

# YOUR SCHOOLS

2024

## Aurora City School District

### From the Superintendent

By MIKE ROBERTO  
Superintendent of Schools



In the last edition of *Your Schools I* shared that the Aurora City School District is one of only six school districts in Ohio, out of over 600, that earned a perfect score of five stars in all five categories on the Ohio Department of

Education State Report Card for the second year in a row. This rating indicated that the district significantly exceeded state expectations in each of the categories measured. However, the practices we put in place are not a result of focusing on outcomes such as good test scores and five-star rankings. The five-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. We are grateful for the ever-present support of the Aurora Community to help us reach this level of achievement and so I wanted to be sure to start this update with a heartfelt thank you.

#### PI Renewal Levy- No New Taxes

On March 19, 2024 you will see that the Aurora City School District has placed a 1.5 mil Permanent Improvement (PI) Renewal Levy on the ballot. Because this levy is a renewal it means that it will not increase your taxes. This levy has been renewed by the community six prior times as it was first put on the ballot in 1989. Even though the school district receives the same amount of money as it did in 1989, the levy actually costs a taxpayer less than it did in 1989 because there are now more houses in Aurora to spread the cost over. Therefore, the total

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### ACSD BOE ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING 2024



Aurora BOE Members 2024 (left to right) Mike Acomb, Jennifer Klich, Pam Mehallis (President), Molly Schneider, Stephen Sabulsky (Vice-President)

committed Board of Education members, Pam Mehallis, Steve Sabulsky, Mike Acomb, Jennifer Klich and Molly Schneider for all they do to make our district one of the top school districts nationally and in the State of Ohio. They continue to make sure our “Kids Come First.”

The Aurora Board of Education (BOE) held the annual BOE Organizational Meeting on Monday, January 8, 2024. New Board members, Jennifer Klich (top right) and Molly Schneider (bottom right), took their oaths. BOE President, Pam Mehallis, was voted in as president by the BOE members and was sworn in as president for 2024. Board member Stephen Sabulsky was voted in as the 2024 BOE Vice-President.



The State of Ohio Governor and Lieutenant Governor have issued a proclamation recognizing January 2024 as School Board Appreciation Month. The proclamation honors school board members for their important role in “creating and monitoring district plans to make sure students have the tools and skills to reach their full potential.” Thank you to all of Aurora’s hard working and



### ACSD PERMANENT IMPROVEMENT LEVY ON MARCH 19, 2024 BALLOT - NO NEW TAXES

The Aurora City School District (ACSD) Board of Education has placed a 1.5 mill Permanent Improvement (PI) RENEWAL levy on the March 19, 2024 ballot. This levy will be Issue #11 on the March ballot. Because this is a renewal levy, passage of the levy will not increase taxes for the residents of the City of Aurora. This renewal levy is for General Permanent Improvements for 5 years commencing in 2024. This levy was originally passed on May 2, 1989.

ACSD Treasurer, William Volosin, explained, “The permanent improvement levy supports the capital improvement needs of the school district. Funds from this levy can only be used to renovate, remodel, repair, furnish school buildings or purchase items of equipment or school buses. All of the items must have a life span exceeding 5 years. Permanent improvements funds do not go to salaries and benefits.

Recently, these funds have been used for technology upgrades, school buses, new boilers at Aurora High School, repair of the stage rigging at Aurora High School, a new track at Veterans Stadium, repair of the Leighton chiller, and the purchase and renovation of the Aurora Schools Conference Center.” The funds have also been used to help pay down Leighton School since it was first built in 2001.

The actual tax money received by the ACSD will equal less than 1 mill. Volosin explained, “As this is a renewal levy, this will not increase taxes. Because of House Bill 920, the current effective rate of this levy is 0.91 mills.” ACSD Superintendent, Mike Roberto, said, “This levy has been renewed by the community six prior times as it was first put on the ballot in 1989. Even though the school district receives the same amount of money as it did in 1989, the levy

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## WHO'S WHO & WHAT'S NEW

Thank you to **AHS Interact Club** students and Club Advisor, **Melissa Foster**, who worked for about five hours with Habitat for Humanity of Portage County this past fall. They painted siding for a house being built in Ravenna and the Habitat coordinators were very impressed that these students were volunteering out of the kindness of their hearts. AHS students also spent time volunteering (November 11-12th) at the **Habitat for Humanity ReStore** in Kent and the **Aurora Sanctuary**.



