

THE Newark CITY SCHOOLS



PAWPRINT

FALL 2025

A Message from the Superintendent



We have had a great start to the 2025-2026 school year! I'm proud of how our students and staff have started strong, and I appreciate our families' partnership as we settle into new routines. Our shift to no cell phones during the school day has also gone smoothly, resulting in fewer distractions and more focus on learning.

Speaking of distractions, based on recent events, I want to touch on school safety. The safety of our students and staff remains our top priority. We take every situation seriously and work closely with the Newark Police Department to resolve issues quickly. When incidents occur, we will communicate as soon as possible. Thank you for your patience and for not rushing to our buildings so we can keep entrances clear and students secure. We are always striving to benchmark against other school systems and explore new technologies to strengthen campus security, and that work is continuing this year.

Inside this issue of the Paw Print, you'll see how we're building opportunity for every learner:

- Freshman Academy is making the transition to high school easier.
- More schools are joining the House System to boost culture, relationships and team spirit.
- Our students are showing up and showing out in athletics and performing arts.

Thank you for your trust and support as we remain A Community of Opportunity and Learning.

David Lewis
Superintendent

A Note from the Treasurer

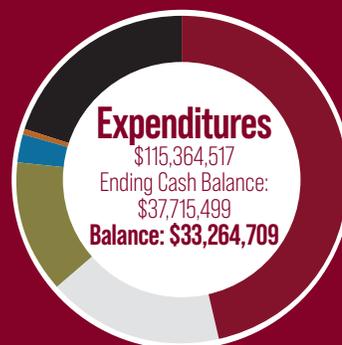


Newark City Schools is in a solid financial position despite uncertainties presented by the state budget bill passed earlier this year.

We are primarily funded by the state and local taxpayers, and spend more than 65% of our revenue directly on student instruction.



- Real Estate Taxes \$27,838,014
- Personal Property Taxes \$4,008,532
- Income Taxes \$13,985,609
- State Foundation \$43,737,197
- Property Tax Allocation \$3,607,316
- Other Operating \$4,186,377
- Other Non-Operating \$1,591,787



- Salaries and Wages \$53,707,446
- Fringe Benefits \$19,838,554
- Purchased Services \$15,196,757
- Materials and Supplies \$2,954,047
- Other Expenditures \$777,346
- Other Non-Operating \$22,890,367

State Report Card is in

Each year, the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce issues School Report Cards, designed to show staff, families, taxpayers and legislators how we are preparing our students for the future. These scores do not define us, however, they give us the opportunity to identify areas where improvement is needed as well as celebrate growth.

Report cards are based on the following categories — Achievement, Progress, Gap Closing, Graduation, Early Literacy, and College, Career, Workforce, and Military Readiness — and are rated on a 1-5 star scale, with one meaning needs support, and five meaning significantly exceeds state standards.

Several of our schools had significant achievements this year.

Congratulations to the following:

Newark High School

Achievement:



Liberty Middle School

Overall:



Progress:



Ben Franklin Elementary

Overall:



Progress:



Hillview Elementary

Overall:



Progress:



Gap Closing:



Legend Elementary

Overall:



Gap Closing:



Early Literacy:



From new curriculum to reimagined building and district leadership teams, to innovative programs such as WIN Time and an improved workforce development program, we continue to see forward progress across our district. Full state report card information is available at reportcard.education.ohio.gov.

What's New in Newark Schools

Freshman Academy Smooths the Move to High School

Newark High School launched a Freshman Academy this school year to help ninth graders make a strong start. Core classes are clustered in one part of the building, so students spend more time with the same peers and teachers. This model makes it easier to build relationships, reinforce routines and provide timely support as students transition to the expectations of high school.

Alternative Academy Opens Doors to Graduation

This year, Newark City Schools opened an Alternative Academy. Serving more than 70 students who benefit from a smaller, more focused setting, it is helping students stay on track for graduation. Morning and afternoon sessions are offered to fit around work schedules. As students graduate the program, more will be added throughout the year to continue the progress.



A staff of seven — teachers from each core subject, a special education teacher, administrative assistant and an administrator — provides consistent one-on-one support.

