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Community Connection

A Publication of Indian Valley Local Schools

SUMMER 2025

A Message from the Superintendent

by Dr. Ira Wentworth, Superintendent



As we wrap up the 2024–2025 school year, I want to reflect on what has truly been an extraordinary year for Indian Valley Local Schools. From the classroom to the playing field, and from the arts to agriculture, our students continue to make us proud to be Braves.

First, congratulations to the Class of 2025! This outstanding group has shown resilience, leadership, and heart. Whether heading to college, careers, military service, or technical training, they carry the strength and spirit of the Indian Valley community with them.

This year will be remembered for a historic achievement—our Braves football team captured the 2024 Ohio Division IV State Championship! Their grit, unity, and determination inspired us all and brought our community together in celebration.

Academically, students continue to grow and succeed. Our internal measures show that Indian Valley students are learning at higher levels than ever before, and this is supported by external metrics as you will read in the 4.5 Star Rating article.

Our visual arts students again earned awards, showcasing incredible creativity and excellence. For example, Indian Valley High School was the top school in the county and third in NE Ohio for the Scholastic Art Awards, top school in the county and region for the Governor's Youth Art Exhibition, and no other teacher in Ohio had more student selections in the State Art Show than high school teacher Sara Dittfeld.

In Career-Technical Education, Indian Valley now offers six robust CTE programs, including one where students earn a federal license to fly drones. A highlight: senior Max Kinsey was named Ohio FFA State Winner in Diversified Crop Production and will next represent us at nationals.

Behind the scenes, we have made strong operational progress with facility upgrades, enhanced transportation protocols, and improvements in food service—all aimed at building a safe and supportive learning environment.

Thank you to our families, staff, and community members. Indian Valley thrives because of your continued support. Enjoy your summer — and as always, Go Braves!

> **Academically, students continue to grow and succeed. Our internal measures show that Indian Valley students are learning at higher levels than ever before, and this is supported by external metrics as you will read in the 4.5 Star Rating article.**
>
> *Ira Wentworth, Superintendent*

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Mission: Working together to personalize a rigorous, standards-based learning experience.



Indian Valley Earns a 4.5 Star Rating on State of Ohio Report Card

by Dr. Ira Wentworth, Superintendent

The State of Ohio has used several different systems when rating school districts over the years. Terms such as Excellent and Effective once described the top rated school districts. The next iteration of ratings utilized letter grades — A, B, C, D, and F. Now, ratings are based on a 5-Star scale, similar to Google reviews.

Indian Valley Local Schools earned a 4.5-Star rating on the most recent school report card, which was the top rating in Tuscarawas County. Also, the State of Ohio identifies districts that are most similar to one another based on a plethora of demographic and economic criteria. Indian Valley was tied for first among our 10 most similar districts, as shown on the accompanying chart.

Additionally, the list of Ohio schools that achieved a 4.5-Star rating includes many affluent and suburban type school districts too such as: Amherst, Beavercreek, Brunswick, Canal Fulton Northwest, Hilliard, Indian Hill, Kettering, Lakota, Lebanon, Louisville, Mentor, North Royalton, Olmsted Falls, Oxford Talawanda, Pickerington, Stow-Munroe, Sylvania, Troy, Westlake, and Worthington.

RANK	DISTRICT	OVERALL
1.	BEAVER LOCAL	★★★★½
1.	**INDIAN VALLEY**	★★★★½
3.	CRESTVIEW	★★★★
3.	WEST BRANCH	★★★★
5.	WEST HOLMES	★★★½
5.	WYNFORD	★★★½
7.	BARNESVILLE	★★★
7.	FRANKLIN (PHILO)	★★★
7.	JACKSON CITY	★★★
10.	PREBLE/SHAWNEE	★★½

I want you, the Indian Valley Braves community, to feel good about your school district. Our teachers work together to maintain high expectations and ensure that our rural country school provides students with an education as good as anywhere in the state.

Ira Wentworth, Superintendent

Why do I share this? I want you, the Indian Valley Braves community, to feel good about your school district. Our teachers work together to maintain high expectations and ensure that our rural country school provides students with an education as good as anywhere in the state.

We will continue to work together in a model of continuous improvement to provide a rigorous standards-based learning experience so our young people learn to their fullest potential and to give you yet another reason to be proud to be a Brave!

Indian Valley High School Designated with Purple Star Award

by Dr. Ira Wentworth, Superintendent



Indian Valley High School has been designated as a Class of 2025 Purple Star Award School. The Purple Star designation is bestowed by the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce to schools that show a major commitment to students and families connected to the United States military. This designation is a three year renewal of the distinction originally awarded to Indian Valley High School in 2022.

A total of 700 Ohio schools have the honor of being identified as a Purple Star school for 2025. Indian Valley is one of the 252 schools that recently renewed their application for the next three year cycle, while 115 schools are enjoying the distinction for the first time.





The Indian Valley community values and appreciates the men and women who serve in the United States military. This Purple Star Award reflects that sentiment and shows the commitment of our school to support students who come from a military family.

Fiscal Update: Financial Health Indicators

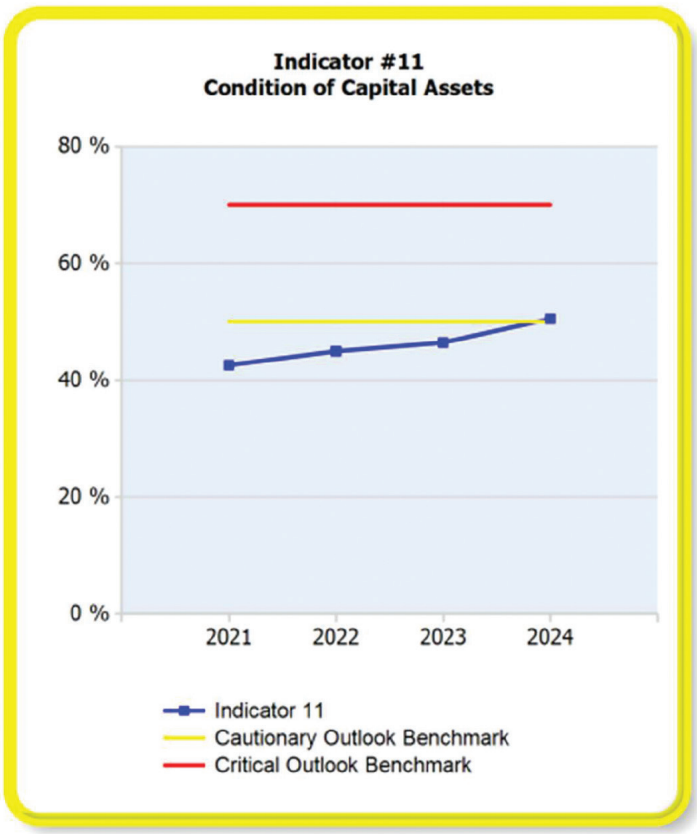
by Andrew Bache, Treasurer

Every year, district leadership is responsible for strategically planning and allocating funds to preserve, expand, and enhance the learning opportunities offered to our students. One key approach the district employs in its planning process is the use of a five-year financial forecast. Integrating a five-year financial forecast into the strategic plan is essential for ensuring fiscal sustainability. The forecast helps us anticipate future revenue and expenditure trends and account for factors like state funding changes, local property tax revenues, and enrollment fluctuations. By forecasting financial needs over a five-year period, we can make informed decisions about staffing, program investments, and capital improvements. This long-term perspective allows us to align our educational goals with available resources, minimizing the risk of financial strain or shortfalls.

