Summer 2025

OLDHAM COUNTY SCHOOLS

OUR Schools — OUR Stories

CONNECTING OUR COMMUNITY



SPOTLIGHT ON SUCCESS:

celebrating the

CLASS OF 2025

OUR SCHOOLS, OUR STORIES:
connecting our community



As I reflect on the past four years serving as superintendent of Oldham County Schools, I am filled with pride and gratitude for the collective progress we have made as a district. Together—with our Board of Education, dedicated staff, engaged families, and supportive community—we have built a strong foundation for continued growth and excellence. Our shared commitment to ensuring that every student is known, valued, loved, and supported has guided every decision and initiative during my tenure.

Strategic planning is the cornerstone of continuous improvement in Oldham County Schools, guiding the district from present accomplishments to future goals with a focus on preparing every student for college, career, and life. Approved by our Board in 2023, our strategic plan is something I am very proud to have facilitated here in Oldham County. Informed by extensive input from students, families, staff, and the broader community, the plan reflects shared values and clearly defines what student success looks like. The Board of Education oversees implementation to ensure alignment with policy and resource allocation, while regular progress updates maintain transparency and accountability. Designed to guide the district through 2028, the OCS Strategic Plan represents a unified commitment to educational excellence and a thriving environment where students succeed and staff grow, serve, and lead.

We continue to innovate and adapt to meet the diverse needs of our learners. Liberty Academy, our online school, continues to grow. We have prioritized igniting students' passions and guiding them toward future pathways. This year, we expanded our focus to the middle school level, encouraging students to explore their interests and think critically about their future careers. Through personalized learning experiences and hands-on projects, students are discovering their strengths and aspirations earlier than ever. Additionally, we have implemented new programs that enhance engagement and foster a love for learning, ensuring that each student feels empowered to pursue their goals.

We've also worked hard to strengthen our support for staff with meaningful steps to recruit and retain top-tier talent. Teacher and staff salaries have now increased 17% or more over the past four years, along with enhanced benefits for personal days, sick leave, and vacation. We were one of the first school districts in the state of Kentucky to offer paid leave for new parents. We removed tuition costs for children of full-time employees living outside of Oldham County, making our district even more attractive for prospective staff. These are just a few of the initiatives that reflect our commitment to making Oldham County Schools a destination district for the very best educators and support staff.

The new building on the Oldham County High School campus is set to elevate our district's facilities significantly. This state-of-the-art structure will not only house Buckner High School and Little Colonels Daycare, it will feature a modern spectator gymnasium, providing our students and community with a premier venue for athletic events and gatherings. Renovations and additions at South Oldham High School aim to create dynamic learning environments tailored to the needs of our students. Together, these facilities will not only enhance student experiences but also strengthen community ties, making Oldham County Schools a hub of collaboration and growth.

As I look back on these four years, I am filled with gratitude for our staff's dedication, our community's support, and the resilience and brilliance of our students. We've accomplished so much, but there's more work ahead. With continued collaboration, we can further elevate the experience for all, making Oldham County Schools not only a place of learning, but a place of inspiration, innovation, and excellence.

Thank you for allowing me to serve. It has been the honor of a lifetime.

Dr. Jason Radford, Superintendent

The Oldham County Board of Education



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Vice Chair
DISTRICT 1:
Buckner, Goshen, Harmony, NOMS, NOHS



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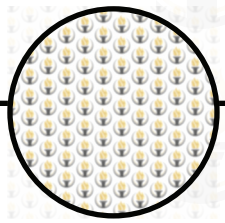
DISTRICT 2:
Camden Station, Crestwood, Kenwood Station, EOMS, SOMS, SOHS



ADAM SPRINGER
DISTRICT 3:
Centerfield, Crestwood, Locust Grove, EOMS, OCMS, OCHS, SOHS



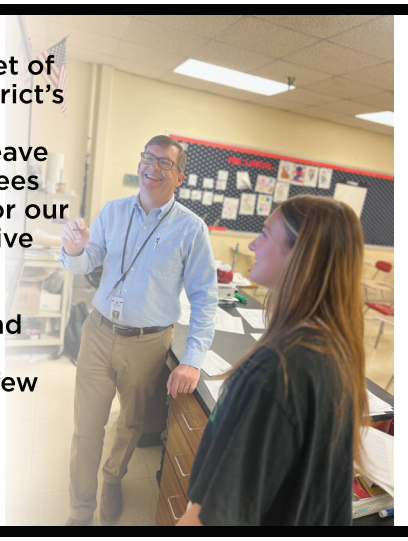
VACANT
DISTRICT 4:
Buckner, La Grange, Locust Grove, EOMS, NOMS, OCMS, NOHS, OCHS



