FEBRUARY

YOUR SCHOOLS

2025

Aurora City School District

From the Superintendent

By MIKE ROBERTO
Superintendent of Schools



We are well into the second half of the 2024-2025 school year which has been full of great opportunities for our students to get into the community and to invite members of the community into our schools. This is one of our goals and one of the best ways to nurture those important School/Community connections. Here are a few examples that have taken place during the first semester of the school year.

The first annual **Leighton Pancake Breakfast** hosted 300+ community members who enjoyed breakfast and student-led tours to Leighton's Nature Trail, Gardens, and Dock. **Craddock Staff** held a Veterans' Day Celebration on November 11th. Veterans from all branches of the military filled half the gym with the students occupying the other half. Veterans were then honored and entertained with a few songs from the kids. **Harmon's Student Council** collected 582 coats for their Coats for Kids drive benefiting families in Portage County. In Aurora High School, the **AHS Interact Club** held its Rake & Run event. Sixty students woke up on a Saturday to help over fifty senior citizen members of Aurora clear their yards of leaves. This is always a well-received service from the schools to the community. These connections were further nurtured through the newly formed **AHS Cybersecurity Advisory Council**. The council, composed of 16 individuals from local tech companies, universities, city representatives, and ACSD Staff, collaborates to support cybersecurity instructor **Nick Kukarola** design meaningful experiences in this class including various

Superintendent continued on p. 3

ACSD SUPERINTENDENT MIKE ROBERTO ANNOUNCES RETIREMENT



Aurora City School District (ACSD) Superintendent, Mike Roberto, has announced his retirement from the district. His retirement will be effective beginning August 1, 2025.

Roberto's educational background includes a Bachelor of Science, Masters, and Educational Specialist degrees from Kent State University where he also earned his three licensure degrees. Roberto's career began in 1992 as an eighth-grade physical science teacher at North Olmsted Middle School. After teaching at high schools in Hudson and Stow-Munroe Falls, he continued teaching biology and chemistry in the Aurora Schools from 1999-2007. He then left to work at Ravenna High School as a unit principal for one year from 2007-08. Roberto then returned to Aurora High School (AHS) as the assistant principal from 2008-11, AHS Principal from 2011-15, and moved on to Assistant Superintendent in 2015-20. Roberto took over the helm as the ACSD Superintendent in 2020.

Roberto explained, "This will complete my 25th year in Aurora and at the end of the semester, I will officially have over 34 years in education, qualifying me for full retirement. I am grateful for every one of them, but especially those I served in Greenmen Nation. I have been blessed with the opportunity to teach, coach, lead, and ultimately serve this wonderful school district. It has been my honor to work with the ACSD Staff and I wish nothing but the best for Greenmen Nation in the future."

Roberto's philosophy has been, "Schools should not be compared to a factory because the goal of a school is not to produce identical minimal standard products such as those that factories are designed to produce. Schools should also not be compared to businesses because schools are not in the "business" of educating students. Schools are not profit-seeking organizations with the ability to bring in more revenue if individual students learn more or if more individuals learn. A better metaphor for schools is to view them as a greenhouse. In a greenhouse, individual

Retirement continued on p.3

ACSD COMMUNITY BOND ISSUE 2024 SURVEY



The Aurora City School District is reaching out to our community to gather feedback concerning Issue #32, the ACSD 7.57 Mill Bond Issue which was not approved by the voters during the November 5, 2024 elections. The purpose of this survey is to understand individual perceptions and rationale for a resident's vote, to identify questions or concerns regarding the district's aging infrastructure and capacity challenges, and to explore potential solutions and future funding options.

Community member input is completely anonymous and a summary of responses will be posted on our website at aurora-schools.org. after the survey is completed. For additional questions, please email mroberto@aurora-schools.org.

ACSD Survey Link and QR Code:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe1cwMS837Vx3Ke417TZ0NklPwdrkE94PDNO5L8uQ470i7yMA/viewform?usp=dialog

SCAN ME

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

From the Superintendent..... 1
Mike Roberto Annouces Retirement..... 1
ACSD Community Bond Survey 1
Sobolewski 2024 OAGC Teacher of the Year... 2
ACSD ODEW State Report Card 2
ACSD ODEW Special Ed. Report Card 2
AHS Cybersecurity Ribbon Cutting 3
Kohanski Pavilion Dedication..... 3
Sport Report..... 4
AHS National Merit Students..... 4
Fulbright Scholars 5
US News Middle School Rankings 5
Leighton Inclusive Playground Ceremony 5
Kick-Off to Kindergarten 5
Class Acts 6
Who's Who & What's New..... 7
ACSD BOE Organizational Meeting 7
Veterans Day Celebrated..... 8
Spooktacular Fun 8

