YOUR SCHOOLS

AURORA LEARNERS
Future-Ready

FALL 2026 | AURORA CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

As another school year begins, there is an unmistakable sense of excitement and optimism throughout Aurora City Schools.

Our hallways are once again filled with the energy of students reconnecting with classmates and teachers, families engaging in Meet and Greets and Open Houses, and the familiar traditions that make the beginning of the school year so special. Whether it is the first bus ride, the first day of kindergarten, or the excitement of Friday night lights at Veterans Stadium, these moments remind us of the incredible privilege we have to serve this community.

This year, we continue our commitment to **The Green Standard** through our district theme of **Impact.** We believe every interaction, every lesson, every performance, every practice, and every relationship has the opportunity to positively shape a student's future. Our mission remains centered on developing the whole child by providing exceptional opportunities in academics, athletics, music and the performing arts, leadership, service, and personal growth so that all Aurora learners are truly Future-Ready.

This edition of *Your Schools* also provides important information about **The Essential Plan,** the district's proposed facility improvement project that will appear on the November 3rd ballot. Over the past two years, this plan has evolved through extensive community feedback, collaboration with staff, partnerships with the Ohio Facilities Construction Commission, and thoughtful planning focused on our most pressing facility needs.

I want to express my sincere gratitude to our residents for the unwavering support you continue to show our schools. Aurora has long valued public education, and that partnership is one of our community's greatest strengths. As with any important community decision, I encourage every resident to take the time to learn about *The Essential Plan,* ask questions, review the available resources, and attend a community engagement session if possible. An informed community is a strong community, and your voice plays an important role in shaping the future of the Aurora City School District for generations to come.

Thank you for your continued trust, partnership, and investment in the young people of our community. We are excited for another outstanding school year and look forward to all we will accomplish together.

Go Greenmen!



Dr. Paul Milcetich
Superintendent of Schools

First Day of School

The Aurora City School District welcomed students for the first day of the 2026-27 school year on August 18, 2026. Good luck to all of our students on a successful year of learning and growing!







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AURORA

aurora-schools.org

The Aurora City School District has placed The Essential Plan bond issue on the November 3, 2026 election ballot. The ballot issue number is 4.

A bond issue allows a school district to use the funds to build new schools, fix old roofs, upgrade safety equipment, buy school buses and update technology. School districts are restricted from using the funds to pay teacher salaries, buy everyday classroom supplies, or cover daily operating costs, such as utility bills.

Following years of evaluation, 2024 ballot-feedback, and community input, the district developed *The Essential Plan*. This plan focuses on the district's highest priority facility needs while addressing the need to provide the best possible educational environment for students. *The Essential Plan* reflects the Aurora Schools' reconsidered approach to provide a pared-down ballot request from the previous plan that was placed on the November 2024 ballot and provides a fiscally responsible plan for Aurora community members.

Visit The Essential Plan Webpage

For more information on *The Essential Plan*, scan the QR code below or visit the ACSD webpage at aurora-schools.org and click on *The Essential Plan*.

Essential Plan Webpage

The Cost of Doing Nothing

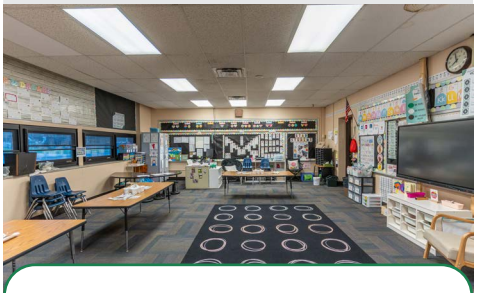
Maintenance Plans

Aurora City Schools uses around **$650,000** from its annual budget to address facility issues. These issues are prioritized according to the greatest need. As buildings age and require more maintenance, this amount becomes insufficient to satisfy the needs of each building. New construction and renovation projects drastically reduce maintenance costs and provide a better learning environment for students.