In May of 2025, the Auditor of State's Office published its first set of Financial Health Indicators for all Ohio public schools. These indicators, such as cash balance trends, expenditures relative to revenue, and liquidity ratios, help provide a clear picture of the district's financial health. There are 16 total indicators applicable to public school districts that must be considered collectively to assess whether a district is showing signs of financial distress. Each indicator is marked as critical, cautionary, or positive. Indicators identified as critical or cautionary should be evaluated to ensure fiscal stability is maintained.

For instance, the condition of capital assets is a key area of focus for both the district and the Auditor of State's office. In general, capital assets are tangible items with a useful life of more than one year and meet certain acquisition cost thresholds. These assets include everything from technology upgrades to infrastructure improvements such as roof, door, and window replacements. The Auditor's Condition of Capital Assets indicator (#11) helps districts assess when capital assets may need to be repaired or replaced. A higher percentage signals that replacement is imminent. Indicator #11 is marked as a cautionary outlook for fiscal year end 2024. As our buildings near the 20-year mark, repairs are becoming more urgent. For example, we are scheduled to replace the high school roof this summer, with additional roof replacements at other buildings expected within the next 5 to 10 years. Given that capital improvement projects can be costly, careful planning is essential to ensure these expenses are accounted for in advance.

By leveraging both the five-year forecast and these financial health indicators, the district can make informed, data-driven decisions that align educational goals with available resources, while maintaining



Cursive Connections: Building a Lifelong Skill

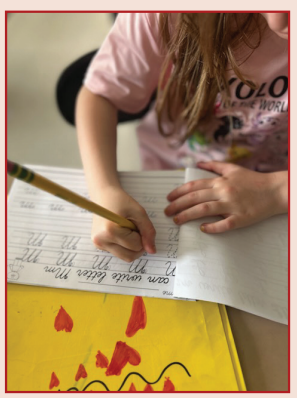
by Brandy Grant, Director of Teaching and Learning

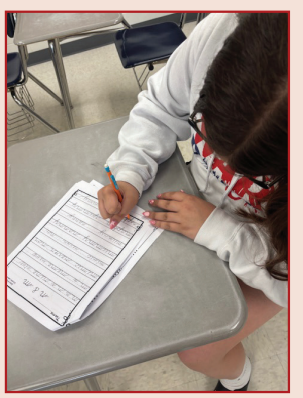
This year marked an exciting expansion of Indian Valley's Cursive Handwriting Curriculum, designed to ensure students can both write their full names in cursive and fluently read cursive script. What began in fifth grade has now extended through middle school, with 6th-8th grades receiving dedicated instruction during Advisory Period.

In elementary classrooms, students focus on foundational skills such as proper posture, pencil grip, and accurate letter formation. As students progress into middle school, they apply those skills to read and write both lowercase and uppercase letters. This year's middle school rollout reflects our commitment to reinforcing this timeless skill, with teachers providing consistent practice and feedback based on clear grade-level expectations.

As we look ahead to 2025–2026, we are excited to refine and strengthen our curriculum to ensure all students — grades 5-8 — can confidently read cursive and sign their names with pride. Indian Valley continues to invest in meaningful, developmentally appropriate instruction that honors tradition, while building the foundational skills our Brave Scholars need to pursue the career pathway of their choice and become persistent academic and social problem solvers.







Indian Valley Bus Drivers Enhance Student Safety Through Monthly Training Exercises

by Jacob Glasgow, Director of Transportation

This past school year, Indian Valley School Bus Drivers have been improving safety and building teamwork skills by attending monthly safety trainings. An instructor was brought in from Operation Lifesaver to present on train and rail safety and give helpful tips on what to do if things go wrong while crossing a railroad. Some of the training topics were refresher courses such as our drivers were re-trained on wheelchair securement and distracted driving.



Our drivers also got to participate in hands-on exercises to help simulate possible emergency situations. Smoke filled the bus to give drivers a firsthand experience of evacuating students while relying solely on touch rather than sight. Along with fire evacuation, drivers participated in lighting flares and learned how to extinguish the flames; they also set up triangles to ensure they would be prepared in case an incident occurred.

School buses in Ohio undergo daily pre-trip inspections to ensure passenger safety. During this exercise, certain components on a bus were deliberately disabled. Drivers were then organized into teams and given 15 minutes to complete an inspection and identify the malfunctioning items.

This spring, drivers viewed videos showing potential outcomes when school buses attempt to navigate through high water during and after heavy rainfall periods.

While this represents only a snapshot of our comprehensive training, these hands-on exercises were a great way to brush up on our safety skills and put them into practice. Our bus drivers' primary objective remains enhancing safety for the students we transport daily.

Fresh Ingredients and Special Events Enhance Student Dining Experience at Indian Valley

by Kaleb Stokey, Director of Food Services

In my first year as Director of Food Services, I have had the pleasure of bringing new and exciting menu items and fun special events to our cafeteria, including bringing in more homemade and fresh items for our students to enjoy.

One item we introduced that was a big hit with the students is our homemade pizza we have as a daily option. Various options of the pizza were our normal pepperoni, but we also did a BBQ chicken, and a cheesy white pizza which were big successes as well! We also made strombolis, homemade macaroni and cheese, and even Philly cheesesteaks. Boba tea was even introduced into the middle and high schools with fun flavors like strawberry lemonade and a mango Arnold Palmer.

Along with our fresh new menu items, we hosted a variety of special events in our cafeterias this year. At the elementary schools, we had Wellness Wednesdays where students could try new healthy options and earn a sticker for participating.

Our elementary students were visited by Molly the Cow to teach them how important calcium is for our bodies. Regional chef Jason Williams visited our high school and middle school students to treat them to korean stir fry that was cooked in front of them. We also celebrated apple crunch day at the middle school by doing caramel apple nachos.

As we look forward to next school year, I cannot wait to continue to bring new and exciting items to our cafeteria.







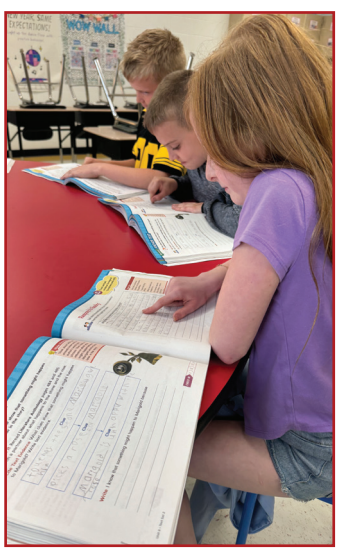


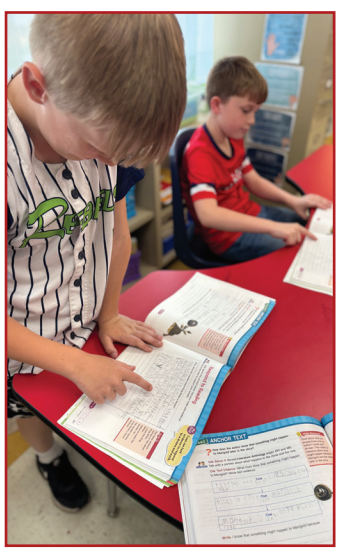
Wonders ELA Curriculum Strengthens Literacy in Indian Valley K-5 Students

by Brandy Grant, Director of Teaching and Learning

During the 2024–2025 school year, Indian Valley Local Schools successfully launched the district-wide implementation of the Wonders English Language Arts (ELA) curriculum. From kindergarten through fifth grade, our elementary teachers embraced this new resource with dedication, innovation, and a continued commitment to instructional excellence. The curriculum offered tools that enhanced vocabulary development, strengthened writing instruction, and supported rigorous, standards-based reading experiences.

