



Blackcat News

Mission Statement:

"Educating Today for a Better Tomorrow"

VOLUME 30 ISSUE 95

SCHOOL YEAR 2025-2026

March 19, 2026



From Crayons to College Credits: Preparing Students for Success

School districts are often measured by test scores or graduation rates. But in the Dunklin R-5 School District, the story of student success begins much earlier, long before the first standardized test. From the moment children walk into preschool to the day seniors graduate with college credits, Dunklin schools focus on preparing students for the future.

A Strong Start

That journey begins at Taylor Early Childhood Center, a program recognized across Missouri for its excellence. Taylor was named "Early Childhood Program of the Year" in 2019 and again in 2021. After receiving the honor twice, the MSBA's Future Builders Foundation asked the school to wait five years before applying again so other preschools could be recognized.

Like most preschools, Taylor teaches colors, shapes, numbers, and letters. What sets the program apart is the individual attention given to each child. A student may arrive with an issue, like a speech delay, that they often overcome before kindergarten. Others may face greater learning obstacles, but regardless of where they start, students consistently make progress during their time at Taylor. About 80 percent of kindergarten students entering Pevely Elementary School have attended Taylor's full-day or half-day program. The only downside to a strong preschool is the need to maintain a waiting list.

Measuring Progress

When annual state test scores are released, they provide a snapshot of student performance midway through their K-12 education. Grade level assessments for 3rd through 8th grade make up 85 to 90 percent of a district's MAP score. Among Jefferson County schools, Dunklin often ranks in the middle. District leaders say that has more to do with local census data than classroom instruction. Instead, administrators focus on where students finish their academic journey.

Those results come from End-of-Course (EOC) exams, the final standardized tests students take in subjects like English or math. On those exams, Herculaneum High School students consistently score above the state average, ranking in the top 10 percent of all Missouri school districts in Science and English Language Arts.

Census data shows Dunklin has a high mobility rate (18%), meaning many students move into or out of the district, especially in the lower grades. In fact, 38 percent of the district's fourth graders have not been in Dunklin for three years, meaning they did not attend Taylor or go to kindergarten at Pevely. So far this school year, we have welcomed 88 new students to the district, with about 20 percent arriving from out of state. Changing schools often causes a dip in academic performance, or they may have been behind academically when they arrived, but there is good news. Tracking their performance over time shows that Dunklin teachers get the new students up to speed within three years.

Preparing for the Future

While academic success matters, Dunklin focuses on preparing students for their next step after graduation. Career exploration begins in elementary school, and students start meeting with a counselor in the 8th grade. During the one-on-one meetings, they create a career plan that's updated annually.

For students planning to attend college, Herculaneum High School offers an impressive number of college credit opportunities at no cost. Counselor Laura Asinger says, "If you take dual credit in high school, it's discounted, but a class can still cost a couple of hundred dollars plus a textbook, so eliminating that barrier makes us unique." Herculaneum High School offers 53 college credit hours through partnerships with Jefferson College, Missouri Baptist University, and Missouri State University.

Some students take that opportunity even further by attending classes directly at Jefferson College during their junior and senior years. As a result, about 10 percent of the Class of 2026 will receive an associate degree just days before graduating from high school. Those credits can be a significant savings for families. Two years at Mizzou cost over \$60,000.

Not every student chooses a four-year college path, and the district provides strong career options as well. About 35 students currently attend the Area Technical School at Jefferson College, where they learn skilled trades and earn industry credentials. Programs range from Culinary Arts to Metal Fabrication to Biomedical Sciences. Students can become Certified Nursing Assistants during their junior year of high school and earn close to \$20 an hour working part-time during their senior year.

Students facing additional challenges can find support through the JAG (Jobs for America's Graduates) program, which provides mentorship and career readiness training. Programs like JAG have helped increase the district's graduation rate from 88 percent to 93 percent.

Each year, some graduates choose to serve in the military after high school. To help them make informed decisions about their future, students take the Military Entrance Exam. Recruiters also partner with the district to explain the many opportunities available, including specialized training, education benefits, and potential career paths within the armed forces.