Maintenance Plans	2019	2026
Heating System	$1,941,972.00	$4,035,697.05
Roofing	$593,881.20	$948,240.86
Ventilation/Air Conditioning	$5,000.00	$7,138.87
Electrical Systems	$957,115.56	$2,421,095.46
Plumbing and Fixtures	$516,404.00	$725,397.75
Windows	$320.00	$587,330.18
Structure: Foundation	$-	$16,450.56
Structure: Walls and Chimneys	$183,357.50	$248,663.49
Structure: Floors and Roofs	$-	$-
General Finishes	$1,432,767.90	$3,298,198.29
Interior Lighting	$383,318.00	$547,378.10
Security Systems	$168,070.20	$239,632.72
Emergency/Egress Lighting	$58,972.00	$84,212.02
Fire Alarm	$132,687.00	$-
Handicapped Access	$173,594.40	$255,610.02
Site Condition	$424,152.00	$1,199,312.75
Sewage System	$-	$-
Water Supply	$11,750.00	$22,004.66
Exterior Doors	$-	$21,416.60
Hazardous Material	$-	$881,937.49
Life Safety	$293,037.04	$458,299.20
Loose Furnishings	$189,602.00	$270,182.85
Technology	$707,664.00	$1,009,924.99
Construction Contingency - 7%	$572,156.54	$1,209,468.67
Non Construction Contingency - 16.29%	$1,424,694.30	$3,011,628.83
Subtotals:	**$10,170,515.63**	**$21,499.221.41**

The Essential Plan addresses solving the district's three primary challenges that are necessary to provide and sustain a high-quality educational experience for Aurora students.

Challenge #1



ELEMENTARY EDUCATION:
Outdated Learning Spaces

A portion of Craddock Elementary is over 100 years old. While well maintained, the building requires annual extensive and costly repairs merely to remain operational. Its 1940s-era classrooms are undersized and do not meet current spatial requirements for early elementary programs.

SOLUTION:
Construction of New Building

A new building for grades 1–3 on the Craddock site would replace the existing building. The new building would include updated instructional spaces sized to current educational standards, and infrastructure designed to support a range of academic and arts programming. Third grade would move from Leighton to the new building allowing Leighton to accommodate enrollment needs.



Challenge #2



TRANSPORTATION:
Aging Infrastructure

The current transportation facility uses aging infrastructure that can no longer adequately service Aurora's bus fleet. The cramped structure lacks space for essential modern repair equipment such as bus lifts, which are necessary for efficient and preventative maintenance.

SOLUTION:
New Transportation Facility

A new transportation facility is planned for the former Craddock School site to replace the district's existing bus operations space. The facility would consolidate transportation functions and include maintenance bays, a wash bay, a bus lift, and dedicated areas for drivers and staff. The updated layout is designed to support routine maintenance and daily transportation operations.



Challenge #3



BUILDING PRESERVATION:
Replacing Key Mechanical and Structural Systems

Key mechanical and structural systems across Miller Elementary School, Leighton Elementary School, Harmon Middle School, and Aurora High School are nearing the end of their expected lifespans. These types of repairs exceed the regular annual maintenance that the systems already receive.

SOLUTION:
Building Preservation

Priority infrastructure projects across existing buildings will focus on extending the life of systems, including HVAC and ADA upgrades district-wide. Exterior work includes new roofs at Aurora High and Harmon, paving, and door replacements to support operational efficiency. Additional capital projects include a new Board of Education building and an addition at Miller.



AURORA CITY SCHOOLS

THE ESSENTIAL PLAN

A Vision for the Future

If approved on November 3, 2026, *The Essential Plan* will generate approximately $96,000,000 for the district to address the most necessary capital improvements needed to increase the longevity of Aurora City Schools buildings while being fiscally conscious. Based on the preliminary project costs of *The Essential Plan*, an Aurora resident would pay $12 a month per $100,000 valuation of their home.

