WILLOUGHBY-EASTLAKE CITY SCHOOLS

COMMUNITY UPDATE

Message from the Superintendent

State of the Schools 2026

When Schools Thrive, Communities Thrive



As superintendent, one of my greatest responsibilities is keeping our community informed about the progress of our schools and the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead. A few years ago, our community came together around a bold idea: that every student deserves the opportunity to be future-ready.

Together, we created a Shared Vision grounded in four priorities:

1. Academic Excellence
2. The W-E Experience
3. Operations and Fiscal Stewardship
4. Communications and Community Engagement

Today, I am proud to share that our vision is becoming reality.

Across Willoughby-Eastlake City Schools, students are achieving, opportunities are expanding, and our schools are thriving. From stronger academic outcomes and innovative learning experiences to expanded career pathways and deeper community partnerships, the momentum is real and the impact is visible.

Our students continue to benefit from engaging learning experiences that challenge them to think, create, collaborate, and grow. The W-E Experience continues to provide opportunities that help students discover their passions, build relationships, and create lasting memories. At the same time, we remain committed to being responsible stewards of taxpayer resources by aligning investments to what matters most: student success.

Most importantly, we continue to strengthen the partnership between our schools and the communities we serve. Strong schools do not happen by accident. They are built through trust, communication, and a shared commitment to the next generation.

The results speak for themselves. Our district is making progress. Our students are succeeding. Our staff is exceptional. Our future is bright.

Yet even as we celebrate our success, we must remain focused on the future. For nearly six years, our district has not sought new operating money from our community. Through careful planning, operational efficiencies, and fiscal discipline, we have worked hard to maximize every dollar entrusted to us.

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Message from the Superintendent

However, like districts across Ohio, we can see significant financial challenges emerging on the horizon. Changes in state policy, rising costs, and ongoing property tax reforms are creating uncertainty for public schools throughout the state. We support meaningful property tax relief for homeowners. Families deserve it. But relief cannot come at the expense of opportunity for children.

The choice should never be taxpayers **or** students. It must be taxpayers **and** students. Strong communities need both.

As we move forward, we will continue to advocate for solutions that protect taxpayers while preserving the educational opportunities our students deserve. We will continue to plan responsibly, communicate transparently, and make decisions through the lens of our Shared Vision.

I am incredibly proud of how far we have come together and I am even more excited about where we are headed. When schools thrive, communities thrive.

Thank you for your partnership, your support, and your belief in our students.

Patrick Ward

Patrick Ward, Ph.D. | Superintendent
#MyChoiceWilloughbyEastlake

Message from the Treasurer/Chief Financial Officer



The strength of Willoughby-Eastlake City Schools has always been rooted in the support of our community and our shared commitment to student success. As we look ahead, we are focused on balancing today's needs with thoughtful planning for tomorrow. Like many Ohio school districts, we are facing financial pressures resulting from recent changes to state property tax laws. In response, district leaders have carefully reviewed our finances, identified cost-saving opportunities, and begun evaluating potential solutions that will help protect the educational experiences our students deserve. This update shares where we are today and the options under consideration as we plan for the future together.

Commitment to Fiscal Stewardship & Cost Reduction

We consistently review our financial position in order to identify potential cost reductions and ways to optimize resources. Key actions include the following changes for fiscal year 2027:

- **Transportation Efficiencies**: Achieved a $1 million reduction/savings in transportation from the implementation of new bell times.
- **Targeted Budget Cuts:** Implemented a 6% to 7% reduction across all department-level budgets.
- **Personnel Management:** Realized approximately $1 million in savings via attrition by leaving eligible retirement positions unfilled.
- **Operational Planning:** Moved technology/property purchases to the Permanent Improvement Fund, converted the bus fleet from leasing to ownership, and brought career technical education programming in-house to reduce per-student costs and access for our students.

