



# HORNET'S PRESS

SPRING 2023

Updates from Licking Heights Local Schools

## From the Desk of Dr. Kevin S. Miller



Licking Heights Schools has experienced remarkable growth over the past two decades, growing by nearly 1,000 students in the past five years alone. We are in the process of expanding our facilities to accommodate this growth. In fact, four of our six buildings are already beyond or near capacity and our enrollment continues to grow year after year.

However, a historically competitive construction market, along with supply chain delays, growth, and development in the region have impacted our carefully constructed timelines and budgets.

We are committed to stretching each resource for its maximum impact, and wanted to use this newsletter to share about the challenges we are facing and our planned solutions. We are also launching our Hard Hat Hornet Hub on the district website, where you can follow our progress as we continue to build the future for our district.

Our plans were always designed for cost efficiency and affordability. In order to be able to complete the projects planned within our available resources, the district office building has been removed from our scope of work. We are implementing additional cost-saving measures and doing all we can to limit the impact of the current environment on timelines.

As always, we do everything with our students at the center. All the work planned is intended to provide our students with the facilities they need to thrive today and tomorrow.

**Go Hornets!** Dr. Kevin S. Miller, Superintendent



*Students presented at the Board of Education meeting on Tuesday, January 17 in honor of School Board Recognition Month. Festivities included presenting a "survival kit," to board members, reading thank you cards, and presenting yard signs made by the high school Fab Lab.*



SCAN ME

Learn about  
Hard Hat  
Hornet Hub



Mark Your Calendars!

Spring Break: April 3-7

Prom: May 5

Community Culture Day: May 12

Last Day of School: May 26

Graduation: May 27



# Hard Hat Hornet Updates

## Construction Moves Forward, Defying the Odds Amidst Difficult Market Conditions

Construction in central Ohio is booming. It is great for our local economy and growth, but it makes building large facilities difficult. The builders and vendors we need to complete the projects are in high demand, as are supplies and resources. Despite all these challenges putting pressure on budgets and timelines, Licking Heights has pushed its projects forward.

**Elementary School** – Design is completed and mass excavation for the site has begun which includes routing water, sewer, and gas to the site. The project will provide much-needed classroom space, with a 900-student capacity. All efforts are being made to maintain our original timeline and open the facility for the 2024-2025 school year.



The high school project is currently in design development and is anticipated to be out for bid later this summer.

**High School Addition** – When completed, the high school will have space for an additional 300-350 students with 13 classrooms, three small group



collaborative spaces, an office, and individual restrooms. The high school project is currently in design development and is anticipated to be out for bid later this summer.

**Athletic Complex** – Due to supply chain issues, the Athletic Complex will not be ready in the fall of 2023 as originally planned. Items like the bleachers and turf field will likely be installed this fall; however, we are experiencing

massive delays in electrical supplies and equipment to complete the field house, concessions stands, and restrooms on time. The complex is now projected to open in 2024.



**Transportation Complex** – This project is in progress and is anticipated to be completed by the end of the calendar year. When completed, the facility will protect and maintain our growing fleet of buses focused on safe and efficient transportation.

## Follow Our Journey

<https://www.lhschools.org/ConstructionHub1.aspx>



Principals share how building projects impact our students.



District leadership team explains budget solutions and what the district is doing to stay on track with our construction needs.

## Behind the Scenes

### How Our District Prepared for Historic Construction Costs

Under the advice and direction of the Board of Education, Treasurer, and district leadership, the district planned ahead to encounter inflation and supply chain issues. Along with the Board of Education, the district understood our local economy was growing and would impact plans. Even with that foresight and thoughtful forecasting, no one predicted just how high inflation and construction costs would soar over the past two years.

### How the District Calculated the Construction Budget:

- Analyzed local per-square-foot costs at the time they were planning for the bond issue and added an additional 18% to that figure
- Added \$9 million in construction contingency to assure they were prepared for the growing construction costs in the area
- Prioritized cost efficiency with each building and project





# #HornetsTakeFlight

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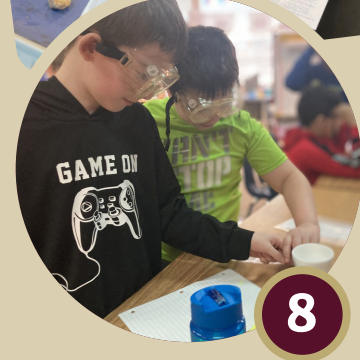
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## To Infinity—and The Classroom

### Meet Chris Sommerkamp, 4th Grade Teacher and Limitless Space Educator



**1.** The Cultural Identity Club presented their annual Diaspora show, a celebration of all cultures represented in our district, to a sold-out house during Black History Month.

**2.** Mrs. Fox's third grade class at West used a multitude of manipulatives to explore and learn about fractions, including M&Ms®, Play-Doh®, LEGOs®, paper strips, and markers.

**3.** Hornets basketball had a stellar season! Three boys basketball teams (seventh grade, eighth grade, and high school) brought home the Licking County League Championship and to top it off, both the seventh and eighth grade teams had undefeated seasons. Go Hornets!

**4.** Over 100 families participated in the preschool's Family Literacy Night in February. The event included literary events, snacks, and prizes.

**5.** The middle school Wind Ensemble impressed audiences at the Columbus

Convention Center with their set at the 2023 Ohio Music Education Association Professional Development Conference in February.

**6.** Students in Ms. Ceballos's anatomy class dissected sheep brains as part of their nervous system unit. Dissections like this help students understand and study the human brain in more detail.

**7.** Students in Mrs. Conger's fourth grade, Mrs. Beaver's second grade, and Mrs. Hoar's first grade at South Elementary created directed drawings of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in technology class with Ms. Perry.

**8.** Mrs. Fenton's fourth grade class learned about fluorescence, viscoelasticity, and fiber optics with hands-on experiments from Ms. Willett, the district's Technology Integration Specialist and President of the Science Education Council of Ohio.

Mrs. Sommerkamp is one of 20 educators in the Limitless Educator Program, based in Houston and sponsored by the Limitless Space Institute. They aim to bring space research to K-12 classrooms and prepare the next generation of NASA leaders. Mrs. Sommerkamp hopes her participation will inspire her students to love science and space, as they will be the ones to take us to Mars.



**Coming Soon!**

# Student Health Center

Licking Memorial Health Systems is partnering with Licking Heights Schools to provide greater health care access to students through a secure Student Health Center inside the high school.

Health services will focus on preventative care and include treatment for common illnesses. Mental health services provided by Behavioral Health Partners of Central Ohio will also be offered in the center.

The Health Center is being constructed inside a void storage area in the high school and is expected to be ready for the 2023-2024 school year. There is no cost to the district as Licking Memorial is financing the project and will provide all necessary staff. The Health Center will accept insurance, including Medicaid.



## Fast Facts

### About the Student Health Clinic

- Will not impact classroom space
- Will not replace each school's health clinic—school clinics will remain in place to provide support for daily needs
- Will ensure students have access to both general and behavioral health care
- With parent permission, students from all buildings will have access to the Health Center



#### Licking Heights Local School District

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## Sign Up for Hornet Highlights

Scan the QR code to join our email list for bimonthly district updates!

SCAN ME