Cost Breakdown

New Elementary School:	**$57,600,000**
Miller Addition & Select Renovations:	**$5,500,000**
Board Office:	**$2,900,000**
Essential Capital Improvements:	**$23,000,000**
Transportation Center:	**$7,000,000**
Total Cost:	**Approx. $96,000,000**

Costs are estimated and subject to change

Cost to Homeowners

Approx. $12/month

per $100,000 of property value







The Essential Plan Core Priorities

Right-sized Elementary Facilities

Better meeting the needs of early learners, and allowing the district to remove current trailer classrooms at Miller and Leighton.

Upgraded Transportation Facilities

Ensuring safety and longevity of the district's fleet.

Building Preservation and Maintenance

Extending the life of key educational spaces.

The ACSD is seeking to create learning and working spaces to support student success, foster innovation, and reflect the values of the Aurora community while continuing to be financially prudent with stakeholder dollars.

This plan is the district's strategic solution for student success, ensuring that buildings remain safe, functional and equipped to provide a high-quality education. *The Essential Plan* was introduced as a fiscally responsible roadmap that focuses on early education, transportation and building care and maintenance and addresses the highest priority facility needs. These priorities address aging infrastructure, elementary capacity limits, and critical maintenance needs such as roofing, HVAC and paving.

The Essential Plan At a Glance

New 1–3 Elementary School

- A new, approximately 117,104 square-foot 1-3 Elementary School
- Located on the existing Craddock Elementary School site
- Grade 3 will move from Leighton to the new school
- Meets current code and ADA compliance requirements
- Abate/demolish the existing Craddock Elementary School

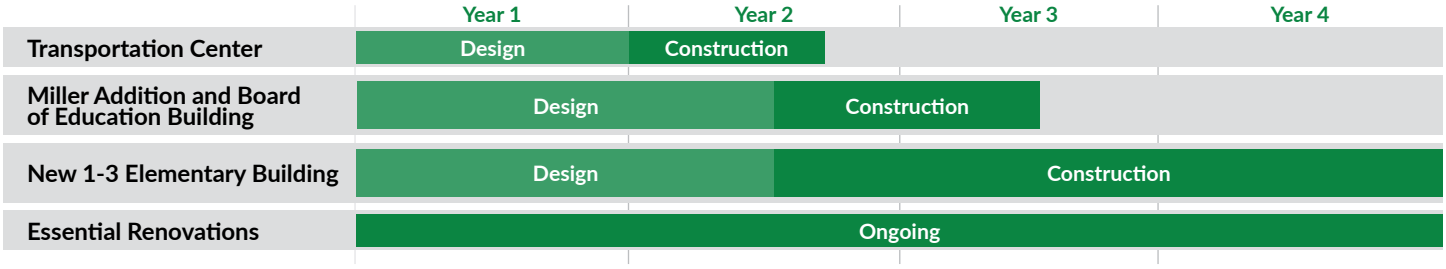
Transportation Center

- A new 12,073 square-foot transportation center built on the Craddock site that replaces the existing aging facility
- New wash bay, operations and maintenance spaces for the district's vehicle fleet
- Separate circulation for district staff that simplifies traffic on the site

Essential Renovations

- Paving on Greenmen Way campuswide
- New roofing at Aurora High School and Harmon Middle School
- HVAC improvements at Aurora High School
- Kitchen refresh at Aurora High School and Leighton Elementary School
- New playgrounds for kindergarten and pre-k at Miller Elementary School
- Chiller and boiler replacement at Leighton Elementary School
- Board of Education building on the Conference Center site
- Addition at Miller Elementary School

Project Timeline



Learn More About The Essential Plan

The Essential Plan 15-Part Video Series

To explain the different components of *The Essential Plan*, Aurora City Schools' Superintendent Dr. Paul Milcetich presented a 15-part video series covering the details of the plan. Each video contains information on a different topic regarding the facilities plan.

The district encourages community members to review the 15-part series which provides insight into the different aspects of *The Essential Plan* to clarify key details of the project. To explore the different components of "The Essential Plan," use the QR code to view the video series.