Throughout the year, teachers found Wonders particularly valuable in facilitating small-group instruction, encouraging independent reading, and introducing vocabulary in meaningful ways. These components contributed to more engaging classroom discussions and improved instructional delivery.





Our educators went beyond basic implementation—thoughtfully integrating Wonders into their daily instruction while maintaining flexibility to meet the unique needs of their students.

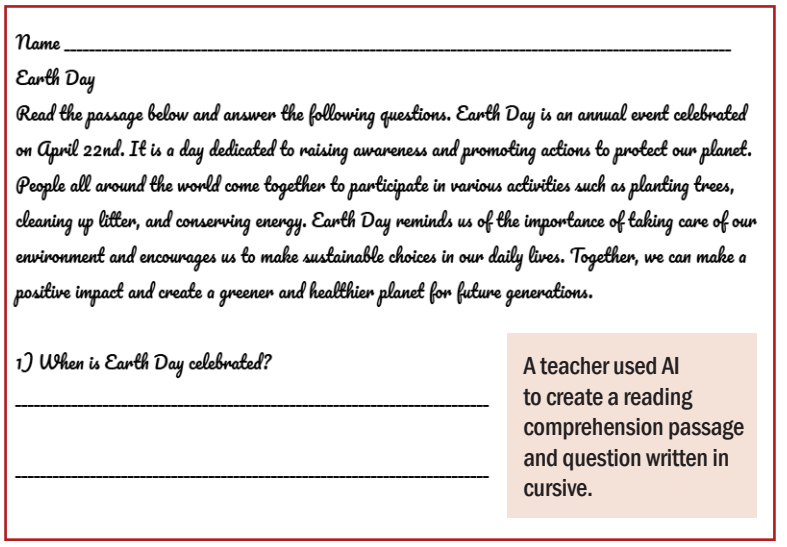
As a district, we remain committed to providing personalized learning, teaching to the high end of content mastery, and delivering exceptional literacy instruction that fosters growth, engagement, and long-term academic success.

Indian Valley Teachers Expand Technology Skills with AI Training for Education

by Rachel Gibson, Director of Continuous Improvement

To date, the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) is ever-evolving with no end in sight! From simple tasks, like building a recipe from the obscure ingredients you have left in the fridge at the end of the week, to more sophisticated ones, like using AI sensors to monitor the health and behavior of animals for livestock tracking; AI has infiltrated every crevice of our society.

AI has also had a significant impact on our school systems and how teachers and students use technology. To better familiarize our teachers with the endless possibilities of AI and to learn how to use its powers to benefit us, the district enlisted the expertise of Eric Curts from the Stark Portage Area Computer Consortium and Matthew Mays from the Stark County Educational Service Center. These technology gurus are well versed in the variety of AI tools that are at our teacher's fingertips. We welcomed Eric and Matthew into our buildings to lead our teachers through a two-session series on the AI tools that are available to educators and students. These sessions took place during the district's Professional Learning Community (PLC) times and were tailored to the individual needs of each PLC team. They presented practical tools that teachers could use in their classrooms, such as Brisk, Notebook LM, ChatGPT, TeacherServer, MagicSchool, as well as a host of others.



Name _____

Earth Day

Read the passage below and answer the following questions. Earth Day is an annual event celebrated on April 22nd. It is a day dedicated to raising awareness and promoting actions to protect our planet. People all around the world come together to participate in various activities such as planting trees, cleaning up litter, and conserving energy. Earth Day reminds us of the importance of taking care of our environment and encourages us to make sustainable choices in our daily lives. Together, we can make a positive impact and create a greener and healthier planet for future generations.

1) When is Earth Day celebrated?

_____

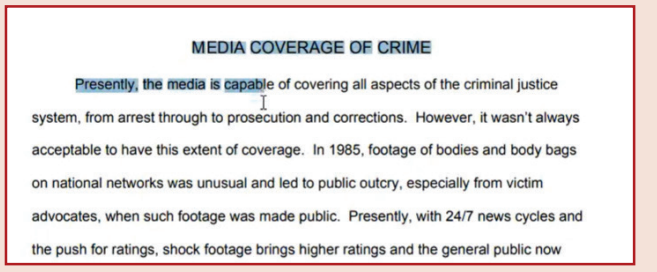
_____

A teacher used AI to create a reading comprehension passage and question written in cursive.

Our teachers are becoming more familiar with these tools and if they choose to, are finding ways to incorporate them into their instructional planning and daily classroom use. For example, developing grading rubrics, creating social stories, differentiating teaching materials, creating behavior contracts, and a host of other time-saving and practical uses. AI has become another valuable tool in the teacher's toolbox.

A high school ELA teacher recorded a video explaining to her students how to use ChatGPT and MagicScool for classroom assignments.

1. She started by finding a reliable source of information



MEDIA COVERAGE OF CRIME

Presently, the media is capable of covering all aspects of the criminal justice system, from arrest through to prosecution and corrections. However, it wasn't always acceptable to have this extent of coverage. In 1985, footage of bodies and body bags on national networks was unusual and led to public outcry, especially from victim advocates, when such footage was made public. Presently, with 24/7 news cycles and the push for ratings, shock footage brings higher ratings and the general public now

2. She showed her students how to prompt ChatGPT to summarize the article.



District-wide Facility Upgrades Transform Learning Environments as New School Year Approaches

by James McPeek, Building & Grounds Supervisor

It seems like each year goes by faster and faster, and here we are about to start another school year. Over the past year, the facilities department has been busy making several updates to the building and grounds.

Kelley Field received a significant upgrade with the installation of a sloped roof over the locker room facilities, replacing the existing flat structure that was experiencing leakage issues. This will help with drainage and prolong the life of the roof.

Indian Valley High School also received some necessary improvements. The lights in the foyer/dome were replaced from T-12 to longer lasting LED, and a new dust collector was added to the wood shop. Phase two of the carpet project was finished which involved installing non-slip tile flooring and new carpeting to the office, library, computer lab, PLTW, and multi-purpose rooms. In addition, new windows, carpet, and fresh paint were completed at the Digital Academy building.

The middle school also saw some enhancements with the addition of an outdoor basketball court made possible through a grant from The Reeves Foundation. Stocker Concrete also donated and installed a sidewalk to the new basketball court. A big thank you to both The Reeves Foundation and Stocker Concrete for their generous support of our district.

Port Washington Elementary and Midvale Elementary were the final buildings to be finished with LED lighting throughout all the classrooms.

While this overview highlights just a select few of our facility projects completed this year, these were some of the most impactful.

Auditorium Upgrade Delivers Better Sound, Comfort, and Energy Efficiency

by James McPeek, Building & Grounds Supervisor

This summer, our auditorium got a makeover with important repairs and new features that makes it more comfortable and will help everyone better enjoy our talented students' performances.

We installed a brand-new heating and cooling system to replace the old one that had been serving our auditorium since it was converted from the high school gym 30 years ago in 1995. This new heating and cooling system will allow us to better and more efficiently control and monitor the temperature in the auditorium during events from an updated central computer system.

Another long awaited renovation was the flooring. All of the carpet that was originally laid down in 2007 has been replaced with new carpet squares and the floor underneath the seats has been repainted. By installing the carpet squares, we have the advantage of easily replacing small sections when they get worn or damaged instead of the entire surface.

We also improved the sound system thanks to a grant the Tuscarawas County Community Foundation.

