WINTER
2025-26

Aurora City School District

YOUR SCHOOLS

Aurora Learners – Future Ready

From the Superintendent

By DR. PAUL MILCETICH
Superintendent of Schools



As we move through the heart of winter and into the early months of the new year, our schools and community have once again demonstrated resilience, pride, and a shared commitment to our students. While the fall season brought excitement through academics, athletics, music, and student activities, this winter has reminded us that the work of educating and caring for young people continues regardless of weather, challenges, or changing circumstances.

This school year has included an unusually high number of cold and snow days, requiring thoughtful decision-making centered on student and staff safety while also honoring the importance of instructional time. I am grateful for the flexibility, understanding, and partnership shown by our families as we navigate these decisions together. These moments reinforce the trust that exists between our schools and our community. That trust is essential as we work to balance safety, learning, and continuity.

Even amid the conditions, our students have continued to shine. This past fall, our extremely talented Boys Soccer team made history by advancing to the state championship game for the first time in school history. While the final outcome did not result in a state title, the achievement itself was extraordinary and a source of great pride for Aurora. Under the leadership of Coach Louis Kastelic, in his first year as head coach, our student-athletes demonstrated perseverance, teamwork, and belief at the highest level of competition. This historic run will be remembered as a milestone moment for our school and community.

We are also proud to celebrate outstanding academic and artistic accomplishments that

Superintendent continued on p. 2

Harmon STEAM Class Hands of Gratitude Prosthetic Project

Students in the Aurora City School District's (ACSD) Harmon Middle School STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics) classrooms were recently involved in a classroom project that was both meaningful and inspiring. Students in Harmon teacher Karen Sunderhaft's 6th grade STEAM class and Corrine Mack's 8th grade STEAM class were busy assembling 3-D printed prosthetic hands in conjunction with the Hands of Gratitude organization. Hands of Gratitude, founded by Aurora resident, Matt Campana, is described as a, "fun and interactive program for individuals and teams to assemble 3D printed prosthetic hands. The complete devices are then distributed to thankful recipients around the world."



Sunderhaft explained how the classroom project came about saying, "So, I was watching tv and somehow came across a presentation about Hands of Gratitude. Matt Campana, who is the founder of it, is a local man and they have done this in Hudson Schools and other schools in the Ohio area, and I thought, why not us, we can do this. It would be great to. So, the whole premise behind it is that students are going to have this opportunity over the course of multiple days to get all the pieces and parts of the prosthetic hand, wire it together, put it together, build it and it is a very durable, lightweight opportunity for students and children in other parts of the world who have lost a hand to be able to be independent again. This is an awesome opportunity in engineering. The students are going to work together"

Sunderhaft stated, "The 8th grade STEAM classroom by Corrine Mack, who is a new teacher in Aurora, as well, she and I are working together on this and she has about 22 8th graders and I have about 20 6th graders, and we're working together in groups of 3-4 to wire and put it all together and it's really excellent because it' very lightweight, and durable. Students will learn that once you

Hands of Gratitude continued on p. 5

ACSD Board of Education Organizational Meeting 2026

The Aurora Board of Education (BOE) held their annual BOE Organizational Meeting on Tuesday, January 6, 2026. The Board of Education members voted in Pam Mehallis as president of the Aurora School Board for 2026. Board member Jennifer Klich was voted in as vice president for 2026 by the BOE members. Both the president and vice president took their oaths that were given by ACSD Treasurer, Bryan Schiraldi, during the meeting.

The BOE members also welcomed Board member, Kate Fuller, who was elected as the newest Aurora Schools' Board member as a result of the November 4, 2025 general election results. Fuller replaced Aurora BOE Vice President Stephen Sabulsky.



