OCTOBER

YOUR SCHOOLS

2024

Aurora City School District

From the Superintendent

By MIKE ROBERTO
Superintendent of Schools



We are off to a great start as we welcome the classes of 2025 through 2037 to the new school year. The PreK-12 classrooms are buzzing with activity during the school day along with the competition fields, courts, and courses during after-school hours. The beginning of a new school year is always exciting, but I would like to start by sharing some exciting news from the summer.

In early July, we were notified by the College Board that the students at Aurora High School (AHS) passed the equivalent of **855 college-level courses** by earning a 3 or higher on their Advanced Placement (AP) exams. This is an impressive number, but equally impressive is the fact that out of the 977 tests taken, which is a record high for AHS, 88% of the tests were a score of 3 or **higher. That 88% is also a record** high for AHS. In total **199 Greemen earned an AP recognition** of either AP Scholar, AP Scholar with Honors, or AP Scholar with Distinction. One of the most impressive numbers, at least from our parents' perspective, is that 855 exams with a 3 or more is a **potential savings of 1.4 million dollars** for Aurora families. This is because Greenmen who go on to college carry AP credits earned at AHS that save them both semester hours and credits at the university level. Congratulations to the young people at AHS and the entire PK-12 staff in the Aurora City Schools! We know to get these strong results at AHS you have to nurture the "roots" of young people from day one in Miller Elementary and every day following through Craddock, Leighton, Harmon, and ultimately through graduation from Aurora High School.

Superintendent continued on p. 7

ACSD NEW CONSTRUCTION BOND ISSUE ON NOVEMBER 5, 2024



As you travel to the polls this November, you will see a bond issue from the Aurora City School District (ACSD) on the ballot. The bond issue is #32 on the ballot. The 7.57 mil bond issue is for the proposed construction of a new high school, reprogramming and updating of the other school buildings in the district, and the closing of Craddock Elementary School. The goal of the bond issue is to address aging buildings and capacity concerns in the school district. The district has scheduled multiple community informational nights concerning the bond issue that will contain factual and neutral information to help you understand the bond issue and provide a question-and-answer period after the short presentation. Each of these informational nights will run from 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. and take place at the ACSD Conference Center located at 119 W. Pioneer Trail.

Bond Issue Community Information Nights
Tuesday, **September 24**, 2024
Wednesday, **October 2**, 2204
Thursday, **October 17**, 2024
Tuesday, **October 22**, 2024

The Master Facilities Plan for the Bond Issue, which can be found on the ACSD District's website (www.aurora-schools.org), includes the construction of a new high school in the large field between the current high school and Harmon Middle School that will house grades 9-12. The current high school will then be used to house the middle school students (grades 6-8) and the Board of Education Offices which are currently located in Craddock Elementary. Grades 3-5 will be relocated from the Leighton Intermediate School building to the current Harmon Middle School building which allows the students in grades 1 and 2 to move to Leighton. By

Bond Issue continued on p.7

ACSD BOND ISSUE QUESTIONS & ANSWERS



Below is a compilation of some commonly asked questions with answers regarding the Aurora City School District's upcoming November 5, 2024 New Construction Bond Issue (**Issue #32**). For more detailed information regarding the bond issue, please view the continually updated **ACSD Facility Master Planning Project** link at the top of the district's website at aurora-schools.org.

How did the buildings get so bad? Did the District ignore repairs?

No, in fact, the opposite is true. District maintenance staff continue to do their best to keep the schools safe and in the best shape possible. This includes spending thousands of dollars each year on basic and "Band-Aid" repairs to expensive, outdated systems that no longer function efficiently. However, due to space shortages and the building's effective lifespan, most repairs are no longer enough. The district uses every square foot in each of the buildings. Continuing to spend money on repairs and makeshift modifications is not the best use of District dollars. The most cost-efficient, fiscally responsible action is to consider a long-term facility plan that accommodates the district for the next 75 years.

