

# YOUR SCHOOLS

2023

## Aurora City School District

### From the Superintendent

By MIKE ROBERTO  
Superintendent of Schools



The **Aurora City School District** was recently informed by the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) that the district received the highest rating of five stars on all five components in the district's report card from the state. Aurora is one of only six school districts out of over 600 across the state to earn this recognition both years the state has used the five-star designations. This means that the young people in Aurora significantly exceeded state expectations on each of the components on the district's report card so congratulations to the PreK-12 students and staff for this recognition.

You can find Aurora's report card on the ODE's website and if you were to look it up you will see that the first of the five components measured in the report card is **Achievement**. This rating is based on the Performance Index which is a function of the state test results in a district. Where Achievement showed how well the district scored on the test, the second component on the report card which is labeled **Progress** demonstrates how much growth young people experienced over the school year. The third component, **Gap Closing**, digs down to the district details to determine if our most vulnerable learners are having their needs met by the district. **Graduation Rates** make up the fourth component and the **Early Literacy** component of the report card, which addresses whether our youngest learners are improving and becoming proficient in their reading in grades K-3, is the final category.

Aurora High School was also recently recognized by the U.S. News & World Report  
*Superintendent continued on p. 7*

### ACSD OPERATING LEVY ON NOVEMBER 7<sup>TH</sup> BALLOT

The Aurora City School District has placed a 5.9 mill operating bond issue on the November 7, 2023 ballot. The ACSD levy will be issue #15 on the ballot. Funds from an operating levy are used by a school district to pay for the district's costs of operating. Some of these day-to-day costs include, utilities, classroom supplies, extra-curricular activities and athletics, safety/security, maintenance of buildings/grounds, insurance, technology, salaries, textbooks, computers, equipment, buses, gasoline, etc.

Community information nights are being held for community members at the ACSD Conference Center on October 3rd, October 11th and October 19th from 7:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. These meetings are being held to inform residents about what the levy means, how much the passage of the levy would cost an Aurora taxpayer, explain how levies work in the State of Ohio and answer questions. Please check the Aurora City School District's website at [www.aurora-schools.org](http://www.aurora-schools.org) for more information.

Below are answers to questions commonly asked in regard to the upcoming ACSD operating levy:

#### What is the levy request?

The levy request is for a 5.9 mill continuing operating levy.

#### What is an operating levy?

Operating funds are used to pay for curriculum supplies (books, supplies, and technology expenses), salaries and benefits, transportation expenses (fuel, school bus purchases, etc.), utility costs, and professional development expenses. All expenses to run the day-to-day operations come from an operating levy.

#### What will this levy cost me?

Passage of the proposed levy of 5.9 mills will cost an Aurora homeowner with a house valued at \$100,000 (based on appraised value, not property selling price) approximately

*Operating Levy continued on p.5*

### ODE State Report Card


The Ohio Department of Education (ODE) 2022-23 State Report Card has been released for the 2022-23 school year. Each year the ODE rates each of the 609 districts in the state on five components. A summary of this year's ODE State Report Card is as follows:

#### Stars

Since the 2020-2021 school year the Ohio Department of Education has rated each of the 609 school districts in Ohio on a 5-star scale with 3 stars meaning a district is meeting state requirements and 4 or 5 meaning the district exceeds or significantly exceeds the state expectations.

#### Aurora's Report Card

The Ohio Department of Education (ODE) is in the second year of using this new report card system and the Aurora City Schools once again have earned the highest rating of five stars in

School District	County	2021-2022 ODE Ratings	2022-2023 ODE Ratings
Aurora	Portage		

all five categories.

Aurora is **one of only six school districts out of over 600 districts** in the State of Ohio to earn this recognition both years the state has used the five-star designations. This means that Aurora students significantly exceeded state expectations in this component.

#### Report Card Overview

Taking a closer look at Aurora's report cards shows that the first of the five components measured in the report card is Achievement.

