

ELWOOD HIGHLIGHTS

A NEWSLETTER OF THE ELWOOD UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT

Elwood Elevates: New Elementary Report Card Puts Growth at the Center

Beginning in November, Elwood will introduce a new elementary report card designed to give families a clearer picture of student learning and progress. The new K-5 report card uses one consistent, standards-based scale across every subject and grade level.

The four-step scale – Exemplary, Consistent, Progressing and Improvement Needed – shows where a student is currently

performing in relation to grade-level learning targets. Rather than serving as a fixed label, each rating is intended to highlight progress, identify the next step in learning and support a growth mindset.

The redesigned report card also replaces the three different rating systems previously used with a single scale and connects feedback directly to specific grade-level standards in clearer, family-friendly language.

Families will receive a written guide explaining the new system and how to interpret each rating (example below). Report cards will continue to be available securely through eSchool, with translations offered.

The goal is simple: provide families with consistent, understandable feedback that shows not only what students have learned, but how they are continuing to grow.

E Exemplary

Consistently masters learning targets

Demonstrates a deeper knowledge and understanding of grade-level learning targets and consistently masters application of concepts and skills taught.

C Consistent

Meets grade-level expectations

Demonstrates proficient knowledge and understanding of grade-level learning targets and consistently applies concepts and skills taught.

P Progressing

Developing toward expectations

Demonstrates some knowledge and understanding of grade-level learning targets and is developing consistent application of concepts and skills.

I Improvement Needed

Needs more practice and support

Does not yet demonstrate knowledge and understanding of grade-level learning targets. The student needs additional practice and support

THE PATH FORWARD

Establishing Goals for 2026-2027

The Board of Education, working with district administrators, has reviewed and updated its goals for the 2026-2027 school year. The priorities focus on student achievement and opportunities, financial and operational planning, school-to-community partnerships, and promoting a culture of wellness and safety throughout the district. Learn more about our work and the priorities identified by visiting the district website: <https://www.elwoodufsd.org/about/district-goals>.



Dear Elwood School Community,

As we have settled into the 2026-2027 school year, I am excited about the opportunities and possibilities that lie ahead for our students and staff. A new school year brings renewed energy, fresh beginnings and the promise of continued growth and success.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to our outstanding facilities teams and office staff, whose hard work throughout the summer ensured that our schools were ready to welcome everyone back safely.

As we move forward, I would like to remind families that all students are eligible for free breakfast and lunch each school day through New York State's Community Eligibility Provision. Our Students and Electronic Devices Policy also remain in effect, prohibiting the use of cell phones and other personal internet devices during the school day. Additionally, consistent attendance, punctuality and remaining in school through dismissal are essential to student success. Our schools are committed to partnering with families to address attendance concerns and ensure every student has the support they need to thrive.

Our focus remains on elevating the student experience, expanding opportunities and building on the strong foundation of excellence that defines our district. Through our continued partnership with families and the community, we look forward to making this a meaningful and successful year for every student.

On behalf of our entire administrative team and staff, thank you for your continued support. I look forward to a great year working together.

Warm regards,

Gayle Steele, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

A Message from the Board of Education

Welcome Back, Elwood!

As we begin a new school year, I would like to extend a warm welcome back to our students, families, faculty and staff. The start of a new year brings a sense of excitement, fresh opportunities, and the promise of continued growth and success for our entire school community.

In preparation for the school year, the Board of Education has worked with our administrative team to establish new district goals that will help guide our work and shape the future of our schools. These goals focus on four key areas: student achievement and opportunities; financial and operational planning; cultivating school-to-community partnerships; and championing a culture of wellness and safety. Together, these priorities reflect our commitment to providing meaningful learning experiences, ensuring responsible stewardship of district resources, strengthening our connections with the community, and fostering an environment where every student and staff member feels safe, supported and valued.

As we look ahead, we are excited about the opportunities this new school year will bring. We remain committed to working collaboratively with our administrators, educators, families and community partners to support our students and continue building on the strengths of our district.

On behalf of the Board of Education, I wish everyone a successful, rewarding and inspiring school year. We look forward to all that we will accomplish together.

Sincerely,
James Tomeo
Board of Education President



A Seat on the Board

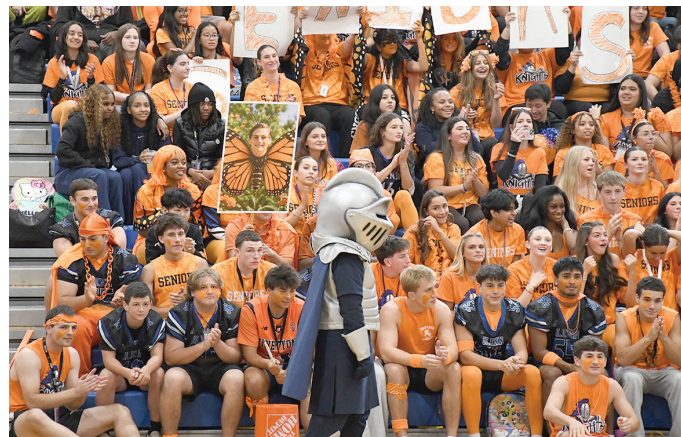
Elwood-John H. Glenn High School senior Ava Hopkins has joined the Board of Education as this year's new ex officio student member, representing her fellow students by attending Board meetings, participating in discussions and sharing recommendations on issues affecting the district's schools. The nonvoting, uncompensated position, mandated by New York State, gives high school students an opportunity to contribute directly to their district's decision-making process.