Pam Mehallis – Aurora BOE President



Jennifer Klich – Aurora BOE Vice President



Kate Fuller – New Aurora BOE Member

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

From the Superintendent 1
Hands of Gratitude Prosthetic Project 1
ASCD BOE Organizational Meeting 1
Board Member Klich Wins Aptitude Star Award 2
ACSD Quality Profile 2
ASF Serveohio Volunteer Project 3
Ohio School Board Recognition Month 2026 3
Kour Wins Statewide Tech Corps Hackathon 3
ACSD Partners With KSU's Cognitive Robotics Lab . 3
Sport Report 4
Beckstrom STEAM Class Presentation 5
AHS Model UN Club 6
Class Acts 6
AHS College AP Platinum Honor Roll 6
Who's Who & What's New 7
Aurora Schools' Veterans Appreciation 2025 8

Superintendent - *Continued from p.1*

reflect the strength of our learning culture across the district. Aurora High School was recently recognized by the College Board as an AP School Honor Roll Platinum recipient, an improvement from our previous Gold designation. This recognition celebrates more than just test scores, as it highlights inclusive practices, access to rigorous coursework, and a belief in all students striving to reach their potential. As the College Board notes, students who engage in Advanced Placement coursework are more likely to attend college, graduate on time, and build confidence for future success. This achievement reflects not only the dedication of AHS students and staff, but the intentional scaffolding built across our entire district to support learners at every level.

In the arts, Aurora High School students were recognized through the prestigious Scholastic Art Awards. Congratulations to our student artists and to instructors Sean Berrodin and Eric Head for earning this well-deserved recognition. I would be remiss not to mention by name AHS Students Shuti Potdar, Evan Bienkowski, and Ellen Burdett who received Gold Medal level recognition! These accolades are a reflection of a vertically aligned art program that begins in our elementary schools and continues through middle school and high school, reinforcing our commitment to The Green Standard and the development of the whole child. Artistic expression, creativity, and personal voice are essential components of a well-rounded education, and we are proud to see our students' work advancing to national adjudication in New York City later this spring.

Beyond awards and recognitions, what continues to define Aurora is the strong connection between the schools and our community. Throughout the year, our students and staff engage in service, collaboration, and authentic learning experiences that extend far beyond the classroom, such as the annual Rake and Run or Veterans Day events or collections for those less fortunate. These moments, whether rooted in athletics, academics, the arts, or service, are living proof of a culture grounded in compassion, responsibility, and shared purpose. They are reminders that education is not just about achievement, but about developing thoughtful, empathetic, and engaged citizens.

As we look forward, an important focus for the district remains our facilities planning work. We recently launched a new website dedicated to "The Essential Plan," (https://sites.google.com/view/acsd-facility-master-planning/home) providing our community with clear, accessible information about the potential future of our school buildings. In addition, a series of short informational videos is being released to explain various aspects of the plan and answer common questions. These tools reflect our commitment to transparency and meaningful engagement.

The Essential Plan represents a more focused and cost-effective approach to addressing our most urgent facility needs. While portions of the plan include elementary building improvements, it is important to emphasize that a key component is a districtwide "Triage List" of essential upgrades. These improvements (including HVAC systems, roof repairs, parking lot paving, and work along Greenmen Way) will benefit all schools across the district, including the middle school and high school. This work is about maintaining safe, functional, and healthy learning environments for every student, now and into the future.

We continue to collaborate closely with our staff and the City of Aurora as designs are refined, and we look forward to hosting community feedback meetings on April 16th, 21st and 29th from 6:30-8:00 p.m. in the Craddock School gym. Your input remains vital as we move thoughtfully and responsibly toward the future.

As always, thank you for your continued support of Aurora City Schools. Together, we remain committed to nurturing the roots of our learners, upholding The Green Standard, and preparing our students to be truly Future-Ready.

Go Greenmen!

AURORA BOE MEMBER JENNIFER KLICH WINS APTITUDE STAR AWARD

Congratulations to Aurora Schools' Board of Education member Jennifer Klich *(center)* for earning the Aptitude Star Award and being recognized by the Ohio School Board Association (OSBA) for this achievement at their Northeast Region Fall Conference.



The OSBA's STAR Awards program highlights school board members' commitment and service to Ohio's students. The four awards that comprise the program include: service, training, aptitude and recognition.

The Aptitude Award, "requires a board member to demonstrate an understanding and comprehension of a variety of board governance skills based on six leadership areas: vision, accountability, policy, community engagement, relationships and advocacy. To receive this award, board members must receive an 80% passing score on an online assessment."

ACSD QUALITY PROFILE 2024-25 AVAILABLE ONLINE

The ACSD Quality Profile helps to characterize the overall educational value of the Aurora City Schools and is now available online on the ACSD website. The annual profile can be found on the district website homepage under District with the title Quality Profile or follow the QR code below which will take you directly to the Quality Profile. Please take a look at all of the many amazing things that happen throughout our district.