*Report Card continued on p.7*

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## WHO'S WHO & WHAT'S NEW



The AHS **SAVE Promise Club** is very pleased to share that they have won the **Community Engagement Award** from **Sandy Hook Promise**. The club was recognized on Sandy Hook Promise's website and social media channels and was awarded \$250.



Leighton School Secretary,  
**Lynette Schoenman**

The following are a few of the notable ACSD staff member changes that took place over the summer months: **Kathleen Berry** – IT Support Technician, **Tyler Best** – AHS Psychologist, **Laurie Krizansky** – AHS Media Center, **Lynette Schoenman** – Leighton School Secretary, **Victor Torres** – AHS Assistant Principal/6-12 Special Services Coordinator, **Lindsey Verdova**, Special Services Secretary.

Don't forget to check out the **ACSD Spotlight on Aurora Schools** monthly show (and the Striving Artist monthly highlight) that features relevant topics/guests pertinent to the Aurora Schools. It is produced in conjunction with **Community Focus** Spectrum channel 1021 which serves local area communities. The shows can also be found on the ACSD website under the Resources title and then the Community Focus CSD Spotlight on Aurora Schools link.



**AHS Quiz Bowl** at National Tournament 2023

AHS Interact Club member **Diya Brahselected** was selected for the 2023-24 **Ohio Student Advisory Council**. In her role, she will work with others to identify school safety concerns and develop solutions to address them. Congratulations!



**Aurora Service Learning** and **Interact Club** students jumped into their service work this school year without hesitation. Numerous students assisted the annual Aurora One Fund in filling over 10,000 envelopes for their annual campaign! The **Aurora One Fund** was created to collect donations and serve local charitable organizations. It is designed to reduce the duplicity of multiple organizations holding fundraising campaigns within the city. Last year the campaign provided more than \$80,000 to organizations that serve the youth, the elderly and other families within Aurora.



AHS was represented in the 7th annual **Shining Star CLE** solo-singing competition for high school students from Northeast Ohio by senior **Emma Robb**. Many may remember her in the AHS 2023 spring musical, *Bye Bye Birdie*. Students from a ten-county area have the opportunity to showcase their talents and compete for \$18,500 in college scholarships. The event is sponsored by the Menorah Park Foundation and uses proceeds to fund an array of memory care services and programs. Congratulations to Robb on her impressive achievement.

### Prevention Action Alliance

Be sure to check out the district's homepage Resource link (at the top right of the webpage) that directs parents to the **Prevention Action Alliance** link to their **Know! Prevention Tips for Everyone** newsletters. The Know! monthly newsletters, "empower parents and teacher to promote health and wellness and protect the young people in their lives from unhealthy behaviors, including alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use."

The **ACSD Transportation Department** held their annual **school bus evacuation drills** with students on September 19, 20 and 21st. These drills allowed students to practice the evacuation of a bus if needed during an emergency situation.

## WELCOME QUESO!

AHS welcomed the newest member of the Aurora Police Department K9, Queso. Aurora City School District School Resource Officer, Tony Tritto, has been training the canine who is approximately 18 months old and originally came from Colombia. The police dog came to the police department already named Queso. Queso is unique when it comes to police department K9's because he is trained as a weapon's detecting specialist while also becoming officially registered as a therapy dog. Although Queso is officially a member of the Aurora Police Department, when he is not on duty, he resides with the Tritto family at their home in Aurora. Thank you to Officer Tritto for all of his hard work and thank you to the police department for continuing to support our school district.



## 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](mailto:yourschools@aurora-schools.org).



## ACSD TREASURER'S DEPARTMENT EARNS 11<sup>TH</sup> OUTSTANDING AUDIT



ACSD Treasurer Bill Volosin (left) and Ohio Auditor of State Liaison Perry Alexandrides

The Aurora City School District's (ACSD) Treasurer's Office has once again earned an exemplary audit from the Ohio Auditor of State, Keith Faber. This award was given for the fiscal year ending in 2022. This is the 11th year (2011-22) that the ACSD Treasurer's office has earned the Ohio Auditor of State Award. The ACSD Treasurer's Department consists of Treasurer, Bill Volosin; Payroll Manager, Diane Ebie, Treasury Secretary, Kese Hatch, and Accounts Manager, Pam Prochaska.