Were "community use" spaces considered in this project? What are some amenities it may afford for those who don't have students in the schools?

Community use spaces were considered as a part of this plan. It includes two new turf fields for fall and spring activities which can be used for city recreation teams (football, soccer, baseball, lacrosse) along with community members in general who will have access. The new high school will contain 2 new large gymnasiums, for city and district use for teams during the winter and spring. Additionally, a new Performing Arts Center and Theatre (the existing auditorium)

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WHO'S WHO & WHAT'S NEW

Welcome to the **16 new educators** joining the ACSD for the 2024-25 school year! We look forward to a very successful school year with all of the strengths each educator brings to our district.

Thank you to the AHS freshmen Class Advisor, **Megan Watt**, and the **Student Council Officers** who took the time to help transition freshmen students in AHS for the new school year.



Ken Ganley Chevrolet of Aurora General Manager, James Reinart (left), Brynn Winkler, and Mike Hayes (right)

A big CONGRATULATIONS to AHS senior **Brynn Winkler** who was the Grand Prize Winner of the **Ken Ganley Chevrolet of Aurora's Drug Free Club's New Car/$5,000 Scholarship** giveaway. Thank you to Ken Ganley Chevrolet of Aurora General Manager, **James Reinart**, for continuing to generously support the students in the Drug Free Club who are committed to being drug free and living a healthy lifestyle.

The ACSD is providing an opportunity for our parents to discover **Jonathan Haidt's** compelling insights in, **"The Anxious Generation."** Haidt argues that the rise of screen time and the decline of free play are major contributors to the growing anxiety and depression among youth and children. Be part of the conversation that could help shape a healthier future for the next generation.

Where: Aurora Schools Conference Center
When: Wednesdays 6:30-8:00 p.m., Oct. 9 - Oct. 30
Facilitators: Derek & Jenna Hickman



JoAnn Prasnick's class at Harmon School wrote formal letters in cursive to **British Royalty**. This was a culminating project as a part of their Global Perspectives classes for the quarter last spring. Over the summer, some of the students received responses from **King Charles III** and **Princess Anne** which included a photo.

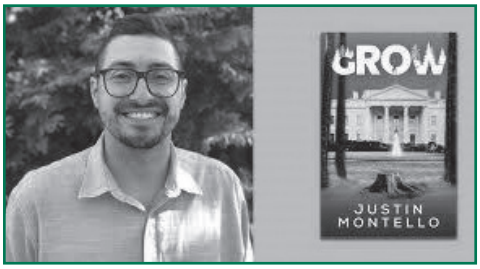
ODEW Overall 5-Star Report Card



In March, the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce recognized the Ohio school districts and buildings that achieved a 5-star overall state report card rating for the 2022-23 academic year. These districts and buildings had, "exceptional achievements" in the 2022-23 school year. The Aurora City School District was named as a district recipient. This 2022-23 Ohio 5-Star Report Card recognition was comprised of 75 districts and 362 buildings that received the overall rating of 5 stars. The department stated, "These dedicated educators, administrators, and students have demonstrated an unwavering commitment to fostering a culture of learning and achievement."

Ohio Department of Education & Workforce

JUSTIN MONTELLO AUTHORS BOOK – GROW



Harmon Middle School 8th Grade Language Arts teacher, Justin Montello, is now a published author. Montello has authored his first young adult fiction book titled, *Grow*. The action/adventure book's synopsis reads, "Amidst a world ravaged by environmental catastrophe and authoritarian rule, Autumn Log embarks on a daring mission to save the planet. Armed with the extraordinary power to regrow trees, she navigates the perilous border between the Southern United States (S.U.S.) and the New United States (N.U.S), where treacherous weather and chaos reign. Her goal: to defy the oppressive regime and bring life back to a dying world. As sirens wail and authority officers close in, Autumn executes her plan with precision, setting in motion a series of events that will challenge the status quo and define her destiny as a fugitive with a cause."