We bought new clip-on microphones with a storage box, plus hanging microphones and wiring that help everyone hear performances more clearly. To top it all off, we upgraded all the auditorium lights to energy-efficient LEDs

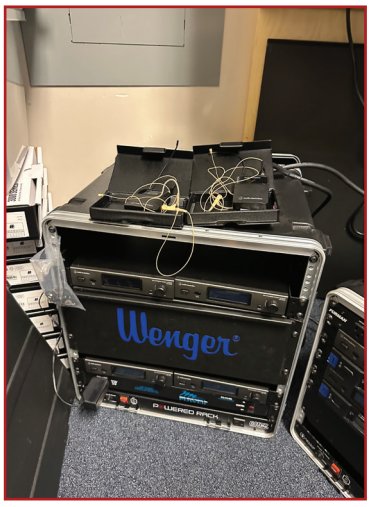
With all these upgrades, everyone in our school and community will enjoy a more comfortable experience when attending student performances and events.











Empowering Learners Through Assistive Technology

by Megan Heath, Director of Student Services

In today's classrooms, inclusivity and accessibility are more important than ever—and assistive technology is playing a key role in making education equitable for all students. Assistive technology includes a wide range of tools, from simple pencil grips and communication boards to advanced devices like speech-to-text software and eye-gaze systems. These resources are designed to help students with disabilities overcome barriers to learning and thrive alongside their peers.

Indian Valley embraces this approach by integrating assistive technology tools into everyday classroom activities. These technologies not only improve access to curriculum but also foster independence, boost self-confidence, and prepare students for future academic and career success.



Examples of assistive technology in our schools include screen readers, speech recognition software, alternative keyboards, and mobility aids. These tools are tailored to individual needs and are supported by ongoing training for staff and students. Collaboration with families and specialists ensures the tools remain effective and up to date.

By investing in assistive technology, our district is building inclusive learning environments where all students—regardless of ability—have the opportunity to succeed. It's one more way Indian Valley works together to personalize a rigorous standards-based learning experience for every learner.

Students Paint Sensory Room Mural at Starlight School

by Megan Heath, Director of Student Services

This past summer, Indian Valley High School art students brought creativity, compassion, and community spirit together through a special project at Starlight School in New Philadelphia. Starlight, a school dedicated to supporting students with disabilities, sought local artists to transform a sensory room—and Indian Valley students eagerly answered the call.

A group of eight student artists took on the ambitious task of designing and painting a 700-square-foot sensory space. Sensory rooms provide a safe, calming, and engaging space to help students regulate their emotions and their responses to sensory input.

With a tight deadline before August, these dedicated students spent over 100 hours creating a vibrant underwater world across eight walls. From a friendly shark mascot to playful schools of fish, every inch of the mural was filled with bright colors and whimsical sea life.

This partnership reflects the values of teamwork and relationships at the heart of Indian Valley Schools. It offered students a chance not only to showcase their artistic talents but also to make a meaningful difference in the lives of others.

The finished mural stands as a lasting symbol of creativity, collaboration, and community—and a project these students will never forget.





PBIS Reward Days at Indian Valley High School

by Aaron Haney, Assistant High School Principal

At Indian Valley High School, Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) are more than just a framework—they're a celebration of student success. A key part of this celebration is our PBIS Reward Fridays, held on a four-week cycle, where students are recognized for meeting high expectations. To qualify, students must have no unexcused absences, no tardies, no discipline issues, no cell phone violations, and no missing assignments.

This past school year, students enjoyed a variety of exciting reward days. Donut Fridays brought fresh Rod's donuts to 1st period, allowing students to pick their favorite treat. Ice Cream Fridays were a big hit, with Assistant Principal Aaron Haney and Principal Robert Clarke scooping sundaes during sixth period. Candy Bar Fridays handed out full-size candy bars, while Early Out Fridays gave qualifying students a well-earned early dismissal before eighth period. The favorite of all? Pizza Party Friday—featuring two slices of pizza, pop, and a fun-filled afternoon with games like basketball knockout, pingpong, volleyball, and more.

With only 20 students missing out on rewards all year, the program reflects the strength of Indian Valley's positive culture, the dedication of our students, and the support of families and our community.







Lunchtime Fun at Indian Valley High School

by Aaron Haney, Assistant High School Principal

At Indian Valley High School, lunchtime has taken on a whole new vibe in the second half of the school year. Thanks to our amazing students and the continued support from parents and guardians, we have created a college-style lunch hour that gives students the freedom to relax, engage, and enjoy.

Our students' positive behavior has truly set the tone. By the end of December, we had only 90 student discipline cases, and we closed the school year with well under 200—the lowest in the last five years. Because of this outstanding record, we rewarded our students with a self-policed lunch period filled with fun and interactive activities.

Students can now choose from Pingpong, Pickleball, Corn Hole, Cards, TVs, Music, Connect 4, Jenga, and Puzzles. Fridays bring even more excitement with Picnic Fridays—music, outdoor games, and lunch under the sun when the weather cooperates.
The response has been fantastic. Students are putting down their electronics, talking to one another, sharing in activities, and creating a vibrant, respectful environment. They've truly taken ownership of this new culture, and it has been incredible to see them thrive in a space built on trust, freedom, and fun.









Indian Valley High School Honors Local Veterans and Earns Prestigious Purple Star Recognition

by Robert Clarke, High School Principal

Each year, Indian Valley High School proudly hosts a heartfelt Veterans Day ceremony, honoring the service and sacrifice of local veterans. As part of a cherished tradition, three area veterans are recognized during the school's annual Veterans Day assembly, a moving tribute that highlights Indian Valley's deep commitment to supporting veterans and military families within its schools and local community.



A highlight of the ceremony is the presentation of beautifully handcrafted flag cases, each personalized for the honored veteran. These special gifts, built by Chadrick Parrott's workshop classes, are paired with an American flag and presented during the assembly, symbolizing gratitude and respect for the veterans' service.



"The Veterans Day ceremony is a powerful way for our students and staff to show appreciation and respect for those who have served," said Indian Valley Principal Robert Clarke. "It's a reminder to all of us about the importance of honoring and supporting our military community every day."

In recognition of its ongoing efforts, Indian Valley High School has once again been named a Purple Star School by the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce. The prestigious Purple Star designation is awarded to schools that demonstrate an exceptional commitment to serving students and families connected to the nation's military. Indian Valley High School's continued focus on meeting specific requirements and conducting meaningful activities for military families has earned it this honor for yet another year.



Indian Valley High School remains proud to be recognized as a Purple Star School, reaffirming its dedication to the veterans and military families who are an integral part of its community.

Spotlight on Career Tech: Indian Valley High School's Small Engines Course Builds Skills for the Future

by Robert Clarke, High School Principal

Indian Valley High School continues to lead the way in preparing students for real-world careers through its expanding Career Technical Education (CTE) program. One of the standout offerings this year is the Small Engines course, which gives students hands-on experience with internal combustion engines and a pathway toward industry-recognized certifications.



Designed to provide a comprehensive understanding of internal combustion technology, the course places special emphasis on small two and four-cycle engines—like those used in lawn equipment, recreational vehicles, and generators. The curriculum blends classroom instruction with practical, lab-based learning, offering students an engaging and applied approach to science, technology, and mechanics. "The goal is to give students not just knowledge, but a skillset that can immediately translate into career opportunities," said course instructor Justin Lestock. "These students are learning to understand and repair the engines that power everyday equipment."

During the course, students explore essential topics like how engines operate, the key differences between two-stroke and four-stroke engines, and the theory behind carburetion. These concepts come to life in the lab, where students get hands-on experience by disassembling, inspecting, reconditioning, and reassembling actual engines.