The Ohio Auditor of State Award states, "The award is presented for excellence in financial reporting in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and compliance with applicable laws for the fiscal year ended 2022." Over the summer, the Ohio Auditor of State Eastern Region Liaison, Perry Alexandrides, traveled to Aurora and presented Volosin with the Award at the Aurora Board of Education Office.

Volosin explained, "We received another unmodified opinion, which is the best opinion that you can receive and indicates that the district's financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Aurora City School District conformity with generally accepted accounting principles." The award asserts, "The citizens you represent are well-served by your effective and accountable financial practices."

Volosin said of the award, "This clean audit is a result of all of the hard work and effort of the three individuals in my office, Diane Ebie, Kese Hach and Pam Prochaska, along with the work of the district administrators, secretaries, food service head cooks, and athletic department staff who have a responsibility for working with the financial information of the district."

## U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT BEST HIGH SCHOOLS 2023 NATIONAL RANKINGS RELEASED

This year, U.S. News & World Report magazine's 2023-24 Best High Schools rankings included data on nearly 25,000 public high schools in 50 states and the District of Columbia. Then, approximately 18,000 reviewed high schools were ranked on six factors based on their performance on state assessments and how well they prepare students for college.

Aurora High School (AHS) was ranked as elite by the publication at **#1** in the Akron Metro Area, **#4** in Northeast Ohio and **#18** in the State of Ohio in their Best High Schools 2023 article. This puts AHS in the top 1.7% of high schools ranked in the State of Ohio. AHS is ranked at **#495** in the country.

AHS Superintendent, Mike Roboerto said of this recognition, "This is a testament to the sincere nurturing of our district's competencies throughout the PreK-12 levels in and out of the classroom and is a natural byproduct of our district's focus on the roots. The State Report Card and U.S. News & World Report is a nice affirmation but not necessarily a confirmation that Aurora City Schools are excellent."

The methodology used by U.S. News & World Report for this article focuses on six factors which include:

- College readiness, based on the proportion of 12th grade students who took and earned a qualifying score on at least one Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate exam (30% of ranking).
- State assessment proficiency, based on aggregated scores on state assessments that students may be required to pass for graduation (20%).
- State assessment performance, based on whether performance on state assessments exceeded expectations given the school's



- proportion of underserved students (20%).
- Underserved student performance, based on how Black, Hispanic and low-income students performed on state assessments compared with those who are not underserved in the state (10%).
- College curriculum breadth, based on proportions of 12th grade students who took and earned a qualifying score on AP and/or IB exams in multiple content areas (10%).
- Graduation rate, based on the proportion of students who entered ninth grade in 2017-2018 and graduated four years later (10%).

AHS Principal, Mike Hayes, stated, "This is a testament to the sincere nurturing of learner-roots beginning at the PK-12 level in and out of the classroom. Thank you to all the staff members, families and community members who work so hard to optimize growth within The Greenhouse! That said, these metrics don't even begin to scratch the surface on the truly amazing lived experiences that our kids and colleagues are part of everyday, and everyone's efforts to design learning environments focused on honoring identity through relationships and valuing the process over the product is what helps our Greenhouse thrive and makes Greenmen Nation so special! Congratulations again to everyone, and thanks for all the passionate dedication to putting kids first!"

## AHS COMMUNITY OF READERS ANNUAL EVENT

AHS English Instructor, Melissa Lindley, facilitated the annual AHS Community of Readers on August 31, 2023. An immense amount of work is involved in orchestrating this event, along with the associated student summer reading experience which creates a forum where students can develop not only reading comprehension and analytical skills, but a real interest in enjoying a lifetime of reading. Thank you to the staff members who facilitated classroom sessions and participated in book readings to help create a lifelong community of readers.