Montello's biography states, "Justin Montello has passionately taught 8th grade English for the last twelve years. He thrives on telling stories through novels, screenplays and songs. He is currently in the process of obtaining his PhD in teacher leadership, furthering a commitment to be a lifelong learner. He is a proud and dedicated father and husband. His family has set out to inspire the love of play, creating a YouTube channel called Family Fun Party. He is an inspiring leukemia survivor, hoping to influence an audience to always believe in themselves and not give up when the fight gets hard."

Congratulation to Montello on his latest achievement. *Grow*, is published by Olympia Publishers, and can be purchased online through Amazon.com.

MARK OF EXCELLENCE NSPRA/Ohio

YOUR SCHOOLS
Published by the Aurora City School District
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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.

ASF/ESC SUPPORTS AHS CYBERSECURITY PROGRAM



Aurora High School is launching a new Cybersecurity program to offer to students who are interested in a career path in the growing cybersecurity field. A career in cybersecurity now ranks within one of the top 20 fastest growing career fields in the country. Students with relevant class and internship experience who are looking to forge a career in the cybersecurity sector are in high demand in the digital world with the field continuing to grow in the future.

AHS Principal, Mike Hayes, and AHS teacher, Nick Kukarola, secured a $20,000 grant from the Aurora Schools Foundation (ASF) allowing them to proceed with the program. The Aurora City School District's Assistant Superintendent, Dr. Paul Milcetich, also secured a sizable grant for the program from the Northeast Ohio Educational Service Center. The Aurora Schools partnered with the organization Paradigm, which creates robust cybersecurity curriculum, programming and professional development for staff, at high schools nationwide. Paradigm can currently be found in 18 states and AHS is only the second in this region making it a hub for cybersecurity growth and development in Northeast, Ohio.

The first course, Cybersecurity 1, is already up and running within the 2024-25 school year for students in grades 9-12. The only prerequisite is a passion for or interest in the topic, and no previous experience in cybersecurity or computer science is required. This is the first course in the Paradigm Aurora City Schools program, and students will explore Cyber Ethics, Fundamentals of Computing, Networking, Cryptology, Linux, System Administration, Cybersecurity Threats, Risk Identification, and much more. Students can expect an engaging learning environment with simulations and authentic, cyber security applications during class and are expected to participate in cybersecurity competitions throughout the year. Future Cybersecurity courses will be added as options in the next two years giving students the chance to complete the three-year program-sequence providing an opportunity to graduate with an industry certification while being workforce-ready.

AHS Principal Mike Hayes said, "Thank you to the ASF for the incredible support in helping to launch the AHS Cybersecurity program! We are truly grateful and so very excited for Greenmen Nation!"

Bond Issue Questions & Answers - *Continued from p.1*

will allow for more involvement from the community and greater attendance at events. The Theatre can be used during the summer months for dance programs. The existing weight room is being renovated into a multi-purpose room for the school and community use, while outdoor walking paths are being added throughout the campus for daily community use.

How do the property taxes in Aurora compare to surrounding districts? Will this project increase our taxes above the surrounding communities?

According to data compiled by Cleveland Magazine's "Best Places to Live" 2024 pp. on 64 Vital Stats, Aurora remains a community that provides a high educational value while still ranking lower for overall property taxes.

With more people moving into Aurora, my home value is going up. If my home value goes up, does that mean I am paying more taxes for this bond issue?

A bond issue is essentially a "fixed sum levy." It is subject to House Bill 920, so your taxes do not go up if the value of your home goes up. The schools cannot collect more than they are asking, regardless of how much your home is worth over time. As more houses and businesses are added in Aurora, the taxes associated with this bond would actually go down since you are taking the same fixed sum and spreading it over a larger tax base. This happens because there are more people who are helping to pay.

How does enrollment growth and inflation affect this project?

During the 1990's, Aurora grew from approximately 2000 to 3000 students in the district. With additional construction and growth in the community, we expect more students to enroll in the district, however, it would not be the same magnitude as in the 90's. The project on the ballot allows room for growth in each of the buildings. Inflation guarantees that the project will only become more expensive the longer that the project is delayed.