Finishing Strong

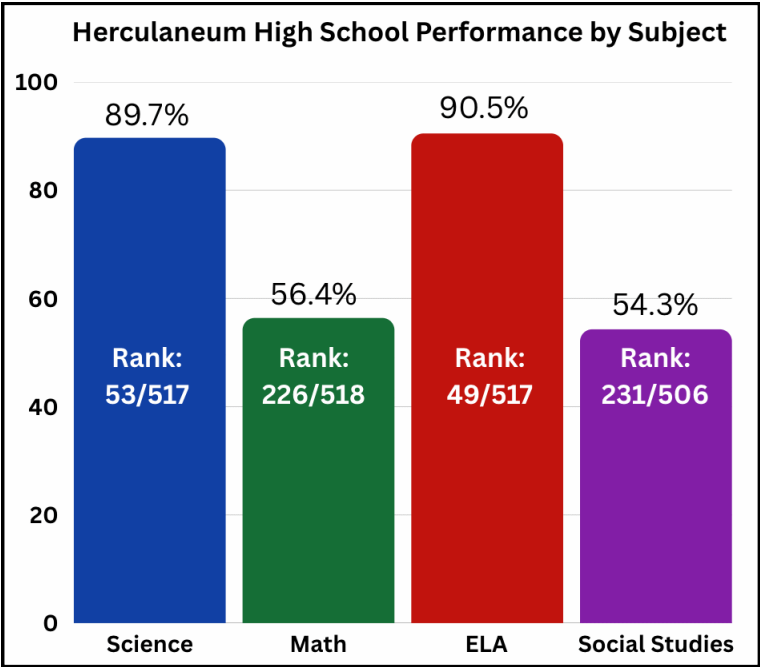
From preschool classrooms at Taylor Early Childhood Center to college courses and career training at Herculaneum High School, Dunklin students are given the tools to succeed. Whether they graduate with college credits, career certifications, or plans to serve their country, the district's mission remains the same: helping every student build a successful future.

Spring Break

April 1st through April 6th



The last day of school is May 22nd



GO Blackcats!

Message From Board President

As spring arrives, I want to share my gratitude and pride in our Blackcat community.

Over the past year, our students, teachers, staff, and families have shown resilience and dedication. Together, we've continued to focus on high-quality instruction, student health and safety, and expanding opportunities that prepare our young people for success beyond graduation.

Looking ahead, we're committed to finishing the school year strong and planning responsibly for next year. Key upcoming items include continued investments in professional development for teachers and a spring calendar of events, including many sporting events, and the music and arts programs.

Your feedback is important; please join us at the upcoming board meetings on the 3rd Tuesday of the month, or reach out directly with questions or ideas.

Thank you to our families, volunteers, and voters for your ongoing support. Our students are at the center of every decision we make, and together we will continue to build a school system that reflects our shared values and aspirations.

Go Blackcats,
Tammy Heidland
School Board President, Dunklin R5

Dr. Freeman's Message

Blackcat Community:

As the calendar turns and the days begin to lengthen, the Dunklin R-5 School District is officially in the "home stretch" of the 2025-2026 school year. Recently, I shared with enthusiasm the progress made thus far, reminding families that "it takes what it takes to be great." As we push toward May, the district is focusing on three key pillars: attendance, academic achievement, and community milestones.

The district continues to emphasize that consistent attendance is the foundation of student success. With the goal of every student being present at least 90% of the time, the "Attendance Matters" initiative remains a top priority. Currently, as a District, we are at a 93.38% attendance for the 2025-2026 school year. We encourage parents to help their Blackcats stay on track by scheduling appointments outside of school hours whenever possible. Remember: when a student is in their seat, they are in the best position to succeed!

Spring marks the arrival of the **Missouri Assessment Program (MAP)** and **End-of-Course (EOC)** exams. These assessments are vital tools that help us measure student growth and ensure our curriculum is hitting the mark. Teachers are already working with students on preparation—focusing on critical thinking and stamina. Parents can support their students by ensuring they get a good night's sleep and a healthy breakfast during testing weeks. Please review upcoming newsletters for specific dates and times of the upcoming state assessments.

