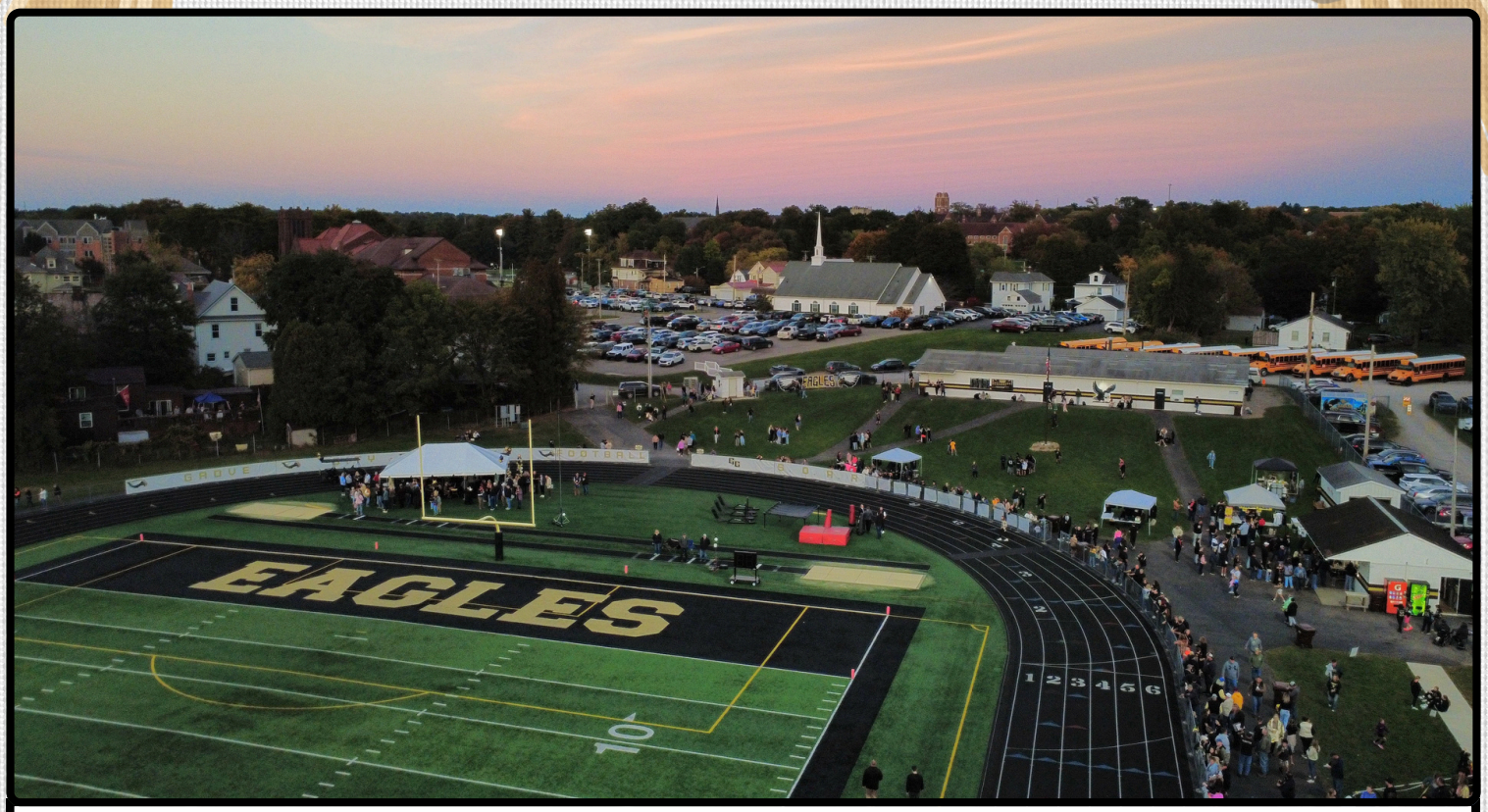
Grove City Area School District

The Talon

November 2026

Thankful for community



The sun sets over Forker Field as the Eagles prepare to host Oil City for homecoming 2026 and the inaugural GC Hall of Fame class looks on.