Aurora Sanctuary Volunteers

Habitat for Humanity Volunteers



AHS Interact Club Volunteers

The **AHS INTERACT CLUB** made certificates of appreciation and a kindness chain for **ACSD BUS DRIVERS** in honor of **UNITY DAY** (October 18, 2023).

### AHS Aurora Community Relief Bake Sale

AHS seniors **Cailor Roche** and **Nora Abass** gave a presentation to their peers about poverty and orchestrated a bake sale to support the **Aurora Community Relief Program** that raised \$175 in sales in only 45 minutes. They also arranged to have a representative from the organization speak at AHS to raise awareness about the needs within the community and how to support one another.



Rake and Run 2023 Participants and Advisor Melissa Foster (front, center)

Students from **AHS Interact Club** and the **Service Learning Class** joined members of the **Aurora Rotary Club** and other community members to participate in the annual **Rake and Run** community outreach on November 4th. The students woke up early and worked hard to rake the leaves of over 30 Aurora senior citizen's yards. This project is looked forward to each year by the Aurora senior citizen community.



Thank you to the families who supported the **Cruisin' Craddock** fundraising event. With their support, over \$10,000 was raised. Craddock School Principal, **Kim Menta**, is brainstorming ideas for use of the funds that will benefit all of Craddock School. During **Breast Cancer Awareness Month** (October 2023), AHS students in **Zonta Club** (Z-Club) took part in the **2023 Komen Northeast Ohio, "More than Pink Walk."** The students helped raised money for research, treatment, community care and civil rights. **Z-Club Advisor, Melissa Foster**, for her guidance and support in helping to change lives. The Northeast Ohio Komen Walk raised nearly \$300,000.



This year's annual **AHS Fall Play** produced by the **AHS Drama Club** took place November 17 - November 18, 2023. This year's production of **Rumors**, one of Neil Simon's most celebrated comedies, was directed by **Rob Albrecht** with **Assistant Director Leigh Jacobson**. Congratulations to the entire cast and on their outstanding performances.



Interact Club Vice-President Diya Brahmbhatt

**Correction:** AHS student Diya Brahmbhatt's name was previously spelled incorrectly (Diya Brahselected) in the Who's

Who article in the October 2023 issue of the Your Schools newsletter. The correct spelling is: Diya Brahmbhatt.



## YOUR SCHOOLS

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*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.

## Veterans Day Celebrated



Area veterans were celebrated throughout the Aurora Schools as part of the national Veterans Day holiday. Several of the many events and student learning experiences are featured in this article. At Aurora High School, Heidi McKenzie's Business Management Class, with senior Max Devins at the forefront, created a product, business model and marketing campaign for Aurora-themed flags and blankets with partial proceeds going to support the Gary Sinise Foundation and US Veterans.

The AHS Service Learning Class, with the guidance of AHS instructors, Melissa Foster and Mike Rubin, once again honored veterans by sponsoring their annual Veterans Day Celebration with funds they raised combined with funds from the Aurora Schools Foundation and Aurora Alumni Association, on December 12, 2023 at AHS. Area veterans and guests were treated to a complimentary dinner which included veteran speakers Ralph Ware (ACSD parent, retired Colonel), and Tony Tritto (Veteran, ACSD SRO), who gave moving speeches focusing on the importance of events such as these and the powerful connection they give to area veterans. Guests were treated to sweets by AHS graduate Nelson Bernstein's, Nelson's Cookies & More baked goods, followed by outstanding holiday musical performances by the AHS orchestras.



The Service Learning Class students was also busy learning how to fold the American flag appropriately in class.

Craddock Elementary School featured a Veterans Day Celebration on November 10, 2023, with veterans related to Craddock students or staff members invited to attend the celebration. They were honored by the entire school and then invited to attend a reception afterward. Photos of veteran family members were also hung and featured on the building's veteran's display board.

