



Stay Informed - Stay Connected

Quarterly Edition
Fall 2025



A HOME FIT FOR CHAMPIONS: COVINGTON DEBUTS UPGRADED SMITH FIELD STADIUM!

Covington Exempted Village Schools proudly announced the completion of a major renovation project at Smith Field Stadium in September 2025. The upgrades include a new all-weather track, press box, ticket booth, and modernized concessions—enhancing the experience for both athletes and fans alike.

The project, totaling just over \$1.8 million, was funded through carryover dollars from the district's permanent improvement and track replacement funds, along with generous contributions from the Covington Bucc Boosters and the Covington Community Chest. A heartfelt thank-you also goes to the Robbins Family for their support in helping make this project a reality.

The district celebrated the completion of the renovation during the first home football game of the 2025 season, marking a new era for Covington athletics.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **December 19**
2-Hour Early Dismissal
- **December 22-January 2**
Winter Break
- **January 5**
School Resumes
- **January 9**
End of Second Quarter
- **January 19**
Martin Luther King Day- No School
- **January 28**
2-Hour Early Dismissal

The Covington High School Athletic Hall of Fame will hold its 43rd induction ceremony on December 20, 2025, before the boys' basketball game vs. Milton-Union.

This year's inductees are Nathan Dunn (2015), Anna Dunn-Sturgis (2017), Samantha Whiteman (2019), and Honorary Inductee Michael Schaffer (2003).



Photo credit: Ben Robinson / Color Green Photo



FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT'S DESK:

A MESSAGE FROM DR. HOELZLE

As the colorful leaves mark the change of seasons, Covington Schools have reached an important milestone – the close of the first quarter of the 2025–26 school year. This time of year is a wonderful reminder to pause and celebrate how far we've come. From the excitement of students settling into their classrooms to the rewarding ceremonies recognizing their first-quarter achievements, Covington Schools are buzzing with progress and pride. Our student-athletes have enjoyed incredibly strong fall seasons, our Band of Bucc Pride continues to shine, and our classrooms are filled with creativity, collaboration, and curiosity. The first quarter brought so many accomplishments across our schools, and now we turn our focus to the new opportunities that lie ahead.

At Covington Exempted Village Schools, our mission remains clear: to provide every student with the highest-quality educational experience—one that prepares them not only for academic success, but also for lifelong learning, leadership, and responsible citizenship. We are committed to being thoughtful and responsible stewards of our community's resources,

ensuring every dollar is used wisely to support our mission and our students' success.

The district remains deeply grateful for our community's continued support for the renewal of our income tax levy, passed in November 2024. This was essential in maintaining high-quality instruction, innovative programming, and vital student services. These funds directly sustain the educational excellence our families expect, and our students deserve.

Ohio's school funding system has long been a challenge. In the 1990s, the Ohio Supreme Court declared the system unconstitutional four separate times, saying it relied too heavily on local property taxes. Unfortunately, the issue still hasn't been fully fixed. Over time, the state's contribution to public education has decreased.

- In 2002, Ohio ranked 35th in the nation for state funding for K-12 schools.
- By 2023, Ohio had dropped to 45th, among the lowest in the country. *Continued on page 6*



On October 5, junior Ramse Vanderhorst reached an incredible milestone during the volleyball match against Lehman Catholic—recording her 1,000th career dig!



On October 3, during the Varsity Football game vs. Bethel, Day'Lynn Garrett tied the school record for most receptions in a single game with 10, while Trenton Havenar set a new school record for career tackles for loss with 59.5!

COVINGTON SCHOOLS 2025-2026 CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

NO SCHOOL

- September 1- Labor Day
- November 7
- December 22- January 2 Winter Break
- January 19- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- February 13
- February 16- Presidents' Day
- April 2-6 Easter Break

EARLY DISMISSALS

- September 24 2-Hour Early Dismissal
- October 29 2-Hour Early Dismissal
- November 6 2-Hour Early Dismissal
- December 19 2-Hour Early Dismissal
- January 28 2-Hour Early Dismissal
- February 12 2-Hour Early Dismissal
- February 25 2-Hour Early Dismissal
- May 22 2-Hour Early Dismissal