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Looking Back

Check out some highlights since our last newsletter























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Looking Back

Superintendent Weaver announces departure



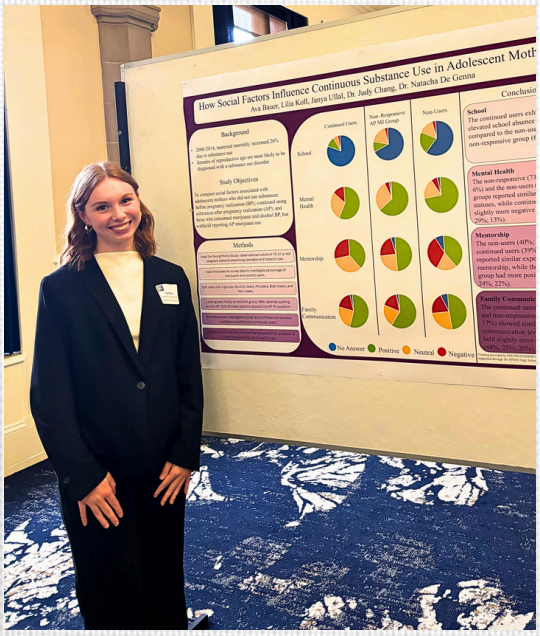
Dr. Joshua Weaver announced his acceptance of the superintendent role at Avonworth School District on October 15. On Oct. 19, the GCASD school board formally accepted his resignation as superintendent after just over a year in the position and nine as assistant superintendent. While the final details of the transition are yet to be determined, according to Dr. Weaver, he will most likely begin his duties at Avonworth in January, 2027. Until then, he says, there is still work to do.

"I have a lot I want to move along and take care of," he says, including solidifying the position of the new GCASD Education Foundation, putting in place the next stages of facility improvements, and working with the admin. team on the transition.

Dr. Weaver says he will genuinely miss the people, connections, and shared accomplishments at GCASD. "I've watched people embrace shared leadership across the district," says Weaver. "It all came from giving time and space to try things without having to be perfect."

GCASD school board president Ryan Thomas said in a community statement the board is now working to appoint an interim superintendent in the coming weeks, and will retain a firm to search for the next district leader. "We, as a board, are committed to ensuring both a seamless transition of leadership for the remainder of the school year and a strong plan moving forward to find our next district superintendent," the statement said.

GCASD thanks Dr. Weaver for his years and wishes him well in his next chapter.



GCAHS senior presents research at Pitt

Senior Ava Bauer spent her days in June and July, 2026 at Magee-Womens Research Institute in Pittsburgh as part of an internship researching women's health issues. She and her team of two other high schoolers, working under public health specialist Dr. Judy Chang, focused their work on a survey called the "Young Moms Study," which looks at connections between substance use and various social factors for expectant mothers ages 15-21, including school environment, family relationships, and mental health.

The team presented their research at the Bridging Connections for Addiction Research Symposium on October 14 at the University of Pittsburgh. "It was mostly PhD candidates," Bauer said. "We were the only high school group."

Nevertheless, their presentation, which demonstrates a correlation between substance use and multiple social factors, was impressive enough to be included, and has inspired them to continue their research. Though the internship has ended, the group continues to collaborate remotely, digging further into the data to study urine test results. Bauer remains curious about additional factors that could influence pregnant women's behavior, including socioeconomic considerations.

"I wanted to get experience and see if it's something I'm interested in," says Bauer, who plans to pursue a career in chemistry or bio-chemical research. "It was a really cool opportunity, and eye-opening."

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Looking Back

Homecoming 2026 wrap-up











On October 9th, Liza Jefferis and Micah Byun were crowned queen and king of the GCAHS homecoming court at halftime of the varsity football game, as GC hosted Oil City. Also on the court were princesses Nareigha Buchholz-Lee, Melina Houck, Maggie Ranker, and Sophia Slivka and princes Reece Edmonds, Declan Peterson, Vicenzo Trezona, and Liam Weller.