YOUR SCHOOLS

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Your Schools is a publication of the Aurora City School District. Its purpose is to keep residents of Aurora informed of current events and progress in the Aurora City Schools and to foster pride and a continuous communication link between the schools and the community.

Your Schools has been awarded the "Mark of Excellence" and "Best of the Best" Awards by the Ohio Chapter of the National School Public Relations Association for service as a school district newsletter. Your Schools is a quarterly publication, mailed to all residents of Aurora. For information, comments, or story ideas, e-mail Editor Stacey DeAnna at: yourschools@aurora-schools.org.

AURORA SCHOOLS FOUNDATION SERVEOHIO VOLUNTEER PROJECT

In true community spirit, the Aurora Schools Foundation (ASF), in partnership with ServeOhio, led a successful Make-A-Difference Day project on October 26, 2025, bringing together students, parents, educators, and civic organizations to improve outdoor learning spaces at Aurora's Leighton Elementary School. Make-A-Difference Day, established in 1992, takes place annually on the 4th Saturday of October to encourage community service and volunteerism. Volunteers gathered to refresh the wooded trail behind the school with fresh mulch and to install new garden beds, replacing older structures that had become difficult to maintain.



The project is part of the ASF's mission to fund innovative and imaginative grants that go beyond the school budget. In a newly formed grants subcommittee, ASF successfully applied for and received a grant from ServeOhio to make this project a reality. The trail was refreshed with mulch that gives students access to an outdoor classroom and also connects to a nearby neighborhood, making it a shared resource for the community. One section of the trail features fairy houses created by fifth-grade students, which are used by kindergartners who craft wooden figures to populate these whimsical displays, a tradition that fosters both creativity and a love for nature. ASF promoted the volunteer effort widely and the response was robust with two volunteers shifts set up.

"This event exemplified what community service is all about," said Rachel Reight, ASF President. "We're proud to support imaginative projects that not only enhance student learning but also build lasting community connections."

ALYZA KOUR WINS STATEWIDE TECH CORPS HACKATHON



Aurora High School 9th grade student, Alyza Kour, received top honors in the 2025 Tech Corps Hackathon on November 8, 2025. The Hackathon is a TECH CORPS statewide mobile app development challenge with 300 high students from across Ohio participating.

The Hackathon challenged students to design and build a mobile application inspired by one the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals for 2030. The goal was to encourage students to think creatively about how technology can improve communities and contribute to a better world.

Kour, on team Miracles are Made, created an app that connects people in need with nearby community resources and support services. During the nine-hour challenge, "students collaborated with peers and received support from more than 90 logistic and tech volunteers, judges, and community professionals. Participants strengthened their coding, problem-solving, communication, and presentation skills while gaining insights into real-world technology careers."

As a regional winner, Kour received a $200 digital gift card in recognition of her creativity, teamwork, and commitment throughout the event. Kour was honored for her accomplishments in December 2025 in Columbus, OH by the Ohio Senate and House Representatives.

OHIO SCHOOL BOARD RECOGNITION MONTH 2026



The month of January 2026 has been proclaimed School Board Appreciation Month in Ohio. The Aurora City School District (ACSD) is celebrating and thanking its board members for their dedication and commitment to the district and its students.

Our school board members play an indispensable role in shaping the educational landscape. They are integral to the success of our school district as they make critical decisions that affect our students, educators and our community. While January is a special time to recognize their contribution, their commitment lasts all year.

The ACSD would like to thank our Aurora Board of Education members, Pam Mehallis - president, Jennifer Klich - vice president, Michael Acomb, Molly Schneider and Kate Fuller for their continued hard work, dedication and tireless efforts. Their invaluable gifts of leadership, vision, and caring have made the Aurora City Schools one of the top districts in the State of Ohio.

ACSD PARTNERS WITH KENT STATE UNIVERSITY'S COGNITIVE ROBOTICS AND AI LAB

Aurora City Schools was honored to host Dr. Rui Liu and his associate, Runxiang Jin, from Kent State University's Cognitive Robotics and Artificial Intelligence Lab during the district's Teacher Professional Development Day on October 13, 2025. Staff members had the opportunity to interact firsthand with one of the lab's quadruped robots, sparking enthusiasm and curiosity about the future of robotics and artificial intelligence in education.