As part of the course, students also have the opportunity to earn up to five basic certifications from Briggs & Stratton. Each certification represents a different area of expertise and contributes to an overall industry credential. Students receive certification by demonstrating mastery in each area, setting them on a strong path toward employment or further technical training.

Indian Valley High School's commitment to career-focused education is evident in courses like this one. With growing interest in skilled trades and hands-on professions, the Small Engines course offers a practical and exciting introduction to mechanical careers that are in high demand.

For students interested in mechanics, engineering, or just gaining valuable life skills, the Small Engines course is revving up a future full of opportunity. For more information about Indian Valley High School's Career Technical programs, contact the school office or visit the district website.



Indian Valley High School Art Students Shine in 2024-2025

by Robert Clarke, High School Principal

The Indian Valley High School art program, led by art teacher Sara Dittfeld, has achieved an unprecedented level of success during the 2024-2025 school year, setting school records in every competition entered. Students were highly successful at the prestigious 2025 Northeast Ohio Scholastic Art Awards, where 63 artworks earned Gold Keys, Silver Keys, and Honorable Mentions.

Juniors Ashlynn Bolon and Olivia Bamfield stood out, with multiple Gold and Silver Key honors, while a wide range of students from freshmen to juniors were recognized for their talent. The momentum continued in the Ohio Governor's Youth Art Exhibition, students Olivia Bamfield, Ashlynn Bolon, Aubrey Elliott, Ava Fisher, Haylie Menefee, Lilly Milburn, and Adri Neininger had works selected at the state level. Indian Valley had the top amount of state selections per teacher.



Beyond these competitions, junior Melody Sprowl captured statewide attention by winning the Ohio Civil Rights Commission's Martin Luther King Jr. Art Contest for the 11th grade category.

Additionally, students Allona Allan and Lacey Varner earned state Honorable Mentions for their graphic and flag designs for Ohio's Youth Art Month competition. Allona Allan's artwork was also selected and featured on billboards around Tuscarawas County sponsored by the Tuscarawas County's Rainbow Connection.

Indian Valley's art students, with Dittfeld's guidance, have truly had a historic year.











Middle School Students Participate in Treats for Troops Program

by Trent Couts, Indian Valley Middle School Assistant Principal



For the last two years students and staff at Indian Valley Middle School have participated in Treats for Troops. Just one of the many philanthropy projects the middle school participates in every year, Treats for Troops brings a touch of sweetness to the lives of veterans, showing appreciation for their service in a simple yet meaningful way.

Each fall, students and staff collect excess Halloween candy, which is then packed and delivered to Veterans Affairs (VA) clinics. The project's only expense is shipping, covered by student donations.

In 2023, students shipped 54 pounds of candy to a VA medical center in Chillicothe, Ohio. This year 55 pounds of candy was sent to a VA outpatient clinic in Knoxville, Tennessee.

The generous donations have been warmly received by VA staff and patients alike, bringing smiles and a sense of appreciation to those who have served. Treats for Troops demonstrates how small acts of kindness can make a big difference, and it continues to show that Indian Valley has a heart for giving.

Indian Valley Eighth Graders Explore History and Evolution of The American Flag

by Trent Couts, Indian Valley Middle School Assistant Principal



Every year, 8th grade students are treated to a performance of The Many Faces of Old Glory, presented by Vane Scott III. This educational program delves into the rich history and evolution of the American flag, offering a captivating blend of storytelling and historical insight.

Vane Scott III, following in the footsteps of his father, Vane Scott Jr., who originally created the presentation, brings to life the stories behind the various designs of the U.S. flag. Through engaging narratives, he highlights the significance of each version, reflecting the nation's growth and the values it embodies. The students were not only educated on the chronological changes of the flag but also inspired by the tales of patriotism and unity that each iteration represents.

This experience, performed three days before their trip to Washington DC, aligns with Indian Valley Middle School's commitment to providing enriching educational opportunities that connect classroom learning with real-world experiences. By witnessing The Many Faces of Old Glory, students gained a profound understanding of the nation's heritage and the enduring symbol of its identity.

Indian Valley Middle School Wins Tuscarawas County Math Tournament

by Brent Carter, Indian Valley Middle School Principal



Indian Valley Middle School (IVMS) emerged victorious in the 2025 Tuscarawas County Math Tournament, marking our first win since 2009. The tournament, organized by the East Central Ohio Educational Service Center (ECOESC), brings together students in 5th - 8th grades across various districts in our county.

Participants compete in multiple rounds covering categories such as Geometry, Ratios & Proportional Relationships, and Expressions & Equations. The school that accumulates the most points in all categories is declared the winner of the John Evanosky Trophy.

Placing first for the Braves were Grace Johnson, Jack Kinsey, Olivia McMillen, Blake Bickford and Evan Gray. The Braves also had a number of our students placing second and third in various categories.

Congratulations to all of our students who participated in this year's event, we are very proud of all of you. The victory is a testament to the dedication and hard work of both students and teachers at IVMS, Midvale and Port Washington.

Congratulations!
Class of 2025
Where they are headed



Blake Addy
Employed
ProVia - Information Technology



Kanzas Affolter
Enrolled
Kent State University Tuscarawas
Early Childhood Education



Gavin Albaugh
Employed
TMK Valley Propane
Equipment Operator



Kylia Arnold
Employed
Sugar Valley Meats
Meat Cutting



Lucas Bair
Enrolled
Kent State University
Aviation



Matthew Beamer
Employed
Seeking employment
Utility Lineworker



Emmalynne Berger
Enrolled
The Ohio State University ATI
Animal Science and
Agricultural Business



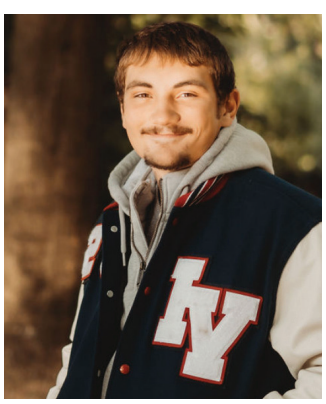
Zoe Blickensderfer
Enrolled
Capital University
Primary Education and
Intervention Specialist



Connor Bolon
Employed
ProVia - Construction Technology



Joselynn Boor
US Marine Corps - Amphibious
Assault Vehicle /Park Village
Health Care Center - CNA



Aidan Braun
Employed
Efficient Pipeline
Laborer



Jaxon Burcher
Enrolled
Wheeling University
Business Management



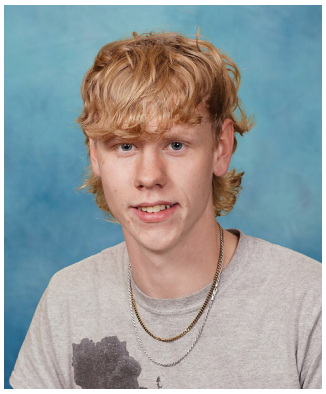
Landon Burgess
Employed
Computer Technology



Devon Burns
Employed
Dover Hydraulics
Machinist



Carson Burrier
Enrolled
Youngstown State University
Nursing



Zavier Byers
Undecided



Emma Byrd
Enrolled
Youngstown State University
Social Work/Counseling



Maddex Caldwell
Employed
Energy Operations



Joshua Carlisle
Employed
Kimble Companies



Julianne Cassidy
Enrolled
Buckeye Career Center
Adult Education
Dental Assisting



Ava Conrad
Employed
The Cutting Edge
Cosmetologist



Chase Coulson
Employed
Auto Technician



Mason Cox
Employed
Duck Water Boats



Noah Cremeans
Employed
Self-Employed
Landscaping



Jayden Dallacheisa
Enrolled/Employed
Kent State University Tuscarawas
Exercise Science
ProVia - Seasonal Help