LAUREN SOBOLEWSKI EARNS 2024 OAGC TEACHER OF THE YEAR



Congratulations to Harmon School's Accelerated Math Teacher, Dr. Lauren Sobolewski, who has been with the ACSD for 26 years and has earned the honor of being named the Ohio Association for Gifted Children (OAGC) Teacher of the Year for 2024. This award recognizes individuals who have made a significant contribution to gifted education and exhibited outstanding work relative to educational leadership, educational support, gifted best practices implementation, professional development, and/or gifted service. She was officially nominated for this award by three current members and one previous member of the district, but informally had the support of many previous students and colleagues. Thank you to Aurora City School District Gifted Coordinator, Becky Quinn, for coordinating the nomination process. She was selected from across the state of Ohio and recently honored at the OAGC Conference on Monday, October 14, 2024 in Columbus, Ohio.

Through Dr. Sobolewski's time serving gifted students within Harmon Middle School, she has provided club opportunities of interest to gifted learners, including 24 Club, Math Club, and Stock Market Club. Her encouragement of a grading policy which allows only the transfer of HS credit, not a transcripted grade, helped to create a safe and productive environment for middle school students taking their first high school credit courses at the middle school level. She works to reinforce a Growth Mindset with our students and encourages them to try problems that may initially seem impossible.

ACSD Assistant Superintendent, Dr. Paul Milcetich spoke highly of Sobolewski saying, "Dr. Sobolewski is highly effective in her ability to prepare our highly gifted middle school students… She truly understands the value of academic success in tandem with social and emotional balance and wellness for our gifted learners. Dr. Sobolewski is committed to encouraging a collaborative learning environment within her math classes, which promotes critical thinking, innovation, and resiliency."



ACSD ODEW SPECIAL EDUCATION 2024 REPORT CARD



The Aurora City School District's has received the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce Special Education Report Card 2024 Award which shows that 28 out of 28 compliance indicators were met.

Congratulations to the entire special education team for their perfect report card recognition. Their dedication and tireless care for the district's special need students is nothing short of amazing!

ACSD EARNS PERFECT SCORE ON ODEW STATE REPORT CARD

Ohio School Report Cards

The Ohio Department of Education and Workforce (ODEW) released the 2024 State of Ohio Report Cards. Congratulations to the entire Aurora City School District (ACSD). The ACSD earned a perfect 5-Star rating from the ODEW. Aurora earned an elite 25 out of 25 rating and is 1of only 6 districts out of over 600 in the state to earn this prestigious honor for the past three consecutive years!

The ODEW explains that, "Ohio School Report Cards are required by law to provide parents, caregivers, community members, educators and policymakers information about district and school performance - to celebrate successes and identify areas for improvement. The information provides transparent reporting to drive local conversations on continuous improvement and identify schools that need intensive supports. The report cards establish high expectations for the education community while showing progress toward equitable outcomes for all Ohio students." The ODEW states that, "Districts and schools receive an overall rating of 1 to 5 stars in half-star increments. The overall rating is comprised of five rated components." These components are:

Achievement
Progress
Gap Closing
Graduation
Early Literacy
College Career, Workforce & Military Readiness

The ODEW explained, "The College, Career, Workforce and Military Readiness Component is report only and does not contribute to the overall rating on the 2024 Ohio School Report Cards." The 5-Star Overall Rating on the report card means a District, "Significantly exceeds state standards."

AHS Principal, Mike Hayes, said, "Congratulations to all of Greenmen Nation for dreaming, believing and living, learning and leading with heart! Being one of only six Districts out of over 600 in the state to earn a perfect State Report Card rating for three years in a row reflects an ongoing commitment to growth in and out of the Greenhouse!"

MARK OF EXCELLENCE NSPRA/Ohio

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.

AHS CYBERSECURITY PROGRAM RIBBON CUTTING CEREMONY

The Aurora City School District launched the new Aurora High School Cybersecurity Program to offer students who are interested in a career path in the growing cybersecurity field. This is one of only two cybersecurity programs in Northeast Ohio. 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.