Aug. 20
1st Day of School

EASTER BREAK
APRIL 2 - APRIL 6

THANKSGIVING BREAK
Nov. 26 - Nov. 28

WINTER BREAK
Dec. 22 - Jan. 2

HOMECOMING
SEP. 27

GRADUATION MAY 24

May 22
Last Day of School



COVINGTON SCHOOLS

WINTER Sports Schedule

2025-2026

JV/Varsity Boys Basketball

11/28	Ansonia	A	6:00
12/5	Miami East	A	6:00
12/6	Mississinawa Valley	A	6:00
12/9	Troy Christian	H	6:00
12/12	Bethel	A	6:00
12/16	Northridge	H	6:00
12/20	Milton-Union	H	6:30
12/29	Holiday Tournament	H	7:30
12/30	Holiday Tournament	H	TBA
1/3	New Knoxville	A	5:00
1/6	Lehman Catholic	A	6:00
1/9	Riverside	H	6:00
1/10	Fairlawn	H	6:00
1/16	Miami East	H	6:00
1/20	Troy Christian	A	6:00
1/23	Bethel	H	6:00
1/27	Northridge	A	6:00
1/30	Milton-Union	A	6:00
2/3	Newton	H	6:00
2/6	Lehman Catholic	H	6:00
2/7	Tri-County North	A	6:00
2/10	Riverside	A	6:00

Freshman/JV-B Boys Basketball

12/5	Miami East	A	5:00
12/12	Bethel	A	5:00
12/16	Northridge	H	5:00
1/3	New Knoxville	A	4:00
1/6	Lehman Catholic	A	5:00
1/16	Miami East	H	5:00
1/23	Bethel	H	5:00
1/27	Northridge	A	5:00
2/6	Lehman Catholic	H	5:00
2/7	Tri-County North	A	4:45
2/14-19	TRC Tournament		TBA
2/21	TRC Tourn. Finals	A	TBA

Junior High Wrestling

12/6	Milton Bulldog	A	9:30
12/20	Sidney Inv.	A	9:00
12/20	Best of Midwest	A	9:00
12/23	Coldwater Inv.	A	10:00
1/3	Triad Inv.	A	
1/10	Mechanicsburg Inv	A	10:00
1/13	Versailles Dual	A	6:30
1/21	Sidney/Spring.	H	5:30
1/24	Beavercreek Inv.	A	9:00
2/10	Piqua Dual	H	6:30
2/21	TRC Conference	A	10:00

JH Girls Wrestling

1/10	Miami East Inv.	A	TBD
1/16	Mechanicsburg Inv.	A	5:00

JV/Varsity Girls Basketball

11/22	Fairlawn	H	6:00
11/24	Piqua	A	6:00
11/29	Miami East	A	11:00
12/4	Troy Christian	H	6:00
12/6	Bethel	A	11:00
12/8	Russia	A	6:00
12/13	Milton-Union*	A	12:00
12/18	Lehman Catholic*	A	6:00
12/22	Northridge	H	6:00
12/29	Holiday Tournament	H	6:00
12/30	Holiday Tournament	H	TBA
1/3	Franklin Monroe (JV)	H	11:00
1/3	Riverside (Var.)	H	12:00
1/8	Miami East	H	6:00
1/10	Troy Christian	A	11:00
1/15	Bethel	H	6:00
1/17	Northridge	A	11:00
1/22	Milton-Union*	H	7:00
1/26	Newton^	H	6:00
1/29	Lehman Catholic*	H	7:00
1/31	Jackson Center*	H	12:00
2/2	Troy	A	6:00
2/5	Riverside*	A	6:00

* Varsity Only; ^2 quarter JV

Junior High Girls Basketball

11/25	Miami East	A	5:30
12/1	Troy Christian	H	5:30
12/4	Bethel	A	5:30
12/8	Northridge (8 th)	H	5:30
12/15	Milton-Union	A	5:30
12/18	Bradford (7 th)	H	5:30
12/22	Lehman Catholic	H	5:30
1/3	Riverside	H	10:00
1/6	Miami East	H	5:30
1/10	Houston	A	10:00
1/13	Troy Christian	A	5:30
1/19	Bethel	H	5:30
1/24	Northridge (8 th)	A	10:00
1/27	Milton-Union	H	5:30
1/31	Lehman Catholic	A	10:00
2/3	Riverside	A	5:30
2/7-2/14	TRC Tournament	A	TBA

11/22 – Junior High Night
 12/9 – Teddy Bear Toss
 12/20 – Hall of Fame
 1/9 – 3rd/4th Boys @ Halftime
 1/10 – Boys Free Throw Winners
 1/15 – 3rd/4th Girls @ Halftime
 1/16 – 5th/6th Boys @ Halftime
 1/26 – Girls Free Throw Winners
 1/22 – 5th/6th Girls @ Halftime
 1/23 – K-2 Mini Buccs @ Halftime
 1/29 – Girls Senior Night
 1/29 – GBK Community Appreciation
 2/6 – Boys Basketball Senior Night
 2/6 – BBK Community Appreciation
 2/10 – Wrestling Senior Night