External Revenue Drivers: Why We Face a Shortfall

Approximately 70% of our budget relies on local property taxes. New state legislation signed into law on December 19, 2025, has heavily impacted our revenue:

- **HB186 (Inflation Cap & Claw Back):** Caps tax increases at the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) Deflation Factor and retroactively "claws back" already-collected revenue from the 2024 Lake County reappraisal. Projected Loss: around $5.21M through fiscal year 2030.
- **HB129 (Fixed Sum Levy Changes)**: Counts our five fixed-sum levies against the 20-mill floor, reducing effective rates. Projected Loss: up to $3.49M cumulatively through fiscal year 2030.
- **HB96 (County "Piggyback" Exemptions):** Unreimbursed property tax exemptions approved by Lake County Commissioners. This creates an expanded, recurring risk to our local tax collections estimated at $2.8 million per year in lost revenue.

Funding Options

The Board of Education held several work sessions open to the community in order to discuss current funding, the projected forecast, and possible options to generate continuing revenue due to legislative changes.

At the June 8 Board meeting, the Board passed the first resolution in order to approve placing a 0.75% Earned Income Tax on the November ballot. A second resolution confirming the decision will be on an agenda for approval in July.

If approved, the Earned Income Tax will generate $14,029,656 annually with full collection by July 2028, of which $4.4 million will be allocated to the Permanent Improvement Fund. This tax applies only to individuals living within the school district boundaries who earn active income. This does not apply to pensions, capital gains, or investment income, as those are considered passive income. This preserves the district's structural footprint and allows us to deeply engage with the community regarding the district's future without forcing immediate closures.

Funding Types

School expenditures are classified into two major purposes, Operations and Permanent Improvement.

Operating funds are used for day-to-day necessities, such as staff salaries, educational programming, transportation and building utilities.

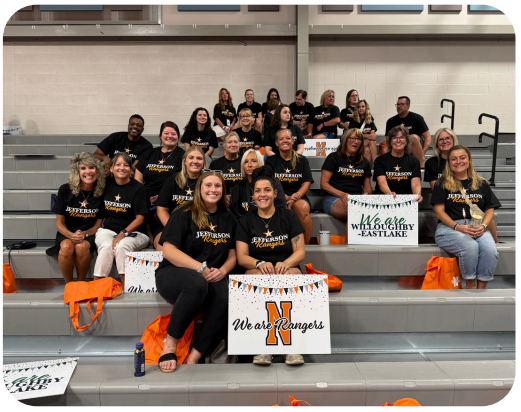
Permanent improvement funds are used to maintain the district's facilities, purchase technology items, security, and new vehicles, including buses.

We will continue to provide monthly updates on the district’s finances at each Board meeting.

Nick Ciarniello

Nick Ciarniello | Treasurer/Chief Financial Officer

Communications and Community Engagement: Amplifying Our Story



Storytelling is more than just reporting the facts, it's about shaping our narrative, building trust, and capturing the true heartbeat of our schools. We accomplish this through printed communications, social media posts, the website, local media outlets, and personally engaging with our community to keep everyone connected.

Rebranding. This year our elementary and middle schools that feed into Eastlake North High School all became Rangers, and those feeding into Willoughby South High School all became Rebels. A sea of orange and black, and blue and gray, created a sense of unity and pride across the district, while also reinforcing that we are all one community. WE Are Willoughby-Eastlake!



Distinguished Alumni Hall of Fame. Celebrating the achievements of our exemplary graduates was a true highlight of this year's Hall of Fame Ceremony. Our four incredible inductees, Dr. Charles Hannum, Dr. Daniel Isom, and Julie Crocker, J.D. (Eastlake North), and Douglas Hart (Willoughby South), are shining examples of how our schools prepare students to lead, inspire, and impact the world. It was also our honor to recognize Richard J. Regovich as our Citizen of the Year. He greatly impacted our community and his legacy lives on in Lake County as an instrumental leader in the community.

Perspectives Podcast. We launched a podcast for the first time ever in the district. Dr. Ward and his guests have honest conversations about education, where we are, where we are going, and how we support every student's journey. Our guests range from students, educators, and industry professionals, to alumni, parents, and community members. It is available on Apple, Spotify, and YouTube, as well as other podcast platforms.