If the ballot attempt is successful in November 2024, when will the project be completed?

The new high school would be completed in approximately 4 years after a successful ballot attempt, with renovations to the existing buildings beginning afterward. The K-5 students would then move in the fall of the following year.

How can I find out more detailed information regarding this proposed ACSD 2024 Bond Issue?

Along with viewing the continually updated **ACSD Facility Master Planning Project** link at the top of the district's website at aurora-schools.org., the district has scheduled multiple community informational nights concerning the bond issue that will contain factual and neutral information to help you understand the bond issue and provide a question-and-answer period after the short presentation. Each of these informational nights will run from 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. and take place at the ACSD Conference Center located at 119 W. Pioneer Trail.

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AHS AP EXCELLENCE 2024

Aurora City Schools' Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, Paul Milcetich, updated the Aurora Board of Education on the latest Aurora High School Advanced Placement (AP) results for 2024 at the BOE meeting on August 26th. Milcetich said, "Using that lens for 2024, one can see that 977 is an exceptional number [of tests] especially considering we have less than 1000 students at AHS. Additionally, the 88% passage is the highest in school history, and the 855 tests passed (translating to college credits earned) is outstanding, especially considering that number is higher than tests taken in years past! In summary, not only did our AP scores continue an upward trajectory, our students accessed this rigorous curriculum in large numbers and performed at historic levels! This information was extremely exciting to see and provides great confirmation of our approach of focusing on the learning environment (nurturing the roots), which will then produce these types of outcomes."

Superintendent, Mike Roberto, said of the excellent 2024 AHS AP test scores/numbers, "In total 199 Greemen earned an AP recognition of either AP Scholar, AP Scholar with Honors, or AP Scholar with Distinction. One of the most impressive numbers, at least from our parents' perspective, is that 855 exams with a 3 or more [passing grade] is a potential savings of 1.4 million dollars for Aurora families." He added, "Congratulations to the young people at AHS and the entire PK-12 staff in the Aurora City Schools! We know to get these strong [AP] results at AHS you have to nurture the "roots" of young people from day one in Miller Elementary and every day following through Craddock, Leighton, Harmon, and ultimately through graduation from Aurora High School."

SPORT REPORT

The **Greater Akron-Canton High School Sports Awards** is an athletic recognition program honoring the area's top-performing athletes, coaches and teams. This program is part of the **USA Today High School Sports Awards**. Several AHS athletes were nominated. **Cameron Good** was nominated in the **Boys Swimming & Diving of the Year** category and **Gracie and Kamy Milano** were both nominated for **Girls Tennis Player of the Year**.



Cameron Good



Gracie and Kamy Milano

Congratulations to AHS athletes, **McKennah Metzger** and **Hannah Salgado**. **Metzger** earned the title of **Softball Player of the Year** while **Salgado** was awarded the title of **Gymnast of the Year** honors at the **USA Today's Greater Akron-Canton Sports Awards** at Akron's Civic Theater on June 21, 2024. The program honors the area's top-performing athletes, coaches and teams. Metzger pitched for the team who earned a fourth straight Suburban American League title and the second softball district championship in AHS history. Salgado brought home AHS' first gymnastics state title in the school's history.



McKennah Metzger with Cleveland Brown Nick Chubb



Hannah Salgado with Cleveland Brown Nick Chubb



AHS seniors **Ashlyn Abramovich** and **Lucas Manderbach** were featured in the upcoming **Portage County Magazine's** fall football preview.



The **Greenmen Cheer Team** came away from the **Bowling Green State University Cheer Camp** with a **Top Banana Award**. The varsity team took 2nd place in the **Sideline Cheer** category and 3rd place in the **Camp Routine**. Y-E-L-L way to go!

