Ottawa Hills
Jr./Sr. High School

Ben McMurray, Principal
Dr. Amanda Ricketts, Assistant Principal

Starting 5: October 2026



Dear Green Bear Families,

Reflecting on our recent Homecoming festivities reminds us all of the unique magic of the Village of Ottawa Hills. From the incredible community turnout at the annual parade to the high energy and spirit at the dance, it was a wonderful display of pride and connection across our entire school family. That same energy drives our students every day in the classroom as we push through the remaining weeks of the first quarter.

With the end of quarter one approaching, we encourage all students to keep their momentum going, finish strong, and proactively take advantage of available academic supports, especially by utilizing all of the support available in the Foundry. Whether that means working with staff in the Foundry, meeting directly with classroom teachers, maximizing study periods, or establishing consistent routines at home, taking these extra steps now makes a significant difference. Communication is key to student success, so please feel free to reach out directly to your student's teachers via email whenever extra guidance is needed.

Thank you for your prompt responses for the Agora sign-up. Both the on-campus and travel programs are shaping up to be something truly special and memorable. If you have questions about the campus

program, please feel free to reach out to Matt Chappuies via email at MChappuies@ohschools.org.

Thank you for your continued support and partnership in making Ottawa Hills a place where our students thrive both academically and as a community.

Sincerely,
Ben McMurray, principal

1. Testing Day

Wednesday, October 14

Students in grades 9 through 11 will be participating in college readiness testing on Wednesday, October 14. Students in grade 9 will take the PSAT; students in grade 10 will take the PreACT; and students in grade 11 will take the PSAT/NSMQT. The results from these tests provide valuable information about our students and programming. They will take the entire morning.

There will be alternative programming for grades 7, 8, and 12.

All students, grades 7-12, will be released early on Wednesday, October 14. Most students will likely be done by 11:10am, but please be flexible.

Once students are dismissed, they should return home and complete online assignments including school safety modules. Students are expected to stay off campus during the afternoon school hours once they are dismissed.



2. Fall Collage Concert

Sunday, October 18
7:00pm Main Gym

The Fall Collage Concert features all of the performing groups at Ottawa Hills Junior/Senior High. Bands and choirs alike perform a seamless concert experience that goes from one group to the next, sampling sounds from the first quarter. Be sure to join us Sunday, October 18th for this event. The concert starts at 7:00PM in the main gym.



3. Parent Teacher Conferences

Parent Teacher Conferences will take place on Thursday, October 22 and Friday, October 23. There will be no school for students on those days.

Click the link to sign up for conferences: https://ptcfast.com/schools/OHLS

Conference FAQs:
Q: Will you send me a piece of paper to sign up for conferences?
A: No, we are entirely electronic.

Q: What if I click all of the boxes, but I never received an email from the website allowing me to sign up?
A: First, check your spam account for an email from PTCfast.com. Next, try again with your email or an alternative email you use in your family. If that still does not work, call the main office and we can help you out.

Q: What if a teacher I want to meet with does not have any open conference times that work for me?
A: Please contact that teacher directly to schedule a time outside of the standard conference dates/times. Emails for all employees in the district are the first letter of their first name, their entire last name, @ohschools.org. For example: Amanda Neuendorf aneuendorf@ohschools.org

Q: Do I need to meet with all of my student's teachers at the Jr./Sr. High School?
A: It is completely up to you. Although very helpful for parent/teacher communication, these are not required conferences.

Q: Do I need to meet with second semester teachers at the Jr./Sr. High School?
A: We highly recommend waiting to meet with second semester teachers until your student is in those classes.

Q: Does my student need to attend?

A: Students only need to attend upon request of the teacher.

Q: Will I be reminded of these conferences?
A: Yes! The website will send automatic reminders two days before conferences.

Ottawa Hills
Local Schools

Invites you to



COFFEE & CONVERSATION

Friday, October 2
at 8:30 a.m.
District Conference Room
(4035 W. Central Ave.)