Senior Citizens Prom. We value our senior citizens who continue to support our schools, knowing that education gave them a strong foundation in their youth, and strong schools continue to produce the leaders of tomorrow for their community. Our Senior Citizens' Prom at Eastlake North is just one of the ways we stay connected.



Website. Often the first contact a potential family has with the schools is by visiting our website. This year we shared a new design, improved the navigation and created consistency and ease of use across the pages. We will continue to enhance this communication vehicle to make it useful and valuable for current and new families, as well as the communities we serve.





Workforce Development: Skills for Today and the Future





Receiving their high school diploma is a tremendous milestone in a child's life. Being prepared for the next step of their journey, whether that is college, career, military or employment is an important part of their PreK-12 experience. Here in Willoughby-Eastlake, preparing for a job and a career just got better!

Expanded Access to Career Pathways. Beginning next school year, the district will operate its own Career Technical Planning District, expanding student access to high-demand career pathways aligned to regional workforce needs. A total of thirteen programs will be accessible to juniors and seniors who will gain valuable skills and credentials, setting the stage for direct employment or post-secondary educational experiences. Ninety percent of the sophomores who applied for a CTE placement will participate in one of their top three program choices.

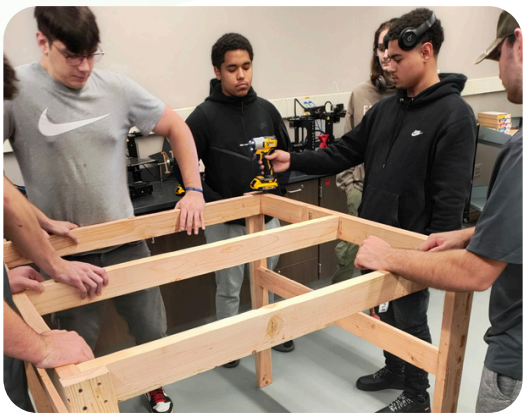
Career Connected Systems Grades 7-12. A three-tiered approach ensures that every student has the opportunity to engage in meaningful career exploration. Career Connections for grades 7-8 helps students build an awareness by exploring Ohio's career fields through hands-on, project-based experiences. This helps them identify their interests, build confidence, and connect their strengths to potential future pathways. Moving into grades 9-10, Career Capstones allows students to immerse themselves in self-directed experiences to dive deeply into their career interests, complete research, develop skills, and gain clarity about their pathways of interest. By grades 11-12, they can choose to participate in one of the thirteen Career Technical Education (CTE) work-based learning programs.

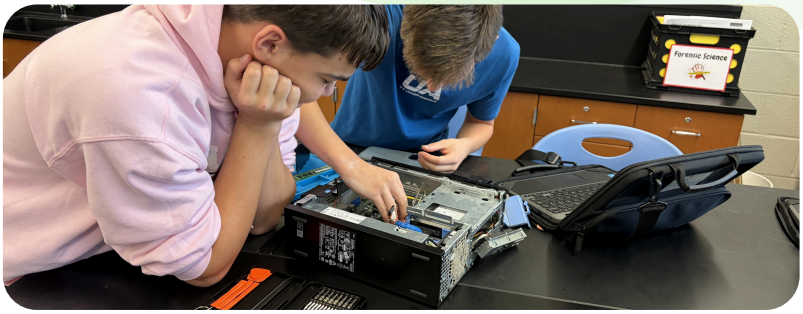


Postsecondary Alignment and College Credit Opportunities. With partners Lakeland Community College and Lake Erie College, students can earn College Credit Plus (CCP) credits as part of their coursework, and get a head start on their postsecondary education while in high school.