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 ceremony included numerous ACSD staff, Aurora Board of Education members, Aurora Schools Foundation members, and business leaders, along with State of Ohio and City of Aurora officials. The event featured speakers including, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, Dr. Paul Milcetich, Bryan McDowell (Business Leader), Nick Kukarola (Cybersecurity Class Instructor), Kavya Balreddygari, (Student), and Keith Koehne and Mike Lynch (Paradigm Cyber Ventures). A large media presence was also there with News5 Cleveland, Fox 8 News, Channel 19 News and Community Focus (Spectrum Channel 1021) in attendance. The ceremony was featured on News5 Cleveland (https://www.news5cleveland.com/news/local-news/aurora-city-schools-launches-new-tech-course-teaching-students-cybersecurity-trades) and aired on September 20, 2024.



From Left to Right: Nick Kukarola, Kavya Balreddygari, Jennifer Glich, Elisa Katz, Pam Mehallis, Rachael Reight, Dr. Paul Milcetich, John Green, Mike Hayes

Superintendent - *Continued from p.1*

"challenges," guest speakers, and potential internships/shadowing. Lastly, it is important to recognize the entire Aurora Community who came together to help raise donations for the Leighton Interactive Playground which opened this past Fall. This playground allows students with disabilities to play with typical peers on the same equipment while at recess.

Renewal Levy

Speaking of continued support, the schools will be asking for the community's support this May in the form of a 5.61 Mill renewal operating levy. This levy will add NO NEW TAXES but will provide important funds that will allow the district to maintain the offerings and opportunities for young people attending the Aurora Schools. This levy was first put on the ballot and approved in 1990 and has been renewed six times (every five years) over the past 35 years. The last time this levy was renewed was in March 2020. It will cost the owner of a home less than when it was first approved because since 1990 more homes have been built in Aurora yet the same amount of funds are collected upon each renewal. However, it is important to remember that the community has provided funds for this levy for the last 35 years so it is NOT a new tax and therefore, if approved, will not increase your taxes.

Retirement - *Continued from p.1*

organisms are nurtured in an optimal environment with special attention given to specific needs. Some organisms need more water, some need more nutrients, and others need different temperatures, but none thrive in darkness. In a greenhouse, the organisms are nurtured with the goal for them to leave the greenhouse with strong roots which allow them to anchor into the new environment and contribute to the benefit of all outside of the greenhouse." He was instrumental in adopting his greenhouse analogy at AHS and throughout the district.

Roberto added, "Five years ago, we began implementing a strategic vision developed with input from our students, staff, and community. This vision keeps "learners" as the focus of what we do each day while nurturing learning environments that promote empathy, balance, collaboration, innovation, resilience, and critical thinking (our roots). I am appreciative of our staff for adopting and supporting this vision for the young people in the district as I truly believe these are the skills students will need to have as they leave Aurora as Aurora Learners who are Future Ready."

Best of luck goes to Roberto as he moves into retirement and wishing him a wonderful next chapter.

KOHANSKI PAVILION DEDICATION

The Aurora City School District (ACSD) Kohanski Pavilion, located next to the tennis courts between Aurora High School and Harmon Middle School, was formally dedicated on Tuesday, September 10, 2024. The pavilion was built and named in honor of Gerald Kohanski who was longtime ACSD Aurora Board of Education (BOE) President. Kohanski served the district on the Board of Education for over 25 years.

Aurora Alumni Association President Matt Shanholtzer gave the dedication speech in honor of Kohanski and thanked all those involved in the inception and construction of the new pavilion. Speakers also included Superintendent Mike Roberto who spoke of Kohanski's firm belief in always putting kids first as well as his mentorship to Roberto. Aurora School Board President, Pam Mehallis, also gave a personal speech about Kohanski's strong commitment to the children of the district, as well as, the BOE. Mehallis related several humorous BOE anecdotal stories that captured the personality and leadership of Kohanski along with his immense impact on the district's success.





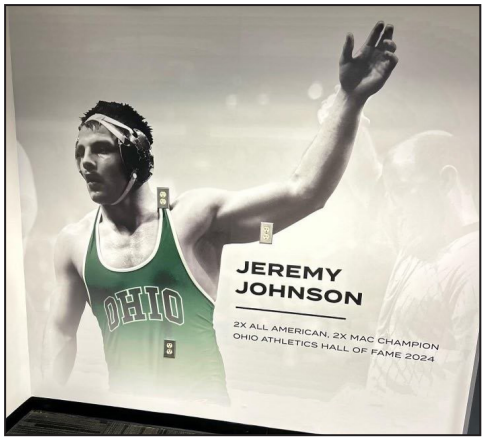


Roberto, said, "Thank you to the Aurora Alumni Association for taking the lead in honoring long time Board President Jerry Kohanski. We appreciate the support from all the donors that helped to honor Jerry's legacy to the Aurora Schools." Thank you to all who made the pavilion possible and all of the friends and family who came out to share in the dedication ceremony.