TOPIC: May 2027 School Levy

4. You're Invited

District leadership invite you to **Coffee & Conversation to learn about the May 2027 levy on Friday, October 2, at 8:30 a.m. in the district conference room** (4035 W. Central Ave.). Regular resident-supported levies are the critical revenue stream for our district and necessary to maintain the long history of educational excellence our community is known for.

Note that additional opportunities like this Coffee & Conversation will be shared throughout the next several months to allow all community members a chance to learn more about the May 2027 ballot.

Resident resources on district financials, including six Green Bear Finance episodes, are **available on the Treasurer's webpage** at: ohschools.org/about-us/treasurerfinancials



5. Upcoming Senior Night

Friday, October 9

Fall senior night for football, cheer/dance, band, girls tennis, golf, and cross country will take place on Friday night, October 9 prior to the football game. We ask that all seniors and their parents meet in the end zone by the flag pole no later than 6:25 p.m. as we plan to begin between 6:30 and 6:35 p.m. The student-athletes will be receiving a short questionnaire from Mr. Wronkowicz via email within the next week which will need to be filled out to help with the event. Please contact Mr. Wronkowicz with any questions. RWronkowicz@ohschools.org

Parking Reminders:
Renovations to Geresy & Hardman Field

Due to exciting renovations at Geresy and Hardman Fields, there will be some temporary impacts to parking availability. Please note that these renovations will affect parking only and will not impact the availability or use of the fields.

The renovations are expected to continue through the month of October. We appreciate your patience and understanding as these improvements are completed.

OTTAWA HILLS GREEN BEARS

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

SEPTEMBER 28–OCTOBER 4, 2026

MON 9/28

GIRLS TENNIS
VS BOWLING GREEN
4:30 PM

7TH/8TH VOLLEYBALL
VS ST. JOSEPH CC
5:00/6:00 PM

TUE 9/29

7TH/8TH VOLLEYBALL
AT EVERGREEN
5:00/6:00 PM

JV/VARSITY VOLLEYBALL
AT ST. JOSEPH CC
5:30/7:00 PM

WED 9/30

GIRLS TENNIS
VS ST. URSULA
4:00 PM

7TH/8TH VOLLEYBALL
AT DANBURY
5:30/6:30 PM

THU 10/1

GIRLS TENNIS
HOSTS SECTIONALS
9:00 AM

VARSITY GOLF
AT DISTRICTS
9:00 AM

JH FOOTBALL
VS WOODMORE
5:00 PM

JV/VARSITY VOLLEYBALL
VS DANBURY
5:30/6:45 PM.

VARSITY BOYS SOCCER
AT CONTINENTAL
7:00 PM

FRI 10/2

VARSITY FOOTBALL
AT WOODMORE
7:00 PM

SAT 10/3

GIRLS TENNIS
HOSTS SECTIONALS
9:00 AM

CROSS COUNTRY
AT CLAY INVITATIONAL
9:50 AM

7TH/8TH VOLLEYBALL
VS NORTHWOOD
10:00/11:00 AM

JV/VARSITY VOLLEYBALL
AT NORTHWOOD
11:00 AM/12:30 PM

JV BOYS SOCCER
AT MILLER CITY
11:00 AM

VARSITY/JV FIELD HOCKEY
VS OLENTANGY LIBERTY
11:00 AM/12:30 PM

VARSITY GOLF
AT JEROME HONORARY
1:30 PM

VARSITY FIELD HOCKEY
VS HUDSON
2:00 PM

SUN 10/4

OTTAWA HILLS

BEAR CAVE

SPECIAL EDITION

THE DROP

A limited edition collection with exclusive Peter Millar apparel and YETI.



THE SHOP IS OPEN

FRIDAY, 9/25 – FRIDAY, 10/9

SHOP THE SPECIAL EDITION
AT OHBOOSTERS.ORG →

LIMITED QUANTITIES

Available exclusively at the Bear Cave.