## SPORT REPORT



Gymnast **Hannah Salgado** was nominated for the **Gymnast of the Year** title at the Greater Akron-Canton Ohio high school sports awards. Way to go and best of luck!

**Hannah Salgado**



The Aurora High School **tennis courts** were closed temporarily between late July and early August 2023 due to the re-surfacing construction project that took place over the summer.



Good luck to **Jack Cardaman** who was celebrated at the Spring Sports Signing Day and took his football talents to **John Carroll University** this fall.

**Jack Cardaman**

A big congratulations goes to **Johnny Green** who finished in 8th place in the country in the **USA Wrestling Junior Freestyle National Championships**!



**Johnny Green** (far left)

AHS graduate and former **Greenmen** quarterback, **Alex Moore**, has joined the **Findlay University Oiler's football team**. Good luck in the upcoming football season.



**Alex Moore (center)** surrounded by AHS coaches



AHS Marching Band junior baton twirler, **Marla Edgecomb**, competed in the **United States Twirling Association National competition**. She qualified with a 1st place win for the International Baton Twirling Federation

(IBTF) World Team in the Elite Junior (ages 15-17) Three Baton category. Edgecomb then advanced to represent international Team USA at the **IBTF World Championship** in Liverpool, England from August 8th-14th, 2023. What amazing career achievements already!



The new Aurora Schools' Tennis Court Pavilion has been officially named the **Kohanski Pavilion** with a plaque after longtime Aurora City Schools' BOE President **Gerald Kohanski**.



Mayfield Country Club hosted the Suburban League vs. the Chagrin Valley Ryder Cup. The **Aurora Boys Golf Team Champions** included the six-man team of **Gannon Brady, AJ Cefani, Max Devins, Dean Larrance, Cameron Phillips** and **Ethan Slagle**.

## DID YOU HEAR THE THUNDER OVER AURORA?



The annual Thunder Over Aurora Marching Band Spectacular could be heard booming throughout the City of Aurora on Saturday, September 23, 2023.





## Operating Levy *continued from p.1*

\$207.00 per year or \$17.25 a month.

### Didn't we just pass a renewal levy?

Yes, our last renewal levy was in November of 2021. Our district has three renewable five-year levies; one permanent improvement levy and two operating levies that were all initially passed between 1990 and 1994. We have asked voters to renew these levies over the past few years. Renewing these levies does not cost tax payers any additional dollars.

### When was the last new operating levy passed?

In 2017, an operating levy was passed. The millage was 5.9 mills.

### Why does the district need this new levy?

The Aurora City School District is hugely dependent on local funds, as over 75% of our district's operating funds are generated by the Aurora community. According to the Aurora City School District's Treasurer, William Volosin, the ACSD needs this levy to pass because, "The district is currently in deficit spending (expenditures exceed revenues). Per the District's current 5-year forecast, the district is projected to have a negative cash balance by the end of the Fiscal Year 2027. Also, short term borrowing is projected to be needed in Fiscal Year 2026 to meet obligations." Therefore, this operating levy is needed to maintain the district's present level of programming.

## ZACH KUTY EARNS PERFECT ACT SCORE



This past July, AHS Senior **Zach Kutty** earned a perfect score of 36 on the ACT! A full 36 is the rarest score of all – just 0.250% (3,376 total students in 2022) of all test takers earn a perfect ACT score. The score is an average of four section

scores for English, math, reading and science. A huge congratulations goes out to Kutty and his family on this amazing accomplishment. We look forward to seeing all of the great things he will accomplish in the future.