AHS Girls Tennis Members

SPORT REPORT



Congratulations **Coach Jeremy Johnson** on his induction into the **Ohio University Athletic Hall of Fame**! He was a two time All America, two-time MAC Champion and Ohio University Athletic Hall of Fame 2024.

Kamy Milano qualified for districts for her 3rd year in a row. She is the first singles player to qualify in over a decade from the **Aurora Girls Tennis Program**.

A big shout out goes to Aurora Alumni tight end **AJ Barner** who caught his first NFL touchdown reception for the Seattle Seahawks on September 29, 2024. Barner caught a 9-yard pass from quarterback Geno Smith during the **Monday Night Football Game** against the Detroit Lions.

Great job by the **Girls and Boys Cross Greenmen Country Teams** and **Coach Laura Bell** who qualified for the Regional Meet.

Way to go! Both the **Girls Soccer Team** (**Coach Domenica McClintock**) and the **Boys Soccer Team** (**Coach Ryan Conner** with assistance from **Jason Bibza**) were **Sectional Champions** and moved on to Districts.



Congratulations to AHS Senior **Cross Country** runner **Sydney Langell** for qualifying for State competition.

Congratulations to **Aurora Football Team** members **Mathew Copley**, **Ryan Dwyer**, **Ben Lukasik**, **Lucas Manderback** (**Defensive Player of the Year**) and **Tommy Tartabini** who earned all-state recognition on the **Ohio Prep Sports Media Association's** Division II and III teams. Way to represent Greenmen Nation!

Great job by the **AHS Cheerleading Squad** who competed in the **2024 Suburban League Cheer Competition** on November 4th. They brought home a **3rd place finish** behind Revere and Tallmadge.

Aurora **Athletic NCAA Signing Day** took place on November 13, 2024. Congratulations to **Hannah Hopwood**, (Soccer – Lake Erie College), **Sophia Petrash** (Softball – Clarion University), **Sophia Retton** (Softball - Findlay)



Hannah Hopwood
(Soccer – Lake Erie College)



Sophia Retton
(Softball – Findlay)



Sophia Petrash
(Softball – Clarion University)



AHS Football Team on Community Focus Set

Community Focus, **Spectrum Channel 2021**, recently released a feature, **The History of Aurora Football**, that was narrated by retired Aurora Schools' teacher **John Kudley**, The show relates the colorful history of Aurora Football, including the origin of the mascot. It can be viewed on the **Community Focus App** under Aurora-A Glimpse Back at Aurora's History-The History of Aurora Football.

NCAA Athletic Signing Day 2024 (December 3, 2024) featured **Conner Bower** (University of Montevallo) and **Gracyn Vidovic** (Ashland University). Congratulations and good luck in your future endeavors.