This event marks the beginning of what promises to be an exciting and enduring partnership between Aurora City Schools and Kent State University. For several years, Aurora's in-house development team has been engineering software solutions to enhance learning and streamline school operations. The district's latest generation of tools incorporates AI-powered features designed to support students and educators alike.





The innovative research taking place at Kent State's Cognitive Robotics and AI Lab perfectly aligns with Aurora's district mantra: "Aurora Learners, Future Ready." Both institutions share a commitment to preparing students for a world shaped by emerging technologies. Looking ahead, this collaboration may open new opportunities for grant funding, software innovation, and the development of new courses and learning experiences for young people across all grade levels.

SPORT REPORT

Kamy Milano, a four-time tennis district qualifier, headed to Akron for the **OHSAA Sectional** finals again in October 2025. Congratulations!

The **Girls Cross Country Team** was successful in earning the **Suburban League Championship** title and went on to take 6th place at the State competition. Individually, **Nathan Eminian**, came back with a 7th place finish overall. Thank you to **Cross Country Coach**, **Laura Bell-Peters**, for a very successful season this year.



Girls Cross Country Team

In golf this past season, the **AHS Golf Team** took 2nd place in the American League Conference with a total of 336 points. Individually, Golfer **Jackson Sarver**, earned the **Runner Up Medal** in the **Suburban League Tournament** at the J.E. Goodpark Golf Course. Way to go!



AHS Volleyball Team - District Champions ~ First Time in AHS History



After securing the **Suburban League Champions title** by taking down the #2 seeded Padua High School, the volleyball team headed to **Sweet 16 competition**. For the first time in AHS history the team ended their season as **District Champs**! A big congratulations to all on an amazing and fulfilling season.

The **AHS Boys Soccer Team** and first year **Coach**, **Louis Kastelic**, secured the **Suburban League Champion** title this season. The soccer team then went on to compete in the **OHSAA State Championship State Final** against the Bishop Watterson Eagles in Columbus, Ohio on Sunday, November 9, 2025 at the Historic Crew Stadium. The team came home with a 0-3 loss, but made AHS history! Congratulations on a very exciting season and for making the Greenmen Nation extremely proud!



AHS Boys Soccer Team

The **AHS Girls Soccer Team** had a great season making it to the **District Semi-Final** competition. What a great run!

Congratulations are in order for the **AHS Cheer Squad** who came in **1st place** in the **2025 Suburban League Conference Cheer Competition** and now have their banner added to the AHS athletic banner collection. They also went on to place 3rd in the **American Spirit League NE Ohio Championship**. Their talent and determination has taken them far.



The **Aurora Varsity Football** team had a strong finish to their season with wins against Revere, Kent Roosevelt, Tallmadge and Barberton, wrapping up yet another winning season!

Congratulations to the **Division I** and **Division II student athletes** who each signed their letters of intent to play on November 19, 2025:

Lailah Bohanan (SFBL) - Youngstown State
Drake Brasiel (WR) - Newberry College
Isabella Cicero (TRK) - U.S. Military Academy, West Point
Abby Dalessandro (GSC) - Murray State
Charlotte Sorma (SFBL) - Lake Erie College
Emerson Spiesz (VB) - University of South Carolina Upstate
Cameron Warnke (BSC) - University of Akron

Congratulations to **Jordan West** for making history when he was named to the **United Soccer Coaches 2025 Boys High School All-American Team**! West is the first soccer player in the Greenmen program history to receive this honor!





Aurora Greenmen wrestler **Giulia Zayas** took 1st place at the **Lady Vikings Wrestling Meet**. A big Congratulations to her from Greenmen Nation!

Congratulations to **Division III All-Ohio Player of the Year**, **Jordan West**, and **Division III Ohio Coach of the Year**, **Louis Kastelic**, who were honored at the **2025 Ohio Scholastic Soccer Coaches Association Awards Banquet** in Columbus, Ohio.





Congratulations to Greenmen Girls Soccer Captain, **Abby Dalessandro**, who signed with Murray State on November 19th, 2025.