## VICTOR TORRES TAKES ON NEW ACSD ROLE

Victor Torres, previously an Intervention Specialist with the ACSD, has stepped into a new role with the district.

Torres was named the Aurora Schools' new AHS Assistant Principal/6-12 Special Service

Coordinator. He moved

into his new position on August 1, 2023.

AHS Principal, Mike Hayes, welcomed Torres by tweeting, "Looking forward to working, learning, and growing alongside him while witnessing the great impact I know he's going to continue having on our kids, colleagues and community!"

Torres earned his Bachelor of Science in Special Education (K-12) at Eastern Michigan University graduating in 2012. He then went on to earn a Master of Arts in Special Education from Michigan State University, a Professional Administrative Specialist License in 2022, a Principal Licensure (5-12) in 2023 and a Certificate in School Management and Leadership from the Harvard Business School and the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

Torres explained, "One of my first jobs was working for Continental and Northwest Airlines at Cleveland Hopkins airport for a company called FSS, a third-party company and what we did was worked with people with disabilities that had layovers. So, we would structure activities, arts and crafts, limited forms of games, built a lot of enrichment and engagement for people who were traveling and passing through and needed a space, whether its for sensory breaks or for structure, or for enrichment we had that at the airport."

He began his career with the Bedford City School District in Bedford, Ohio where he was an Intervention Specialist at Bedford High School and Heskett Middle School. He joined the ACSD in 2018 as an Intervention Specialist. Torres said what brought him to Aurora was, "You know this is a distinguished district and this is a great community so I was ready for my next challenge professionally, but I was also looking at somewhere from a personal perspective, where is somewhere I can serve and potentially call home for a long time with my family and this fits the bill."

As far as biggest accomplishments Torres explained, "When I think about accomplishments it's advising the ABC Club. We had this huge Halloween event every year. It's a vertical event so we pulled every student, every staff member, we focused on our students with moderate transitive needs and we had a huge Halloween bash and we brought them to the high school and our ABC Club students set up stations around the high

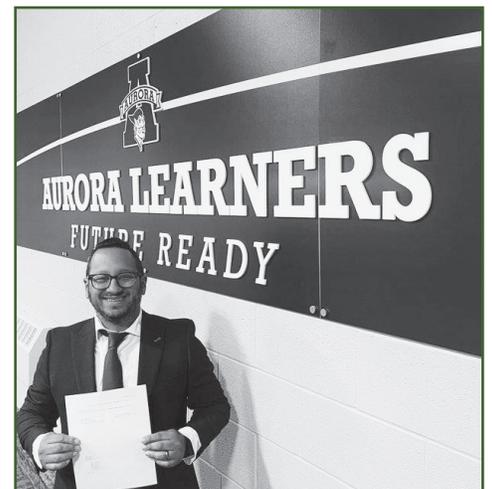


school. It's an opportunity for everyone to kind of trick or treat, get together, have lunch together, engage in a read aloud. I've received nothing but impactful and rave reviews from parents, kids and staff."

Torres feels that skills he acquired as an Intervention Specialist will transfer to his new positions. He said, "People don't realize that when you are a Moderate Transitive Interventionist Specialist there are a lot of transferrable skills that you do within your 20 square feet that actually transfer into an administrative role - coordinate services and programming, collaborate with related services professionals, technical skills like setting up special transportation, ongoing communication and collaboration with families, those are all transferable skills I'm going to utilize as an administrator in this district."

In his new position, Torres explained that while one piece of his job will require discipline it will also include being both the Harmon and AHS liaison between ACSD Special Services Director, Mike Maglionico, and the students and staff.

Torres said he feels like the characteristics that are important for an assistant principal and special services director are, "A deep love for kids, being compassionate, passionate and relational and willing to serve that extends to staff and the community as well." As far as his goals in his new positions, Torres stated, "I wanted to keep who we are as a district at the forefront of what I'm doing and to continue to be a champion for kids - to advocate for kids keeping them in the center of everything we do and also supporting teachers."