## MELISSA FOSTER EARNED UNSUNG HERO AWARD

AHS Instructor **Melissa Foster** was awarded the Rotary Club of Aurora's **Ungsung Hero Award** in June of 2023 which states, "Melissa has been an invaluable asset to the club with her selfless service with all the Interact students over the years. A simple email and Melissa will deliver students to help run projects. Further she shows up to help on projects when not teaching students. Much of the work she does for Rotary is done on her own time. The club would not be the same without her!" Foster has received numerous past accolades and recognitions throughout the ACSD and the Northeast Ohio region for her continued philanthropic endeavors both inside and outside of the classroom.



### Why are you asking for 5.9 mills and not a lesser amount?

Due to HB 920, there is no allowed inflationary growth on voted millage. For example, this 5.9 mill levy will generate approximately \$5.1 million per year. Five years from now even if there are 200 new homes and several new businesses, basically it still will only generate \$5.1 million. Over the next five years, our cost of doing business, like all businesses and public entities, will continue to rise with overall inflationary impacts from goods and services. Thus, with flat and possibly further declining revenues we, like all school districts, must reluctantly ask for additional funds. Aurora Schools' Superintendent, Michael Roberto, explained, "As more housing is constructed and house values grow millage on school levies drops, due to House Bill 920, so more houses and higher valuations do not necessarily bring in proportionally more funds into the district. The only way to raise significant funds for the schools is to ask the community to pass a new levy."

### Has the district implemented cost savings plans?

The Aurora BOE is always looking to operate as cost effectively as possible and has implemented several cost savings measures including:

- The district belongs to consortiums (shared services) for the purchase of electricity, natural gas, diesel fuel, operating supplies, school buses, legal services and other miscellaneous services to leverage our purchase volumes with those of other districts to obtain more favorable pricing and terms from various suppliers.
- The district has implemented pay-to-participate fees for athletics and marching band.

### What happens if the levy does not pass?

School districts' operating budgets are predominately employee-driven operations with expenses in personnel equaling approximately 85% of the budget. Without additional funds, the district would need to reevaluate the employee and program offers to account for the lack of revenue.

### Where does Aurora rank in terms of expenditures compared to other districts?

While the Aurora School District ranks academically in the top 1-3% statewide and was one of only six public school districts in Ohio with all five stars on the Ohio State Report Card for multiple years, the district's costs are in the 42 percentile from the top for all public school districts in Ohio.

### How does Aurora's tax bill compare to comparable local districts?

Below is a chart that shows Aurora's tax bill in comparison to other local area school districts.

District Name	2023 Tax Bill Per \$100,000
Shaker Hills (Shaker Hills schools)	\$1,770
Bay Village (Bay schools)	\$2,790
Chagrin Falls (Chagrin Falls schools)	\$2,630
Mayfield Hills (Mayfield schools)	\$2,450
Solon (Solon schools)	\$2,340
Rocky River (Rocky River schools)	\$2,320
North Royalton (North Royalton schools)	\$2,220
Orange (Orange schools)	\$2,220
Brecksville (Brecksville-Broadview Hills schools)	\$2,190
Stow (Stow-Munroe Falls schools)	\$2,180
Bainbridge Twp. (Kenton schools)	\$2,110
Bath (Bath schools)	\$2,060
Beachwood (Beachwood schools)	\$2,060
Hudson (Hudson schools)	\$1,950
Streetsboro (Streetsboro schools)	\$1,870
Twinsburg (Twinsburg schools)	\$1,840
Aurora (Aurora schools)	\$1,740

### Has the district been good stewards of spending?

Yes. The state auditor has given the district clean audit reports for our spending practices and use of funds. We have been awarded the Ohio Auditor of State Award for "exemplary financial reporting," for the last 11 consecutive years (2011-22). Aurora City School Board President, Pam Mehallis, said, "We as a school district, are thankful for the support of the Aurora community and will continue to be careful stewards of their tax dollars."