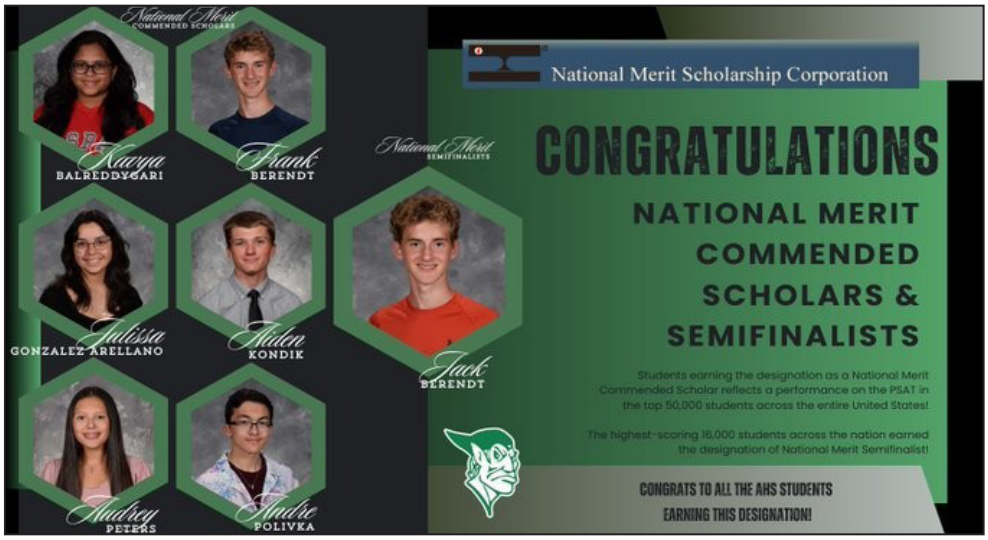


Conner Bower – Fishing – University of Montevallo – Alabama

Gracyn Vidovic – Golf – Ashland University - Ohio



AHS NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARSHIP COMMENDED & SEMIFINALISTS ANNOUNCED



The Aurora City School District would like to congratulate the Aurora High School (AHS) Class of 2024 National Merit Scholarship Program (NMSP) Semi-Finalist student, **Jack Berendt**. This honor is only given to the top 16,00 students nationally with the highest scores on the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT).

Congratulations also go to the AHS Class of 2024 National Merit Scholarship Program (NMSP) Commended students, **Karya Balreddygara**, **Frank Berendt**, **Julissa Gonzalez Arellano**, **Aiden Kondik**, **Audrey Peters** 0 **Andre Polivka**. National Merit Scholarship Commended students represent the 50,000 students who have earned the highest score.

FULBRIGHT SCHOLARS 2024

The Aurora City School District is hosting four Fulbright Scholars through the partnership with the Kent State University's professional development program for foreign educators. The Fulbright Teaching Excellence and Achievement Program is sponsored by the United States Department of State, funded by the U.S. government, and administered by IREX and Kent State.

The program description explains, "The Fulbright Teaching Excellence and Achievement Program brings international secondary-level educators to the United States for a six-week professional learning opportunity at a host university. Participants take part in academic seminars, observe and co-teach in U.S. classrooms, and collaborate on best educational practices with educators and students at the host university with educators and students at the host university and at local secondary schools. Participants engage in various civic and cultural activities in their host communities to promote mutual understanding."



Left to Right: Taif Alhayek, Kyi Kyi Khaing, Elvis Huanca Vicente, Ina Iurcu

This year the ACSD hosted four Fulbright Scholars who are assigned to AHS hosts for six weeks. This year's hosts include AHS instructors, **Lauren Brancazio**, **Kasie Stewart**, **Annie Walker**, and **Kate White**. The Fulbright Scholars were, **Taif Alhayek** (Jordan), **Ina Iurcu** (Moldova), **Kyi Kyi Khaing** (Myanmar) and **Elvis Huanca Vicente** (Bolivia).

LEIGHTON SCHOOL INCLUSIVE PLAYGROUND RIBBON CUTTING CEREMONY



Leighton Elementary School was proud to host their official Inclusive Playground Ribbon Cutting Ceremony on November 1, 2024. The ceremony celebrated playground donors and those who helped make this dream a reality for students. The playground has been open since October 2024 for students with and without disabilities to utilize.

The idea for and champion of the inclusive playground is ACSD Intervention Specialist Alisa Deininger. She worked tirelessly to keep this project relevant and moving forward while forging relationships and making pertinent decisions. Through her tireless work and dedication, the playground project was supported by numerous school district, community and business donors. Many donors and donor representatives, staff/students and community members braved the November cold and were on hand enjoy the ceremony and/or help cut the ribbon. The following is a list of Leighton School inclusive playground donors:

-Portage Foundation and the George L. and Genevieve D. Moore Trust
-City of Aurora
-Portage County of Developmental Disabilities
-Aurora for Others
-Aurora Schools Foundation
-The Church in Aurora
-Believe in Dreams
-Covia
-Liberty Ford
-BraunAbilities
-Mobility Works
-Carnegie Investment Counsel
-Greenman Cafe
-Auroroa PTO
-AHS student Counsel
-Spirit Wear
-Nelson Bernstein
-Developmental Disabilities Nurses Association
-Family and Friends

During the ceremony Deininger gave a speech and stated in part, "Thanks to everyone who believed in this vision and helped make it a reality, we are here today to celebrate a project that once felt impossible. Thank you for making a difference!"

U.S. NEWS LEIGHTON & HARMON 2025 SCHOOL RANKINGS



On November 14, 2024, U.S News & World Report released their 2025 Best Elementary and Middle School rankings. Congratulations to both Leighton Elementary School and Harmon Middle School's recently released U.S. News and World Report Best Elementary School Rankings. Leighton School was rated 264th out of 3,055 Ohio Elementary Schools which places it in the top 8.6% of elementary schools in Ohio. Harmon School was ranked 31st out of 2,451which places it in the top 1.3% of State of Ohio middle schools.