Kindergarten screenings have begun, which means the class of 2039 is coming to

Pevely Elementary, and we are so excited to have them here next fall. We cannot wait to see some of the brightest, energetic students in the county enter our school. Over the next few months, there will be several more opportunities to gain valuable information from Pevely Elementary. Please visit our website at www.dunklin.k12.mo.us to complete your registration.

Stay up to date with the latest news and events by following us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, and visiting our website. Your support and involvement are essential to the success of our schools and students.

Upcoming Events:

Blackcats Give Back Day: April 25, 2026
High School Graduation: May 18, 2026

Dr. Clint Freeman, Superintendent of Schools, **Go Blackcats**

DUNKLIN R-5 SCHOOL DISTRICT

497 Joachim Avenue ▪ Herculaneum, MO 63048 ▪ (636) 479-5200

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Dr. Joe Willis, Assistant Superintendent

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GO BLACKCATS!

Board Meetings are Open to the Public

The Dunklin R-5 Board of Education meets on a regular basis on the third Tuesday of each month. The meetings are held at 7:00 pm. Check the website for the location. The meetings are open to the public. Patrons may view agendas and items from the meetings by going to our website www.dunklin.k12.mo.us, and clicking on the Board of Education tab.

Dunklin R-5 School District is an equal opportunity employer



- Spring Play dates are March 20th and 21st at 7 pm.
- The HHS Prom Committee will host an Easter Egg Hunt fundraiser on March 21st, from 9:30 am to noon, on the football field. The cost is \$15.
- Business Partners Lunch is on April 30th in the new gym.
- Spring Choir Concert is May 7th
- Retirement Dinner is May 12th
- Senior BBQ is May 14th, starting at 11:30 am on the Football Field.
- Taylor Preschool Promotion is on May 14th at 6 pm.
- The Senior Scholarship Award Ceremony is on May 15th at 6 pm in the theater.
- HHS Graduation is Monday, May 18th on the football field.
- Summer School is May 27th through June 26th.



Dennis McHawes - Class of 1990

He has the heart of a warrior and the soul of an artist. As an 18-year-old Marine, he endured mortar fire in Kuwait and, years later, graduated from the New York Institute of Photography. He's both a professional wrestler and a girl dad. He had a successful career in law enforcement, with the temerity to go after the bad guys and the sensitivity to serve on the Jefferson County Child Abuse Response Team. Dennis McHawes' life has played out like an adventure novel that has come full circle.



As a youngster, he would watch Wrestling at the Chase on TV and see the likes of Harley Race and Pat O'Connor. Dennis remembers going to the Checkerdome to see Rick Flair fight Bruiser Brody. He says, "That night, I knew I wanted to do it." Over a decade would pass, but McHawes would follow through and become a professional wrestler.

In high school, McHawes played baseball and football. His freshman year on the football team was the first year for new Head Coach Stan Helms. McHawes excelled over the years, playing offensive guard and defensive end. He was 17 at the time of his graduation, turning 18 in Marine Corps boot camp. That's about when Saddam Hussein decided to invade Kuwait. As part of Desert Shield, McHawes recalls living in a hole near the oil fields. They didn't have tents. He would read letters from his friends in college while listening for the next incoming round. He realized their life experiences were on dramatically different trajectories.

After four years in the Corps, McHawes went to the police academy at Central Missouri State. He worked at the municipal and county levels of law enforcement, earning the rank of Detective and serving on the St. Louis Major Case Squad. While he was starting his law enforcement career, he was also starting his wrestling career. The clean-cut young wrestler was a good guy called the Drill Sergeant. In the late 90's, he got a call from Harley Race to work for him. Having admired the legend since he was a kid, McHawes agreed. After many years of wrestling, he took a break. He was no longer a clean-cut young man. He wanted to be a bad guy for a change. He let his hair and beard grow while deciding on a new name. He eventually settled on Attila Khan. It was a combination of two historical figures: Attila the Hun, the fearsome leader who terrorized the Roman Empire, and Genghis Khan, the brutal Mongolian conqueror. The wrestler's look is made even more dramatic with white contacts. Just prior to the ceremony, Attila spent two weeks wrestling in Japan. While many are dismissive of professional wrestling, McHawes has paid a price to be cheered and jeered in the ring. The Herky alum has tallied 12 concussions as a fighter. His body is held together by scars and titanium. Several disks in his neck were fused, and a plate was installed. At the start of his career, he'd lift weights to get bigger and stronger. Today, he focuses on flexibility and mobility. Retirement is always an option, but he's an active member of a unique community, and he remains passionate about his childhood dream.