### Are Aurora students receiving a quality education?

Yes. The Aurora School System offers high quality programming in both academics and extra-curricular activities. Our test scores on the Ohio state assessments have consistently ranked us in the top 1-2% of the districts in the state. Newsweek Magazine, U.S. News & World Report and The Washington Post have ranked Aurora High School as one of the top performing schools in the nation. Many of our high school students are taking Advanced Placement (AP) courses and earning college credit while at Aurora High School. As a result of taking these college level courses in high school students are earning enough college credit to enter school as a second semester freshman or sophomore. This equates to huge cost savings for the parents of these students. For example, during the 2022-23 school year, over 830 AP tests were administered at Aurora High School, which equates to over 830 college courses having the potential to be forgiven. Of the 400 AHS AP students, 84% earned college credit. This was the highest AHS AP passage rate since 2014-15.

## CLASS ACTS

The **HARMON SCHOOL LANGUAGE ARTS FESTIVAL 2023** featured Leighton Physical Education teacher **LENNY SPACEK** who spoke to the entire school during three assemblies, one for each grade level. His presentations highlighted the book he authored, titled **GAME ON! NINE SPORTS SHORTS**. During and following the presentation students brainstormed an event, developed a plot, shared the plot with a neighbor, created a front jacket/back page blurb, and then wrote an effective beginning to their story.



Lenny Spacek and students at the Language Arts Festival 2023

### AURORA HIGH SCHOOL BOREALIS 2023-24

**HOLD ON TO EVERY BEST MOMENT**  
GET YOUR YEARBOOK

#### YEARBOOK ORDERS

Aurora High School **BOREALIS YEARBOOKS** can be ordered now for your high school student. All yearbooks

will be mailed to AHS. Please contact Alicia Antol at [aantol@aurora-schools.org](mailto:aantol@aurora-schools.org) with any questions. To place an order for the 2023-24 yearbook, please go to the homepage News & Announcements section posting on the Aurora Schools website.



The ACSD has transitioned to a new electronic gradebook called **PROGRESSBOOK** that has replaced the previous

#### PARENT INTERNET VIEWER (PIV)

gradebook. It took approximately three weeks to allow teachers the time to work with the system before parents were given viewing access. Parents have been able to view the current grades for the 2023-24 school year for grades 3-12 grades since the first week in September.

### Class of 1973 Celebrates 50 Years With AHS Tour

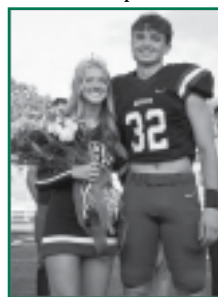


Members of AHS Class of 1973

As a part of their **50th CLASS REUNION**, approximately 40 members from the graduating **CLASS OF 1973** returned to the Aurora City School District. AHS Principal, Mike Hayes, provided the group with a 60-minute tour of AHS which was capped off by Friday night football at Veterans Memorial Stadium. Along with reminiscing, Hayes said, "the members were so very impressed by the current state of the schools!"

Leighton School Media Specialist, **JENNIFER KINKOPH**, was nominated and won the title of **DISTRICT 9 TEACHER OF THE YEAR**. A total of 16 winners in the state are named with one winner earning the title from each region in Ohio. Kinkoph is now a finalist for the **OHIO TEACHER OF THE YEAR!** She is the first ACSD finalist since approximately 1999. A big congratulations to Kinkoph are in order.

Congratulations to **AHS HOMECOMING 2023 KING JAYCE UNVERFERTH** and **QUEEN MAGGIE KEYES**.



## AHS CLASS OF 2024 NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARS

Aurora High School (AHS) boasts a total of nine students who have been honored by the College Board as 2023 Semifinalists, Commended and National Recognition Award recipients. Students who take the PSAT and score in the top 1% become Semifinalists. This is a significant accomplishment since there is only a 0.5% chance of becoming a National Merit Scholar, making this one of the most competitive merit-based scholarships.



Congratulations to AHS students, **Sofia Kang** and **Philip Yao**, who were among over 16,000 Semifinalists named as National Merit Semifinalists in the 68th annual National Merit Scholarship Program. These academically talented high school seniors have an opportunity to continue in the competition for some 7,250 National Merit Scholarships worth nearly \$28 million that will be offered next spring. According to the College Board, "These academically talented high school seniors have an opportunity to continue in the competition for some 7,250 National Merit Scholarships worth nearly \$28 million that will be offered next spring."