The program also emphasizes career readiness and post-school preparedness. On Real-World Wednesdays, local businesses meet with students to share job opportunities and pathways after graduation. Staff members also lead students in resume building, interview skills, career exploration, cost-of-living considerations, banking, and other topics relevant to their success as future community contributors.

Departmentalized Learning Takes Root in Grades 4-5

Fourth and fifth grade students are experiencing a new way of learning this school year. Rather than remaining in a single classroom with a single teacher all day, we've moved to a departmentalized, or team teaching model.

This means students may be with a single teacher for a couple of subjects, then switch classes and learn other subjects from another teacher. This approach has several benefits for both staff and students.

Departmentalization lets educators teach in areas where they are most passionate and experienced, and for students, it exposes them to diverse teaching styles, better preparing them for the transition to middle school and beyond.

More Schools Join House System

Newark Middle School kicked off its House System this year. The program was piloted last year at Carson and Cherry Valley Elementary Schools and is designed to help improve school culture, build relationships and promote a healthy sense of team spirit.



Curriculum Updates

This marks the second year for our new reading curriculum, Wit and Wisdom, at the elementary level, and the first year at the middle school level, and we are excited to be piloting a new math program at the elementary level this year. A strong start in these core subjects ensures students are prepared for success through graduation.



Homecoming 2025: A Night at the Cinema

A good time was had by all during this year's Homecoming festivities, which included a Spirit Week, Carnival, a match up against Canal Winchester, and a dance where students came dressed to shine like the stars!



Photo: S&P Photography



Around Campus

Subject Crossover Best Recipe for Success

Hands-on application of lessons in the classroom is proven to help students retain information better and longer.

Mrs. Howler's fourth grade English Language Arts students at Hillview Elementary are a perfect example. They dove into nonfiction this year and applied what they had learned about text features in *The Circulatory Story* to build blood vessel models.



School Bus Safety

The start of the school year is a good reminder for students and parents alike about the importance of school bus safety. That's why students at Cherry Valley Elementary learned safe riding practices, emergency procedures, and how to look out for one another while driving to and from school at this year's bus safety talk.



Testing the Scientific Method

Fifth grade students at Ben Franklin dove right into learning this school year. During a science lab, they practiced the steps of the scientific method by testing which side of a penny holds the most water.

Students Diving Into the Brain... Literally

Our AP Psychology students are getting hands on with their learning. They built model brains out of clay as they prepared to dive into the structures and functions of the brain, and pipe cleaner neurons to better understand how neurons communicate with other parts of the brain.





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Newark City Schools

A Community of Opportunity and Learning

Newark City Schools Board of Education

Cindy Neely Daniel Hunt
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Mark Christenberry

Athletics and Performing Arts Updates

Fall Sports



Our cross country teams came out of the gate ready to race this season! At their first meet of the season, the girls fought their way to second place, while the boys finished first for the first time in over eight years. The personal records and fun only continue!



Senior volleyball star Peyton Sherman reached a huge milestone: 1,000 career assists and counting! The team won its first conference championship since 2000 and finished as district runner-up.



The girls' tennis team achieved its way to its fourth consecutive double-digit win season.



Soccer freshman Tanner Morgan was nominated for the Newark Advocate Athlete of the Week following seven saves in his varsity debut, a 2-1 win over Granville Christian.



Boys' golf finished second in the OCC Buckeye Division.



Wildcat quarterback Bodie Smith broke the single season record for passing yards and touchdowns this season. The team finished 6-4 and earned the program's third consecutive playoff berth.



Our youngest cheerleaders are ready to grow their Wildcat Pride this year!

Performing Arts

Pride of Newark Marching Band Starts Year on a High Note

The Pride of Newark Marching Band earned straight superior ratings at each of its seven competitions this season. The band qualified for the OMEA State Finals for a record 45th consecutive time and earned a superior rating at the state competition, which took place on Oct. 25.

In addition to the Superior ratings, the band won Best Auxiliary in Hilliard for class AA, Best Auxiliary for class AA/A and overall first place in Class AA at Bloom Carroll.



Orchestra Entertains at Farmers Market

Newark City Schools' orchestra members made some noise with a special performance at the Canal Market District Farmers Market in September.