The rankings were determined by using data taken from the math and reading state tests which determine both proficiency and performance. "The 2025 Best Elementary and Middle Schools rankings offer parents a way to evaluate how schools are providing a high-quality education and preparing students for future success," said LaMont Jones, Ed.D., managing editor for Education at U.S. News.



KICK OFF TO KINDERGARTEN FOR 2025-2026 SCHOOL YEAR

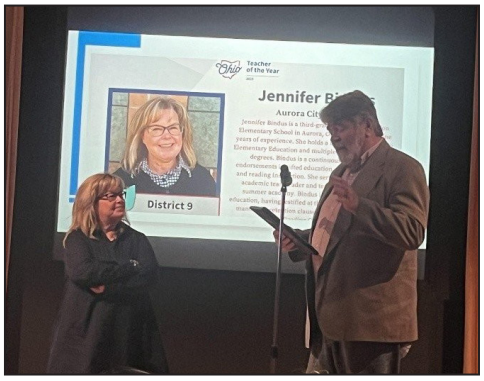
The Aurora City Schools' Kindergarten Registration for the 2025-2026 school year will begin in February 2025. Please help spread the word to neighbors and friends. The kickoff for the **Kickoff to Kindergarten** parent-only meeting is on Tuesday, February 18, 2025, at 6:30p.m. at the Aurora High School Auditorium located at 109 W. Pioneer Trail.

Residents of the Aurora City School District who have a child turning 5 by September 30th, 2025 are invited to attend the meeting to pick up registration materials and learn all about kindergarten. **Registration** days will be held on March 5th and 6th. Registration will utilize timeslots with links shared at the parent meetings. All presentations and registration information will be shared on our district website after February 18th if the parent meeting cannot be attended. Please don't hesitate to call Miller Elementary School with specific questions at 330-562-6199 or email Miller Principal, Maria Goodman, at mgoodman@aurora-schools.org

CLASS ACTS



AHS students **LUCIANA AVILA, ZELIE CERDA-MALICDEM**, **VERONICA DIAZ, JULISSA GONZALEZ ARELLANO, CORBIN KAINRAD** and **MARLI WITHAM** for their outstanding academic achievements and high performance on the PSAT/NMSQT, PSAT 10 and AP exams which lead to them being recognized by **THE COLLEGE BOARD'S NATIONAL RECOGNITION PROGRAM**. The program recognizes students from underrepresented groups including, African American, Hispanic, Indigenous, First-Generation College Student or students who attend rural/small town schools. Congratulations to all!



Leighton 3rd Grade Instructor, **JENNIFER BINDUS**, traveled to Columbus, OH to receive an accommodation from State Representative, **GAYLE PAVLIGA** , where she was recognized at the **OHIO TEACHER OF THE YEAR CEREMONY** for being named the **OHIO DISTRICT 9 TEACHER OF THE YEAR**. She toured the **OHIO STATEHOUSE** where she got to meet Ohio Governor, **MIKE DEWINE**.

AHS Art Instructor **ERIC HEAD** held an **ART 1 TOP DOG COMPETITION** in September and after staff votes were counted, **EMILY ALLEY** took 1st place while **ELLIE PHILLIPS** earned 2nd place and **TALLULAH MACKEY** was awarded 3rd place for their artwork. Great job!



October 2, 2024 was **NATIONAL CUSTODIAN APPRECIATION DAY**. Students and staff at Craddock Elementary School made signs and cards to show how grateful they are for all the custodians do on a daily basis to support students and staff without hesitation. A big "Thank You" goes out to each of our **CUSTODIANS** who are "shining stars" in our buildings each day!



Miller Custodians Anthony Wheeler and Jim Sanate

Harmon School's 8th Grade **HARMON BETA CLUB** members organized a **SOCKTOBER SOCK DRIVE** at the beginning of October. Students collected over 1,600 pairs of socks in all sizes. Socks were then donated to the **SUMMIT COUNTY CHILDREN'S SERVICES** and **FAMILY PROMISE OF SUMMIT COUNTY**. At the beginning of November, the Harmon School Student Council sponsored their annual **COAT DRIVE**. They collected 582 items that were given to the **PORTAGE COUNTY CLOTHING CENTER** to support those in need in Portage County.