Matthew Debolt
Enrolled
Ashland University - Integrated
Social Studies Education



Brylee Dewey
Enrolled
Kent State University Tuscarawas
Business



Katlynn Dickerson
Employed
Divine at Schoenbrunn
STNA



Kaylen Donohoe
Undecided
Entering the Workforce



Dominic Douglas
Undecided
Energy Operations



Kaylee Dunlap
Enrolled
Kent State University Tuscarawas
Nursing



Ella Enama
Enrolled
The Ohio State University
Biology/Pre-Optometry



Mason Fann
Employed
Carolina Stair Supply
Operator/Carpenter



Keeley Ferguson
Enrolled
Ohio University
English



Jacob Fisher
Employed
Construction Technology



Owen Fockler
Employed
Ohio Northern University
Civil Engineering



Olivia Ford
Enrolled
Kent State University Tuscarawas
Electrical Engineering



Tyler Fox
Employed
Dover Hydraulics Inc.
Welder



Brady Gambs
Employed
Bowerston Shale Company
Brick Layer



Gavin Garabrandt
Enrolled
Kent State University
Integrated Social Studies
Education



Leah Gardner
Enrolled
Kent State University
Finance



Makenna Gasser
Enrolled
Aultman College
Nursing



Alivia Gerstung
Enrolled
University of Akron
Psychology



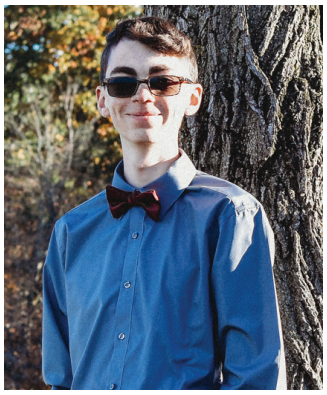
Eric Golder
Enrolled
Kent State University
Electrical Engineering



Shelby Gossett
Enrolled
Buckeye Career Center
Adult Education
Medical Assisting



Chance Gowins
Enlisted
United States Army



Cason Gray
Enrolled
Ohio University
Mechanical Engineering



Anthony Griffiths
Employed
Dough Co.
Customer Service



Addison Gump
Enrolled
Muskingum University
Nursing



Spencer Haney
Enrolled
Point Park University
Business Management



Kaleigh Hart
Employed
A Cut Above Salon
Cosmetologist



Cody Hickenbottom
Employed
Metallus
Electrical Systems Technology



William Holland
Enlisted
United States Marine Corps
Welding



Miley Hostetler
Employed
Ankrom Farm
Farm Hand



Brentin Irwin
Employed
ODOT
Masonry Credential



Trey Johnson
Employed
ProVia
Loading Dock/Transportation



Alexis Johnston
Employed
Hospitality



Ethan Jones
Employed
Tuscarawas County Engineer
Heavy Equipment Operator



Olivia Jones
Enrolled
Aultman College
Nursing



Wesley Jones
Enrolled
Kent State University Tuscarawas
Cybersecurity



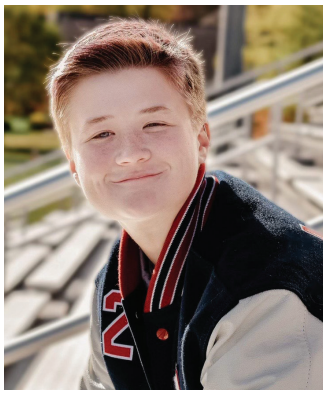
Maxwell Kinsey
Enrolled
Ohio University
Civil Engineering



Josiah Klaserner
Enrolled
Youngstown State University
Civil Engineering



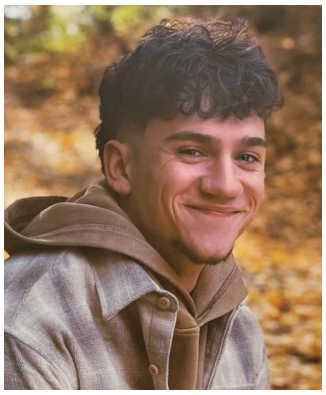
Mason Lancaster
Enrolled
Ohio University
Biology/Pre Med



Tristan Leach
Enrolled
Muskingum University
Music Education



Payton Leslie
Enrolled
East Tennessee State University
Nursing



Jaren Lindon
Employed
Metallus
Electrical Systems Technology Apprentice



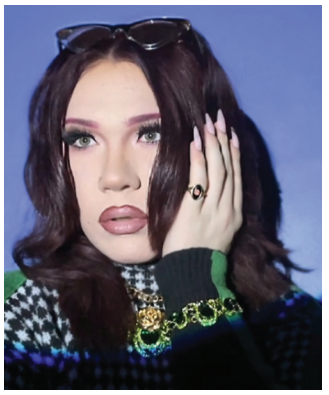
Selinace Llanes
Enrolled
Kent State University Tuscarawas
Veterinary Technology



Colton Long
Employed
Country Club Retirement Center
PCA



William Long
Employed
Pace-Sankar Landscapting
Laborer



Grady Manning
Employed
Goodwill Industries
Retail



Drake Masters
Enrolled
University of Toledo
Mechanical Engineering



Karlayna McDaniel
Enrolled
Kent State University Tuscarawas
Business Management



Landon McPeek
Enrolled
Kent State University Tuscarawas
Undecided



Andre Mendoza
Employed
Ohio State Highway Patrol
Internship



Colton Miceli
Employed
Howes & Sons Excavating
Heavy Equipment Operations



Cerraleus Millender
Employed
Texas Roadhouse
Busser



Garrett Miller
Enrolled
Youngstown State University
Biochemistry



Landon Mishler
Enrolled
Kent State University Tuscarawas
Information Technology



Jackson Murphy
Employed
Diversified Engineering
Surveyor



Brooklyn Myers
Enrolled
Buckeye Career Center
Adult Education
Dental Assisting



Sarah Myers
Enrolled
Kent State University
Business



Jewelius Nelson
Enrolled
Kent State University Tuscarawas
Political Science



Rylie Orr
Enrolled/Employed
National Beauty College
Cosmetology/Hennis Care Centre of Bolivar - STNA



Gavyn Ott
Employed
Industry Credential
Utility Lineworker



Kya Owen
Enrolled
Buckeye Career Center
Adult Education - Heavy Equipment/ CDL A Operator



Heavenlee Pall
Enrolled
Kent State University Tuscarawas
Early Childhood Education



Mason Parrish
Enlisted
US Army
Infantry Rifleman



Alixandra Patterson
Enrolled
Miami University
Kinesiology/Pre-Med



Connor Pearch
Employed
Superior Tank and Trailer
Welder/Mechanic



Hunter Peterman
Employed
Cornerstone Landscaping
Landscaper & Construction Technology



Nicholas Piatt
Employed
Hill International Trucking
Service Technician



Braxston Porter
Employed
Kimble Companies



Sophie Porter
Enrolled
Buckeye Career Center
Adult Education - HVAC



Riley Positano
Enrolled
Kent State University
French and Spanish Education



Brayden Powell
Employed
Duck Water Boats
Finisher



Jackson Proudfoot
Enrolled
Kent State University Tuscarawas
Civil Engineering



Claymond Quarles
Employed
AutoZone
Sales Representative



Makayla Rehard
Enrolled
Buckeye Career Center
Adult Education - Cosmetology



Jozie Riley
Enrolled
Youngstown State University
Political Science/Social Work



Devin Ross
Employed
Fishing Charter Guide



Jakiya Schafer
Enrolled
Malone University
Nursing



Alexa Schuler
Enrolled
University of Pikeville
Nursing



Matthew Septer
Employed
Dover Hydraulics
Welder/Machinist



Cecelia Shamp
Enrolled
Kent State University
Environmental Science and
Biology



Lora Shaw
Enrolled
Buckeye Career Center
Adult Education
Dental Assisting/Radiology