## SPORT REPORT



A big congratulations goes to the **Greenmen Volleyball Team** and first year **Head Coach Katie Cicione** with **Assistant Coach Jenna Schadle**, who earned their first ever **Suburban League Volleyball Championship** this year. The team set a new AHS record for the best overall season record and District Runner-Up. The newly earned banner was erected in the AHS varsity gym.



**Volleyball Team Earns Their 1st Banner for the AHS Gym**



The **Greenmen Football Team** and coaches **Bob Mihalik, Mark Dingman, Brendan Gallagher, Dave Keckan, Jay Price, Vic Ricketts, and Brian Wervey** for earning their **31st League Title** in the history of the football program. Their season ended as 2023 Division I District Runner Ups.



Thank you to the **Aurora All Sports Boosters** who presented a donation check to ACSD athletics in the amount of \$55,000 on October 6, 2023 during the Friday night home football game. The donation supports all of the district's 18 athletic teams.

Greenmen **All State Football Team** honors go to running back **Enzo Catania** (second-team offense); lineman **Rocco Courtad** (second-team offense); **Dylan Crasi** (third-team all-Ohio); punter **Dom Trivisonno** (first-team defense), and lineman **Lucas Manderbach** (honorable mention). Congratulations!

Congratulations to AHS Senior Class Representative, **Jonah Shanholtzer**, who won the **AHS Drug Free Club's Field Goal Kicking Contest**. The contest, sponsored by Ganley Chevrolet of Aurora, provided the winner of the contest with \$500 courtesy of Ganley Chevrolet's, General Manager, **James Reinart**. This year's contest Class Representatives, **Jonah Shanholtzer, Colin Dockman, Abby Jo Dalessandro** and **Luke Hilitch**. The final contestants were Hilitch and Shanholtzer. Shanholtzer made a 40-yard field goal to take the prize. Thank you to the **Trivisonno family** who also donated generous prizes for 2nd, 3rd and 4th place contestants. Ganley Chevrolet also sponsors a new Chevy car lease or \$5000 scholarship drawing for members of the club.



**Ganley Chevrolet General Manager, James Reinart (far left) and Jonah Shanholtzer (second left)**



**Gracie & Kamy Milano**



**Gracyn Vidovic**

The girls' tennis doubles team of **Gracie** and **Kamy Milano** headed to State competition in the fall. AHS Junior **Gracyn Vidovic** joined the Milano's in their trip to States and they are the first girls' tennis players to represent Greenmen Nation in a decade.



**Max Devins** took his golf clubs to the **State District Tournament** on October 9th last fall at Pine Hills. Way to go!

A shout out goes to the **Girls Golf Team** who won the **OHSAA Sectional Championship** in Warren, OH and then headed to District competition.

### DYLAN CRASI PUTS NATIONAL SPOTLIGHT ON GREENMEN



**Dylan Crasi Catch**

An amazing game winning backflip interception catch by Greenmen wide receiver-defensive back **Dylan Crasi** (#1) during the Aurora vs Barberton football game on October 13, 2023 landed him the #1 play on the national **Sports Center** broadcast that night. The national spotlight. Sports Center covers various sports teams and athletes from major sports around the world and shows highlights of sports from the day. In case you missed it, check out the link at: [https://twitter.com/AHS\\_MH/status/1713169569349599256?s=20](https://twitter.com/AHS_MH/status/1713169569349599256?s=20) The astounding acrobatic play highlighted Crasi's athleticism and concentration.

The fall **Athletic Signing Day** at AHS on November 8, 2023 was held to recognize Greenmen athletes **Nate Fletcher** (Baseball-University of Rhode Island); **McKennah Metzger** (Softball- Coastal Carolina); **Brooklyn Millard** (Golf-Toledo), and **Samantha Stask** (Basketball-Ursuline). Good luck to all!

Greenmen alumni **AJ Barner** was named a semifinalist for the **Mackey Award** that is given to the nation's top Tight End.

The **Boys Cross Country Team** took home the **2023 Suburban League Championship** as well. Congratulations to AHS **CC Coach Laura Bell-Peters** as well.