Video Series

Community Focus Spotlight on Aurora Schools

The May 2026 Community Focus Spectrum Channel 1021 Spotlight on Aurora Schools' district show featured Aurora City School District Superintendent Dr. Paul Milcetich, and *The Essential Plan* community meeting tours given last spring. Milcetich explained *The Essential Plan* and took guests on a tour of Craddock Elementary School (the oldest building in the district), the Board of Education Office and the Transportation Facility.

To view the Community Focus May 2026 Spotlight on Aurora Schools' show and get an inside look at the buildings, scan the QR code or find it on the homepage of the ACSD website at aurora-schools.org.

Spotlight on Aurora Schools

Girl Scouts Donate Buddy Bench

Four girls from 6th grade Girl Scout Troop 9182 set out to "do a project that focused on spreading kindness, inclusion and friendships among students," said Girl Scout Troop 9182 Leader Carrie Crawford. Girl Scouts Addie Crawford, Jenna Dobnikar, Kara Garber and Clara Smith decided they wanted to donate a Buddy Bench to the Aurora Schools. A Buddy Bench allows children to signal to other students that one of their peers is in need of companionship when sitting on it.

The project required $500 to complete. The girls located a company in Akron that sells benches that met their requirements. They then partnered with Evexia Café in Aurora and made 200 cake pops to sell. Then they worked with the Aurora Parks and Recreation Department to set up a concession stand to sell their cake pops at a large community event, and created an advertisement flyer to support their cause. The girls raised the funds and donated the bench to the Miller Elementary School playground.

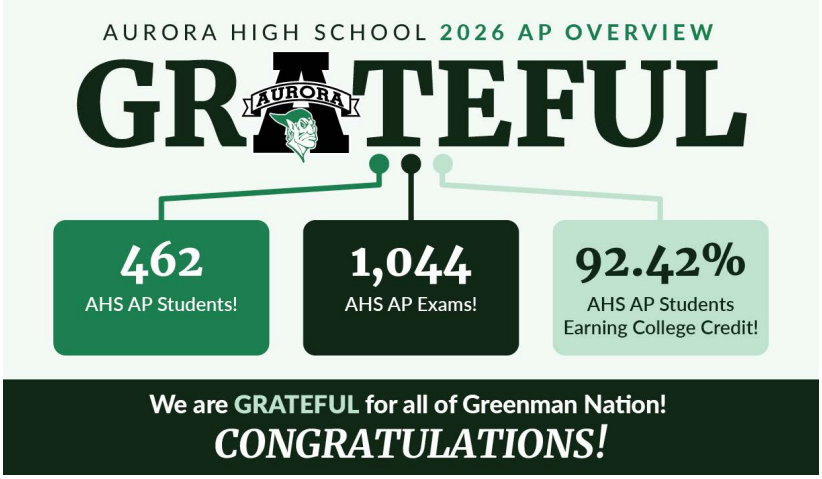
The girls were invited to read a story about Buddy Benches to kindergarten students and joined students on the playground to show them how to use the bench. Their time, dedication and caring spirit with this endeavor will make a big impact on students at Miller Elementary School for years to come.



AHS Advanced Placement 2025-26 Overview

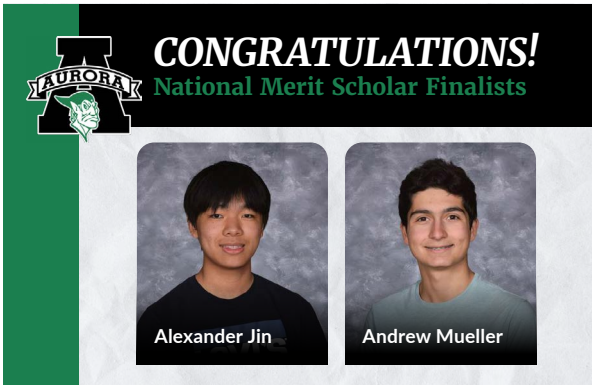
The Aurora High School (AHS) Advanced Placement (AP) 2025-26 testing results have made AHS history! The previous records were shattered with 462 AHS AP students taking the exams (most ever), and 1,044 exams administered (most ever) with the best passage rate ever with 92.42% of students earning college credit.