To become a Finalist, the Semifinalist and a high school official must submit a detailed scholarship application, in which they provide information about the Semifinalist's academic record, participation in school and community activities, demonstrated leadership abilities, employment, and honors and awards received. A Semifinalist must have an outstanding academic record throughout high school, be endorsed and recommended by a high school official, write an essay, and earn SAT® or ACT® scores that confirm the student's earlier performance on the qualifying test.

AHS National Merit Commended students from the Class of 2024 include, **Savannah Brown**, **Zach Kutty**, **Andrew Snyder** and **Ben Mulvaney**. These students have been honored by the College Board for their academic promise. Typically, students who score in the top 3-4% are named Commended scholars.

AHS students **Riley McCloud**, **Hannah Salgado**, and **Ollie Salgado** also received honors designation as College Board National Recognition Program recipients. Hannah and Ollie Salgado were recognized with the College Board's National Hispanic Recognition Award while Riley McCloud was recognized with the National Indigenous Award.

## QUALITY PROFILE 2022-23 AVAILABLE ONLINE

**QP**  
Quality Profile

The annual Aurora City School District (ACSD) Quality Profile 2022-23 will be available online in October on the Aurora Schools website ([aurora-schools.org](http://aurora-schools.org)). It can be found on the website homepage under Resources in the top right corner.

This year's profile highlights the district's overall educational value in areas that matter most to our community. This profile is used as a companion publication to the annual Ohio School Report Cards which are, "designed to give parents, communities, educators and policymakers information about the performance of districts and schools - to celebrate achievement and success and identify areas for improvement." The purpose of the ACSD Quality Profile is to provide a larger picture of the accomplishments, endeavors, and achievements throughout the district that are not included as a part of the Ohio Department of Education Report Cards.





## Report Card - Continued from p.1

This rating is based on the Performance Index which is a function of the state test results in a district.

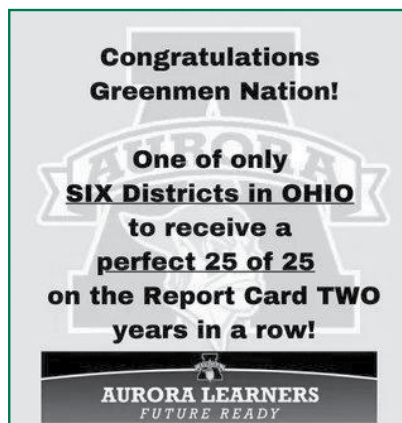
Where Achievement showed how well the district scored on the test, the second component on the report card which is labeled **Progress** demonstrates how much growth young people experienced over the school year. The third component, **Gap Closing**, digs down to the district details to determine if our most vulnerable learners are having their needs met by the district.

**Graduation Rates** make up the fourth component and the **Early Literacy** component of the report card, which addresses whether our youngest learners are improving and becoming proficient in their reading in grades K-3, is the final category.

Again, the five stars in each of the five areas indicates that the Ohio Department of Education has recognized that the young people in the Aurora City Schools significantly exceeded expectations in all five components.

According to ACSD Superintendent, Mike Roberto, the narrative to take away from the ODE Report Card is that, "The State Report Card is a nice affirmation but not necessarily a confirmation that Aurora City Schools are excellent. The confirmation comes from the smiles on young people's faces each day, support from the families and community, the increase in efficacy of our staff, the stories of success from our Greenmen graduates and from them being prepared when they travel beyond the walls of our school buildings. We also understand that there is always room for growth as a district."

Roberto added, "The practices we put in place are not a result of focusing on outcomes such as good test scores and 5-star rankings. The 5-star rankings are a natural byproduct of the philosophy, practices, and pedagogy that are in place. Our goal as educators is not to raise test scores, but to help raise human beings. That is the narrative we would like you to take away from this report card...a narrative of Aurora Learners who are Future Ready."