The court presided over the Rio-themed homecoming dance at the high school on October 10th, sponsored and planned by the student council, with district social worker Mrs. Amber Fitch as advisor.

"Everything went smoothly," says student council president and court member Maggie Ranker. "It took a lot of work but everybody pulled their weight so it turned out well and was fun for all."









GCAMS students enjoy outdoors at Seneca Hills

7th graders at GCAMS spent October 8th and 9th at Seneca Hills Retreat Center, with activities ranging from hiking and outdoor exploration to rock wall climbing and archery.

The annual fall excursion was hosted by Seneca Hills for the second year in a row, after previously being held at Lutherlyn for many years prior. 7th grade teachers organized the event and center staff led educational experiences for the students.

"It's a fun and engaging event, and gives us way to connect with students differently than in the typical classroom environment," says Dwayne Lettie, 7th grade reading teacher.

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Looking Back

Elegant Eagles flag football returns for second year



The seniors came out on top on the scoreboard, but the real winner on October 29th at Forker Field was the American Cancer Society, the benefactor of money raised from the second annual GCAHS Elegant Eagles flag football game.

The event was planned and sponsored by the high school Interact Club, advised by Ms. Karyn Senita.

The goal of the event is to "raise money for breast cancer research and to bring a spotlight onto the need for more funding for this cause," says Senita. Last year nearly $4000 was raised and this year brought in another $3,189.

Nearly 30 girls participated in the 9 on 9 game from the junior and senior classes, with another 26 boys on the sidelines as coaches and cheerleaders.

"It's a fun time that also raises awareness and gives people space to talk about experiences with cancer," says senior Interact Club member Abigail Shimek, who helped coached the cheerleaders.

A thematic spirit week at the high school led up to the game to inspire community, which continued into the game when fans received a free pink pom for bringing a non-perishable food item.





Literary Day Parade marches again

Friday, October 30, Hillview students participated in the annual Literary Day Parade. Students read books in class and created costumes of some of the main characters, developing reading skills and showing off some creativity at the same time. The parade took place around Hillview.









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Student Standouts: October

Rotary Students of the Month



Chloe Douglas
Sophomore

Evelyn Reiber
Junior

The Rotary recognizes outstanding high school students for their academic achievement, leadership, and community service.

Top of the Shop



Caitlyn Bable
Senior

Alora McGough
Senior

Top of the Shop students are nominated by high school teachers from among those who attend Mercer County Career Center and demonstrate outstanding skill and dedication, attention to detail, and leadership beyond expectation.

5th Grade Elite Eagles



Jacob Smoker & Zoey Scott

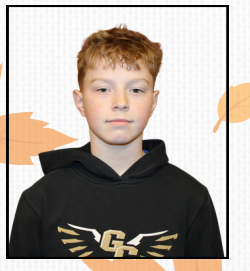
5th grade "Elite Eagles" are nominated by teachers based on outstanding demonstrations of the monthly character trait. For October the trait was RESPECT. Thanks to Bells Comics & Cards for Sponsoring this month's award: an arcade card.

Middle School Students of the Month

6th Grade



Breylyn Dougherty



Jude Osborn

7th Grade



Sydney Cogley



Landon Patterson

8th Grade



Maebi Weaver



Ryan Ochs

Middle School students of the month are nominated and selected by their teachers based on a variety of criteria including work ethic, attitude, and character.

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Department Spotlight

Maintenance Department

"The overall attitude and work ethic are tremendous," says Director of Buildings & Grounds Ray Dennis of his largely new staff of maintenance technicians. "They want to do things the right way."