Rotary Club of Aurora

Rotary Students of the Month

September 2024 - AHS – **JOSEPH GERDES, MADELEINE PARENTE**
October 2024 – Harmon – **KADE BOHANAN, CAMERON VANDYKE**
November 2024 – AHS – **HARRISON MULLIN, REAGAN STOCK**

The **AHS PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA** and Orchestra Instructor, **JASON BURDETT**, performed a special prelude concert before the **AKRON SYMPHONY CONCERT** on Saturday, November 16, 2024 in the **EJ THOMAS HALL LOBBY** in Akron.



On October 31, 2024, the **AHS ENGLISH DEPARTMENT**, led by **KATE WHITE**, facilitated a student poetry contest as a part of the **NORTHEAST OHIO REGIONAL "POETRY OUT LOUD"** competition. AHS senior **DALLAS KOHL** moved on to competition at the Massillon Museum and proceeded to again move on to the **STATE FINAL COMPETITION** in Columbus on February 7, 2025.

The **PORTAGE COUNTY RETIRED TEACHERS** (PCRTA) member, **JIM MONTAQUILA**, presented Aurora instructors, **GRETCHEN JESSEL** and **ASHLEY VERHOLTZ**, with grant awards at the BOE meeting that took place on November 25, 2024. Jessel won a grant for exceptional students – adapting, while Verholtz earned a grant for a Tonibox for her classroom. Thank you to the PCRTA for supplying these $500 grants for worthwhile causes in our Aurora classrooms.



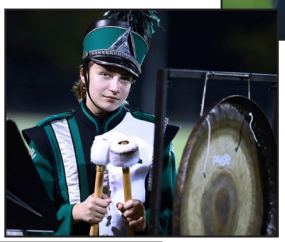
Left to Right: Ashley Verholtz, Gretchen Jessel, Jim Monatquila

THUNDER OVER AURORA 2024

The annual Aurora High School "Thunder Over Aurora" Marching Band Spectacular took place on Saturday, September 21, 2024 at Veterans Memorial Stadium. Participating local bands that joined the AHS Marching Band included: **BEDFORD HIGH SCHOOL, GIRARD HIGH SCHOOL, JAMES A GARFIELD, NEWTON FALLS, NOTRE DAME CATHEDRAL LATIN**, and **WICKLIFFE HIGH SCHOOL**. Thank you to AHS Marching Band Directors **EDDIE NABRING** and **MASON SMITH** and for showcasing student talent not only for Aurora community members to enjoy, but for local area communities to enjoy as well.





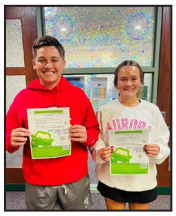






WHO'S WHO & WHAT'S NEW

The first annual **Leighton Pancake Breakfast** was established by **Keri Sweeney** and hosted 300+ community members who enjoyed breakfast and student-led tours to Leighton's nature trail, gardens, and dock. Sweeney collaborated with ACSD Director of Food and Nutrition (**Nutrition Group**) **Krista Guierini**. The Leighton Leaders collected over $2,000 at the event which will support Leighton outdoor learning places.



Congratulations to AHS juniors **Scotty Hauptner** and **Addy Bates**. They won the **Harmon/High PTO VIP Parking Pass Raffle** for this school year.

This year's **Cruisin' Craddock** fundraising event was held at the end of September Thank you to all who helped plan the event and to all of the students and families who participated and made this event so much fun and successful at the same time.

The **ACSD Transportation Department** held driver training during teacher in service which included reviewing rules and regulations and discussing student management with N.E. Preservice Instructor, **Lori Fange**. Safety training with the **City of Aurora Fire Department** also included reviewing the proper us of a fire extinguishers and road flares in case a bus breaks down. **Assistant Transportation Supervisor**, **Christine Wingler**, coordinated the training.

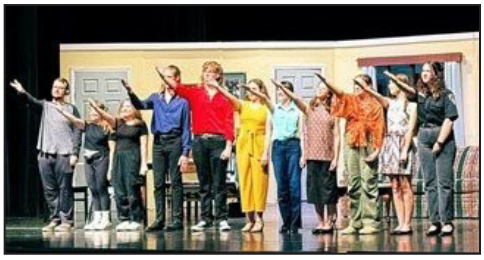
The **10th Annual Celebrate Portage Awards**, which recognizes business development, art and cultural events, student and volunteer-led community service efforts and unsung community heroes took place on September 26, 2024. Congratulations the **AHS Rotary Club** and **AHS Interact Club Advisor**, **Melissa Foster**, and her senior students for winning the **Community Service Award** for their **Rake and Run** program. Approximately 300 leaders and philanthropists held the gala dinner celebration at NEOMED to acknowledge the great things happening in Portage County.