Congratulations to **AHS Tennis Coach, Vince Canata**, and alumni player, **Vincent Canata**, who qualified for State competition on their 4.5 United States Tennis Association men's 18 team in August.

Thank you to the **AHS Drumline** for beating their way through the school and pumping students up for the first weekend after school began.

Mark your calendars for the **Third Annual AHS Alumni Band** at the **Greenmen Homecoming Football Game** taking place on October 4, 2024.



The **Aurora's Men's Soccer Team**, in honor of their hero **Noah**, announced that they had raised $3,686 for local children fighting **pediatric cancer**.



The **Greenmen Cross Country Team** held their annual **Mattress Fundraiser** on Saturday, August 17, 2024. The successful sale benefited the cross-country team's season. If you are in need of a new, name brand, high-quality mattress then look out for the mattress fundraiser next year too.

SPORTS ARE IN MOTION AGAIN!













JENNIFER BINDUS WINS REGIONAL STATE BOARD DISTRICT 9 TEACHER OF THE YEAR



The State Board of Education of Ohio has announced the 2025 State Board of Education District Teacher of the Year cohort. Aurora City School District's 3rd grade teacher, Jennifer Bindus, has been selected as the Regional State Board District 9 Teacher of the Year. Bindus holds a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education from The University of Akron, and the following Master of Education degrees: Gifted Education from Kent State University, Curriculum & Instruction from Ursuline College, Evaluation & Measurement from Kent State University and Educational Leadership from the University of Cincinnati. She holds an Ohio 1-8 teacher license, a PreK-6 Principal License, and endorsements in gifted education, teacher leadership, and the teaching of reading. She previously earned Master Teacher status in Ohio and held National Board Certification. She has attended many professional development sessions and is an avid reader.

Bindus knew she wanted to be a teacher from the time she was in third grade. From those early days, she recognized her calling, and her passion for teaching has only grown stronger over the twenty-nine years she has been in the classroom.

Outside of the classroom, you can find her serving as the third-grade academic team leader and teaching in the district's summer academy. A proud moment in Bindus' recent career is advocating at the state level to remove the mandatory retention clause from Ohio's Third Grade Reading Guarantee. She testified five separate times in the Ohio House and Senate as an advocate for all Ohio third graders. She has a strong belief that, "Every day is a new day."

Since its inception in 1964, the Ohio Teacher of the Year program annually identifies exceptional teachers statewide celebrating their effective work in and outside the classroom. The mission of the program is to provide opportunities for professional learning to exemplary teachers as leaders and advocates for public education.

Selected teachers move through two levels of recognition: (1) the State Board District Teacher of the Year as a regional recognition and (2) the Ohio Teacher of the Year as the state-level recognition. From the cohort of 11 regional honorees, four recipients will be selected as finalists for the 2025 Ohio Teacher of the Year honor later this year. Learn more about the Ohio Teacher of the Year program and watch a video of the 2025 cohort announcement on the Ohio Teacher of the Year webpage.

LEIGHTON SCHOOL WELCOMES NEW ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL -- JEFF MORRIS



Leighton Elementary School welcomed the addition of new Assistant Principal, Jeff Morris this upcoming 2024-25 school year. He replaced former Assistant Principal Ben Lehman. Morris' educational background includes, earning a Bachelor of Science degree from Ohio University and a Master's of Science degree from The Ohio State University in Educational Administration. He went on to earn both a Principal Licensure at Ashland University and a Superintendent Licensure from Kent State University. His career experience includes teaching English and language arts before becoming an assistant principal at Lincoln School in Warren, Ohio. Most recently, he has been working as the assistant principal at East Woods Intermediate School in Hudson, Ohio since 2012.

Leighton School Principal, Maria Goodman, said, "While we are celebrating Mr. Lehman's next adventures in education, we are also celebrating the addition of Mr. Jeff Morris as the new Assistant Principal to Leighton Elementary for the '24-'25 school year." She continued, "Morris has 12 years of experience in this role [as assistant principal] supporting students and staff and is invested in building relationships, supporting building and district initiatives, and helping to foster forward momentum. He has an accomplished track record and a philosophy that directly aligns to our strategic vision, building goals, and frameworks."