Despite being in his role for just over five years, Mr. Dennis has overseen more than his share of big changes in the district, including a high school renovation project, upgrades to the middle school HVAC system, and most recently major improvements at Forker Field. But perhaps the biggest change for his department has been to welcome in new people. Ron Moore joined the department in February, 2026, and Nick Wilpula was just hired in August. The third maintenance tech, Tim Schoedel, came to the district in 2024. While each has his area of expertise, Dennis says they all work well together to do what needs to be done.

"We have true maintenance technicians – guys who can do anything," he says. "I like cross training."

The staff agrees with the approach. "Everyone's looking out for each other," says Wilpula. "The other guys are just a phone call away," says Moore.

Having a skilled staff that works together well goes a long way toward overcoming challenges the department faces, says Dennis. These include working around other people's schedules to perform maintenance needs, completing tasks with limited manpower and budget, and keeping up with the steady stream of maintenance that a school district requires.

"Nothing lasts as long as it used to," says Dennis. "We want to be pro-active, not re-active."

His approach to the department is to plan for the long-term health of the facilities and equipment in the district while meeting the everyday demands as well as possible. "My overall theme is '*What is best for the district?*' not just today but five, ten years from now."

To help with this, he's begun initiatives such as rust prevention and other preventative vehicle mantenance plans, scheduled upgrades to tools and large equipment, and using the district's facility management system, FMX to look at trends across buildings and predict needs.



Ray Dennis

"FMX was a game changer," he says of the system the district adopted a few years ago, which not only allows staff to submit maintenance requests, but also includes facility scheduling and data tracking.

Roz Bonanni, the building and grounds administrative assistant, works frequently with FMX, particularly scheduling outside organizations in district spaces and invoicing. In her maintenance department role she also oversees custodial supplies and requisitions, cost comparisons, and first round interviewing.

On top of that, she serves as the district's transportation coordinator, handling bus routing and even spending time each day as a monitor on bus routes for students with special needs.

"She's the glue that holds it all together," says Schoedel.

The work of the building and grounds crew holds all district facilities together and enables faculty and students to enjoy comfortable, functioning educational spaces.



Nick Wilpula, Tim Schoedel, & Ron Moore



Roz Bonanni

This is the first in our 2026-2027 Department Spotlight Series. New spotlights will run every other month highlighting the faculty and staff who empower our school community.

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Aspiring Educators pilot new program at Hillview

Students interested in pursuing a career in education after high school can now get a head start thanks to a new program being piloted at Hillview Elementary in collaboration with Mercer County Career Center.

The program, called Aspiring Educators, is part of a nationwide push to address a teacher shortage, according to instructor Mr. Michael Parulo, though it looks different depending on the area or the district. Mr. Parulo, who is also the academic coach at Hillview, now spends afternoons delivering instruction to the five GCAHS students currently enrolled for this year, and will soon help place them in classrooms for hands-on experience based on teacher need and their areas of interest.

"I've been encouraged by our administrators to develop the pilot with the students, and I'm looking at them much like partners," he says. "Hosting the program at the district comes with a cost savings while providing a tremendous opportunity to our students," says assistant superintendent Dr. Jason Watkins, who helped launch the pilot.

The students, whose career plans include everything from early elementary science and ELA to occupational therapy and speech pathology, have so far enjoyed the structure and collaboration with Mr. Parulo. "We're all very open to sharing," says senior Gabby Byer." Junior Keira Miller adds, "We're learning about how a school works rather than just being in a school."

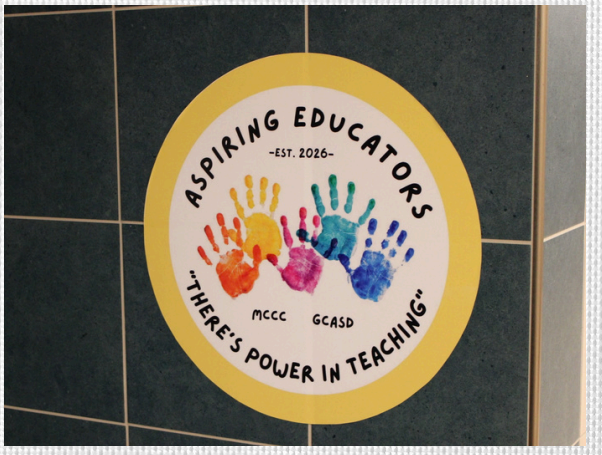
While several of the students will graduate this year, the program is intended as a two year cycle, at the end of which students can take an assessment through the MCCC, which provided funding for the program's curriculum and materials. If they pass, they can potentially earn college credit.