The AHS **Lady Greenmen Soccer Program** won their first playoff game and headed to **State competition** for an exciting fall roundup for the team.

**ACSD Athletic Director, Paul Powers**, was honored for his outstanding service with an **Ohio Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association's** award for his 30 years of committed service to high school athletics. Powers said, "I appreciate the support from the Aurora Community over the last 16years. Thanks also go out to all the coaches, workers, secretaries, etc. that have helped in these years." THANK YOU "All Hours" Paul Powers!



Sports Report continued from p.4

**Boys' Soccer Team** Head Coach **Ryan Conner** took his team to the **District Semi-Final** competition. They ended their season with as 2023 Division 1 District Runner Ups. Great season!

Congratulations to the Greenmen **Cheerleading Team** for bringing back a 2nd place finish in the American Conference **Suburban League Cheer Competition**. Making Greenmen Nation proud!

**BOB MIHALIK EARNS 200TH CAREER WIN/ OHIO DIVISION III CO-COACH OF THE YEAR**



A special congratulations goes out to **Aurora Greenmen Football Head Coach, Bob Mihalik**, who was recognized as **Division III Co-Coach of the Year 2023**, as well as, his **200th career win** this past season. During his head coach tenure, Mihalik has led the Greenmen football program to 19 consecutive



winning seasons, 11 conference titles, 18 playoff appearances, and five trips to the Final Four and one State Championship. ACSD Athletic Director, Paul Powers, organized an on-field celebration after the game where Mihalik recognized the assistant coaches, players, families and community that provide the foundation for his successes. Mihalik said, "This isn't an individual award. This is a program award. I am so fortunate to be the head coach of this program." Afterward, retired/ current teachers and community members gathered alumni dating back over 20 years and special guests to celebrate with Mihalik at a surprise event in his honor. Congratulations from the

**LEIGHTON SCHOOL ADAPTIVE PLAYGROUND FOSTERS COMMUNITY SUPPORT**



The Aurora Schools Foundation recently announced a groundbreaking partnership with the Portage Foundation, helping to continue the strides toward inclusivity in the Aurora City Schools. Together, these two foundations have generously donated \$60,000 to an adaptive playground initiative, a project designed to create an inclusive and accessible play space for all students.

ASF is dedicated to enhancing the educational experience of students within the Aurora City Schools by funding innovative grants that go beyond the school budget. The Portage Foundation is a non-profit organization based in Portage County committed to inspiring philanthropy and impacting various local causes.

The Aurora Schools Foundation contributed \$10,000 of the \$68,000 raised towards the first phase of the project. This phase will include the purchase of an adaptive and inclusive We-Go-Round Merry Go Round, as well as creating a landscape free of mulch, necessary for wheelchair accessibility. Once completed, the playground will benefit Leighton's 3rd-5th graders, neighboring Miller Elementary, and the greater community.

The Aurora Schools Foundation and the Portage Foundation partnered together to make an additional \$50,000 donation to Phase two of the project. These funds will support the installation of a ZipKrooz (a two-way zipline for all students), Chill Spinner (a freestanding playground seat that promotes balance and posture), Shade, and an Adaptive Bench that accommodates wheelchairs. Phase two will cost upwards of \$82,00. These additions will not only enhance the inclusivity of the playground but also provide a more engaging and comfortable space for all students.

The idea for an inclusive playground came from Aurora students who noticed that students in wheelchairs were not able to access the current Leighton playground due to a lack of equipment and environmental obstacles. Through the "Aurora for Change" campaign, students across the district collected coins to put towards the expensive adaptive equipment. Their efforts, coupled with the guidance of educators like Alisa Deininger, Lisa Leone, and Kasie Burroughs, have been pivotal in driving this initiative forward and rallying broader community support.

This collaboration between these two foundations and the greater community exemplifies the power of partnership. The initiative reflects a united commitment to creating an educational space where every child can thrive, play, and learn inclusively.

**MARIA GOODMAN WINS OAHPERD OHIO ADMINISTRATOR OF THE YEAR**

Congratulations go out to Maria Goodman (Miller School) who was officially recognized as the Ohio Association of Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance (OAHPERD) Administrator of the Year for the State of Ohio. This is the first time OAHPERD is recognizing an Administrator of the Year with an award. Miller School Physical Education teacher Stacey Barnes nominated Goodman for the award.



