



HUDSON EXPLORERS CONNECT

News and Updates from the Hudson City School District

WINTER 2026

Hudson High School Earns Platinum Status on College Board AP Honor Roll

Two new AP classes to debut for 2026-27 school year.

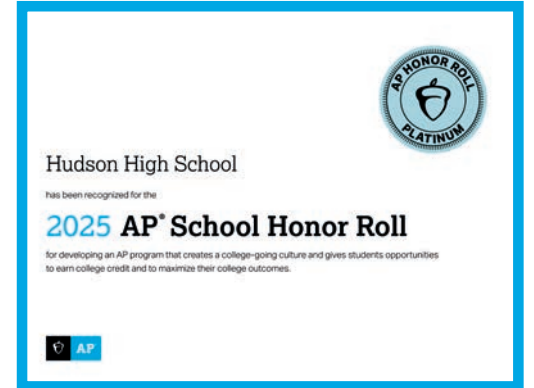
For the third consecutive year, Hudson High School has achieved Platinum Status, the highest level possible, on the 2025 College Board Advanced Placement (AP) Honor Roll.

The AP School Honor Roll recognizes schools whose AP programs deliver results and broaden participation for students. Hudson High School currently offers 25 AP courses, with

two additional planned for next school year. Last year, Hudson had a total of 678 AP students, with 91.74% earning a 3 or higher on the AP exams. The AP Honor Roll status is based on results specific to the Class of 2025.

Next school year, Hudson High School will debut AP Cybersecurity, taught by computer science teacher Katie Valenti. Students will learn about the common threats and vulnerabilities,

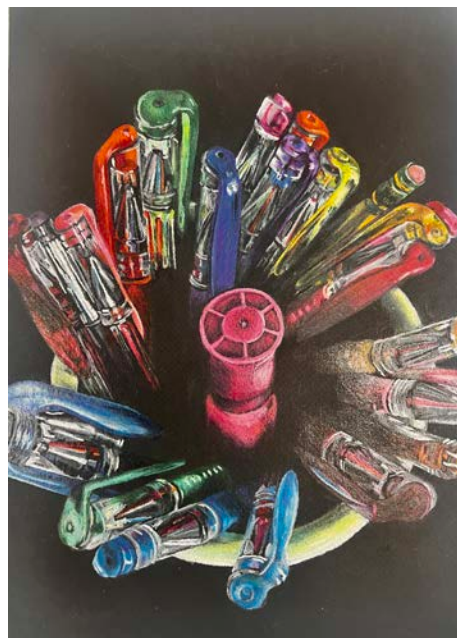
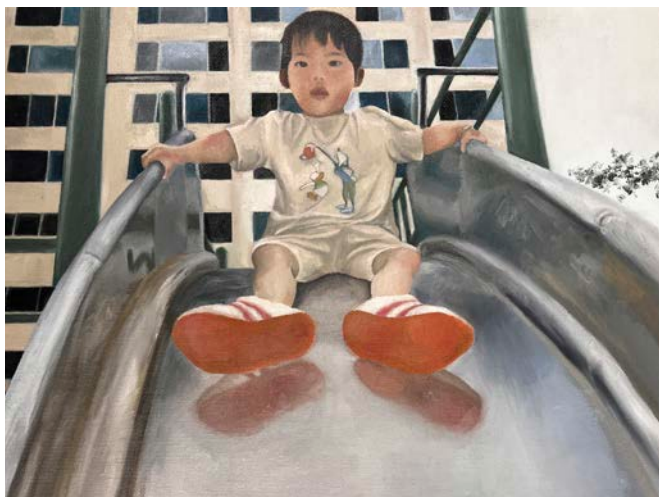
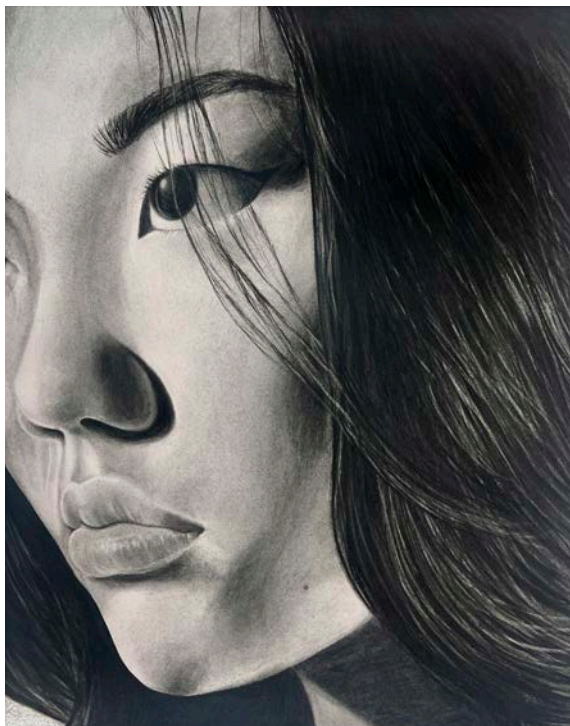
as well as study ways individuals and organizations manage and mitigate risk. In addition, Hudson will also add an AP Business with Personal Finance course, taught by business teacher Stephanie Sutton. Students explore the business disciplines of entrepreneurship, marketing, finance, accounting, and management through real-world business application, case studies, and project-based learning.



Hudson High School Art Students Earn Awards

Congratulations to the Hudson High School artists who recently earned awards in the 2025 Scholastic Art and Writing Contest for the Northeast Ohio region. Students were honored with six Gold Keys, seven Silver Keys and 14 Honorable Mentions.