IT TAKES A VILLAGE.

New This Year! Our page is interactive. Click icons, QR codes, and images to get to that webpage!

DID YOU KNOW THAT AS A PARENT OR GUARDIAN OF AN OTTAWA HILLS STUDENT, YOU ARE A MEMBER OF OHSPA, OTTAWA HILLS SCHOOLS PARENT ASSOCIATION, THE SCHOOL DISTRICT'S PTA?

Newsletter

5 Things You Need to Know:

1

Reminder! No hot lunch on Monday's at the JH/HS!



2

ORDER HERE



Hot Lunch Reminder!

ORDERS ARE DUE SEPTEMBER 24 FOR OCTOBER. PRE-ORDERING AVAILABLE NOW THROUGH DECEMBER!

3

Halloween Movie Night committee needs HS sports teams and clubs to help us with trunk or treat, volunteer, and more! Contact Claire@dollopshoptoledo.com or kassemryn@gmail.com for info!

Sign Up Now!



4

Next membership Meeting is 10/8

Save the date for OHSPA's next membership meeting.

Thursday, October 8

8:15 am

OHES community room

5

Stay Connected!

suggestion BOX

Ottawa Hills Music & Theatre Association

OHMTA supports the choral and theatre activities, as well as contributing towards the enrichment of the arts.

Become an OHMTA Patron today and help our students learn through music and theater productions.

OHMTA Website

OHMTA Patrons

Visit our website to learn more and to get involved.
https://ottawahillsmusicandtheatreassociation.wordpress.com

E-Bike Information

The Ottawa Hills Police Department is concerned about your child's safety. The following information clarifies Ohio law covering E-Bikes and motorcycles under 4511.522, 4511.53 and 4511.56 of the Ohio Revised Code.

E-Bikes are divided into 3 classes:

- Class 1 Pedal assist max speed of 20 MPH, no age minimum.
- Class 2 Throttle Assist max speed of 20 MPH, no age minimum.
- Class 3: Pedal Assist max speed of 28 MPH, minimum age of 16, helmet required.

E-Bike Required Equipment

All E-Bikes shall have a permanently affixed label in a prominent location specifying the class of E-Bike. If the E-Bike does not have a manufacture class label, it is not a road legal.

In accordance with ORC 4511.65, bicycles or E-Bikes operated after sunset shall be equipped with:

- A lamp mounted on the front emitting a white light visable at least 500 ft forward and 300 ft to the sides, if ridden at night.
- A red reflector on the rear visible between 100 and 600 ft
- A lamp mounted on the rear emitting either a steady or flashing red light visible at least 500 ft.

E-Dirt bikes

E-Dirt bikes are not E-Bikes. Such vehicles are motorcycles under ORC 4511.01C and require a valid driver's license with a motorcycle endorsement for legal operation on a public roadway. A legally registered E-Dirtbike Motorcycle requires the following equipment:

- Head lights, Taillight, brake light, turn signals, mirrors, and a registered license plate through the Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles.
- ODOT approved helmet until the operator is 18 years old or older

Please contact the Ottawa Hills Police Department at 419-531-4211 with questions or concerns.

Green Bear News



Ottawa Hills Earns Governor's Thomas Edison Award for Excellence in STEM

Ottawa Hills Junior/Senior High School has been named a recipient of the Governor's Thomas Edison Award for Excellence in STEM Education and Student Research for the 2025–2026 school year by The Ohio Academy of Science. Executive Director Michael E. Woytek officially announced the award, placing Ottawa Hills among just 76 schools across Ohio recognized for their exceptional commitment to hands-on learning and student scientific inquiry.

To qualify for this honor, schools must satisfy strict criteria demonstrating a comprehensive STEM program. Ottawa Hills students actively participated in a local science fair, a Regional Science Day, and at least one additional youth science activity outside the classroom. Rather than treating STEM as just an acronym, Ottawa Hills embeds science, technology, engineering, and mathematics into a project-based curriculum designed to foster problem-solving, critical thinking, teamwork, creativity, and communication.