He reconnected with his high school after graduating from the New York Institute of Photography in the early 2000's. It took a year for him to get his first paying customer, Jim Kasten. Business picked up rapidly after that, and McHawes became Herculaneum High School's photographer. The circle was completed in 2007, when he was hired to coach the Blackcats' offensive line under returning Head Coach Stan Helms. Times had changed since the two-a-days in the 80's, but Coach McHawes shared his passion and knowledge. When introducing her father at the banquet, Madison McHawes said, "He leaves a mark on everyone he meets, everything he touches, and everywhere he goes." Dennis McHawes spoke that evening about his unusual path, the friends he has made along the way, and his incredible wife and three children. He said, "God has blessed me more than I deserve." Today, his life of service continues as a federal employee at the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency. His duties are classified.

Jacqueline Murry Harrison - Class of 1975



She never stopped to think about her accomplishments. Education and hard work were followed by more education and hard work. However, on the long drive to Herculaneum, Jacqueline Harrison had time to reflect. She didn't know classmates were following her journey on Facebook. They could have left comments when she graduated from Tulane Law School or passed the bar. Did they know she became an assistant state attorney in Texas in 1994 or a judge in 2012? Back in the 1960's, no one would have predicted her success.

Harrison remembers being a shy little black girl sitting in a courtroom, waiting for a judge to decide her destiny. Her mother died when she was 6 years old, and there was a custody battle unfolding in front of her. Fortunately, she would stay with her aunt and uncle in Herculaneum. The impression left on the young girl was of the awesome power and responsibility of a judge. She would aspire to hold that position, although she had no idea what it would take to wear the robes.

Today, Harrison talks about having a solid foundation, being raised by Aunt Kerry Burris, the first African American elected to the Herculaneum City Council, and her husband, Arnet Burris. Harrison had another aunt who taught 6th grade, but that wasn't a free pass for Jacqueline. Margarete Burris, a member of the Blackcat Hall of Fame, made sure her niece knew her lessons by calling on her all the time, even when her hand wasn't raised. By the end of that torturous school year, Jacqueline wasn't quite so shy, and she was always prepared for class. Jacqueline blossomed in high school as an athlete and band member. She was a part of the National Honor Society, Student Council, French Club, Science Club, and Nurses Club. Her comfort in social situations grew over time. During law school, she worked for TWA on the weekends as an international airline flight attendant. It was a nice balance, allowing Harrison to finish in the top 15 percent of her class at Tulane.

Meeting Harrison is like finding an old friend you didn't know was missing. She's personable, complementary, funny, and sincere. She drops knowledge casually, like she is talking about getting her nails done. Suddenly, you're knee-deep in a conversation about the judicial system in New Orleans being based on the Napoleonic Code rather than English common law. However, she shines when she talks about her family, especially her son, Justin Harrison. He graduated from Morehouse College with honors and is preparing for medical school. The young man is quick to smile and carries himself with a quiet dignity. During the reception, he would tell his mom, "You needed this."

H.H.S. Secretary Meghan McClain called Harrison to inform the alumna that she had not only been nominated but also elected to the Blackcat Hall of Fame. A moment passed, and there was no response. McClain asked, "Are you there?" Harrison was crying. She knew about the nomination but never expected to get a phone call from Herculaneum High School. She would tear up several more times before she left Texas.