Congratulations to Greenmen **Soccer Coach Jason Bibza** on earning his 2025 Division III **All Greater Cleveland Assistant Coach of the Year** honor.



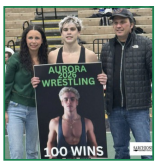


Signing Day November 19, 2025 – Aurora Soccer Player #17, **Kam Warnke**, committed to play for the **Akron Zips Men's Soccer Team**. Fantastic job!

The Greenmen **Swimming/Diving Team** beat Kent to become **Suburban League Champs**! Way to go!



Aurora senior **Nick Turba** became the 31st Greenmen wrestler to reach the 100-win mark in wrestling. Congratulations to Turba on that milestone win! Keep up the great work!



Sport Report continued on p.5

ACSD GRADUATE, ALFRED BECKSTROM, STEAM CLASS PRESENTATION



Aurora Schools' 2014 graduate, Alfred Beckstrom, took the time to visit Harmon School Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics (STEAM) classes on October 22, 2025. Beckstrom is a product engineer at Fives North American Combustion, Inc., located in Cleveland, Ohio. The company designs and supplies machines, process equipment and production lines for the world's largest industrial groups.

Beckstrom gave a presentation to Harmon School 8th grade STEAM classes on October 22, 2025. He provided an in-depth presentation that featured his career path as a product engineer, which included the AHS Excel TECC program, Gannon University, the Fives North American Combustion Company. He focused his presentation on 3D printing, offered advice, and provided students with 3D printed items to take. A big thank you goes out to Beckstrom for reaching out and providing Harmon students with an opportunity to learn more about careers and real world uses for STEAM educational studies.

SPORT REPORT continued

Football Signing Day took place on February 4, 2026, at the Kohanski Conference Center. Seniors **Luke Bonnette** and **Xavier Board** were celebrated as they both signed to continue their football careers at **Gannon University**.



Luke Bonnette



Xavier Board

Cross country athlete **Nathan "Beast" Eminian** will be continuing his track and cross country career at **Tiffin University** next year. His signing day was held on January 13, 2026 to a packed crowd at the Kohanski Conference Center. Wishing him the best of luck!



HANDS OF GRATITUDE CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

have no hand you just have your wrist. The hand inserts right in the center and just with the simple wrist articulation the person who is the recipient of the hand can grab what they need with minimal training, but the payoff is awesome for the person who gets to be the recipient." Campana added that, the prosthetic is "muscle driven" and that the recipients have wrist articulation which makes the device open and close. He said, "It's great because there is no training, it's super lightweight and durable and we have other prosthetic options based on many different issues our recipients are faced with." Recipients can even choose the color of their hand.

Sunderhaft explained, "I always love finding creative, innovative opportunities for students and Hands of Gratitude really speaks to our six competencies here in Aurora. It allows our students to be collaborative, critical thinkers, empathetic, and understanding the people they are creating these prosthetic hands for, that they have a life where they need to be resilient in coming back from losing a hand and being able to have some more independence with what students can help provide for them."

Prior to the assembly, Campana was on hand in the classroom to show a video to the class featuring recipients of hands from the Hands of Gratitude organization. This allowed students to actually see how much of a positive impact their project had on the recipients and how lifechanging and immensely appreciative they are to receive them. Dennis Suchetka from Community Focus was also on hand to tape video footage of the students working on the hands for a Spotlight on Aurora Schools show segment that can be found on the Community Focus website at mycommunityfocus.org and the ACSD website.

The students also wrote notes to the person receiving the hand they had assembled and it comes in a case to decorate. Sunderhaft said, "The students will be connecting with people who will be using them. Matt Campana will be going to India in January and Guatemala, Dominican Republic and Africa, to personally deliver the kits. That's where they will be delivered. And so, we'll be able to have 11 kits in Aurora that we're going to put together for the first rotation and I'm so grateful to have the support of our Aurora community. I mentioned this during our open house and one of the lovely young ladies in my class, Olivia Erickson, and her dad Matt Ericson, were in attendance and he is the president at TXS Corp., which is a technology solutions company, and he readily came up to me afterwards, when I asked for support, with here is $1,000 you can get from our company to support you. The Aurora Schools Foundation (ASF), I put in a grant request, and they are giving us $485 so that we can afford to present this opportunity to our students. I'm so grateful and so excited for that."