Varsity Wrestling

12/6	Mechanicsburg Inv.	A	10:00
12/13	Coldwater Inv.	A	9:00
12/20	Versailles Inv.	A	10:00
12/29	GMVWA	A	11:00
12/30	GMVWA	A	11:00
1/3	Troy Inv.	A	9:30
1/10	Urbana Inv.	A	9:00
1/13	Versailles Dual	A	6:30
1/21	Sidney/Spring.	H	5:30
1/30	LCC Thunderbird	A	5:30
1/31	LCC Thunderbird	A	9:30
2/7	OHSWCA Duals	A	
2/10	Piqua Dual	H	6:30
2/14	OHSWCA Duals	A	
2/21	TRC Conference	A	10:00
2/28	Sectionals	A	TBA
3/6	Districts – Troy	A	TBA
3/7	Districts - Troy	A	TBA
3/13-3/15	State – Columbus	A	TBA

JV Wrestling

12/13	Versailles JV Inv.	A	10:00
12/20	Greenville JV Inv.	A	9:00
1/8	Butler JV Pools	A	6:00
1/31	Butler JV Inv.	A	9:00

HS Girls Wrestling

1/10	Miami East Inv.	A	TBD
1/17	Mechanicsburg Inv.	A	10:00
2/8	Triad Inv.	A	9:00
3/2	District Tourn.	A	TBD
3/13-15	State- Columbus	A	TBA

Junior High Boys Basketball

12/2	Troy Christian	A	5:30
12/4	Miami East	H	5:30
12/6	Bethel	H	10:00
12/8	Northridge	A	5:30
12/13	Milton-Union	H	10:00
12/18	Lehman Catholic	A	5:30
12/20	Riverside	A	10:00
1/8	Miami East	A	5:30
1/10	Troy Christian	H	10:00
1/12	Fairlawn	A	5:00
1/15	Bethel	A	5:30
1/17	Northridge	H	10:00
1/22	Milton-Union	A	5:30
1/24	Houston	A	10:00
1/29	Lehman Catholic	H	5:30
2/5	Riverside	H	5:30
2/14-21	TRC Tournament	A	TBA

*Dates and times are subject to change.

Around OUR Schools





Stay Alert: Delay & Closure Info

As temperatures drop, delays or school closings may become necessary. Covington Schools will notify families as soon as a decision is made. When weather conditions are clear enough the night before, a decision may be announced early. Otherwise, updates will be shared as soon as possible the following morning.

To stay informed:

- Check the homepage of the district website
- Watch for updates on Covington's Facebook page
- Look for notifications through our system via email, phone call, text message, and push notification (for those using the Remind app)
- Local TV and radio stations will also be notified

Please make sure your contact information is updated with your child's school so you don't miss important alerts.



Parents... Get plugged in.

CHECK YOUR CHILD'S GRADES-TODAY!

<https://pa.metasolutions.net>



SUPERINTENDENT MESSAGE: DR. JOSEPH HOELZLE ... Continued from page 2

Meanwhile, the responsibility for funding schools has shifted from businesses to homeowners:

- In 1975, homeowners (residential and agricultural properties) paid 46% of property taxes.
- By 2023, that share had risen to 67.5%.
- Businesses paid 54% in 1975 but now pay only 32.5%.

One major reason for this change was House Bill 66, passed in 2005, which eliminated several business taxes. As a result, residents now carry a much greater share of the cost of funding public schools.

Because school funding affects every district in Ohio, this is ultimately a statewide issue. Earlier this year, Governor DeWine created a Property Tax Task Force to study these challenges. The group has released several recommendations aimed at:

- Providing targeted property tax relief.
- Capping future property tax growth.

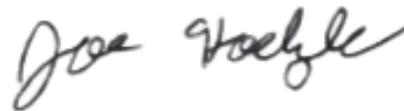
Some of these recommendations are expected to become law soon.

In short, local taxes continue to be an essential part of keeping our schools strong, but long-term solutions will need to come from the state level. Covington Schools will continue to monitor these developments and share updates as they become available. Covington Schools remains in a stable financial position thanks to years of careful budgeting and responsible management. However, we recognize that ongoing cost increases—ranging from staffing and transportation to classroom materials and technology—require consistent and predictable funding.

I believe it is in the best interest of our schools and community to take thoughtful, deliberate steps while awaiting the outcomes of these legislative efforts. I encourage the public to support HB 186 and 335 while the state continues to develop meaningful solutions to address the burden of school funding on local homeowners. Doing so will help ensure that long-term solutions strike the right balance between reasonable, sustainable taxation and the responsibility to sustain high-quality public education. Our students, families, and community deserve a sustainable funding system that supports excellence without placing an undue burden on local taxpayers.

As we step into the holiday season, we're grateful for the dedication of our staff, the enthusiasm of our students, and the unwavering support of our Covington community. Together, we're building momentum that will carry us into an even stronger second quarter. Wishing everyone a joyful, safe, and memorable time as we wrap up the year!

Thank you for your continued support and Go Buccs!