The **AHS Fall Play** – **The Odd Couple**, with two female and two male performances, ran from November 14-17, 2024.



AHS Fall Play 2024 – The Odd Couple

Harmon School Instructor, **Karen Sunderhaft**, was recently awarded with the **Enspire Founders Award for Youth Entrepreneurship Education for 2024** at their Enspire Conference. Her "**Hello Jello!**" project, which involved making and selling Jello, along with other projects, are examples of the amazing job she has done to inspire our future entrepreneurs.



The **AHS Government Class** and **Instructor Mike Rubin**, had their **presidential debate** on October 29, 2024. The debate, which is held every fourth year to coincide with the U.S. Presidential election, was officially declared the **Jerry Kohanski Student Presidential Debate**. It was named in honor of long-time **Aurora School Board President Gerald Kohanski**.

Congratulations to 2024 Aurora Alumni Association Hall of Fame Honorees **Ryan Searles** & **Mike Mattmuller**.



Craddock School has a new painted map of the United States on the playground thanks to the **Rotary Club of America** with help from the **Rotary Club of Chagrin Falls**. **AHS Interact Club** student members and Aurora Rotarians **Eric Steinel** and **Vic Baerman**, created the map on October 12, 2024.

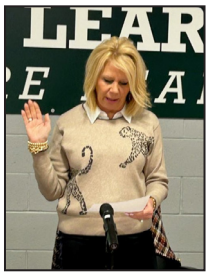
Congratulations to the **2024 Oscar Award recipients** from our PK-3 school buildings. The **Ohio School Counselor Accountability Report (OSCAR)** winners, **Lindsey Ambrosia**, **Claudia Schnur** and **Tami Mazzella** traveled to Columbus, Ohio to accept the OSCAR Award from the **Ohio School Counselor Association** on October 29, 2024. The award utilizes the use of data in our programs to demonstrate the effectiveness for students, parents and staff within each school building.



Left to Right: Tami Mazella, Lindsey Ambrosia, Claudia Schnur

ACSD BOARD OF EDUCATION ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

The Aurora Board of Education (BOE) held the annual BOE Organizational Meeting on Tuesday, January 7, 2025. Aurora BOE 2024 President, Pam Mehallis, was voted in as president by the BOE members and was sworn in as president for 2025. Aurora BOE 2024 Vice-President, Stephen Sabulsky, was voted in as the 2025 BOE Vice-President and took his oath during the meeting.



Pam Mehallis being sworn in as Aurora BOE President 2025



ACSD Treasurer William Volosin (left) shakes hands with BOE 2025 Vice-President Stephen Sabulsky after taking his oath

The State of Ohio Governor and Lieutenant Governor have issued a proclamation recognizing January 2025 as School Board Appreciation Month. The proclamation honors school board members for their important role and for the dedication, commitment and vision in shaping the future of the schools and students.



Thank you to all of Aurora's hard working and dedicated 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. Even though their efforts are celebrated during the month of January, their contribution is a year-long commitment. They continue to make sure our "Kids Come First."

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VETERANS DAY 2024 CELEBRATED







Veterans Day 2024 was celebrated throughout the ACSD. Craddock School held a celebration on November 10, 2024 that featured an assembly to learn more about Veterans Day and the special people who are honored. The celebration was attended by area veterans and special guests related to students. Veterans from all branches of the military filled half the gym with the students occupying the other half. Veterans were then honored and entertained with a few songs from the students.





The Aurora High School's Service Learning Class (supported by Melissa Foster and Mike Rubin) organized a Veterans Day Dinner, along with sponsorship by the Aurora School Foundation, to recognize area veterans in honor of Veterans Day 2024. The celebration and dinner were held on the evening of December 10, 2024 at AHS followed by a holiday orchestra/choir concert in the AHS auditorium. Guests enjoyed a catered dinner, camaraderie, and guest speaker David Kuhary from the Aurora VFW before being treated to the festive musical concerts. Thank you to all of our veterans who are currently serving or have served in the military.





SPOOKTACULAR FUN!



The AHS National Honor Society hosted a Trunk or Treat event to celebrate fall for elementary school students on Tuesday, October 29, 2024 from 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. NHS students dressed in costumes and decorated their vehicle trunks to welcome guests as they walked through the Trunk or Treat experience, including a renovated/decorated Ghoul Bus, located in the Aurora High School parking lot. A ghoulishly fun time with treats to share was had by all.