CARLY CLEM
Board Chair
DISTRICT 5:
Buckner, Camden Station, Centerfield, Goshen, Harmony, Kenwood Station, EOMS, NOMS, OCMS, SOMS, NOHS, OCHS, SOHS

ELEVATING THE *Employee Experience*

This spring, the Oldham County Board of Education approved a comprehensive set of initiatives aimed at enhancing staff recruitment and retention, reinforcing the district's commitment to both its employees and students. Over the past several years, our district and Board have worked to implement significant measures such as paid leave for new and adoptive parents and free tuition for the children of full-time employees who reside outside Oldham County. These efforts have laid a strong foundation for our ongoing commitment to supporting our staff and creating a positive and supportive work environment.



These new measures are the result of collaboration between district leadership and dedicated workgroups, all striving to develop the best possible package for employees while maintaining strong fiscal responsibility. The following are just a few of the approved actions for the 2025/26 school year.



COMPENSATION *Enhancements*

- A 5% salary increase for all salaried employees (bringing salary increases to 17% or more over the past four years).
- A $2.00/hour increase for all hourly employees.
- Extension of all salary schedules (certified and classified) to 33 years.
- Adjustment of the teacher certified salary schedule, shifting the current structure forward by four years to better align experience levels with compensation.
- A $250 increase to all club and extracurricular stipends.
- Staff in designated hard-to-fill special needs classrooms (Functional Academic, Communication and Behavior, Positive Behavior Support and IECE Preschool teachers and assistants) will receive stipends of $7,000 (certified staff) and $3,500 (classified staff).
- New competitive salary schedule for school nurses.
- Bus monitors' hourly contracts will increase from 4 hours per day to 6 hours per day.

STAFFING & WORK ENVIRONMENT *Improvements*

- Ensuring time for professional development and planning with the existing Staff Work Day structure.
- Addition of one staff member at each middle school to support a new "Passion to Pathway" course, along with new instructional materials.
- Expansion of Gateway staffing to better meet student needs.

DIRECT INVESTMENTS IN *Schools and Students*

- Each K-12 school will receive $100 per student in restricted funds to support student technology needs first, then staff needs.
- Schools will receive $100 per student identified for free/reduced lunch to provide resources that reduce barriers to learning, such as intervention programs, instructional materials, and stipends for extra instructional time.
- A $40 per student reduction in school fees for parents for the 2025/2026 school year, fully funded by the Board of Education.

TASSELS TURNED *Futures Earned*



As the Class of 2025 turns their tassels and steps into the future, Maritza Lara (OCHS), James Tharpe (NOHS), and Andrea Priddy (SOHS) reflect on their years in Oldham County Schools.

Q: What are your plans after graduation?

Maritza: I will be attending the University of Notre Dame, majoring in Neuroscience and Behavior, on the Pre-med track. As a first generation college student, I'm really excited.

James: I will be working at Porsche as a full-time technician where I'll work on cars, diagnose problems and fix them. For the first year I'll be learning and shadowing, and then I'll work on getting certifications.

Andrea: I'm going to NC State and I'm going to major in Mechanical Engineering with a minor in Aerospace Engineering. I'm really excited about meeting new people. I can't wait!

Q: What is your best memory from your time in Oldham County Schools?

Andrea: I've been on the track team all of high school. My favorite memory is when my 4 x 2 sprint broke the school record at the KHSAA State Championship my sophomore year. It was so cool being able to run at State and even cooler breaking the school record.

Maritza: There are so many! Being part of the Biomed program at Arvin. The absolute highlight was doing the UL Hospital internship. I got to watch a surgery where they removed a brain clot, it was amazing! I saw actual brain matter up close, and that moment just locked it in for me: I knew I wanted to go into medicine, especially neurology.

James: Going to Stangapalooza when I was a freshman. Stangapalooza is when the seniors and juniors can put their cars on display. They park them over by the football field and students get to walk around and check them out. Being a car guy, I thought that was really cool.

Q: How would you describe the education you received in Oldham County Schools?





James: I think it was pretty good, honestly. My parents heard this district was one of the best around, so that's why they decided to send me here. I started off at a private school and they switched me here in second grade. The teachers are nice, and it's been a good experience overall. North High is a bigger school, but not too big, you know? Like, it feels like the perfect size - right in the middle. I've gotten pretty close with my school friends too. I'm glad I came here.