Goodman has been the principal at Miller School for the last six years and was previously a 3rd grade teacher in the ACSD for 14 years. The OAHPERD Facebook page said, "Congratulations to Maria Goodman of the Aurora City Schools, the 2023 OAHPERD Administrator of the Year!" Superintendent, Mike Roberto, stated, "...they could not have picked a better administrator to set the bar high for future award winners."

**TRUNK OR TREAT**

The AHS Honor Society students and advisors, Melissa Lindley and Karen Baker, joined forces with the Aurora Elementary PTO to host the annual **Trunk or Treat** event to celebrate fall for elementary school students on Thursday, October 26, 2023. Children dressed in costumes, along with the National Honor Society students, and walked through the Trunk or Treat experience located in the Aurora High School parking lot. The children enjoyed the ghoulishly fun experience with candy treats that were provided. The fundraiser accepted donations of \$5 from each family.



## CLASS ACTS

Thank you to **JODI ROSCO** and **SARAH MOST** who collaboratively organized and trained a group of people to help give a battery of new dyslexia screenings to first and second grade students. From the data that was collected, informed decisions and a deeper insight about the literacy program, were gained.

Harmon School advisors **KORY RORABAUGH** and **LAURIE SCHOFIELD-CARTER** supported students during this year's "Start with Hello" week. Some of the events and activities included creating rings of kindness and "hello" signs that celebrated student upstanders and youth leaders who combat social isolation and foster belonging.



### Rotary Students of the Month

September 2023 – AHS – **Ben Mulvaney, Isabella Shorr**

October 2023 – Harmon – **Nico Picone, Bella Wetzel**

November 2023 – AHS – **Ava McGovern, Justin Burick**

This year the ACSD is hosting three **FULLBRIGHT SCHOLARS** through a partnership with Kent State University. The scholars are assigned to AHS with hosts **JENESS KINGTON, MELISSA FOSTER** and **AMY WILLIAMSON**. This year's scholars are **ROCIO CANQUI** (Bolivia), **BIANCA CASTRO** (Dominican Republic) and **MONTASAR MAHMOUD** (Egypt). Along with meetings and interviews, they co-teach lessons and give cultural presentations. This program continues to allow for growth in the scholars, our staff and students in our schools.



Rocio Canqui



Bianca Castro



Montasar Mahmoud

Congratulations to the 180 **ACADEMIC LETTERMEN** who were honored at AHS and earned an academic letter or a pin (for repeat winners). To earn this recognition students had to have earned at least a 4.0 in both semesters of the previous school year.



### CUSTODIAN APPRECIATION DAY

took place October 2, 2023. Thank you to all of our district custodians for working so hard behind the scenes to make our buildings safe and clean.

With the coordination of Harmon School Social Studies & French teacher, **PAUL FRANKMANN**, the entire 8th grade team and students were treated to a "walk about"

throughout the City of Aurora. The tour included visiting with members of City Hall, the Aurora Fire Department, the Church of Aurora, the Aurora Police Department, the Aurora Historical Society and Aurora veterans at the Aurora Cemetery. This "walk about" facilitated the goal of getting students into the community and nurturing those connections.



New AHS Choir Director, **ROSS DOWNING**, held his first AHS choir concert and featured former AHS Choir Director, **SARAH DIXON** on the piano, along with special guest drummers and played the guitar himself.



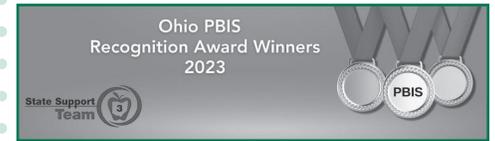
Harmon School Washington D.C. Trip

Thank you to Harmon School 8th grade **WASHINGTON, D.C. TRIP COORDINATORS, ANGI FRANKMANN, PAUL FRANKMANN** and **JENNY JENKINS**. They provided a memorable experience and amazing learning experience for these students.