"STEM education is about empowering students to think critically and solve real-world problems, and this award highlights the incredible hands-on learning happening in our classrooms every day," shares Principal Ben McMurray.

Sixteen educators were recognized for their leadership and classroom contributions: Chris Gajewicz, Dan Feuerstein, Jacob Byrley, Gerry Davis, Gloria Kreischer-Gajewicz, Jeremy Nixon, Joan Keckler, Kristin Johnson, Michael Leeds, Nicole Silvers, Caitlin Shawaker, Jake Hall, Paige Bergsma, Patty Dowd, Paul Genzman, Tim Adkins, and Trevor Hug.

To honor their dedication, each recognized teacher will receive a complimentary membership to The Ohio Academy of Science.

Established in 1985, the Governor's Thomas Edison Awards are administered through a partnership between The Ohio Academy of Science, The Office of Technology Investments, and The Ohio Department of Development to highlight programs preparing students for the future workforce.

"The brilliant minds in today's classrooms are laying the groundwork for our state's future economic success," said Lydia Mihalik, Director of the Ohio Department of Development. "We're deeply grateful to the schools and educators molding these young scientists into the problem-solvers and visionaries who will create a brighter tomorrow across Ohio."

Congratulations to our outstanding faculty and students on this well-deserved statewide achievement!

About The Ohio Academy of Science Founded in 1891, The Ohio Academy of Science (OAS) is a membership-based, volunteer-driven, not-for-profit organization. The Academy is the leading organization in Ohio to foster curiosity, discovery, innovation, and problem-solving skills. For more information about the OAS, please visit its website at http://www.ohiosci.org.



Students Clean Up the Ottawa River

For more than a decade, Paul Genzman, a dedicated science teacher and advisor to the Eclipse Club, has taken his students to various beautiful spots along the Ottawa River in the Village to remove plastic and other debris that has accumulated in the water. Genzman works with Village Manager April MacDonald and Mayor Thompson to identify critical areas in need of waste and debris removal.

National Clean Your Streams Week is an annual environmental initiative that connects local volunteers, students, and community partners to clear trash from area waterways, improving water quality and protecting wildlife throughout the region. Participation gives students hands-on experience with environmental stewardship and real-world science applications.

"Getting our students out into the river allows them to see the direct, positive impact of their stewardship," said Paul Genzman. "It transforms abstract environmental concepts into a meaningful, practical experience that stays with them long after the cleanup is done."

"The Ottawa River is not only a vital community resource, but it also serves as an incredible outdoor learning lab for our students," said Principal Ben McMurray. "We are deeply grateful to Mr. Genzman and the wonderful partnership he's created with the Village, which allows the students to work hand-in-hand to care for and protect this river together."

This cleanup effort is crucial for preserving the natural ecosystem of the Lake Erie watershed. Thanks to the removal of the dam and the commitment of students and teachers, the river is gradually returning to its natural state. Photos by Paul Genzman



Homecoming 2026
The week of festivities, culminating in a wonderful weekend, was made possible by advisor Liz Puskala and Sophomore Class Officers Dahlia Hajjar, Jane Denny, Sophie Hamilton, Parker Moran, Hadi Hajjar, and Balal Khawaja.

They did an incredible job in organizing key events, including coordinating the assembly, dance, theme video, voting, and class floats

Friday's events were a wonderful display of school and community pride. A huge shout-out to Meredith Douglas, Jenn Wagoner, Becky Hauck, and the OHPD for organizing Friday's annual Village Homecoming Parade. The fantastic weather and high turnout made for a magical afternoon for the Village of Ottawa Hills. Thank you to Michael Leeds and the OHHS Marching Band for their spirited participation in both the parade and the football game.

Our hallways and gym were transformed with festive decorations centered around this year's "masquerade" theme, thanks to parent volunteers Cecily Denny, Megan Hopkins, and Amy Barone alongside the sophomore class officers. DJ Adam Darwich kept the energy high as students danced for more than two hours nonstop, with more than 220 students attending.