ASF President, Rachel Reight, let Sunderhaft know that her grant had been approved for the project saying, "On behalf of the Aurora Schools Foundation, I am delighted to inform you that your "Hands of Gratitude" grant request for $485 has been approved by the ASF Board of Trustees. Your project is a wonderful example of the type of innovative and imaginative learning experience that the Foundation is proud to support, one that not only enriches the STEAM curriculum but also encourages empathy, creativity, and global awareness among students. Congratulations again, and thank you for bringing such a meaningful and inspiring project to life for your students. We are proud to be part of this effort that truly is innovative and imaginative!"

The Harmon High PTO membership also recently approved additional funding for the Hands of Gratitude project and more funding requests are currently pending. ACSD Superintendent, Dr. Paul Milcetich said, "This is amazing. We certainly could not do this without some of the community partnerships."

The Harmon School's Hands of Gratitude project was featured in the local *Ravenna Record-Courier* newspaper (November 18, 2025) and the national *USA Today* newspaper's 50 States highlights section on November 20, 2025. Hands of Gratitude was on track to build 2,300 hands in 2025. For more information regarding the Hands of Gratitude organization, please go to handsofgratitude.com.



50 States

HIGHLIGHT: OHIO

Noah Ebel, from left, Andrew Sedlik and Billy Stofcho look over their prosthetic hand at Harmon Middle School. USA SCALFARO/USA TODAY NETWORK

Aurora: A group of Aurora middle school students recently gave a hand – actually nearly a dozen of them – to people in need. Over two days in October, two STEAM classes at Harmon Middle School worked to build 11 prosthetic hands that then were donated. The students then decorated bags for the hands and wrote personalized notes to the recipients during November. The hand parts, made with a 3D printer, are provided in kits that include detailed instructions for assembly from a program called Hands of Gratitude. It was started by Matt Campana, who uses it as a team-building effort for businesses.

CLASS ACTS

AHS CYBERSECURITY INSTRUCTOR, NICK KUKAROLA, received new Raspberry Pi computers for his classroom as part of an **AURORA SCHOOL FOUNDATION GRANT**. Kukarola said, "Receiving Raspberry Pi computers into my cybersecurity class is an opportunity to ignite hands-on learning & innovation. It empowers students to explore security challenges & develop skills that will shape the future of tech."




AHS Cybersecurity Class

AHS JOURNALISTS were treated to an inspiring conversation about storytelling, performance and bringing literature to life with **GREAT LAKES THEATER ACTOR-TEACHERS JASMINE NICHELLE** and **ASH BROWN** in October.

KENT STATE UNIVERSITY'S HONOR CHOIR in November 2025. KSU Honor Choir participants (left to right): AHS Choir Director **ROSS DOWNING, OLIVIA HEISKELL, PRESTON DUNCAN, GRACE NAGY**.



Congratulations to **DIRECTOR OF ACSD PUPIL SERVICES, MIKE MAGLIONICO, 6-12 SPECIAL SERVICES COORDINATOR, VICTOR TORRES** and the **SPECIAL EDUCATION STAFF**, who earned a **"MEETS REQUIREMENTS"** rating on the **2025 OHIO SPECIAL EDUCATION ANNUAL RATING**, which is based on the 2023-24 district data. This is the highest designation awarded by the **OHIO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**. Maglionico said, "It reflects that our students with disabilities are graduating at exceptionally high rates while our dropout rate stays well below state thresholds. Additionally, it demonstrates that our data integrity and monitoring systems are strong, reinforcing the overall excellence of our district's special education programming."

AHS instructors, **MELISSA FOSTER** and **MIKE RUBIN**, hosted guest speakers from **WOMENSAFE** and discussed their mission, shelter and healthy relationships with students.



The **AHS CHAMBER CHOIR** sang the national anthem, **"THE STAR -SPANGLED BANNER"** at the **CLEVELAND CAVALIERS** vs. **PORTLAND** basketball game on December 3, 2025.