Dr. Joe Hoelzle
Superintendent of Schools



2025 CHS Homecoming Court



Congratulations to the 2025 Covington High School Homecoming Court! This year's court featured Cailyn Wagner, Christian Clark, Bella Welch, Colt Williams, Nell Rogers, AJ Reyes, Dakohta Kenworthy, Day'Lynn Garrett, Jayda McClure, and Caleb Smith. A special shout-out to Bella Welch and AJ Reyes, who were crowned Homecoming Queen and King.

FROM THE TREASURER'S DESK:

A MESSAGE FROM CARMEN SIEFRING

Each fall, I prepare the district's five-year financial forecast, which is submitted to the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce (DEW). This document—also available on the Treasurer's page of our website—includes both historical and projected financial data and serves as an essential tool for Covington's operational and capital planning.

When reviewing the Forecast, you will see that Covington EVSD receives roughly half of its General Fund revenue from local sources and half from state resources, totaling approximately \$13.5 million. Within the local share, property taxes generate about \$2.65 million annually, income taxes provide approximately \$3.7 million, and interest and other miscellaneous revenue contribute another \$400,000.

While state resources still make up a significant portion of our budget, their relative share has declined over time throughout Ohio, shifting more responsibility to local taxpayers. Ohio now ranks 45th in the nation in state funding for public schools.

In addition, several property tax reform proposals are currently being discussed by state legislators.

Evaluating these proposals—and understanding what they may mean for Covington's long-term financial outlook—is an ongoing effort. The district has taken a conservative approach within the Forecast, ensuring we remain well-positioned to manage any future uncertainty in the economy or in state funding.

It is also important to note that Covington Schools does not have a dedicated revenue source specifically for facility maintenance or capital improvements. Instead, these needs are funded through Board-approved transfers from the General Fund. Our goal is to balance daily operational requirements with long-term planning, maintaining operational stability while exercising caution in an ever-changing financial landscape.

In short, the Forecast helps ensure that Covington Schools continues to operate responsibly—living within our means, planning prudently, and preparing for future needs.

I wish you and your family a wonderful holiday season. As always, please feel free to reach out with any questions at 937-473-9816 or siefringc@covingtonk12.org.

State Report Card Shows Continued Improvement

The Ohio Department of Education and Workforce (ODEW) released its 2024–2025 State Report Cards in September, and we are proud to share that Covington Exempted Village Schools continues to show strong performance and growth across multiple areas.

ODEW uses multiple data points from public schools to determine district ratings. The six categories that make up the overall rating include:

- Achievement – How students performed on state assessments.
- Progress – The amount of academic growth students make from year to year.
- Gap Closing – How well schools are meeting performance expectations for all students, especially those who may need additional support.

- Early Literacy – Reading proficiency and literacy growth in grades K–3.
- Graduation Rate – The percentage of students earning their diplomas on time.
- Readiness – This is a new component that measures students' preparedness for post-secondary success through college, career, workforce, or military options.

Achievement and progress are most heavily weighted in the overall calculation. This year, Covington Schools received four stars overall—exceeding state standards in academic achievement.

Key highlights include:

- 4 Stars Overall – Exceeds state standards in academic achievement

- 82% Performance Index
- Significantly exceeds state standards in graduation rates
- Exceeds state standards in closing educational gaps
- Five Stars in College, Career, Workforce, and Military Readiness, thanks to our robust College Credit Plus program and strong partnership with the Upper Valley Career Technology Center. Our district is one of only 64 districts in the state with a five-star rating on this component.

Building-level performance also reflected our district's dedication to excellence:

- Covington Elementary made progress in early literacy and continues to focus on strategic interventions to improve gap-closing results. *Continued on page 8*

Covington Board of Education

The Board of Education is honored to serve the students, staff, families, and community of Covington Exempted Village Schools. To learn more about the Board, its members, and upcoming meeting dates, please visit covington.k12.oh.us.



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STATE REPORT CARD IMPROVEMENT *... Continued from page 7*

- Covington Middle School received an overall rating of 4 stars, showing gains in academic progress and strong classroom instruction.
- Covington High School earned an impressive 4.5-star rating, exceeding state standards in multiple categories.

Graduation rates remain high, early literacy continues to grow, and chronic absenteeism has dropped—an encouraging sign that our students are more engaged and supported than ever before. These results are a direct reflection of the hard work of our teachers, staff, and students, along with the continued partnership of our families and community. We will continue using this data to refine our strategies and celebrate our success as we move forward.



CHS Band Receives Superior Rating at State!

The Band of Bucc Pride struck all the right notes at the OMEA State Adjudicated Competition, earning a SUPERIOR rating!

What an incredible way to cap off another outstanding season! Congratulations to Mrs. Moore, Mrs. Ayres, and all members of the BOBP for their dedication, talent, and teamwork.



Marias Technology generously donated smoke detectors for all our kindergarteners during Fire Prevention Week!

Congratulations to the Junior High Boys' team for finishing as CONFERENCE CHAMPS!