Morris has two daughters, Lane and Lacy with his wife Courtney and they currently reside in Hudson.

AURORA SCHOOLS FOUNDATION CONTINUES SUPPORTING OUR DISTRICT

The Aurora Schools Foundation (ASF) is beginning its 30th year of supporting the Aurora City School District with grants. They have given over $500,000 in grants over that 30-year time period.

Recently, the ASF has supported the innovative AHS cybersecurity program that has been launched for the 2024-25 school year. This is one of only two cybersecurity programs in Northeast Ohio. This initiative offers students real-world experiences through internships and industry-recognized certifications, leading to immediate job opportunities after graduation. Partnering with Paradigm Cyber Ventures, the program provides comprehensive training for teachers and includes the formation of a Cyber Advisory Board. Aurora High School is poised to become a leader in cybersecurity education, preparing students for high-demand careers in this rapidly growing field.

The foundation has also recently funded DASH coding robots for Craddock School 1st grade classrooms which offers young learners hands-on experience with coding. These interactive robots foster problem-solving, critical thinking, and creativity, aligning with ASF's mission to fund innovative educational tools. Thanks to community support, students are enthusiastically embracing these challenges, exploring endless possibilities like navigating mazes and performing dances. This initiative enhances the educational experience and helps build a foundation for lifelong learning.

These and so many other initiatives have been funded by the ASF through community support and at this year's Aurora Schools Foundation Gala, the ASF had the pleasure of auctioning off some truly amazing experiences, generously donated by our local first responders. Among the highlights were the "Police Officer for a Day" and "Firefighter for a Day" experiences, which drew enthusiastic bidding from attendees. These unique opportunities not only provided unforgettable experiences for the winning bidders but also supported ASF's mission to fund innovative grants that benefit all students across all grades. The ASF said, "A huge thank you to everyone who donated and bid on these items—your support makes a real difference in our schools!"



DASH Robots at Craddock School

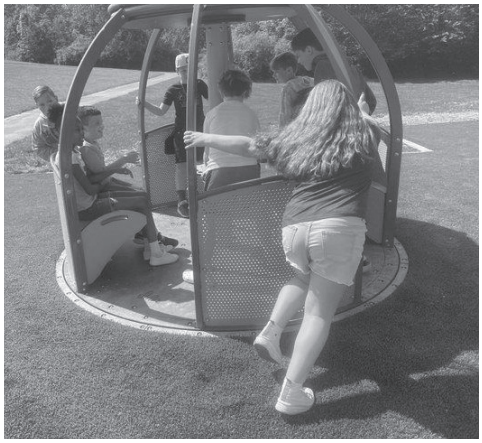
LEIGHTON SCHOOL ADAPTIVE PLAYGROUND – IN ACTION



The Leighton School adaptive playground is officially open and eager students, with and without physical disabilities, have been happily utilizing the new equipment. The process for the new playground has been 18 months in the making from inception to completion. In early November of 2023, a Leighton School teacher asked whether funds raised through the district's Aurora for Others annual fundraising campaingn could potentially be used to purchase play equipment for children with special needs. The vision of creating an inclusive and accessible play space for all students became a priority with the idea that it could be done. Within two weeks, a total of almost $20,000 was raised by all the school buildings participating in an exciting effort to give back.

As the process continued, it became clear that the initial $20,000 would not be nearly enough. There was a strong community business response for the playground, which included first investors/believers Liberty Ford. Community partnerships then continued with the Aurora Schools Foundation and The Portage Foundation who together generously donated $60,000 to the adaptive playground. The project was also supported by various groups including the Aurora Schools' PTO and Believe in Dreams.