Northbound on the interstate, Harrison was lost in her thoughts when the police pulled her over. The officer asked, "Where are you going in such a hurry?" Harrison told the officer she's going back home, to Herculaneum. She said I'm going to be inducted into my high school's hall of fame. He let her off with a warning.

Blackcat Give Back Day

April 25, 2026

A black silhouette of a paw print with three claws, containing the number 3.

Tiny Hands. Big Hearts

During Kindness Week, students at Taylor Early Childhood Center spent their days creating handmade Valentine's cards and colorful paper hearts — not for themselves, but for others. Their artwork was delivered to the residents of Scenic View in Herculaneum, spreading joy just in time for Valentine's Day.

The goal, according to Director Charissa Kappler, is simple but meaningful: teach children to do something purely out of the kindness of their hearts. As teachers and preschoolers worked side by side, they talked about grandparents, older adults, and what it means to care for others. Between glue sticks and crayons, they shared conversations about love, respect, and making someone smile.

On the Friday before Valentine's Day, Taylor's Leadership Team and a small group of students made a special delivery to Scenic View. For many residents, the visit was more than a surprise — it was a bright moment in their day. "Their faces lit up," Kappler said. "They were so excited to get something or see a child and have that human connection. They loved it." It was the first time Taylor's preschoolers visited Scenic View, making the experience even more memorable for both generations.



Pictured: Rowan, Alesha Farris, Shannon Kieschnick, Maggie, and Charissa Kappler.

Kindness Week extended beyond the senior community as well. For the second year in a row, the three- and four-year-olds decorated coffee sleeves with crayon masterpieces and words of encouragement. Each sleeve featured a sticker with affirmations like "You're Brave" and "You Matter." The cheerful creations were delivered to On the Grind on North Truman and The Corner Cup on Festus Main Street, ensuring that customers received a warm reminder along with their morning coffee.

At Taylor Early Childhood Center, Kindness Week isn't just an activity. It's a lesson — one that proves you're never too young to make a big difference.

Honoring Special Olympians



Morgan Hahn

Every spring, buses pull away from HHS carrying some of our proudest athletes to the Special Olympics track meet in De Soto. We send them off with cheers, and it's fulfilling to see them compete, earn medals, and take pride in their accomplishments. But inside the halls of the high school, there was little to show for their hard work.

When Junior Morgan Hahn noticed a poorly maintained display on the far side of Robinson Gym, she felt it didn't reflect the pride our Special Olympics athletes deserve. "We have a lot of things in our school for regular sports," Hahn said, "but our Special Olympics were tucked away in a corner." She decided it was time for a change.

With the support of Principal Dix, who gave her creative freedom, Hahn set out to design a mural in a high-traffic hallway. Art Teacher Christine Tipton allowed her to bring the vision to life during Independent Art Study, and Special Education teachers shared what their students loved most — Marvel superheroes and PBS characters like *Sid the Science Kid* and *Super Why!*.

Although the idea began more than a year ago, Hahn didn't start painting until September. She would stay after school and come in during Christmas break to carefully bring the wall to life. Now, the top of the mural proudly reads "HHS Special Olympics," bordered by bright, familiar superheroes chosen with the athletes in mind. It is colorful, joyful, and impossible to miss. "I just wanted to honor them," Hahn said. "Show them they are special."

Moving forward, the high school will take high-quality group photos of Special Olympics teams to display alongside the artwork. Staff members are also searching for photos from years past to ensure the wall reflects the program's history and growth. Morgan graduated in December but will return in May to walk at commencement — one more moment in the halls she helped change. She is currently attending Grabber School of Hair Design in Crestwood and is working toward a nail technician license.



Pictured: Savanna Smith, Brooklyn Propst, and Lillian Trusty

Senn-Thomas Olympics

While the nation tuned in to watch figure skaters glide, snowboarders soar, and curlers sweep their way to Olympic glory, students at Senn-Thomas Middle School were staging an Olympic competition of their own.