## Superintendent - Continued from p.1

as one of the best high schools in the United States! The US News & World Report evaluated 1,011 high schools in Ohio and over 18,000 across the United States. AHS ranked as the number one school in the Akron Metro Area and within the top 1.7% (18th) of schools in Ohio as well as within the top 2.75% (495th) of all high schools across the country.

The Ohio State Report Card & recognition from the US News & World Report is a nice affirmation but not necessarily a *confirmation* that Aurora City Schools are excellent. The confirmation comes from the smiles on young people's faces each day, support from the families and community, the increase in efficacy of our staff, the stories of success from our Greenmen graduates and from them being prepared when they travel beyond the walls of our school buildings. We also understand that there is always room for growth as a district. Our goal as educators is not to raise test scores, but to help raise human beings. That is the narrative we would like you to take away from this report card...a narrative of Aurora Learners who are Future Ready.

### New Operating Levy

This November 7th the Aurora City Schools will have a new 5.9 Mill Operating Levy on the ballot. The levy is a new levy and not a renewal. The funds for this levy will go towards operating the school district, not towards new construction, which means it will cover expenditures ranging from teachers in the classroom to soap in the restrooms. A 5.9 Mill levy in Aurora will generate approximately 5.1 million dollars for the district and it will cost approximately \$207 for every \$100,000 of assessed valuation (35%).

### Operating Levy History

The last new money operating levy to fail in Aurora was in 2007. In 2007 the Aurora School Levy failed by just over 100 votes. The following March, in 2008 the levy passed by nearly 400 votes. That levy lasted for **four** years before a new school levy passed in 2012 and then **five** years later our last levy asking for additional funds passed in 2017. This November will be **six** years since that last levy, so you can see the district has successfully stretched out the time between asking for additional funds from the community.

## Financial Efficiency

Earlier in this article I shared the district's educational effectiveness as identified by outside organizations such as the Ohio Department of Education. However, the Aurora City Schools has also been recognized for financial efficiency as well. The Ohio Auditor of State Award for excellence in Financial Reporting is the highest honor for a School Treasure to earn and our Treasurer, **Bill Volosin**, has once again been awarded this distinction for this past school year. We also work with two consortiums to purchase electricity (Power 4 Schools) and natural gas (Ohio Schools Council) and through these groups we earned \$288,000 in savings in electricity and \$59,941.17 in natural gas by going through these respective groups this past year. This partnership of financial efficiency and educational effectiveness makes for a great combination as the Aurora City Schools rank among the top of public school districts in Ohio while our costs hover near the middle as compared to other school districts around the state.

## Why Ask for a Levy Now?

Approximately 71% of funding for Aurora Schools comes from the community through property taxes. That number has grown over the years as less support has come from the state. Just over the last ten years, the state has dropped from providing 27% of our revenue to approximately 19% of our revenue. Over the last year, the Aurora City Schools began to go into deficit spending and though there are currently sufficient savings set aside we are projected to be in deficit within the next few years unless more revenue is brought into the district. Because of the way schools are funded in Ohio, new construction in the city does not mean proportionally more money comes to the schools. The only way to raise funds for the schools is to pass a new levy. The specifics of why a new levy is on the ballot, how much it would cost taxpayers in Aurora, and other details can be found by going to our district website at [www.aurora-schools.org](http://www.aurora-schools.org). There you will find a video update that was shared with our school families and frequently asked questions about the levy. We will also be holding three Community Information Nights about the New Operating Levy which will allow community members to learn more about the levy and ask questions. These meetings are being held on October 3rd (Tuesday), October 11th (Wednesday), and October 19th (Thursday) starting at 7:00 p.m. in the Aurora City Schools Conference Center located in front of Aurora High School. I hope to see you at one of these informational meetings.

Go Greenmen!

Mike