Special thanks go to our dance chaperones: Liz Puskala, Gloria Kreischer-Gajewicz, Haley Hoss, Mandy Ricketts, Ben McMurray, and Officers Sarah Motter and Jared Largent from the OHPD. The class officers and custodian Trish Moyer also deserve recognition for their prompt help with clean-up.

Finally, congratulations to all members of the Homecoming Court! In case you missed the crowning ceremony, Jasmine Hajjar was named the 2026 Homecoming Queen.





Homecoming for Alumni
The classes of 1996 and 2006 celebrated their 30 year reunion and 20 year reunion this weekend. They attended the football game on Friday and took a tour of the school on Saturday, receiving an update on campus developments from Principal Ben McMurray.

Special thanks to Erica Silk, Chris Hardman, Jessica Loudermilk, Pete Kadens (‘96), Brett McCall (‘96), Zaia Thombre (‘06), Michael Stancati (‘03), and Hannon’s Block/Huron Yards for assisting with the reunions.



Green Bears Finish Strong, Taking 6th at the 2026 Ottawa Hills Invitational

On Saturday, the Ottawa Hills boys golf team delivered a strong performance at the prestigious 2026 Ottawa Hills Invitational, held at the historic Inverness Club.

Navigating a challenging course, the Green Bears secured a solid 5th-place finish in an eight-team field featuring top high school programs across the state, including St. Ignatius, Upper Arlington, Dublin Jerome, Archbishop Alter, and Dublin Coffman. St. Ignatius ultimately claimed the team title.

Individually, the Green Bears posted impressive scores across the board: Walker Peterson led the team with an outstanding 75, followed closely by Charlie Swigart with a 76, Yale Feniger with a 79, Will Kelcziewski with an 85, and Cooper Friedman with an 87.

Special thanks go to Coach Justin Kruse, Athletic Director Ryan Wronkowicz, the OHHS Athletic Boosters, and the outstanding staff at the Inverness Club for organizing and hosting such a memorable event. Enjoying perfect weather, it was a fantastic day of competitive golf on the links.

Next up, the Green Bears will compete in the Division II OHSAA District Championship at Stone Ridge on October 1, 2026. Let's Go Green Bears!



Kicking MS for a Cause: Girls' Soccer Team Scores Big for Charity!

Last week, aour girls' soccer team carried on a proud athletic tradition by hosting the annual Match for MS event! The stands were filled with school spirit as fans gathered to support a fantastic cause, with all proceeds going directly to the **National MS Society.** Attendees enjoyed a fun-filled lineup of activities, including a 50/50 raffle, a halftime shootout, a delicious cookie sale, and an exciting auction for a party basket.

The action on the field was just as thrilling as the fundraising off it! The girls delivered an outstanding performance, dominating the match and securing a decisive 3-0 victory over Liberty-Center.

Beyond the scoreboard, the true heart of the event was the incredible generosity and unity of our community. A huge thank you goes out to head coach Jessica Kozy, Erica Skiver, and Sam Abbott, as well as every student, parent, and fan who came out to show their support. Liz Puuskala won the party basket, and the event raised $1,560 for the National MS Society.



Volley for the Cure: Raising Awareness & Funds for Breast Cancer
On Wednesday, September 23 hundreds of people dressed in pink turned out for the annual Volley for the Cure held at Ottawa Hills High School. The OH JV and Varsity volleyball teams wore special uniforms and played with a pink ball to raise awareness about breast cancer and to raise money for research.

The team raised several hundred dollars in donations for the Susan G. Komen Northwest Ohio affiliate which works to save lives and end breast cancer forever by empowering people, ensuring quality care for all and energizing science to find the cures.