The **AHS STUDENT SENATE** (grades 9-12) visited Craddock School and read with 2nd grade students. Two to four high school students went to each 2nd grade classroom and mentored them while discussing academics, athletics, arts, etc. and answered their questions before reading with them.

## MILLER/LEIGHTON OHIO PBIS GOLD RECOGNITION AWARD



Both Leighton and Miller School's staff members deserve congratulations on their recent Ohio Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) Gold Recognition Award for their work during the 2022-23 school year. They were notified they had earned the award for designing a supportive and systematic implementation of PBIS at all levels; Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3. This is the second consecutive year Miller School has been recognized with this award.

PBIS involves teaching students expected behaviors in a consistent and positive way, through modeling and acknowledging those behaviors with the ultimate goal to remove barriers to accelerate student achievement. This recognition comes as an entire building recognition with a special thank you to the PBIS Leadership teams who plan, collect, and organized the evidence behind the scenes.



## AHS Chamber Singers Performed Anthem at Cavs Game



The AHS Chamber Choir Singers were featured as they performed "The Star-Spangled Banner" National Anthem at the Cleveland Cavaliers vs. Denver Nuggets basketball game on Sunday, November 19, 2023 at Rocket Mortgage Fieldhouse. This was the first Cavaliers game performance for new AHS Choir Director, Ross Downing





## MILLER SCHOOL KICK OFF TO KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION

The Aurora City Schools' Kindergarten Registration for the 2024-2025 school year will begin in February. Please help spread the word to your neighbors and friends. Miller School will be holding their Kickoff to Kindergarten parent-only meeting on Tuesday, February 20, 2024 at 6:30 p.m. at the Aurora High School (109 W. Pioneer Trail).

Residents of the Aurora City School District who have a child turning 5 by September 30th, 2024 are invited to attend the Kickoff to Kindergarten meeting to pick up registration materials and learn all about kindergarten. Miller School will be holding their registration days on March 6th and 7th. Parents will select a registration timeslot using the links shared at the parent meeting. All presentations and registration information will be shared on our district website after February 20th if you cannot attend this parent meeting. Please don't hesitate to call Miller Elementary School with specific questions at 330-562-6199.

## ACSD LEVY THANK YOU



The Aurora City Schools' Board of Education, Administration, and Staff are very grateful for the continued support from the community and are very appreciative of your vote of confidence in the district as displayed by the passage of our 5.9 mill Operating Levy. Our district is thankful for the Aurora Community's trust and will continue to work to provide an outstanding educational environment within an economically efficient system that focuses on helping Aurora Learners be Future Ready.

## Superintendent - Continued from p.1

price tag of the 1.5 mil PI levy to the Aurora Community is now actually under one mil. These funds are nonetheless important as they go towards upkeep and repair of infrastructure which lasts five years or more such as roofs, roads, busses and boilers. The funds have also been used to help pay down Leighton Intermediate School since it was first built in 2001.

### Potential New Construction Update

Believe it or not, this process is now in its third year as we first started way back in March of 2022 with staff and family surveys along with input from the Superintendent's Advisory Council and the Aurora Community. Over the last two years, there has been overwhelming support to look into the possibility of new construction with the goal of replacing Craddock, which was built in 1911, with a new 9-12 high school and then moving the first and second grades in Craddock along with the pre-school at Miller to Leighton. Grades 3-5, currently at Leighton, would move to Harmon, and grades 6-8 at Harmon and the Board of Education offices would then occupy the old high school. (Kindergarten would stay at Miller). This plan would provide much needed updated facilities and room to grow for literally the next generation of Greenmen.

Over the next year, we will continue to work on our Master Planning process with a goal of having a series of staff and community meetings that will help our architects from ThenDesign Architecture (TDA) to develop a solid overall plan for a new high school. The goal of the district is to have a Bond Issue for this project on the November 2024 ballot.

