to pay for curriculum (books, supplies, software, and hardware), staff salaries and benefits, school bus acquisitions, utility costs, technology purchases, and fuel.

It is no secret that our schools are facing a funding crisis in the near future due

See President p. 7

SPORT REPORT

DICK BLISS RETIRES/ INDUCTED INTO WRESTLING HALL OF FAME

Longtime Aurora City Schools' wrestling coach **DICK BLISS** recently announced his retirement after 44 years as the wrestling coach for the district. He took over the wrestling program beginning with the 1972-73 school year. Prior to coaching wrestling, he worked as the district's athletic director for 27 years. Superintendent Pat Ciccantelli said, Bliss has had, "a tremendous career of guiding successful teams and athletes. He made a significant impact on many young men and leaves a great legacy at AHS."



Dick Bliss

It has also been announced that Bliss is being inducted into the National Wrestling Hall of Fame and Museum. The Ohio Honorees Class of 2016 includes nine individuals who have "given countless hours of their time instilling in young people the skills needed to succeed in all areas of life. The Lifetime Service to Wrestling Award is for years of dedication to wrestling as a coach, official or contributor."

The "Hall of Fame Day" celebration banquet will be held on October 16, 2016 in Dublin, Ohio. The recipients will be permanently recognized at the National Wrestling Hall of Fame and Museum in Stillwater, OK.

President – Continued from p. 6

to state revenue cutbacks. Compared to fiscal year 2010, the Aurora Schools have lost a cumulative total of \$3.45 million in state funding and will lose an additional \$2.8 million from FY17 through FY20 for a total loss of \$6.25 million over the ten-year period. At the same time our enrollment has remained at constant levels. Per the 2014 CUPP report, the Aurora Schools rank 571 out of 611 school districts in total state revenue received per student and 564 out of 611 school districts in formula funding per student. We depend heavily on revenue generated from local tax dollars to maintain our operations and excellent performance.

In October, our schools' Quality Profile 2015-16 will be released which will provide you with a wealth of

BUBBA ARSLANIAN RAN AWAY WITH TOP PLAYS OF WEEK 5 FOOTBALL CONTEST

Aurora Schools' senior running back **BUBBA ARSLANIAN** rushed for 96 yards and two touchdowns during the Aurora vs. Barberton game on Friday, September 23, 2016. One of his runs earned him the title of winner in Cleveland.com's Top Plays of Week 5 football video contest. The play, which featured Arslanian hurdling over a defender, earned him a spot in the highlights video, which can be viewed on Cleveland.com.

VOLLEYBALL TEAM HOSTS VOLLEY FOR A CURE

The AHS Volleyball team hosted a 2016 **VOLLEY FOR A CURE** event on October 4, 2016 during the freshman, junior varsity and varsity games. A special recognition of family members currently battling cancer (or cancer survivors) was held prior to the 6:30 p.m. varsity game. The night also included a bake sale, boot collection and games/prizes, along with entry to the games with a donation at the door. All proceeds went to the Susan G. Komen Foundation.

*Emma Kennis
(front) and Grayson
McMaster (back)
are set for a night
of Volley for A Cure
fundraising.*

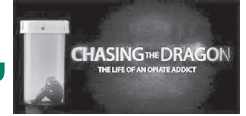


information on the value education our children receive in the areas of academics, the arts, athletics, and clubs and activities. Please take some time to review it along with our current academic performance data that has us ranked 7th and 10th in the past two years out of 611 districts on the state performance index scale.

The Aurora community can be justifiably proud of its schools, students and graduates. Our performance benefits not only families with children in our schools, but all members of the community in terms of real estate values and the ability of the city to attract new industry and business.

Gerald P. Kohanski, President
Aurora Board of Education

AURORA SCHOOLS' HOSTED STATEWIDE DRUG AWARENESS MEETING



In light of the nationwide opiate addiction crisis, the Aurora City School District hosted a Chasing the Dragon drug awareness program for school district superintendents, educational leaders and law enforcement personnel throughout the State of Ohio. The program, one of the first of its kind, took place on Thursday, September 1, 2016 in the Aurora High School library. Aurora Schools' Superintendent Pat Ciccantelli explained that while the epidemic has not been a problem in the Aurora Schools, he feels it is very important for school districts to be proactive in drug awareness education. He explained, "This is an issue that affects everybody. I think it's important for us to have a dialogue that includes school leaders across Northeast Ohio."

Following a screening of the *Chasing the Dragon: The Life of an Opiate Addict* documentary, produced by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Drug Enforcement Administration, a panel discussion was held with members of the DEA, the FBI, The United States Attorney's Office, and the Aurora Police Department. Panel members included, Carole Rendon, U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Ohio; Timothy Plancon, Special Agent in charge of the DEA's Detroit Field Division; Stephen Anthony, Special Agent in charge of the Cleveland Office of the FBI and Brian Byard, Chief of Police for the City of Aurora, Ohio. The U.S. Attorney's Office from Chicago also sent a representative to explore the opportunity of utilizing the same program in Chicago. The panel answered questions and sought feedback about the documentary, which chronicles the experiences of several opiate addicts and the effects of their addiction on family and friends.

Roughly 15 school districts sent personnel to participate in the program, which represented approximately 70,000 students in those districts, and

See Chasing the Dragon p. 8

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Chasing the Dragon - Continued from p. 7
 numerous law enforcement officials who also attended the event. The panel stressed their belief that early education for students about opioid addiction is crucial to helping prevent this addiction. Plancon said, "Educators, they are a crucial part of this" and that kids need to learn how to say no and not to use drugs. He explained that it's extremely important for kids to learn from an early age, and all the way through their education, not to use drugs. He said that educators are, "a huge participant in the message," along with their parents, the medical community, and law enforcement collectively. Plancon explained, "They're a huge piece to that puzzle in hopefully lowering the epidemic that is happening right now." He added that this crisis affects a wide range of people including kids as young as 11 or 12 years old all the way to senior citizens. He stated that many school districts are affected, affluent school districts and less affluent school districts saying, "It knows no bounds."

Byard said that very few people are successful in recovering from their addiction and "the recovery rate, in my opinion, is less than 1%." Rendon also stressed that schools and law enforcement need to work together to stop addiction before it starts. She told the audience, "We're here today because we're asking, literally begging, for your help. What we are seeing in our region is an epidemic of incredible proportions. We all need to take ownership in our own homes, in our own lives and in our own communities." She explained that it will take parental, community and legislative involvement to help break the cycle of addiction.

The panel expressed its hope that school districts utilize the Chasing the Dragon video as an educational tool that portrays a graphic depiction of life as an addict and, although "raw" at times, aids in discussion for students. Rendon added that officials are also tailoring this drug awareness education to specific age groups, including middle school students. The Aurora School District is

currently finalizing plans to present the program to high school students. Aurora Schools' Superintendent Pat Ciccantelli was presented with a Certificate of Appreciation from the Drug Enforcement Administration of the United States Department of Justice for his outstanding contribution in the Field of Drug Law Enforcement from Timothy J. Plancon of the Detroit Field Office of the Drug Enforcement Administration at the end of the program.

Aurora Schools' Superintendent Pat Ciccantelli (right) received a Certificate of Appreciation from Timothy Plancon (left) of the Drug Enforcement Administration of the United States Department of Justice



Panelists included (left to right), Stephen Anthony, Brian Byard, Timothy Plancon and Carole Rendon