Maritza: I've always appreciated how challenging the classes are here. Taking college-level courses in high school gave me a real taste of what college will be like. When I visited a college and sat in on a class I'd already taken as AP, I already knew it. And I knew I was ready for college.
Outside of class, I've met people, gone to conferences, and competed in events that match my interests. It was nice to have things outside of class.

Andrea: I think my education has been very good. I was in GATES in elementary school, so I got to work on individual projects that interested me. The past two years I've done a lot more studying, mainly because I am taking more AP classes. I wasn't doing well at first so I had to change my study habits and learn how to study better. This should help me be ready for studying in college.

Q: How has OCS prepared you for what you want to do next?

Andrea: I feel really prepared thanks to lots of AP classes, pathways like engineering and welding, and also social opportunities. School taught the importance of comradery through things like class wars, powder puff, Greek games. We have lots of collaborative meetings with classmates, study groups, and talks with teachers. I think this will help me feel comfortable to ask questions of my college professors.





Maritza: I didn't speak English when I first started elementary school. So, from learning English to being in leadership roles, interning at UL Hospital, and attending different classes, every experience has helped me get ready for college.

James: I think the schools really prepared me for the future. I mean, I've learned a ton, but it's not just school stuff. There's been a lot of chances to grow as a person, not just a student. They do a good job coaching you in life skills too. And I feel like I've had the space to figure out who I am a bit more. Arvin and North gave me confidence and the ability to talk to older generations and learn how they do things, and just how to act around others.

Q: What is one piece of advice you would give to students just starting their education?

Andrea: Don't wish for it to go faster. It goes so fast. So, so fast. Make friends. Talk to people and be yourself. You will find people who are like you.

Maritza: Always listen to yourself. Try new things. Meet new people. Take the class that none of your friends are taking. Join the club. Don't be afraid to take your own path.

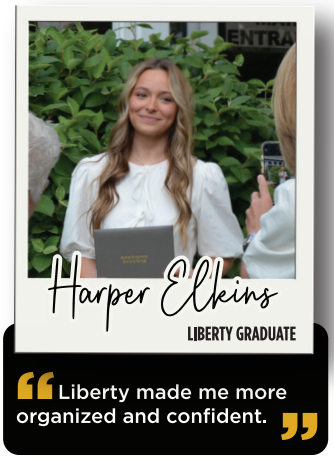
James: Have fun. Always try your best but don't take things so seriously that you forget to have fun. Good grades are nice but they aren't the most important thing. You don't have to get all "A's" or even all "A's" and "B's" to succeed in life. Find balance. You'll make mistakes sometimes but that's okay, that's part of being a kid.

Spotlight on Harper Elkins, Liberty Graduate

Oldham County Schools celebrates the first graduating class of Liberty Academy, our online school for 6th-12th grade students in Oldham County. These graduates have shown remarkable flexibility and focus in completing their academic studies and we celebrate their accomplishments. Here is the story of one such graduate, Harper Elkins.

Harper's story is one of self-discipline, determination, and the power of a flexible learning environment. She chose Liberty Academy for the freedom it offered her.

"I chose Liberty because it gave me the opportunity to be able to work full-time and do my school work on my own time," she explained. "It worked really well for me. I even finished my classes early! The program was great because I really learned how to push myself, work independently, and believe in myself to get my work done."



"Liberty made me more organized and confident."

Her daily schedule was anything but ordinary. Harper was working full-time day shifts, after starting her mornings with church school at 7 a.m. Only after getting home around 4 p.m. did she begin her schoolwork - often studying for five to seven hours into the evening. Despite the long days, she appreciated the flexibility that it allowed her to take breaks and manage her own time.

Now a proud graduate, Harper is preparing for her next chapter: attending Utah Tech University in St. George, Utah. She plans to study radiology and eventually enter the university's sonography program. Her goal is to work in hospitals performing ultrasounds.

Harper's time in Liberty Academy exemplifies the success that comes from self-motivation and finding the right learning environment. We look forward to seeing all that she achieves in the future.

Spotlight on Bryan Hernandez Sanchez, BHS Graduate

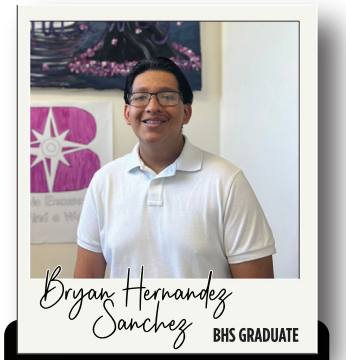
For Bryan Hernandez Sanchez, Buckner High School was more than just a place to finish his education — it was where everything changed. A first-generation U.S. citizen whose parents emigrated from Mexico, Bryan faced deep personal challenges, including the loss of his father at age 13. Yet despite the obstacles, he graduated early, driven by a powerful motivation: "My goal in life is to be able to support my mom and take care of her when she is older."