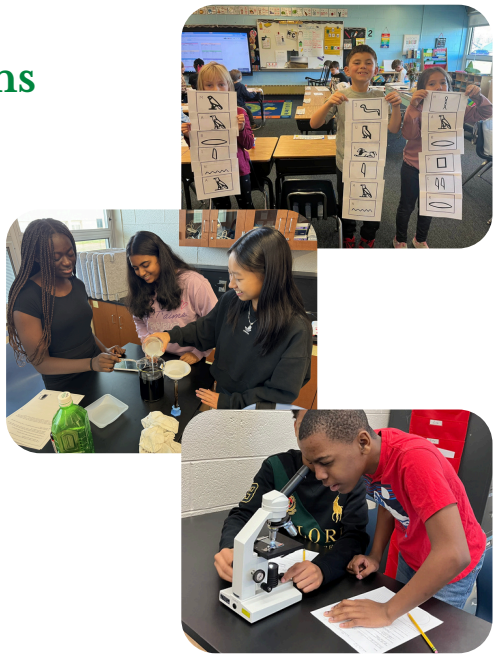
Strategic Use of Grants to Expand Hands-On Learning. A competitive $200,000 grant enabled the district to design, equip and launch Immersion Hubs, providing students with hands-on, career-connected learning experiences in grades 9-12. By accessing these learning modules, students are engaged, explore pathways and non-traditional career fields in order to make informed decisions before committing to a CTE enrollment.

Launch of Cybersecurity and WE Build Programs. The WE Build program was designed with the Home Builders Association. Students experienced the opportunity to learn from and work alongside industry professionals to explore various construction trades. Whether it was masonry, carpentry, electrical work or plumbing, they gained practical skills and meaningful career exposure before graduation. A Cybersecurity course equips students with technical skills as well as allowing for thoughtful reflection on the role of technology in education and life.





Teaching and Learning: Classrooms in Action - A Year of Breakthroughs



Beginning in preschool, our work is dedicated to creating future-ready learning experiences for every student. Across all levels, the efforts of our staff and the collaboration with our families and community stakeholders align us for impact and empower every student to grow and achieve to be the best version of themselves.

- **Future-Ready Learning Framework.** A districtwide, collaborative effort to develop a learning framework will align teaching and learning to the Shared Vision and the Portrait of a Graduate.
- **Expanded High School Modalities.** Meeting the diverse needs of our students begins by offering a variety of learning options. Traditional classes, project-based learning, and flex-classes along with a new POWER self-paced option in the high schools provide students choice and voice in their learning.
- **Middle School Redefined.** The teaming model has improved teacher collaboration and strengthened relationships with students while providing more student-centered support and interdisciplinary connections. A new math curriculum and a knowledge-based English Language Arts curriculum, along with increased opportunities to explore student interests through Career Connections classes, helped jump start our middle school programming and has created a positive culture for learning and adolescent development.
- **K-5 Enhancements.** A K-5 Math Framework is being developed to strengthen and align mathematics instruction across the elementary schools. In addition, we have successfully completed year one of structured, student-centered data conversations, ensuring a collaborative “all hands on deck” approach to student growth.
- **Comprehensive Literacy State Development Grant.** The funds provided support for all K-8 classrooms as the staff implements practices consistent with Ohio’s Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement, and they also support professional learning and coaching.
- **Instructional Leadership Teams.** Building-based teams were initiated this year to empower staff to set goals, monitor student progress and practice shared decision-making as further commitment to student-centered learning.

Longfellow Elementary

By hosting **Community Night**, the school’s students and staff created a showcase of student work that was so impressive! Coupled with vendors from around the community, food and raffles for prizes, it was a wonderful night for the Rangers.

If you know anything about Longfellow, you know that the **Music Program** is top-notch. Concerts at every grade level provide students opportunities to perform in front of audiences and allow families and friends to celebrate their accomplishments. Whether they sing, dance or play instruments, they provide great entertainment.

How do you learn to solve problems and think outside of the box? **STEAM** (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math) classes do just that! Inspired by Artemis II, students used creativity, problem-solving and teamwork as they engineered models and conducted drop tests to see whose space capsule could land their astronauts safely.





