Avon High School is a 2023 National Blue Ribbon School!

This is an incredible achievement for our entire staff and all Avon students. Not only that, this rare and prestigious award is something our entire corporation and community can be proud of because so much of what happens at AHS is built on the foundation of the outstanding work that is taking place in our preschool, elementary, intermediate, and middle schools.

This year, AHS is the only public high school in Indiana to earn this recognition. It is one of 353 schools in the nation and one of only eight public schools in Indiana to earn this honor.

According to the U.S. Department of Education, the National Blue Ribbon Award is a symbol of exemplary academic achievement. In a press release, U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona said, “The honorees for our 2023 National Blue Ribbon Schools Award have set a national example for what it means to raise the bar in education. The leaders, educators, and staff at our National Blue Ribbon Schools continually inspire me with their dedication to fostering academic excellence and building positive school cultures that support students of all backgrounds to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.”

At the beginning of every meeting of the Avon Board of School Trustees, we recite our vision statement: Avon Schools is a “nationally recognized district of choice that embraces all students and prepares them to grow and thrive for their future.” While we continually measure our progress and celebrate victories along the way, it is wonderful to see our vision so clearly becoming a reality here in our nationally recognized district of choice!

The Indiana Department of Education nominated AHS and then Principal Matt Shockley completed a detailed application process. AHS students’ overall academic performance is the basis for the award.

I spend a lot of time in our classrooms across the corporation and at AHS, and I never cease to be impressed by the work of our educators and the achievements of our students.

Join me in celebrating our students, teachers, staff, and administrators at AHS and across all Avon Schools.

Sincerely,

Scott Wyndham, Ed.D., Superintendent
smwyndham@avon-schools.org
On September 16, Avon Community School Corporation administrators gathered in a field just west of the Prestwick subdivision. They were joined by state and local leaders, students, and representatives from Performance Services, Inc. to ceremonially launch the construction of what will be ACSC’s third middle school, Avon Middle School West.

Recent demographic studies predict enrollment growth to continue climbing over the coming decade. It has been 15 years since we broke ground on a new school. Yet, ACSC serves 2,300 more students than 2010 when River Birch Elementary, our newest school, was opened. The Avon Board of School Trustees reviewed multiple options for growth, and presented three options for community input. In December 2022, the Board voted to pursue the strategic expansion option that was the overwhelming favorite of ACSC staff and the community and will take effect for the 2025-26 school year. Key components include:

- Constructing a new grades 6-8 middle school.
- Shifting grade 5 back to elementary schools, grade 6 up to middle school, and transitioning Intermediate Schools East and West to K-5 elementary schools.
- Updating our six current elementary schools to accommodate 5th grade and Avon Middle Schools North and South to accommodate 6th grade.

This growth model sets up the school corporation to continue providing excellent educational environments for all Avon students for years to come.

Financial considerations were an important part of project planning. The Avon Board of School Trustees and corporation leaders have long shared a commitment to wise financial stewardship and keeping promises to Avon-Washington Township taxpayers. Because debt for this project is being added as older debt is paid off, this project will be completed with no increase to taxpayers. Additionally, no referendum funds will be used in this project or for any construction project.

Avon Middle School West will be located at 1204 South County Road 450 East. Learn more at the new AMS West website: amswest.avon-schools.org.

Access info about this and other projects at avon-schools.org/growth.

AMS West Groundbreaking
Students, administrators, partners turn dirt to launch project

At AHS, Phase 2 (on the south side) will be completed in January. Rapid progress is being made on Phase 3 construction (on the northwest corner) and major cafeteria renovations, with completion planned for July 2024.

Work on the south side and northwest corner of Pine Tree Elementary is progressing rapidly with renovation and expansion set to be complete by January. Internal updates will continue through July 2024.

Stay up to date at ahs.avon-schools.org/more and pinetree.avon-schools.org/renovation.
Pine Tree Elementary Multilingual Learner Teacher Sarah Valentin is our 2023 Teacher of the Year. “When I think about how impressed I am with all that Sarah does and the results she sees in growth and achievement for her students, I think about who she is as a person and I’m even more wowed,” says Pine Tree Assistant Principal Jennifer McCann Thomas. “When we think about being student-focused and outcome-oriented for student success, it starts with our largest and most valuable resource – our teaching staff. Sarah is what education is all about.”

Not only was Sarah recognized for her excellence as an educator in Avon Schools, she was among the top 25 finalists for Indiana Teacher of the Year.

Avon Intermediate School East Special Education Assistant Sue Misner is our 2023 Support Staff of the Year. “Sue has been a staple at East for a number of years,” says AIS East Principal Brad Bates, who is quick to point out the impact she makes in and around the school. “She brings an energy to the building every day. If you haven’t seen her in the hallways, you can surely hear her coming. She is often the first to text me and ask if a class needs covered, or you will often see her stopping to check on a student in the hallway that may be struggling.”

In addition to Sue’s work at AIS East, she organizes a substantial food drive for the Mary Lee Meier food pantry in memory of her son Wesley as well as taking care of his memorial garden behind White Oak Early Learning Center. Both are near and dear to her heart.
Celebrating 85 Years of Service

Two of ACSC’s longest-tenured employees are set to retire

Gary Ayers and Chris Parker have given a combined 85 years of service to Avon Community School Corporation. Gary has announced that this will be his final year teaching at Avon High School and Chris Parker retired from his role as Custodian at Avon Intermediate School East on Friday, September 29.

Gary began teaching in Avon Schools in 1980. He walked into his first day of teaching at then Avon High School, the school building we all know as Avon Middle School South. He has had a front-row seat to more than 40 years of changes, not only at AHS, but also in the Town of Avon. In early days, Gary and his students took on the challenge of mapping the growth in Avon and Washington Township. Community leaders who were involved in incorporating Avon as a Town actually used the data his class collected to make their case for incorporation, which happened in 1995. Upon retirement at the end of the school year, Gary is looking forward to traveling with his wife and just enjoying life.

On Wednesday, September 27, the students and staff at AIS East celebrated Chris by declaring ‘Chris Parker Day’. As one of ACSC’s longest-tenured staff, he dedicated a total of 42 and a half years to Avon Schools. Students, staff, and district leaders all joined in the well-deserved celebration of a person who has quietly and consistently gone above and beyond.

We are grateful to Gary and Chris for their years of service to Avon Schools. They have impacted thousands and made ACSC a place where ALL belong, learn, and grow.

Read more at avon-schools.org/experience-avon.