Student Council President Brooklyn Propst helped bring the event to life. “All the houses get together, compete, and earn points,” she explained. Propst kicked off the festivities alongside Vice President Savanna Smith and Secretary Lillian Trusty. Dressed in togas and standing before their classmates for the opening ceremony, the eighth-grade leaders embraced the moment without hesitation. For Smith, the outfit only added to the excitement. “I felt like I fit in because it’s part of the Olympics,” she said.

The ceremony was full of energy, with students proudly holding house flags and displaying colorful posters. Each house—named after a member of the Blackcat Hall of Fame—includes students from all three grade levels, creating teams that mix experience, personality, and plenty of school spirit. Then it was time for the games to begin.

Soon, the school buzzed with activity as teams rotated through a variety of challenges. Students shot free throws, tossed cornhole bags, walked like a duck, and carefully shuffled back-to-back while balancing balloons. In another event, teammates worked together to form giant letters with their bodies. The goal? Earn as many points as possible before time runs out. But the competition was about more than winning.

“It teaches you to work together as a team,” Trusty said. Communication and cooperation were essential to complete the challenges. Along the way, students built friendships, strengthened school pride, and practiced important life skills—all while having fun. For Smith, these experiences have helped her grow personally. “I used to be really scared of talking to people. I was super shy,” she shared. “But once I started having fun with it, I didn’t feel so embarrassed.”

As the STMS Olympics wrapped up, the student leaders had a bit of advice for next year’s organizers: don’t stress—just enjoy the moment. They even added a little humor to the ceremony, asking the crowd what they thought of their togas and receiving a round of applause in return. While the student council leaders were pleased with the event, they also wanted to thank Student Council sponsor Mrs. Butcher for her trust and setting them up for success.

New Assistant Principal Selected for Senn-Thomas Middle School



The search for a new assistant principal at Senn-Thomas Middle School has come to a close. Herculanum High School teacher Robert DeMoulin has been selected from a strong pool of candidates to help lead the school.

DeMoulin brings 13 years of teaching experience to the position. During his career, he has taught both World History and Special Education at Herculanum High School and has also taught at the middle school level.

“My time at the high school has given me a clear vision of the skills our students need to succeed long-term,” DeMoulin said. “I’m excited to bring that perspective to the middle school.” As he steps into the new role, DeMoulin hopes to focus on strengthening school culture while building strong partnerships with families. “My goal is to ensure every student feels supported in a positive, engaging environment as they navigate these pivotal years,” he said. DeMoulin will officially begin his new role at Senn-Thomas on July 1st.

He and his wife, Rosemary, have two children — one who attends elementary school and the other is enrolled at Dunklin Daycare.

DeMoulin will replace Kyle Borrer, who has been promoted to principal of Senn-Thomas Middle School. The current principal, Dr. Tracy Lewis, will retire at the end of the school year.



Pictured: Parker French, Aiden Pruitt, Will Slinkard, and Owen Tucker.

The Milk Mustache is Back! For the first time in 14 years, whole milk is being served to students. Whole milk was removed from public schools in 2012. A new bipartisan bill, signed on January 14th, reinstates both whole and 2% milk as options for students.

Is it healthy for kids? Here is what research tells us: Whole milk is nutrient-dense and provides essential vitamins A and D, calcium, and healthy fats that support growth and brain development. While it contains more fat, some studies link whole milk to greater satiety, higher nutrient intake, and lower childhood obesity rates compared to lower-fat options.

Mini Cheer Camp

More than 100 elementary students wrapped up Mini Cheer Camp with a halftime performance during a varsity girls' basketball game. The stands were packed with parents who smiled and waved, trying to catch the eye of their little Blackcat. With cell phones in hand, they were ready to capture every second.

Soon, the cheers, chants, and dances began, delighting the crowd. Varsity cheerleaders performed alongside the campers, guiding their movements and boosting the volume of their chants. The young performers rose to the moment, each camper revealing a bit of their personality on the hardwood. In the stands, adults beamed with pride, recognizing a special moment that would pass all too quickly.