Bryan transferred to Buckner for his junior and senior years and found the structure, encouragement, and connection he had been missing. "Being at Buckner changed my whole perspective on high school," he said. "Before I came here, I wouldn't be at school at all. As soon as I changed over to Buckner, I got perfect attendance and perfect grades."

He credits the dedicated staff — especially Ms. Carter, Mr. Brown, and math teacher Ms. Esterle — for helping him find his path. "I told Ms. Esterle I hated math. I am horrible at it, I cannot do anything good with it. She told me, 'You don't hate math, you just don't understand it yet.'" That simple shift in perspective unlocked something for Bryan, and math eventually became one of his strongest subjects.

Now working two jobs, Bryan is saving for trade school, with plans to earn certifications in both plumbing and welding. He knows the value of support and encouragement, and says Buckner made all the difference: "This is a place that receives you with open arms and you really feel the care."

As he works toward his next goals, one thing is certain: his family—and especially his mother — has a lot to be proud of.



"The staff at Buckner supported me to finish school and achieve my goals the way I wanted to."

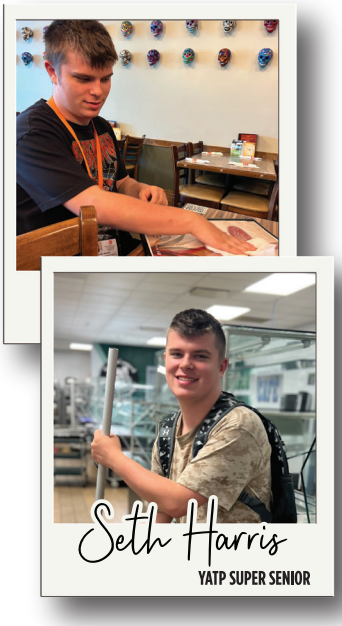
YATP SUPER SENIOR *Spotlight*

The Young Adult Transition Program (YATP) is a program that is available for students who have completed alternate assessment requirements at their local high school. Students of the YATP have opportunities to work toward their functional academic, vocational, daily living, recreation/leisure, social and self-care goals in both the classroom and community settings. Student goals are person-centered; with a focus related to transitioning to adult life.

This year's only "Super Senior," Seth Harris, is an enthusiastic and active participant in YATP. His days are filled with a wide variety of meaningful activities—both in the classroom and out in the community. From cleaning windows and folding laundry to delivering Meals on Wheels and helping out in the school cafeteria, Seth is gaining valuable job skills and independence. "But my favorite is karaoke day," he shared with a smile.

Seth especially enjoys the fun and engaging atmosphere created by his teachers. "I love my teachers—Ms. Morgan, Ms. Cindie, Ms. Maria, and Ms. Susan. They teach me how to dance, exercise, and they all dance too," he said. Whether he's visiting places like Yew Dell Botanical Gardens, reviewing movies like Jimmy Neutron, or singing Johnny Cash's "Ring of Fire" on karaoke day, Seth embraces every opportunity. "I always have a great day. They make it fun," he added. Looking ahead, Seth is excited about continuing to build his life skills at the Carl Perkins Center in Louisville and making new friends along the way.

YATP is committed to providing our students with a variety of volunteer worksite options, to build their skill set and resume. Thank you to our many community partners for making this possible.



PASSION ON WHEELS: *A New Chapter in Design Thinking*



East Oldham Middle School has taken a bold step forward by replacing their traditional cars unit with an innovative and academically challenging experience: the Patriot Pinewood Derby.

This reimagined unit transformed the classic car project into a Design Thinking challenge for the entire 6th grade. Students engaged in the complete design process, from research and ideation to testing and revision, as they set out to create the fastest Pinewood Derby car ever made! Utilizing a variety of tools, they shaped their cars to reflect their unique visions. Each student also had the opportunity to enhance their designs with vinyl graphics, 3D printed elements, and other creative accessories.

"At first we didn't like that we weren't doing the Soapbox Derby cars but then we all ended up really liking it because everyone got a car," said student Ethan Anderson.

"My friends and I thought it was really fun to start a new tradition," said student Jayden Griffin. "I got to use tools I'd never used before which was challenging but fun."