This year's Gold Key winners are Zola Ferri, Grace Kim, Annie Lawrence and Grace McKenna.



Gold Key winners had their pieces displayed at the Kent State University Stark Campus before being judged at the national competition in the springtime.



From the District Treasurer: Ohio Property Tax Reform

In the early 1800s, Ohio established a system of public education and built a funding structure grounded in local property taxes. For more than two centuries, property taxes have served as the primary local funding source for public schools, as well as for cities, libraries, and parks.

Recently, the Ohio General Assembly enacted legislation that significantly alters long-standing property tax laws. While these measures were presented as tax relief, they materially change how school districts receive and grow local revenue. For many districts across the state, these changes will reduce future revenue capacity and shift key funding decisions away from local communities. For districts like Hudson, which rely heavily on local property taxes to operate, these changes introduce greater financial uncertainty and may accelerate the need to return to voters to maintain current programming and services.

There is an organized effort underway to pursue a statewide ballot initiative that would significantly reduce or eliminate property taxes altogether. Such a change would fundamentally restructure how public education is funded in Ohio. For Hudson City Schools, approximately 80% of our operating revenue comes from local property taxes. It is our responsibility to use those dollars wisely while continuing to deliver a high-quality, nationally recognized education to our students. We remain committed to that responsibility.

Harmony Project: Orchestra Room Groundbreaking Slated for March 16

Phase One of the *Harmony* Performing Arts Project is ready to get underway, as Hudson City Schools starts building the new 5,000 square-foot Orchestra Room at the high school. The official groundbreaking is planned for March 16th at 5:30 p.m. The new construction, which utilizes a combination of public and private funds, should be completed for student use by the start of 2027.

Meantime, the district is ready to begin fundraising for Phase Two of the *Harmony* project, which will include a renovated auditorium, to include new seating, acoustic upgrades, new stage and house LED lighting, a mid-house station, and more. The second phase will also include upgrades to the band room and choir room at the high school.

If you are interested in making a donation to the project, please scan the QR code or contact the Hudson Community Foundation at 330-655-3580. Naming rights for the project are still available. In all, the project will cost an estimated \$5.5 million.



Kindergarten Students Celebrate 100 Days of School

5th Grade Marks 1,000 Days

Two major milestones were celebrated recently with our kindergarten and fifth grade students! At McDowell Early Learning, our littlest Explorers marked their first 100 days of school. Students celebrated their educational growth by wearing special t-shirts, while others dressed up as the 100-year-old version of themselves. The 100 days of school is a fun rite of passage and a day enjoyed by all!

Over at East Woods Intermediate, our fifth grade students were observing a special day in their academic journey — the 1,000th day of school! To commemorate the event, students wrote letters to their future high school selves outlining their hopes and goals. Other activities included writing down favorite memories from kindergarten through the present to construct a giant paper chain and making 1,000 Valentine's Day cards to send to local senior citizens.



Join Us for the PTO Pancake Breakfast on March 7th



Tickets are on sale now for the 69th annual Hudson PTO Pancake Breakfast on Saturday, March 7, 2026 from 8 a.m. to noon at Hudson High School. This event is the PTO's largest fundraiser each year. In addition to pancakes and sausage, guests will enjoy live entertainment by Hudson students, games, raffle prizes, artwork, and much more.

Proceeds from the breakfast are given back to Hudson City Schools in the form of teacher grants, student scholarships, and programs.

Tickets purchased online at www.hudsonpto.org will be available for pickup on the day of the event. Event tickets are \$7 for adults and \$5 for children.

8th Graders Receive Early HHS Orientation

On January 16th, our 8th grade students took a trip to Hudson High School to learn more about what they will experience throughout the next four years.

This began a new tradition of giving our 8th graders a glimpse at high school life, far earlier than in previous years. Students broke off into several groups, as they toured the building, asked questions to a student panel concerning life at Hudson High School, and learned more about class offerings and the scheduling process.

These incoming freshmen will still begin the school year one day ahead of the 10th, 11th, and 12th grade classes, so they have additional time to get acquainted with navigating the high school.



Hudson Staff Honored at Summit County Celebration

Three Hudson staff members were honored on February 5th at the Celebration of Education through the Summit County Educational Service Center (ESC). The annual event highlights the achievements of dedicated educational professionals.

Kelly Grannis, a first-grade teacher at Ellsworth Hill Elementary, was honored as Hudson's Teacher of the Year. **Rowen Karasek**, a Hudson High School counselor, was named Rookie of the Year. And **Paul Vagi**, a longtime member of the Hudson Athletics community, was honored with a Lifetime Achievement Award.



Congratulations to all three staff members for their dedication to Hudson City Schools!

Kindergarten Registration Open for 2026-2027

Registration is now open online for the Class of 2039! Hudson City Schools offers both half-day and full-day options for kindergarten students. A \$200 non-refundable deposit is required if registering for the full-day kindergarten program. Per a new Ohio law that takes effect next school year, students must be five-years-old by the first day of school in order to begin kindergarten. The first day of school for the HCSD next year is August 18, 2026.

Kindergarten Parent Orientation will take place on April 8, 2026. An email to all families who register for kindergarten will be sent after March 10th with details regarding Orientation and Kindergarten Screenings.

If you have questions, please reach out to McDowell Early Learning School at 330-653-1246.



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For questions regarding this newsletter, please contact reece@hudson.k12.oh.us.

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