Rotary Club of Aurora

Selected Rotary Club students are honored each month at the Aurora Board of Education Meeting as **Rotary Students of the Month**:

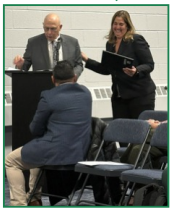
November 2025
Sophie Frissore and **Roman Hardetskyy**
January 2026
Leah Himmel and **Cayden McDowell**



DR. PAUL MILCETICH joined 3rd grade students at their field trip to the **AURORA HISTORICAL SOCIETY** with **JOHN KUDLEY** as host, making history come alive.

AHS TEACHER, CONNI HILSTON, and her **AP LANGUAGE ARTS STUDENTS** were treated to a unique learning experience when they visited the **MALTZ MUSEUM** on November 11, 2025. They toured the museum and interviewed **STANLEY BERNATH**, a **HOLOCAUST SURVIVOR** who passed away in 2019. Using AI, students were able to ask questions and virtually interact with Bernath for an innovative and empathetic experience.

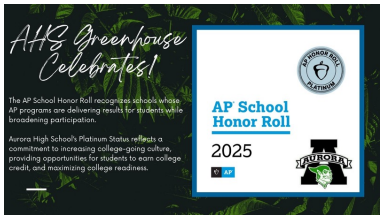
CRADDOCK PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHER, DR. GRETCHEN JESSEL, was presented with a $500 check to help purchase adaptive physical education equipment for her classes from the **PORTAGE COUNTY RETIRED TEACHERS ASSOCIATION** at the December 15, 2025 **AURORA BOE MEETING.**



NEW AHS MODEL UN CLUB BRINGS STUDENTS TO WORLD STAGE

AHS has debuted a new club called MODEL UN for the 2025-26 school year that has students stepping onto the world stage. This club is set up as a mock United Nations where each student assumes the role of a delegate for a specific county. The Mock UN club advisor, Kevin Wilcox, was quoted as saying, "Model UN is kind of like speech and debate except you have to represent a country and try to negotiate a solution to a problem instead of winning a debate." Model UN club members represent their country's interests and positions as global leaders which has them taking on major real-world issues that lead to enhancing many of their own skills such as, public speaking, collaboration and understanding varied world views.

AHS COLLEGE BOARD AP HONOR ROLL PLATINUM DESIGNATION 2025



Aurora High School (AHS) was recently recognized as an Advanced Placement School Honor Roll Platinum school for, "doing outstanding work to welcome students into Advanced Placement courses and support them on the path to college success." This Honor Roll celebrates schools who have programs that are delivering results for students while broadening participation. AHS Principal, Ashley Pacholewski, said, "This commitment to whole students and the learning process has earned the Aurora City School District (ACSD) platinum status on the CollegeBoard AP Honor Roll!"

ASCD Superintendent, Dr. Paul Milcetich stated, "We are proud to share that Aurora High School has been named to the AP School Honor Roll-Platinum Level by the College Board. This honor recognizes our work in not only achieving high performance in Advanced Placement coursework, but also in expanding access to rigorous academics for all learners. Moving from Gold to Platinum reflects years of intentional practice and believing in every student's potential, building scaffolding from PreK through high school, and fostering a culture where resilience (one of our core competencies) is built over time as challenges are met with support. AP participation opens doors to college credit, builds confidence, and accelerates future success. Congratulations to all, as this honor belongs to our students, staff, and the entire district community."

WHO'S WHO & WHAT'S NEW

Kamryn Taylor was selected out of over 107,000 high school seniors to be a **Coca-Cola Scholar semifinalist**! She is one of only 1,238 students who were then selected to advance to the second phase of the Coke Scholars selection process. The Coca-Cola Scholars Program scholarship is an achievement-based scholarship awarded to students in their final year of high school. Students are recognized for their capacity to lead and serve, as well as their commitment to making a significant impact on their schools and communities.





AHS Interact students partnered with **Taco Bell** on October 19, 2025 to celebrate **National New Friends Day** which is dedicated to creating and strengthening connections.

The **Harmon School Beta Club** held its annual **Socktober Sock Collection** in October in conjunction with Leighton and Harmon Schools. A total of 2,089 new socks were collected and donated to the **Akron Snow Angels** and **local shelters**.