Pupil Services: Putting Students First - Prioritizing Care and Community



We provide a wide range of services to support and ensure that every student can benefit from educational programs. A student's overall school experience can be enhanced with access to a host of wraparound services to address special education needs, as well as the physical and mental health of all students. Every *Person* Matters. Every *Moment* Counts.

- **Engaging Experiences.** We expanded student access to art supplies through Creative Kids Kits to foster creativity and expression beyond the classroom. In partnership with artist Cheryl Palmer, a retired W-E employee, we helped brighten the creative spirit in children.
- **The W-E Experience.** We are proud to offer mobile dental care, and vision and hearing screenings. Through the Fine Arts Association, we provided music therapy to all students in resource rooms across the district. A certified therapy dog and handler supported a positive school culture and created a source of connection at Grant. The ROX (Ruling Our eXperience) program provides girls in the middle and high schools with evidence-based tools to navigate social and emotional challenges.
- **We Prioritize Relationships.** Embedded mental health services in every building support the emotional development of students and reinforce a district-wide sense of belonging. The Career Options program coordinates clothing assistance, removing barriers to school participation and building student confidence for those with identified needs.
- **Communications and Community Engagement.** We distributed 12,000 pounds of food monthly through our Fresh Produce Market in partnership with the Greater Cleveland Food Bank. This directly supports our families and community. We will continue this in the upcoming school year. The W-E Care Fair featured the FBI and the Do It For James Foundation, connecting families with vital community resources and digital safety awareness. By establishing the Together WE Talk forum, we provided a specialized mentor group designed to connect and empower families of Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) users. This fosters a supportive community where families share experiences and guidance to help students navigate their communication journeys with confidence.
- **We Inspire Extraordinary Growth.** Along with the Technology and Teaching and Learning Departments, we launched the MTSS Dashboard. This data resource integrates academic, attendance, and behavioral data to ensure interventions are timely and effective, and it enables us to look at the whole child. A comprehensive Internal Monitoring process audit ensured that our special education programming meets the highest standards of compliance and instructional quality consistently across the district. We refined tiered behavioral supports and trauma-sensitive practices to keep students engaged in learning, staying true to our promise to meet students where they are and help them take the next step forward.
- **We Invest in the Future.** Future-ready pathways for students with disabilities will be possible with expanded community-based job training. These authentic work experiences pave the way for students to graduate with the practical skills, confidence, and the independence needed for competitive employment.

Edison Elementary

Edison earned the **GOLD-level** recognition for the **PBIS** (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports) implementation. This honor reflects their commitment to fostering a safe and supportive environment where every student has the tools to succeed. They also received the **Governor's Science of Reading Champion Award**. With a focus on ensuring that students master the complex building blocks of language, teachers have done a masterful job of dedicating themselves to targeted, evidence-based literacy instructional practices.



Being able to perform **music in the community** for all to enjoy is a special treat for the Edison Rebels. Among their performances were the PTO Fall Fest, the Veteran's Day Ceremony at Lakeland Community College, the Downtown Willoughby Tree Lighting Ceremony, and the Downtown Willoughby Farmer's Market. They performed the National Anthem at the Lake County Captains' game.

Edison has been **"Choosing Kindness"** this year! The Principal Advisory Committee created a kindness video, provided kindness bracelets for the school community, and developed "Kind Kid" stickers to recognize students who go above and beyond expectations. To round out their kindness focus, their One School, One Book story was *A Boy Called Bat*.

Technology: Future-Proofing Our Schools in The Age of Digital Innovation





The Technology Department had a busy year supporting teachers, students and families. Whether it is providing devices, troubleshooting, running cables and wires, researching resources or ensuring that we have the tools and policies in place for the responsible use of technology for students and staff, the department staff is always on the edge of innovation.