Aurora City School District (ACSD) Assistant Superintendent Mike Hayes said, "We are so GRATEFUL for our amazing Aurora kids, colleagues and community as their commitment to themselves and one another allows for Aurora learning environments to flourish and our Greenmen to be truly Future-Ready!"



AHS National Merit Scholar Finalists 2026

Congratulations to 2026 Aurora High School National Merit Scholar Finalists Alexander Jin and Andrew Mueller. They were named National Merit Scholar Finalists as part of the 70th annual National Merit Scholarship Program (2025) from over 15,000 Semifinalists. More than 6,930 Finalists earned the Merit Scholar title and are eligible to earn scholarship money from a pool of almost $26 million. Best of luck to both in their future endeavors.



AHS Ten Finalists Named in 2026 Stop the Hate Contest

Aurora High School had ten finalists named in the Maltz Museum's 2026 Stop the Hate Contest. Each of the ten students received at least $1,000 scholarships!

As the third runner-up, Liam Hernandez earned a $5,000 scholarship to the school of his choice for his competition essay, which gives a voice to the elderly, especially those tucked away in nursing homes. Linh Nguyen was a top-three finalist in the poetry division, with her poem earning her a $1,000 scholarship. Thank you to instructor Conni Hilston for supporting our students as they submitted their work and were celebrated at the recognition ceremony.



Liam Hernandez



Linh Nguyen

Leighton School Amphitheater Renovation

The Aurora Schools Foundation and community partners sponsored a renovation of the Leighton School Amphitheater. The project transformed the amphitheater into a space that can be utilized and enjoyed by the Aurora City School District and the community. The renovations are now complete, and the amphitheater is ready for students and staff. Superintendent Dr. Paul Milcetich said, "We are so grateful for the support of our community partners, especially JJ's Beautification Service, for making this dream a reality."

Thank you to these community partners:

Rotary Club of Aurora

Aurora Schools Foundation

V Financial Partners

Aurora Elementary Parent Teacher Organization (AEPTO)

JJ's Beautification Service







Aurora Schools Foundation Creates Scholarship Granting Organization

The Aurora City Schools Scholarship Granting Organization (AuroraSGO) was founded in 2025 by the Aurora Schools Foundation (ASF). It is a 501(c)(3) organization created primarily to raise scholarship dollars for students to attend all-day kindergarten in the Aurora City School District. The grant prioritizes low-income households. While both the ASF and the AuroraSGO are dedicated to supporting students in the City of Aurora, they are two separate entities that operate through different programs and guidelines.

AuroraSGO
SCHOLARSHIP GRANTING ORGANIZATION

Contributions made to AuroraSGO are eligible for a nonrefundable tax credit, which can be applied to an individual's Ohio state income tax liability, up to a maximum of $750. For couples filing jointly, two separate contributions of $750 each can be made, totaling $1,500. It is important to note that a tax credit is not the same as a tax deduction. A tax deduction reduces taxable income, while a tax credit is a dollar-for-dollar credit applied against any taxes paid to the State of Ohio.

Donations are very much appreciated and can be made through the AuroraSGO website at **www.aurorasgo.org** or mailed to: AuroraSGO, Attn: Treasurer, P.O. Box 109, Aurora, OH 44202.

Aurora City Schools
102 East Garfield Road
Aurora, Ohio 44202

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EXCEPTIONAL GREENMEN

Track & Field Event

The Aurora City School District hosted the spring 2026 Exceptional Greenmen Track & Field Event. This annual event invites students receiving special education services to participate in a custom day of sporting events just for them.

Aurora High School Assistant Principal and 6-12 Special Education Coordinator Victor Torres stated, "This special event is an opportunity for our students with exceptional needs to come together, participate, build confidence, and celebrate their abilities through a variety of fun and engaging activities. Much like the spirit of the Special Olympics, this event is centered around inclusion, empowerment, teamwork, joy, and providing meaningful opportunities for all students to shine."