Integral to the process was ACSD Intervention Specialist Alisa Deininger who worked tirelessly to keep this project relevant and moving forward while forging relationships and making pertinent decisions. According to teachers Jen Simmerman and Kasie Stewart, "The reason that the playground is going up is because of the drive of Alisa Deininger. She has been there from day one. She has been in every construction meeting. She reached out and got community buy-in from the city, PTO and the Aurora Schools Foundation. She set up the relationship with Believe in Dreams so we could get online donations. She helped make decisions about equipment and placement. She made the playground STAY relevant and in conversations. She held people accountable and worked tirelessly and invested time and commitment on a project that became bigger than anyone anticipated." "She is the behind-the-scenes driver. And I know there is so much she did that I don't even know, but what I am is grateful," added Simmerman.



Leighton School Principal, Michelle Nizen, stated, "There are so many people to thank for helping to make this amazing effort happen for our learners. Thank you so much for everyone's help and support and all of the community outreach efforts by Alisa and others!" She added, "I have to share the heartfelt sentiment of so much gratitude, pride, and overwhelming happiness for always keeping the lens on all of our learners and supporting accessibility for all students. It certainly takes a village and we have the best. Our Leighton staff and community is so grateful for the outpouring of support, kindness, generosity, and dedication to make these efforts a reality."

ASCD Special Services Director, Mike Maglionico, said, "Thank you to everyone for your efforts, donations, and dedication to make this accessible playground a reality!"

CLASS ACTS



Harmon School student, **OLIVIA DERECSKEY**, designed a unique and creative bookmark for the national **JUNIOR LIBRARY GUILD's** contest (with over 1,000 entries!) selection *Better Than The Movies*. Her entry impressed the judges so much that they awarded the school library a $250 backlist credit and are having her bookmark professionally printed on bookmarks for the entire school. Over the summer, the professionally produced bookmarks were delivered from the Junior Library Guild and were made available to students. Congratulations on a job well done!

Thank you to all of our CUSTODIAL STAFF and **HEAD CUSTODIANS - JIM SANATE** (Miller), **RON BURNS** (Craddock), **DAN FULLER** (Leighton), **JOHN EACOTT** (Harmon), and **HARRY HOLT** (AHS) for all of their hard work, leadership and careful attention to details in getting each of our district school buildings ready for the start of the 2024-25 school year. Despite being short handed at each of the buildings throughout the summer, the school buildings were sparkling and ready to welcome students on the first day of school.

The **AURORA SCHOOLS FOUNDATION** (ASF) is starting its **30th YEAR** of supporting the Aurora City School District. They have provided over $500,000 in grants during this time. Please consider supporting the ASF with your donation.

As a part of **SUICIDE PREVENTION WEEK**, September 8 -14, 2024, **AHS MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELOR, COLLEEN DWYER**, and the entire **MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS TEAM** worked to create various opportunities for both students and staff including partnering with **LIFEACT** to provide **SIGNS OF SUICIDE** training for Greenmen Nation as part of a safer and more inclusive school environment.

ACSD TREASURER'S DEPTARTMENT EARNS 12th EXEMPLARY AUDIT



The ACSD Treasurer's Department (left to right): Diane Ebie, Pam Prochaska, Heather Stask, Auditor Jennifer Drlik and Bill Volosin)

The Aurora City School District has earned yet another exemplary Ohio Auditor of State Award. This is the 12th year that the Aurora Schools' Treasurer's Department has earned this exemplary recognition. The ACSD Treasurer's Department consists of Treasurer, Bill Volosin; Payroll Manager, Diane Ebie; Treasury Secretary, Heather Stask and Accounts Manager, Pam Prochaska.

The award was given by Ohio Auditor of State, Keith Faber. The East Regional Liason, Jennifer Drlik, traveled to Aurora and hand delivered the award certificate to Volosin on June 6, 2024 at the Board of Education Office. Drlik remarked, "Not all districts get this award!" The certificate reads, "This 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 2023." It also states, "The citizens you represent are well-served by your effective and accountable financial practices."