Cheer Coach Michelle Wichmann said the camp typically attracts between 100 and 125 students, making it their largest fundraiser. Several cheerleaders tutor at Pevly Elementary School, which may help attendance. "I give the cheer team music to use at camp, and they create the choreography," Wichmann said. She encourages her team to make the experience fun and memorable, and the formula seems to work. As a middle school science teacher, Wichmann often sees sixth- and seventh-grade girls still wearing their Mini Cheer Camp t-shirts from their elementary days. A couple of the varsity cheerleaders even remember attending the camp themselves.





DUNKLIN R-5 PRESCHOOL

We have openings available for the 2026-2027 school year
at Taylor Early Childhood Center.

QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

- Must be a Dunklin R-5 Resident
- Child will be 3 or 4 years old on or before July 31, 2026
- Parent/Guardian provides transportation to and from school.

PROGRAMS AVAILABLE

- Half-day Morning (8:50-11:50) & Afternoon (12:50-3:50)
- Full day (8:50-3:50)
- ADA (free program, income-based)
- Before and after care on-site services available through the Jefferson County YMCA

SPACE IS LIMITED

If you're interested, please contact Taylor Early Childhood Center's office at (636) 479-5200
Option 5 to add your child to the waiting list. Don't delay, rosters fill up fast!



Students Turn Eyesore into Artwork

When a truck hit the front of MRV Bank in November, employees had no idea they would be staring at plywood for months. But as it turns out, plywood is just a blank canvas waiting for a little imagination.

Instead of a quick fix, bank administrators chose to redesign their storefront, but that takes time. Eventually, MRV's Dan Abts reached out to Superintendent Freeman with a simple idea: What if students could help?

Enter the artists of Herculaneum High School. Mrs. Tipton made sure her students were armed with paint, brushes, and a healthy supply of creativity. The barren boards began to bloom with color and character. Stroke by stroke, the dull facade transformed into a joyful conversation piece. Employees smiled a little wider, customers lingered a little longer, and the temporary walls became something worth seeing.

And the story doesn't end there. When construction finally begins, contractors will carefully cut the artwork from the 4x8 sheets of



Pictured: Clarissa Corder, Mackenzie Janczura, Zoey Leaman, Kennedi Curtis, and Zoe Lammert. Not Pictured: Faith Stinson, Gabrielle Ramos, Kiana Davidson, Trace Dyer, Aubrey Emily, Caleb Blaylock, and Emma Rowden.

plywood and return them to the students — preserving not just the paintings, but the pride, collaboration, and community spirit that brought them to life.

Late Mayor... Bill Haggard Had a Lasting Love for the School District

The late Herculaneum Mayor Bill Haggard had a deep love for the Dunklin School District and its history. A passionate historian, he helped bring the community together during the district's Centennial Celebration in 2018. Even after his passing, his care for the district continued to reveal itself in a meaningful way.

In a shed at Kade's Playground, Haggard had saved several dusty strips of old gym flooring. At first, no one knew if the pieces were simply random boards or part of something larger. That's when Herculaneum High School junior Jaxon Jakubs stepped forward, offering his time and determination to uncover the story behind them.

Piece by piece, Jakubs began the careful work of restoring the wood. Using heavy buckets and plenty of patience, he slowly flattened the warped wood. As the pieces came together, he realized Haggard had preserved part of a shuffleboard court from the hallway of the old gym. Jakubs built a custom frame and carefully waxed the wood to bring out its original color and character. Recently, he delivered the finished piece to Superintendent Freeman at the Central Office. What once sat forgotten in a shed was transformed into a beautiful tribute to the community's history.