Ava also serves as secretary of John Glenn's Yearbook Club and is an All-County cross-country athlete and member of the National Honor Society, World Language Honor Society, Shared Decision Making Committee, and the SADD and Freshman Buddies clubs.

"I am honored to serve as the ex officio member this year and excited to bring a student perspective to the Board," she said. "I'm looking forward to strengthening connections with students, staff and the Elwood community."

National Marks of Distinction

Elwood-John H. Glenn High School seniors Bella Ronai, Nico Rayo Trager and Avalyn Sclafani have been named Commended Students in the 2027 National Merit Scholarship Program, placing them among approximately 34,000 students nationwide recognized for exceptional academic promise. The students earned the distinction based on their performance on the 2025 PSAT/NMSQT, placing among the top 50,000 entrants in the 2027 competition.



HOMECOMING SPIRIT

Remains Strong Despite Weather Challenges

John Glenn held an energetic pep rally on Sept. 25 that kept homecoming enthusiasm high despite the nor'easter forcing the parade and football game to be rescheduled. Students from all four classes packed the gym in their class colors as the homecoming floats were displayed, athletic teams were introduced and the marching band, cheerleaders and kickline performed. Class pride took center stage during spirited tug-of-war and volleyball competitions, with seniors, juniors, sophomores and freshmen cheering loudly from the bleachers throughout the afternoon.

The weather delay did little to dampen the school community's excitement, as homecoming festivities continued with the rescheduled football game on Sept. 28, when Glenn earned a 42-0 shutout over Wyandanch.



Meet the District's New Administrators

Dr. Andrew McIntosh was appointed to a new position as director of curriculum, with oversight over all curriculum areas from kindergarten to 12th grade. Dr. McIntosh comes to Elwood from Westchester County's Valhalla School District, where he served as an assistant principal and districtwide educational technology specialist.

"From the moment I started the interview process, I knew Elwood was a special place," McIntosh said. "I look forward to partnering with all stakeholders to build upon the district's vision and its deep commitment to extraordinary student focus."

Lindsay Fritch is the new principal of Elwood-John H. Glenn High School, after serving with distinction as John Glenn's assistant principal since 2023.

"Having served as an administrator in this district, I've seen firsthand the heart of the John Glenn community," Fritch said. "I am eager to embrace the responsibilities of principal and look forward to hitting the ground running as we work together to support the achievement of every student."

Rounding out the team at John Glenn is new assistant principal Tim Cipolla, who brings more than 14



years of experience as an educator, instructional leader and mentor dedicated to fostering student success.

"I look forward to partnering with John Glenn's students, staff, families and community to build upon its tradition of excellence while ensuring every student feels valued, inspired and empowered to succeed, not only in school, but in life," Cipolla said.

At James H. Boyd Intermediate School, Dr. Timothy Hoss was appointed as interim principal, ensuring continuity and stability thanks to his extensive background as an educator and his student-centered approach to leadership, including 16 years as principal of Northport Middle School.

"I am thrilled to be supporting the great work the district and staff are doing at Boyd," Dr. Hoss said. "Children arrive having learned to read and leave us reading to learn. It is a remarkable journey, and I am honored to be a part of it."

Focusing on Facilities Updates

The Elwood School District continues to invest in the maintenance, safety and improvement of our school facilities to ensure our buildings and grounds are well cared for and ready to support our students and staff.

Several important facilities projects and improvements have been completed or are underway:

- **James H. Boyd Intermediate School Auditorium Roof:** Replacement of the roof over the auditorium was completed in September, addressing an important maintenance need and protecting the facility for years to come.
- **Water Heater Replacement:** A water heater was replaced over the summer, ensuring reliable service and improving the overall operation of the building.
- **New Maintenance Department Truck:** The district purchased a new truck equipped with a plow for the maintenance department. This addition will provide significant support to our facilities team during snowstorms and winter weather, helping them maintain safe access to our schools and grounds.
- **Harley Avenue Primary School Security:** Additional gates were installed along the outside perimeter of Harley Avenue Primary School to further secure the school grounds and enhance the safety of our students and staff.
- **Lacrosse Netting System:** Bids for a new lacrosse netting system were opened on October 1. A contract is expected to be awarded shortly, with the goal of having the system installed in time for the spring lacrosse season.

These projects reflect the district's ongoing commitment to maintaining safe, functional and welcoming facilities while planning thoughtfully for the future needs of our school community.

Board of Education

James Tomeo, President Deborah Weiss, Vice President

Walter Edwards Thomas Scarola Patricia Haack

Dr. Gayle Steele, Superintendent of Schools

www.elwood.k12.ny.us