Volosin explained, "We received another unmodified opinion, which is the best opinion 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." Volosin thanked his office and staff for this recognition saying, "This clean audit is a result of all of the hard work and effort of the three individuals in my office, Diane Ebie, Pam Prochaska and Heather Stask, 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."

Superintendent - *Continued from p.1*

Bond Issue

As you travel to the polls this November, you will see a bond issue from the Aurora City School District (ACSD) on the ballot. The 7.57 mill bond issue is for the proposed construction of a new high school to be built in the large field between the current high school and Harmon Middle School that will house grades 9-12, reprogramming and updating of the other school buildings in the district, and the closing of Craddock Elementary School. The goal of the bond issue is to address aging buildings and capacity concerns throughout the school district. Details of this project can be found in the Master Facilities Plan for the Bond Issue on the ACSD District's website (www.aurora-schools.org).

A 7.57 mill bond issue would generate approximately $136 million dollars and would cost the owner of a $100,000 house an extra $265 dollars a year. Approximately $17 million dollars from the bond issue will be used to renovate and reprogram Miller Elementary, Leighton Intermediate, Harmon Middle School, and the current high school. Financial details concerning the bond issue can be found in the **ACSD Bond Issue Update- Finances** located on our district website and our district Facebook page. However, one piece of financial information that is important to know is that as you examine your newest property evaluations from the Portage County Auditor's office, you should use your 2023 property values to calculate how much your taxes would change should the school bond issue pass in November 2024.

You will see that the 2024 tax year values will be significantly higher. However, under Ohio law, thanks to House Bill 920, the millage will adjust downwards. As a result, the bond issue will only raise the specific dollar amount approved by the voters. In short, the amount to be collected for the bond issue will be frozen once approved by the voters even if property values increase.

Community Info Nights

The district has scheduled multiple community informational nights concerning the bond issue that will contain factual and neutral information to help you understand the bond issue and provide a question-and-answer period after the short presentation. These informational nights will run from 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. and take place at the ACSD Conference Center located at 119 W. Pioneer Trail.

Tuesday, **September 24**, 2024
Wednesday, **October 2**, 2204
Thursday, **October 17**, 2024
Tuesday, **October 22**, 2024

This bond issue is a culmination of three years of planning and research completed by the school district. As stated earlier, the goal of the bond issue is to address aging buildings and capacity concerns throughout the Aurora City School District. For more information concerning the bond issue, please visit our district website at www.aurora-schools.org or stop in at one of the Bond Issue Community Information Nights mentioned.

Take care and Go Greenmen!

Mike

Bond Issue - *Continued from p.1*

moving these students, Craddock Elementary, which is over one hundred years old, would be able to be closed. Miller Elementary will be turned into a kindergarten only building once the Pre-School, currently located at Miller, moves over to the extra space in Leighton. Each of these moves allows the district to address current capacity concerns as highlighted by the recent procurement of trailers to house students for Miller and Leighton along with the need to reduce the Craddock Library by 50% of its size to create an extra classroom due to growth.

A 7.57 mil bond issue would generate approximately $136 million dollars and will cost the owner of a $100,000 house an extra $265 dollars a year. A breakdown of the taxes and tax comparisons to local communities can also be found in the Master Facilities Plan located on the ACSD District's website. Approximately $17 million dollars from the bond issue will be used to renovate and reprogram Miller Elementary, Leighton Intermediate, Harmon Middle School, and the current high school. Details of these renovations can also be found under the Master Facility Plan located on the ACSD Website. The district's plan does not include renovating Craddock Elementary. To comply with the Ohio School Design Manual, and the most recent state code regulations, renovations of Craddock School would require $20,890,124.60. The State of Ohio recommends completely replacing a school when its renovation costs exceed 66% of the cost of building a new school of the same size. Currently, Craddock Elementary is over 85% of this percentage.

For more information concerning the bond issue, please visit our district website at www.aurora-schools.org, stop in at one of the Bond Issue Community Information Nights listed above, or scan on the QR code at the right.

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