Peyton Shear
Enrolled
Cleveland State University
Music Therapy



Dawson Shivers
Employed
KET Kinsey Excavating & Trucking
Laborer



Ethan Shroyer
Employed
ProVia
Manufacturing



Andrew Smith
Enrolled
Kent State University Tuscarawas
Early Childhood Education



Christy Smith
Employed
Cosmetologist



Gabriel Smith
Employed
ProVia
Manufacturing



Kolton Smith
Employed
Electrical Systems Technology



Case St Clair
Employed
Kimble Companies
Heavy Equipment Operator



Elliona Stidd
Enrolled
Malone University
Exercise Science



Katelyn Stout
Enrolled
Kent State University Tuscarawas
Social Work



Ryah Stratton
Enrolled
Kent State University
Nursing



David Striker
Employed
Festi Heating & Cooling
HVAC



Mariann Stull
Enrolled
Marietta College
Psychology



Bryley Swaldo
Enrolled
Bowling Green State University
Flight Technology



Rylynn Swinderman
Employed
Cosmetologist



Dakodah Thompson
Employed
Wendy's Restaurants



Deyon Thompson
Employed
Dairy Queen
Customer Service



Makayla Tolotti
Enrolled
Kent State University Tuscarawas
Veterinary Technology



Jeffery Trolio
Employed
Welding



Connor Van Dyke
Enrolled/Employed
Stark State College - Automation & Robotics Technology/
Gradall Industries
Manufacturing/Engineering



Caden Vosick
Enrolled
Hocking College
Natural Resources
Law Enforcement



Kenneth Waid
Employed
Xtreme Elements
Concrete Finishing
Masonry



Sydney Waligora
Employed
Self-Employed
Cosmetologist



Mallory Walton
Enrolled
Mount Vernon
Nazarene University
Nursing/Youth Ministry



Luke Wells
Enrolled
Kent State University Tuscarawas
App Development BSIT



Faith West
Enrolled
Buckeye Career Center
Adult Education - Medical Assisting



Isabella Williamson
Enrolled
The Ohio State University
Psychology/Social Work



Jason Yoder
Employed
Yoder Family Roofing
Construction Technology



Samantha Zantene
Enrolled
Kent State University Tuscarawas
Veterinary Technology



Carson Zoller
Enrolled
The Ohio State University
Business Education

Indian Valley Celebrates Banner Year for Sports Teams and Student-Athletes

by Zach Golec, Athletic Director



It was an exciting year to be an Indian Valley fan as it was banner year in Braves Nation. The support that was seen from our district throughout this year was second to none and the successes would not have been possible without each and every one of our supporters.

Highlighting the year was a 16-0 football season that ended with a win over Sandusky Perkins to make us the Division IV OHSAA State Champions. This is the first in program history and also the first state football championship in Tuscarawas County. The district would like to thank our Athletic Booster Club and all private donors for their contribution in purchasing rings for the players and coaches.

The success of our student-athletes was not just contained to the gridiron. There were a plethora of teams and individuals that either qualified for, or placed at the state tournament. On top of that, we were IVC Champions or Runners-Up 10 times throughout the year.

Not only did our student-athletes continue to "Build the Brand" in their respective sports, but we were also top notch academically in the Inter Valley Conference (IVC). Each year our conference distributes Scholar Athlete awards to seniors from each school district that have a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or higher and have lettered in at least one varsity sport. This year, we had 27 individuals qualify which was more than any other school in the IVC.

We could not be more proud of our student-athletes and their success in competition, in the classroom and in the community.

GO BRAVES !!!!



Indian Valley Adds Esports and Clay Sports for 2025-2026 School Year

by Zach Golec, Athletic Director

The Indian Valley Athletic Department is pleased to announce the addition of esports and Clay Sports for the 2025-2026 school year. Both of these have been approved by the Indian Valley Board of Education and competition will begin in the fall.

Esports has two seasons throughout the year. There will be a two month season in the fall and then a small break with a second season beginning mid-winter and running through the spring. Indian Valley will be participating in the E-Sports Ohio league. Esports Ohio is an educational nonprofit esports organization.

The Clay Sports team will be participating in the Ohio High School Clay Target League. The League is an extracurricular coed and adaptive activity for safety-certified student athletes. They will also operate during two different seasons: one in the fall and one in the spring.

Both esports and Clay Sports will be operating from their designated home location the majority of the time and sending in scores to their respective organizations. Sign-ups exceeded our expectations, and we're thrilled to launch these exciting new opportunities for our students.

USA CLAY TARGET LEAGUE

ESPORTS OHIO

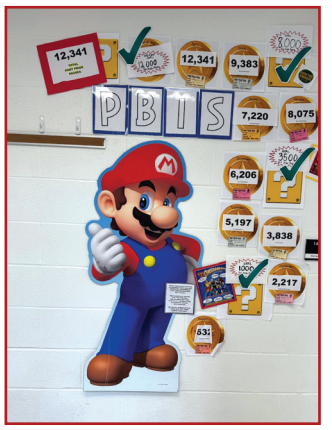
Port Washington Elementary Celebrates Outstanding School Year

by Troy Page, Port Washington Elementary School Principal

Port Washington Elementary School had a fantastic 2024-2025 school year. Our tradition of each grade level inviting family members in for a family engagement activity during the school year continued. Students always enjoy this fun opportunity to share their school experience with a loved one.

The accelerated reader (AR) program continued to grow. The AR program enables students to earn points by taking comprehension quizzes on books they read. This year, Port students passed 47,916 quizzes and earned 29,246 points. At the end of the year, students in grades K-2 get to pick a prize; students who have earned the most points get first pick. Students in grades 3-5 had an auction to spend their points on unbelievable prizes.

Our PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports) initiative continued with students earning Port Pride Passes for being respectful, responsible and/or engaged. In addition to students being recognized on Fridays and at the end of each month, building-wide rewards were also earned throughout the year. This year's building rewards included: the Omegaman assembly, the Quest for Kindness assembly, a performance by Take 3 (a nationally renowned string trio) and extra recesses. Collectively, our students earned more than 12,000 Port Pride Passes during the school year!









This year, Port was fortunate to be able to partner with OhioGuidestone so each of our 4th and 5th grade students were able to participate in their Takin It To The Schools program. This program provided seven sessions throughout the year to help improve our student's social and emotional well-being.

As always, the Port PTO was very active throughout the year and provided our students many special events including: Santa's Workshop, Mother/Son Olympic Night and the annual Spring Carnival.

The staff is very thankful for the support our families provide our students and our school. Their daily efforts - ensuring their student is reading daily outside of school, practicing their math facts and keeping up with homework - combined with always stepping-up when volunteers are needed for the special activities at the school, make a tremendous impact.

We can't wait to see what the 2025-2026 school year brings and what new opportunities we can provide our students.

Midvale Elementary Celebrates Veterans Day with Crafts, Family, and Fun

by Ryan Wells, Midvale Elementary Principal

The 2023-2024 school year proved to be another memorable year for our drama and music students.