- **Artificial Intelligence.** More than one hundred of our educators participated in pilots of the top two educational AI tools in the fall. MagicSchool AI was adopted based on the feedback from these pilots. In February we kicked off the launch with a district-wide professional development workshop on the use of AI in the classroom. Internationally known AI Researcher and Ethicist, Rebecca Bultsma, provided the keynote address and facilitated work sessions.
- **Annual Chromebook Refresh.** Annually we refresh our Chromebook fleet by purchasing new Chromebooks for all fourth-grade and ninth-grade students to ensure reliable, high-performance technology for these key transition years.
- **Elementary Touchpanel Additions.** We have provided enhanced interactive learning options in the classrooms by installing new touchpanels across elementary schools, replacing aging projection systems with modern, multi-touch displays that boost student engagement.
- **Cybersecurity Enhancements.** In order to safeguard user data and maintain a highly secure network environment, we bolstered defenses across all district Windows devices and email systems by implementing advanced security and threat protection features.
- **Technical Support Volume.** Our support team successfully addressed more than 7,000 technology service tickets this year, ensuring minimal downtime and keeping our district's devices running smoothly.

Human Resources and Operations: Safe, Secure, and Strong

Working hand in hand, our Human Resources and Operations Departments focus on ensuring that we support our employees, no matter their role, to be successful and create a positive learning environment for students. In addition, a team of maintenance and custodial staff work diligently to maintain 16 buildings and 275 acres of land, as well as make sure that our buses are safe as they travel 31 square miles to transport students to school and on field trips.

- **Safety Equipment.** All Automated External Defibrillators (AED) were updated throughout the district to ensure that all staff are equipped with the most reliable and user-friendly technology.
- **Threat Assessment Teams.** All of our buildings have threat assessment teams that are trained to support students and the community in times of crisis. We have updated that training over the last school year.
- **School Safety Plans.** Our school safety plans will be updated again this summer to make sure our staff, along with local police and fire departments, are prepared to help us in case of an emergency.

Willowick Middle

Our focus on student growth extends beyond academics to ensuring students are present, engaged, and ready to learn each day. Willowick Middle School achieved the **largest reduction in chronic absenteeism** across the district, surpassing our annual goal. Through targeted supports, strong family communication, and a culture that emphasizes the importance of attendance, more students are actively participating in their learning with a sense of belonging. This accomplishment reflects our commitment to nurturing growth in every student and ensuring that every moment counts.





Teachers at Willowick Middle School have embraced a collaborative approach to instruction through strong **Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)** and a focus on high-impact strategies. By analyzing student data, implementing research-based practices, and designing engaging learning experiences, staff are meeting the diverse needs of learners. This work directly aligns with the Shared Vision priority of creating engaging experiences and advancing academic excellence through customized learning and innovative programming.

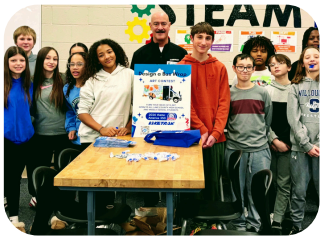
At Willowick Middle School, **strengthening relationships and school culture** has been at the core of our work this year. Through consistent expectations, intentional relationship-building, the addition of the Ranger Hype Squad, and a focus on student support, discipline incidents have decreased by more than 50% compared to last school year. This progress reflects our commitment to ensuring every student feels valued, respected, and connected. Prioritizing relationships creates the foundation for a safe and supportive learning environment where students can thrive.

Willoughby Middle School

Students are building **strong connections beyond the classroom**. Service-based learning opportunities, such as the "Stockings for Veterans and Soldiers" project and the Mentor Headlands Beach cleanup in partnership with Eriesponsible, demonstrate a deep commitment to empathy, civic responsibility, and community engagement. These experiences bring the focus on relationships to life while helping students understand their role in making a positive impact.

The expansion of **Career and Technical Education** opportunities ensures students are prepared for future success. By introducing pathways such as information technology, manufacturing, and cybersecurity, Willoughby Middle is actively investing in the future, helping students explore interests, build skills, and make informed decisions about their next steps.





Through innovative **STEAM** programming, students are immersed in hands-on, real-world learning that fosters curiosity and problem-solving. These engaging experiences empower students to think critically, collaborate effectively, and create solutions to complex challenges.