Earlier in 2024, we met with the Aurora High School Instructional Leaders and Staff in order to gather their feedback on the preliminary Master Plans for a new high school. Also, in February, we will have the

## ACSD ODE Special Education Rating 2023

The ACSD Special Education Department was recently notified by the Ohio Department of Education that they met 27 out of 28 total points on seven different indicators; therefore, receiving an overall rating of 4 which is the highest possible rating. The 2023 Special Education Rating is based entirely on compliance indicators. The 2023 Special Education Rating is based on data from the 2021-22 school year. This attention to compliance details is outstanding. Congratulations to Director Mike Maglionico and all those who work with students identified as having a disability.



first meeting of our Construction Steering Committee which is a group of over 20 parents, staff, administrators, and community members who will serve as a sounding board for our construction plans and as a liaison to the community. This will be preceded by meetings with the Miller, Craddock, Leighton, and Harmon staff in early February which will be held to garner input on what they would like to see in terms of renovations to the current buildings. These meetings will help with the transition in phase II of our plans should a new high school building be constructed.

These meetings will eventually lead to a series of community events we anticipate taking place in late April and early May with the goal of having final plans set prior to the start of summer break. Over the summer, the Aurora Board of Education will decide whether to place the proposed plan on the November 2024 ballot. If they do, then a campaign would be organized in the Fall of 2024 to get the word out to the broader community for a bond issue on the November 2024 ballot.

Although there is still a long way to go and much work to be done, we are excited for the journey. Over the next year, we, along with TDA, will be holding meetings and will continue developing the Master Plan for this project. Please be sure to keep an eye out for those community meetings coming up in the late spring. For the latest information on this project, you can visit our district website at [www.aurora-schools.org](http://www.aurora-schools.org) and click on the link titled "ACSD Facilities Master Planning Project." In the meantime, thank you for your continued support and partnership as we all work to nurture the competencies (critical thinking, collaboration, empathy, resilience, balance, and being innovative) within our strategic vision, that will lead to young people in our schools becoming Aurora Learners who are Future Ready.

Go Greenmen!  
Mike

## Levy - Continued from p.1

actually costs a taxpayer less than it did in 1989 because there are now more houses in Aurora to spread the cost over."

Aurora Board of Education President, Pam Mehallis, stated, "The Board is charged with continuing to invest in the district's facilities and improvement projects. The PI levy is a low millage and cost-effective way for the schools to receive the funds that allow for those investments. Passage of the levy also ensures that we are able to make necessary security enhancements that are essential to our school safety plans."

**BOARD OF EDUCATION**

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**Postal Customer**

**HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS**

**Aurora High School**

The AHS Aurora for Others campaign with advisors, Kasie Stewart and Jen Simmerman, raised over \$4,000 through their coin war money challenge with \$2,000 of it being given to charity. This year's charities were **Tunnel to Towers Foundation** and **The Littlest Heroes**.

**Harmon Middle School**

Harmon School staff and students held their annual **Coats for Kids** drive with a total of 1,325 items collected and delivered to help provide winter coats to children who are in need.

**Leighton Elementary School**

The Leighton Leaders' food drive, under the leadership of Jen Kinkoph and Keri Stoye, was a huge success with roughly 100 large post office boxes filled with canned goods that were then donated to the **Aurora Volunteers of America** food pantry.



Leighton Leaders

**Miller/Craddock/Leighton Elementary Schools**



The grades K-5 staff partnered with the Aurora Elementary PTO to help the young people in our district think of others during this time of the year through **The Giving Tree** project. They collected an amazing number of clothing items, toys and gift cards to donate to those in need.

Giving Tree Donations On Their Way!

**Holiday Concerts**

Holiday concerts abounded throughout the ACSD. Holiday choir, orchestra, and band performances highlighted the season with music to make spirits bright!



Harmon School Holiday Orchestra Concert 12-23

**Staff Holiday Spirit**



The **ACSD Transportation Department** really spread cheer to the children throughout the district. One parent wrote, "While I was driving yesterday, I passed a bus with Santa driving. A friend of mine made a Facebook post about her daughter who attends Leighton being picked up on the bus by Santa. I just wanted to drop a note to say how grateful we are grateful we are for our amazing bus drivers."

Bus Drivers Todd Flowers and John McCoy



Bus Driver Cyndi Rogers