"We're hoping to link up with universities in the area," says Mr. Parulo, " and give students a chance to see what those classes are really like.

In the meantime, the students will spend time learning everything from ed. policy to brain development, in addition to working directly with students and other teachers, in order to get a jump on their education aspirations.

"We're very cheerful being here," says senior Jossilyn Ross. "We've formed friendships."









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Looking Ahead

What's coming up at GCASD?

GCAHS Theatre bringing *Our Town* to stage



Small town life is nothing new to GCASD students, but as Thornton Wilder's classic play reminds the audience, it's important to "realize life" while living it, even when it seems simple.

That's part of what the cast and crew of the GCAHS theatre's fall production have worked on since September. The play has very little set, and few props and special effects, requiring the audience - and the actors - to use their imagination to make the world come alive.

"It's a really interesting show that encourages you to find meaning in everyday life," says senior Vicenzo Trezona, who plays the Stage Manager in the show, narrating and connecting the audience to the world of the play. "It's a very relatable show, and we have some amazing actors."



"It's a classic play that somehow remains just as important and impactful today as when it was written," says Mr. Patrick McElroy, director. "I'm proud of the cast and crew for embracing it and putting so much of themselves into the work so far, and I'm excited for the audience to see it.

The show goes up November 12, 13, and 14 at the GCAHS theatre. Tickets are $5 for adults and $3 for students and seniors and are available at the door or online at gchs.booktix.com.

Junior Achievement Day coming to Hillview

This year, Hillview will host their 3rd Annual Junior Achievement (JA) Day on Wednesday, November 18, 2026, in partnership with Junior Achievement of Western Pennsylvania.

"JA Day is an exciting opportunity for our K–5 students to learn important real-world skills related to financial literacy, career readiness, and entrepreneurship," says Rebecca Trinchese, guidance counselor at Hillview. "The goal is to help students understand how the skills they are learning in school connect to their everyday lives and future opportunities." Community and parent volunteers will visit classrooms and help deliver lessons on topics such as financial literacy, career exploration, entrepreneurship, and community connections.

"One of my favorite parts of JA Day is the opportunity to bring our school and community together. Our volunteers share their time, experiences, and enthusiasm while helping students make meaningful connections between classroom learning and the world around them," says Mrs. Trinchese. "We are so grateful for the continued support of our families, community members, and Junior Achievement of Western Pennsylvania in making this event possible!"

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Important Dates



- **November 11:** Veteran's Day Assembly - Hillview
- **November 12-14:** High School Fall Play (*Our Town*)
- **November 18:** Junior Achievement Day - Hillview
- **November 19:** National Honor Society Inductions - High School
- **November 20:** Winter Sports Begin
- **November 20, 23, 24:** HILLVIEW ONLY - Early Dismissal for conferences
- **November 25-20:** Thanksgiving Break
- **December 2:** School Board reorganization and voting meeting
- **December 7:** Grades 6-12 Band Concert
- **December 15:** Grades 6-12 Choral Concert

See weekly postings or visit gcasdk12.org for calendars and other information

EMPOWERING OUR COMMUNITY FOR SUCCESS

Thank You for Reading!

Thank you for reading *The Talon*, the GCASD Newsletter. The Grove City Area School District publishes periodic newsletters to celebrate and share information about the GCASD community. They are delivered by ParentSquare and social media. If you haven't already, please sign up for ParentSquare so you never miss a newsletter, along with other updates from GCASD.

Follow us on social media at the links below for all the latest district news and updates. We'll be posting content and providing information all year long!

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