North High School



Among our many student accomplishments, we were incredibly proud to celebrate senior **Adriana Attwood** who competed in the ACS U.S. Chemistry Olympiad test. We are thrilled to share that she earned first place in Northeast Ohio. She has been nominated to take the National Exam. This is an amazing accomplishment that reflects her hard work, dedication, and passion for chemistry.

The **Eastlake North High School Chorale** earned a Superior rating at the Ohio Music Education Association (OMEA) large group contest. What a wonderful accomplishment for a talented, hard-working group of students, along with their teacher and director, Mrs. Devra Levine. Our entire fine arts department staff excels in providing students opportunities to showcase their visual and performing arts talents.

North High School's Robotics Team **"The Rebelling Rangers"** finished 8th out of 38 in the FIRST Tech Challenge Ohio Championship, earning a spot in the playoff rounds and competing against some of the top teams in the state. We came up one position short of qualifying for the National Championship, but it was still an outstanding performance. The students dedicated many hours to designing, building, programming, and improving their robot. This achievement is especially exciting because this is only their second year as a team, and in both years the team has qualified to compete at the Ohio Championship level.





South High School

Key Club was proud of their partnership with the **Willoughby Senior Center** through an intergenerational pen pal program. Through this meaningful initiative, Key Club members exchanged letters with local seniors, building connections that bridge generations and foster understanding, compassion, and community.

A group of South students participated in the **Chagrin Valley Conference Empower Sports Day**. Empower Sports Day is a powerful opportunity for students with diverse challenges to enjoy a fun, inclusive day of sports and activities while connecting with their peers. Additional support came through a local initiative by teacher Matt Vespa. Dedicated to providing high-quality sports and exercise programming for children with a wide range of physical and cognitive disabilities, our South students had a blast!

South Junior **Sharon Sharma** and her sister **Prarthana Sharma** from SOI, finished in second place in the **2025 Congressional App Challenge for Ohio's 14th Congressional District**. Sharon and Prarthana designed Program Hub, an app that connects middle and high school students with educational and extracurricular opportunities. That was an incredible accomplishment!







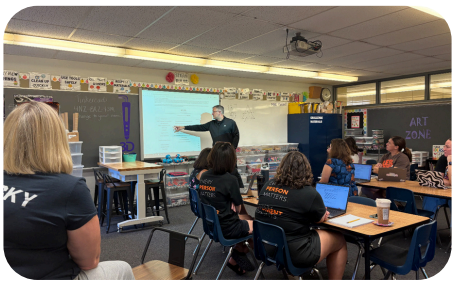
Royalview Elementary

Beyond the numbers and the lesson plans, we want our community to know that Royalview is a place where every child is seen and supported. Whether it is through our Instructional Leadership Team, support through our Positive Behavioral Intervention System, or the joy of a morning shout-out, we are dedicated to recognizing and nurturing the whole child. Our school provides a united, intentional and deeply invested commitment to the future of every student who walks through our doors.





Our commitment to meeting students where they are in their learning journey is best reflected in our WIN (What I Need) time. These blocks of time provide six-week increments of extra support or enrichment, enabling students, based on their progress data, to move fluidly between groups and subjects as needed.



School of Innovation

One of the most transformative highlights of this school year was the installation of a professional-grade greenhouse at the Willoughby-Eastlake School of Innovation (SOI), awarded through a generous grant from **Arcadia Glasshouses** in partnership with Partners in Science Excellence (PSE). Valued at $16,523 and provided at no charge to the district, this is now a year-round "living laboratory" for our students.



A significant milestone this year was the incredible growth of the School of Innovation **stocking project**, which provided a record-breaking 507 stockings donated to children in need across the Cleveland area. What began 15 years ago as a small classroom project at Royalview Elementary by teacher Cherise Goodrich, has flourished into a massive community-wide effort. More than just a holiday tradition, this project provides our students with invaluable life lessons in empathy and social responsibility, proving that a single small idea can grow to touch thousands of lives.