**The theater
department
presents**

**MURDER'S
in the HEIR**

Dunklin R5 Theatre

March 20th & 21st

7pm

CRIME SCENE - DO NOT CROSS





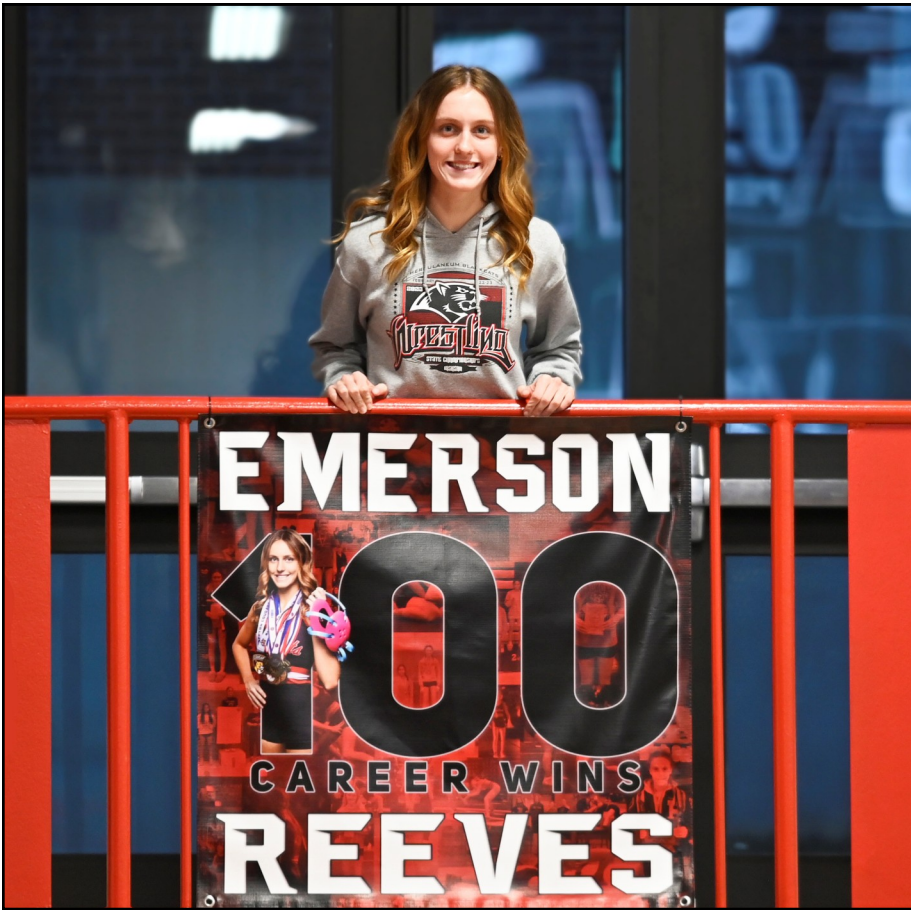
100 Wins and Counting for Emerson Reeves

Junior wrestler Emerson Reeves reached an impressive milestone this season, earning her 100th career victory on the mat. “It’s a goal I’ve had since freshman year, so I’m happy I made it,” Reeves said. She has been wrestling since fifth grade, and her success has continued into high school. During the regular season, it can be difficult for her to find opponents in her weight class. “I get most of my matches during tournaments,” she said.

In the hallways of Herculaneum High School, Reeves is quiet and unassuming, blending easily into the crowd. On the wrestling mat, she’s a true competitor—circling opponents quickly, searching for leverage and the perfect grip. Once she gains control, the match often ends fast. Reeves says, “It’s hard, but it can also be fun.”

Reeves finished the season with 125 career wins and a third-place finish at the state wrestling championships, adding another highlight to an already decorated career. Coach Bahr believes the best may still be ahead. “I can’t wait to see what she does next year,” Bahr said. “If she can reach 150 wins, that would be the equivalent of scoring 1,500 points in basketball.”

Reeves is a multisport athlete who earned All-State honors in



wrestling, cross country, and track last year. Athletic success runs in the family. Her older siblings, Eddyson and Keaton, both made their mark on the wrestling program, and the youngest, Kamdon, is already emerging as a talented grappler.



Follow us on
social media.



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Dr. Willis @JoeFWillis
Matt Lichtenstein @BlackcatMatt

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Pevely Elementary @MsKatieDunlap

Taylor Preschool @DunklinTaylor



Dunklin R5 School District
Herculaneum High School
Senn-Thomas Middle School
Pevely Elementary School
Taylor Early Childhood Center

BLACKCATS
GIVE BACK DAY
April 25, 2026

A DAY OF SERVICE PROJECTS
THROUGHOUT THE COMMUNITY