Special thanks to Jackie Berenzweig who organized the Volley for the Cure. Todd Kowalczyk shared a personal story about his mom, who was diagnosed with breast cancer when Todd was in his teens and the importance a team can make in raising awareness and find a cure. Special thanks to Gretchen Awad from Komen for coming out to speak about what Komen does and how they continue to help locally in Northwest Ohio. Thanks to Brian Lorenzen for inviting WTOL to come and get some footage and to Sarah Petro who did the cute cookies from her company Sugar Sugar. If you wish to make a donation, click here. The Green Bears beat Lakota in three sets. Congratulations on the win and thank you for making a difference!



Seniors Take the Crown in Action-Packed Flag Football Game!

What an incredible evening we had last week as our junior and senior girls took to the field for a fun, high-energy flag football game! The stands were filled with enthusiastic supporters, creating a fantastic atmosphere for our entire school and local community.

Organized by our junior class officers as a fundraiser for this year's prom, the event was a resounding success, raising nearly $500. On the field, both teams brought some serious intensity and competitiveness, but the senior girls ultimately pulled ahead, earning a 28–8 victory over the juniors.

Reflecting on the evening, Principal Ben McMurray shared, "Events like this flag football game play a vital role in building our school spirit. It's wonderful to see how events like this bring our entire student body, faculty, and staff closer together, especially as we celebrate Homecoming."

Special thanks go to Coach Geoff Skibinski and his staff for taking the time to coach the players and referee the game with great fairness and enthusiasm. Shout out to Lowell Shreve for providing color, excitement, and humor with his lively play-by-play announcing. Finally, we extend our gratitude to Junior Class Advisor Gloria Kreischer-Gajewicz and the junior class officers for their hard work and dedication in organizing such a fun, action-packed event for our school family.

Thank you to everyone who came out to support our students, contribute to the prom fund, and show their school pride. Shout out to our senior girls on their impressive win!



Outdoor Adventures & HS Mentors: Inside the Sixth-Grade Trip to Camp Storer

The sixth graders of Ottawa Hills Elementary recently continued their annual tradition, making a trip to Camp Storer for a unique outdoor educational experience. Under spectacular weather, the students spent their time immersed in nature, learning about natural sciences and environmental issues, as well as participating in activities focused on cultural history and team building. This year marked the very first Camp Storer trip for new principal Andy Evans.

The trip was made even more special by the participation of high school students who volunteered as cabin leaders. They played an important leadership and mentoring role, guiding the sixth graders through activities and helping foster a sense of teamwork. Sixth grade teacher Jennifer Griffin shared, "We were so fortunate to have such an amazing group of high school students with us this year. Their energy, kindness, and leadership truly made this trip unforgettable for our sixth graders." Principal Andy Evans, the sixth-grade teachers, and the Camp Storer staff were deeply impressed with the dedication demonstrated by the high school leaders throughout the trip.

The following students served as cabin leaders for this year's trip: Lowell Shreve, Kyle Rose, Sawyer Ellis, Sam Kapadia, Savio Deiger, Elsa Gehling, Evelyn Parsons, Zhang, Louie Olah, Henry Lenahan, Najeed Alsultan, Bella Howard, Kaylin Zheng, Jillian Parson, Hana Mashali, and Sofia Denk.

The trip was organized by teacher chaperones Jennifer Griffin, Angie Parker, Lindsey Brewington, and Andrea Williamson. Additional adults accompanying the trip were Emily Mann, Kevin McKee, Tina Blosser, and Ashley Jones. Special thanks go out to the entire sixth grade team and the YMCA Camp Storer staff for providing such an amazing experience for the class of 2033. This annual trip continues to be a highlight for the students and a valuable lesson in both education and community. ***Photos by Jennifer Griffin***

Save the Date

Tuesday, October 6: Senior Portraits
Wednesday, October 14: Testing Day: EARLY RELEASE
Sunday, October 18: Fall Collage Concert
Thursday & Friday, October 22 & 23: Parents/Teacher Conferences: NO SCHOOL
Tuesday, November 3: No School-Voting Day



Unsubscribe Here