We are grateful to the local **VFW**, who celebrated **Kamryn Taylor**, **Chris Savukas**, **Benjamin Keckan**, **Morgan Savage**, **Xaden Connell**, and **Tallulah Mackey** at the December 2025 **Aurora Board of Education Meeting** for their achievements on the **American Legion Americanism & Government test**. Leighton School 4th graders **Malcolm Lewis** and **Gracie Jones** were also recognized at the meeting for being the overall winners of the **4th grade US flag activity**. The test is a 50-question, high-school-level exam, testing knowledge of the U.S. Constitution, flag, and government structure, including an essay.



AHS student, **Jackson Sarver**, has been serving on the **Ohio Attorney General's Teen Ambassador Board** and a **subcommittee** involving AI use in education. Another great example of Aurora students in high level leadership roles!

AHS Interaction Day 2025 was held on November 16, 2025 with AHS hosting 14 Northeast Ohio schools, 180 students who want to be change makers and serve their community.

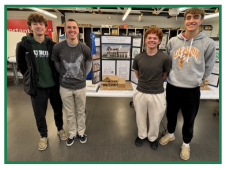




ACSD Treasurer, **Bryan Schiraldi** (second from left), attended a meeting on December 17, 2025 at the **Portage County Auditor's Office**. The Aurora School District continues its commitment to be an active member in the community and collaborate in exploring solutions to issues like property taxes.

Miller School held their annual **Family Bingo Night** on January 29, 2026 at Leighton School. A fun filled evening was had by all and donated coins will be used to purchase materials for school-wide events and celebrations.





Congratulations to **Colby Blaser** (left) and his **CADD Engineering Tech Team** at **Excel TECC** that earned 1st place at the annual **Student Home Model Contest**. Their winning project was featured at the **Cleveland Great Big Home & Garden Show**!

AHS Instructor Melissa Foster and several **Service Learning class** students, **Brayden** and **Annie**, served over 350 dinners at the **2100 Lakeside Men's Shelter** in Cleveland. The students were surprised saying, "I can't believe how young so many of the men are," showing that homelessness does not discriminate.





Interact Club had **Bill Ross, CEO** of **ACBC** (**Aluminum Cans for Burned Children**) as a guest speaker. They learned more about this program that was founded by dedicated Cleveland firefighters that channel finances from recycling aluminum cans into comprehensive fire prevention education initiatives, empowering the public, hosting camps, and providing invaluable support to burn survivors in the journey toward recovery. This was a wonderful opportunity to be inspired in the service of others and to learn more about such a great organization.



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AURORA SCHOOLS' VETERANS APPRECIATION 2025

Miller Elementary School students were invited to wear red, white and blue colors on Veterans Day. They learned about Veterans Day and made cards for local veterans.



Craddock Elementary School held its annual Veterans Day celebration on November 11, 2025. Military veterans and a guest were invited to attend the assembly and were honored for their service and treated to a reception with their student or staff member. A veteran's board was also created that featured photos of student family members that have served our country.



Leighton Elementary School's Leighton Leaders (a service organization made up of 36 fifth-grade students at Leighton Elementary School), the Leighton community and the local VFW partnered for a Treat for Troops candy collection program through Soldiers' Angels from November 3-17, 2025. Thanks to the generosity of the community, more than 700 pounds of Halloween candy were donated. Under the guidance of advisors Jennifer Kinkoph and Jackie Skeels, student leaders sorted and boxed the candy for delivery. Rick Carpenter, Commander of Aurora VFW Post 2629, along with VFW member Al Homza, transported approximately 30 boxes of candy to the VA Hospital Chillicothe, helping bring a small taste of home and appreciation to veterans and service members.

Harmon Middle School students learned about veterans in their social studies classes and 8th grade students visit Washington, D.C. each year to talk to and honor our veterans by attending various ceremonies, historical buildings/museums and monuments.






Aurora High School hosted their annual Veterans Dinner/Concert, sponsored by the Aurora Schools Foundation, which was held on Tuesday, December 9, 2025 at Aurora High School. The event was once again coordinated by Service Learning Class teachers Melissa Foster and Mike Rubin. Veterans were honored and treated to a complimentary dinner and dessert while the AHS Orchestra students provided music. Kent State University ROTC Air Force Major, Jared Moon, was featured as the guest speaker focusing his speech on service. The dinner was followed by the AHS Choir holiday performance in the AHS auditorium.

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