Competing as individuals and as part of five-member teams, EOMS students aimed to achieve what no Patriot has accomplished before: being crowned the Patriot Pinewood Derby Champion!

In addition to their engineering efforts, each student crafted a backstory for their car, design, and/or driver, incorporating literary elements along with PR and marketing strategies for their brand. Ultimately, this engaging project allowed every student to showcase their creativity and skill, all while leaving their mark in the EOMS history books!



"Being able to create the car and work on it individually was really great," said EOMS student Zoey Houston. "I really liked that we all got to do it instead of in groups where sometimes only one person really gets to do things."

BITE-SIZED REVIEWS:

KENWOOD STATION STUDENTS WITH THE *Lunchroom Lowdown*



Norah McCollum
3RD GRADER

My favorite meal at breakfast is the whole grain donuts. Donuts are my favorite at breakfast because I like how the glazing goes with the rest of the donut. If you don't like chocolate, you can get a different flavor, like vanilla or glazed. Sometimes, the breakfast has special donuts, like pink or green donuts. You have to get fruit. My favorite fruit at breakfast is the pears. You can get milk at the end. The flavors are chocolate, vanilla, and strawberry.

Chicken nuggets are my favorite meal at lunch because they are so tasty. At lunch, you have to get a fruit or a veggie. My favorite fruit at lunch is apples. I like apples at lunch because they are crunchy. Also, you can get chips, ice cream, or a water bottle. I hope you enjoyed reading my cafeteria review.



Maddox Hataway
4TH GRADER

The lunch at Kenwood Station is really good! Even if you're a picky eater like me, you'll probably find something you enjoy on the menu. There's always something tasty to eat each day. My favorites are the golden chicken nuggets and Big Daddy's Pizza.

The lunch ladies are super sweet, and they always make sure we have fruits and vegetables with our meals. Fourth grader Louisa Bravo agrees:

"The lunch is really good, and I can tell other people think so too because every time I get in line, there are so many people. The lunch ladies are really sweet."



Anthony Cline
5TH GRADER

I'm new to Kenwood Station this year. Even though I'm still getting used to a lot of things at a new school, one thing I haven't had to worry about is lunch. I've never felt the need to pack my own lunch — not even once! Every day, there's always something good on the menu, and I know I can count on Kenwood Station to serve something I like. The food is tasty, and it helps make my school day even better.



FREE SUMMER MEALS

La Grange Elementary School
Monday - Friday, until August 1 (closed July 4)

Breakfast – 8:00 a.m.
Lunch – 11:30 a.m.

Kids – Free!
Adults – $2.90 breakfast / $4.85 lunch

Open to all children and teens 18 and under and up to 21 years of age with a disability. Must reside in Oldham County. Our Summer Meals program is funded by the USDA. Due to federal regulations, all meals must be consumed on-site. To view our menus, visit Mealviewer.com under La Grange Elementary.

Exciting Changes Coming to
SOUTH OLDHAM & OLDHAM COUNTY HIGH SCHOOLS

Big things are on the horizon for South Oldham High School as the campus prepares for a major addition and renovation project. With enrollment climbing and the building bursting at the seams, this expansion will increase the school's capacity by 500 students and bring state-of-the-art upgrades to every corner of the building.

Highlights of the new addition include a modern classroom wing, a much anticipated new auditorium, and an enhanced fine arts wing. Students and staff can also look forward to a brand-new kitchen and cafeteria, designed to better serve the growing student body. A two-story media center will offer expanded space for learning, research, and collaboration.

But the improvements don't stop there. As part of this project, South Oldham High School will undergo a full interior renovation. Every classroom, the gymnasium, and all shared spaces will be updated, ensuring that every student benefits from a refreshed and modern learning environment.







Meanwhile, at Oldham County High School, a new facility is already taking shape. This new facility will house Buckner High School as well as a large-capacity gymnasium that will seat approximately 3,700 spectators. This new building will also house Little Colonels Daycare, bringing multiple programs under one roof in a modern space designed to support both learning and community engagement.

Once construction is underway on the new gym, the next phase will be a significant renovation of the core OCHS building, bringing long-overdue upgrades to classrooms and common areas.
These exciting projects reflect a bold investment in the future of Oldham County students, ensuring our schools are equipped to support growth, innovation, and excellence for years to come.



Visit www.oldham.kyschools.us/departments/facilities for more renderings and information on these projects.

OLDHAM COUNTY SCHOOLS
Ignite Passion. Experience Excellence.
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COUNTY RESIDENT

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