This year the School of Innovation was recognized by U.S. News & World Report as both a "Best Elementary School" and a "Best Middle School" for 2026. This dual honor is a significant achievement, placing SOI among the top-performing schools in the nation and validating the rigorous academic environment our staff and students cultivate daily. Whether in our primary or middle school classrooms, this ranking underscores our commitment to excellence and our mission to provide a transformative educational experience.

Eastlake Middle School

Classrooms at Eastlake Middle School are designed to spark joy and curiosity, where students are encouraged to take risks, explore their interests, and take pride in their work. These moments of creativity not only make learning memorable, but also help students develop confidence as creators and innovators.







Visits to the MAGnet (Manufacturing and Growth Network), participating in academic competitions such as the Power or the Pen, or listening to guest speakers about careers and competencies, provide students with valuable connections to people who serve as role models, coaches and sources of inspiration. Creating a connection between school and the world around them inspires them to write their own stories of success.

Willoughby-Eastlake Preschool

The preschool maintained a **Gold Rating** through Ohio's **Step Up To Quality** program, a recognition of our commitment to high-quality early childhood education.

The successful **PBIS School Carnival**, brought together students, families, and staff for a fun-filled celebration of positive behavior and a welcoming school community.



It isn't just high school seniors who get to celebrate graduation! Our **Preschool Graduation**, honoring the growth, accomplishments, and bright futures of our young learners as they prepare for kindergarten, was an exciting ending to a wonderful year.



Jefferson Elementary

Jefferson Elementary School was officially recognized as a **Governor's Science of Reading Champion**! By committing to the Science of Reading, we are building a strong foundation for our students' future success in the classroom and beyond. We are so proud of our efforts to ensure all of our Rangers have the best opportunities to become proficient readers.

The **One School, One Theme: Rangers Are Resilient** program united our campus through cross-grade buddy reading and visits from diverse guest readers who shared personal stories of overcoming challenges. Our interactive Family Night brought the theme to life with challenges designed to build perseverance through play. A Read-A-Thon fundraiser, successfully raised over $5,000 for classroom supplies and field trips. By combining literacy with strategic activities, we provided our Rangers with tangible ways to practice grit and determination in every aspect of their school life.





Jefferson Rangers have truly embraced the **PRIDE promise**, fostering a dynamic environment where everyone is empowered to learn and grow. By consistently being Prepared, Respectful, showing Integrity, staying Dedicated, and striving for Excellence, students have earned Jag Tags, positive shout-outs, and invitations to our parties with the principals. We also celebrated each quarter with rewards such as a Fall Fest and Magic show. Our clear school-wide expectations have kept our students deeply motivated and focused on achieving their personal best throughout the year. This commitment to excellence was even recognized at the state level, earning Jefferson a Gold Award from the State of Ohio for our Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports.

Grant Elementary

Grant's **First Responder Parade** on September 11th honored and recognized the brave men and women who work every day to keep us safe. Students and staff joined together to show their appreciation for firefighters, police officers, EMTs, and other first responders. The importance of service, courage, and community were the focus while reflecting on the significance of the day.





Students explored how to play a variety of instruments in **music class**, building foundational skills in rhythm, melody, and technique. These hands-on experiences helped strengthen their musical background while encouraging creativity, listening skills, and an appreciation for different sounds and styles of music.



In their **CKLA** units and lessons, students explored a variety of civilizations and cultures from around the world. They brought their learning to life by creatively making and showcasing important elements they studied, deepening their understanding while expressing their ideas in meaningful and engaging ways.

Willoughby-Eastlake City Schools
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School Board Members

Stacy Menser, President
Jaime Shatsman, Vice President
Gabrielle Miller, Member
Rhonda Osagie-Erese, Member
Denise Verdi, Member

Follow the district on social media!

willoughbyeastlakecityschools
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@WESchools

2025-2026 Celebration issue

This issue is devoted to a celebration of the school year. Each of our departments and schools remain focused on our Shared Vision, our priorities and our promises to the community. Our thirteen school campuses are unique, while also demonstrating the same commitment to excellence and supporting our families with a focus on preparing our students for success.