At the elementary level, students performed again before large, fan-filled audiences. Parents, grandparents and other loved ones wait each year with anticipation as elementary concerts are filled with lots of cameras. Young stars are recorded as they create memories for themselves and their families.

Midvale Elementary proudly honored local veterans and their families during a heartfelt Veterans Day celebration held in late October and early November. The event brought students, staff, and community members together to show appreciation for the service and sacrifices of those who have served in the U.S. Armed Forces.



This year's theme centered around the poppy flower, a symbol of remembrance and hope. Students learned about the meaning behind the poppy, inspired by the poem "In Flanders Fields," and its role in honoring fallen soldiers.

Families enjoyed crafts, snacks, and quality time together, creating a warm and welcoming atmosphere throughout the event. Students proudly shared their gratitude and respect for veterans while deepening their understanding of this important holiday.

Special thanks to the Midvale staff for their dedication and support in making the celebration a success. This event reinforced the value of service and community, and we look forward to continuing celebrating veterans.

Drama Returns to Midvale Elementary with "Striking Out!" Performance

by Ryan Wells, Midvale Elementary Principal



After a long hiatus, drama returned to Midvale Elementary this winter as 4th and 5th grade students performed "Striking Out! (A Children's Play in Six Innings)" by Michael Bigelow Dixon and Valerie Smith.

Directed by Midvale teacher Amanda Poletti and assisted by Midvale teacher Katelyn Allen, the baseball-themed comedy was a hit with students and families alike. The play, filled with humor and heart, showcased the talents of students who embraced acting, teamwork, and the confidence that comes from performing.

"This production was about more than just a play," said Poletti. "It gave students a voice and a chance to grow creatively."

The cast and crew worked hard throughout rehearsals, and their efforts paid off with a fun, energetic performance that reignited the performing arts at Midvale. Midvale Elementary looks forward to building on this momentum with another production in February 2026.

Midvale Elementary Advances Learning and Positive Culture

by Ryan Wells, Midvale Elementary Principal

This school year, Midvale Elementary proudly launched Wonders English Language Arts (ELA) curriculum, an exciting new reading program that's already bringing stories to life in classrooms. Designed to captivate young readers and boost literacy skills, Wonders offers interactive lessons and targeted support to help every student succeed and grow in their love for reading.

We are building an even more positive and empowering school culture at Midvale by expanding our PBIS efforts. This year, we proudly launched our new Difference Maker of the Month program to spotlight students who go above and beyond in showing kindness, responsibility, and respect. These standout students are celebrated with rewards like special lunch privileges, yard signs, and shout-outs during our afternoon announcements.

Right to Read Week was a hit at Midvale. Classrooms buzzed with excitement as district staff served as guest readers, bringing the hilarious and spooky tales of the Black Lagoon series to life. Their storytelling helped spark curiosity and inspired students to dive deeper into reading.

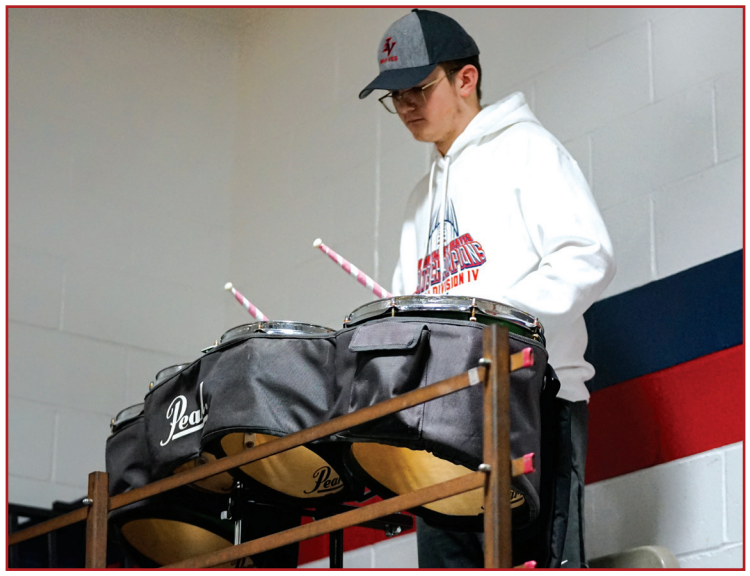
Midvale's 4th and 5th grade students got a glimpse into their futures at Career Day hosted by Buckeye Career Center. From hands-on demonstrations to conversations with high school students, our students explored career paths and discovered opportunities waiting for them.

These steps reflect Midvale's commitment to academic excellence and fostering a positive, supportive environment for all students.



THE YEAR IN PICTURES
























MERRY CHRISTMAS





INDIAN VALLEY LOCAL SCHOOLS

BOARD OF EDUCATION
Roger Bond, President
Bob Hall
Eric Kinsey
Francis Picchetti
Kathy Roth

Dr. Ira Wentworth
Superintendent

Andrew Bache
Treasurer

100 N Walnut Street, PO Box 171
Gnadenhutten, OH 44629
740-254-4334
740-254-9271 (Fax)

Indian Valley High School
Robert Clarke, *Principal*
rob.clarke@ivschools.org
253 S Walnut St.,
PO Box 130
Gnadenhutten, OH 44629
740-254-4262
740-254-9275 (Athletics)
740-254-4911 (Fax)

Indian Valley Middle School
Brent Carter, *Principal*
brent.carter@ivschools.org
261 School St.,
PO Box 356
Tuscarawas, OH 44682
740-922-4226
740-922-2493 (Fax)

Midvale Elementary School
Ryan Wells, *Principal*
ryan.wells@ivschools.org
4259 W. State St., PO Box 337
Midvale, OH 44653
330-339-1191
330-339-1194 (Fax)

Port Washington Elementary School
Troy Page, *Principal*
troy.page@ivschools.org
304 E Arch St.
Port Washington, OH 43837
740-498-8389
740-498-6312 (Fax)

Indian Valley Digital Academy
188 Southern Gateway St.
Gnadenhutten, OH 44629
740-561-4034

IMPORTANT DATES

Monday, August 4	6th Grade Orientation-6:00 p.m.
Wednesday, August 6	Midvale Kindergarten Parent/Guardian Meeting-6:00 p.m.
Thursday, August 7	Port Washington Kindergarten Parent/Guardian Meeting-6:30 p.m.
Thursday, August 7	7th & 8th Grade Schedule Night-6:00 p.m.
Monday, August 11	Teacher In-Service Day
Monday, August 11	Midvale Open House-6:00 -p.m.
Tuesday, August 12	Teacher Workday
Tuesday, August 12	Port Washington Open House-6:00 p.m.
Wednesday, August 13	First Student Day
Monday, August 18	Buckeye Career Center First Day of School
Tuesday, August 19	8th Grade Washington D.C. Parent Meeting-6:30 p.m.
Wednesday, August 20	Middle School Fall Picture Day
Thursday, August 28	High School Fall Picture Day
Monday, September 1	Labor Day- No School
Friday, September 5	Port Washington Fall Picture Day
Monday, September 15	Midvale Fall Picture Day
Friday, September 19	Teacher In-Service Day-No School
Saturday, October 4	IVHS Homecoming Dance-7:00 p.m.
Tuesday, December 2	College Financial Aid Night at the High School-6:00 p.m.

www.ivschools.org

Mission
Working together to personalize a rigorous standards-based learning experience.

Vision
Persistent academic and social problem solvers pursuing the career pathway of their choice.

Values
Innovation - Integrity - Relationships - Teamwork - Tradition

Motto
Brave Scholars - Brave Leaders - Brave Pathfinders