



HORNET'S PRESS

FALL 2023

Updates from Licking Heights Local Schools

Dear Licking Heights Community,



Mark Your Calendars!

Oct. 6: Battle for Broad Street: Licking Heights vs. Watkins Memorial

Oct. 17: Regular School Board Meeting

Oct. 26: Haunted Happenings at South Elementary. **We need candy donations for this event! Drop off bags of wrapped candy to South Elementary, 6623 Summit Rd., Pataskala, OH 43062.**

Nov. 16-18: Licking Heights High School theatre presents *Grease*

We're on the move! There is a buzz of positivity and excitement for the future in our district. From construction to our strategic planning and all the moments in between, community and collaboration drive us forward!

Our vision for the future is coming to life each and every day. It is not just about our new facilities like the transportation garage, athletic complex, or elementary school – it's about the momentum we're building for the future. Every brick laid and blueprint drafted is a step towards a brighter tomorrow for our students.

Our financial efficiency in the face of difficult financial circumstances has also been recognized. The State Auditor Award with Distinction proves our commitment to managing every dollar with precision. Congratulations to Treasurer Todd Griffith and his team for this outstanding achievement.

The heart of our district is and has always been our staff and students. From the English Language Learner team, ensuring every student finds their voice, to the heroics of teachers like Ms. Weller, our district is brimming with stories of dedication and triumph.

While we can celebrate all we have in motion for our students today and into the future, we recognize that the time is right for us to embark on a strategic plan. Over the next few months, we will continue to write a plan that ensures we're not only looking ahead but also planning purposefully, ensuring every student has the tools and environment to succeed.

Sincerely,

Dr. Kevin S. Miller
Superintendent, Licking Heights Local Schools



Strategic Planning



Our district is working on creating a strategic plan with the Schlechty Center, a nonprofit organization helping school districts plan for growth and build engaging, supportive learning spaces and practices for all students. **This is the first time in Licking Heights history that a strategic plan has been created for the district.** With a population of over 5,300 enrolled students, the time is right.

In September, over 50 different district leaders went through the two-day discovery process. The group included community members, teachers, support staff, school board members, and school administrators from diverse backgrounds. Engaging discussions were held about defining moments in Licking Heights history, developing a shared vision, district capacity to serve students, and district organization.

Construction in Action



We are moving along with constructing our transportation center, athletic complex, and elementary school. The high school building addition is currently in design. In September, our team visited the construction sites to see progress and speak with site supervisors.

Athletic Complex



Elementary School



Transportation Center



Finances



Licking Heights Wins Prestigious Financial Reporting Honor from State Auditor

We are thrilled to report that Licking Heights Local Schools received the Auditor of State Award with Distinction for excellence in financial reporting for the 2022-2023 school year. **Only 3% of public entities throughout the state of Ohio earn this honor.** State Auditor Keith Faber personally visited the district to award Treasurer Todd Griffith and recognize his office's outstanding stewardship of taxpayer money.

From left to right: Chief of Staff for the State Auditor Sloan Spaulding, State Auditor Keith Faber, Treasurer Todd Griffith, LH Board of Education Members Tiffany Blumhorst and Paul Johnson, Superintendent Dr. Kevin S. Miller.



ELL Department Feature

Meet Our English Language Learner Team



Out of the 5,300 students enrolled at Licking Heights, nearly 1,000—almost 20%—participate in the English Language Learner program. The department includes 17 full-time teachers and a district EL coach working with students from non-English speaking homes.

The program's primary goal is getting students comfortable with speaking, reading, and listening to English like a native speaker and supporting students in classes such as science, social studies, language arts, and math. Instruction in an ELL classroom varies based on grade levels. For elementary students, the focus is on literacy. For fifth through twelfth grade, students receive instruction from an ELL teacher who supports their other teachers during designated periods.

North Elementary



South Elementary



West Elementary



Central Intermediate



Middle School



High School





Now Open to Our Community

Licking Memorial Health Center at Licking Heights



Meet your Health Center team. From L-R: Catey Wohlford, CNP; Kris Plotts, DNP; Natalie Workman, Physician Center Manager; Chloe Davis, RN; Patricia Anderson, Physician Center Clerk.

Five days a week from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., the Health Center provides district community members, students, and staff with necessary care for common colds and illnesses, along with athletic physicals and vaccines required for school. **This is an excellent and affordable resource for community members and students without easy access to healthcare.**

To keep students, staff, and our community safe, the Health Center follows these practices:

- Each external patient must be buzzed into the center through a secure, locked door
- Each external patient is required to scan their driver's license with Raptor, the district's instant background check system, immediately upon arrival for their appointment
- Only Licking Heights students and staff have access to the school—no community members can access the high school through the Health Center
- Students and staff and community members will be treated in separate, designated sides of the center

Thank you to Licking Memorial Health Systems for supporting the health of our school district!

Same-day appointments available! Call (220) 564-7830 to schedule.



South Elementary Teacher Saves a Student's Life

A student accidentally swallowed a marker cap during a math lesson in Ms. Courtney Weller's first-grade classroom. Ms. Weller sprang into action and performed the Heimlich Maneuver, dislodging the cap and saving the student's life.

In an interview with Stephanie Duprey from ABC 6 On Your Side, Mrs. Weller explained, "All of a sudden, a student tapped me on the shoulder. I turned around, and he was standing in front of me, red. He couldn't speak. He couldn't tell me what was wrong. He was holding his throat. I knew he was choking on something. I just started tapping his back to see if I could get it out. All the kids were scared, so I started the Heimlich. As I was doing that, I was moving towards the door. Once we got straight out the door, the marker lid popped out."

Since the news story was published, several other families have shared how Ms. Weller positively impacted their student's life over the years. We are sincerely grateful for Ms. Weller's selflessness and dedication to her students.



Scan the QR code to view Ms. Weller's full interview with Stephanie Duprey.





#HornetsTakeFlight

Pataskala Street Fair Parade

In August, students ended a successful first week of school by marching in the annual Pataskala Street Fair Parade. Those represented included the Marching Hornets, Transportation Department, Licking Heights Youth Sports League (LHYSL), middle and high school football and cheerleading, high school girls' golf, high school girls' soccer, high school girls' volleyball, and alumnus D.J. Fillmore, national and state track champion. Congressman Troy Balderson even stopped by to visit with the students ahead of the parade! The parade's Junior Grand Marshal was South Elementary student Alexander Ingraham.





Support LH Athletics



Buy Hornets Gear from the Official School Shop!

Represent Licking Heights and support your favorite athletic teams by buying gear from the official online spirit shop.



Scan the QR code to purchase sweatshirts, t-shirts, sweatpants, cardigans, and even hijabs from Licking Heights athletics.



Now Hiring!

Substitutes Earn \$150 a Day!

Earn extra money and have a flexible schedule as a building substitute at Licking Heights! **No college degree is required—a high school diploma or GED is sufficient.** Central Intermediate, South Elementary, and North Elementary currently have the highest need, but we welcome substitutes across our six schools.



Scan the QR code to view all available positions.



Licking Heights Local School District
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www.licking-heights.k12.oh.us



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