



The PERRY Way

www.perry-lake.org

Spring 2025

Featured Events

MARCH

MARCH 19

National Honor Society Inductions
6:00pm, Goodwin Theatre

MARCH 24-28

Spring Break
No School

APRIL

APRIL 15

Buccaneers & Jazz Band Concert
7:00pm, Goodwin Theatre

APRIL 18

Good Friday
No School

APRIL 21

Day after Easter
No School

MAY

MAY 7

6th Grade Camp Parent Meeting
7:00pm, MS Cafeteria

MAY 9

Last Day for Seniors

MAY 14

Scholarship Night
6:00pm, Goodwin Theatre

MAY 18

Commencement Ceremony
1:00pm, HS Gymnasium

MAY 30

Last Day of School

The state legislature is currently working through the process of approving the next biennium budget, which will determine state spending from July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2027. The Perry Schools operating budget relies heavily on state funding. That being said, maintaining fiscal solvency is always a district priority, which makes keeping our state funding levels stable of the highest importance. The revenue received from past state budgets in the form of state foundation and public utility reimbursement represents over 40% of our annual revenue. So it is easy to understand how a decrease in this state funding would result in significant fiscal hardships for our school and community. Our advocacy plan is to lobby for legislative support to keep the Public Utility Tax Personal Property (PUTPP) reimbursement amount we are receiving frozen at its current amount in perpetuity and monitor and provide testimony in the state foundation funding debate.



Dr. Jack Thompson, Supt.

Budget Timeline

February 3, 2025 - Governor DeWine will introduce his operating budget which will encompass his funding priorities from July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2027.

February 10, 2025 - The Ohio House will introduce the Governor's proposal as a House bill and begin Finance Committee hearings. During these hearings, agency directors will be required to testify and answer questions about their agency budget. Members of the public will also be able to testify and meet with House members to advocate for their budget requests.

March 2025 - Amendments will need to be submitted to House Leadership. We expect to see a substitute bill around April 1 which will incorporate the House changes. The bill will be voted out of committee and out of the House.

April – May 2025 - The Senate will begin the same committee process. They will also host agency directors for questions and hold public committee hearings. Members of the public meet with Senate members to advocate for their budget requests. During this time, Senate members will author and submit amendments to fund their individual priority items to Senate leadership.

June 2025 - The Senate will introduce an amended substitute bill and vote it out of committee and the Senate. Then, the bill goes to a conference committee where the Senate and House negotiate their differences.

June 30, 2025 - The legislature usually passes the budget bill in the last few days of June, and the Governor is required by law to sign the budget before midnight of June 30.

July 1, 2025 - Fiscal Year 2026 begins. Funding becomes available immediately, and new policy will be enacted after 90 days. The budget includes funding from July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2027.

Since 2017, there have been multiple temporary fixes to freeze the phase out of the PUTPP because of the millions of dollars in funding the schools have lost. The latest effort expires in FY 26. Our budget request is to permanently freeze the PUTPP phase-out at the FY 17 levels indefinitely to provide better planning and financial stability moving forward.

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CELEBRATING THE FINE ARTS:

A Vital Part of Student Success

At Perry High School, we take great pride in our fine arts programs, recognizing the incredible impact they have on our students and school community. Whether it's visual arts, choir, theater, or band, the fine arts provide students with a creative outlet that fosters self-expression, confidence, and collaboration. Our talented students continually impress us with their dedication and artistry, enriching our school culture in ways that extend far beyond the classroom.

The benefits of fine arts education are well documented and profound. Studies show that students involved in the arts perform better academically, develop stronger problem-solving skills, and show increased perseverance. Participation in band, choir, drama, and art enhances critical thinking and communication—skills that are essential for success in any career path. Additionally, the discipline required to perfect a piece of music, memorize lines for a play, or complete a painting teaches patience, focus, and the value of hard work.

Beyond academics, the fine arts cultivate a sense of belonging and emotional well-being. Our school's theater productions bring students together to create something extraordinary, while our marching band fosters teamwork and school spirit. Art classes allow students to explore the journey of life and emotions through creative expression. These programs give students a voice and a space where they feel valued and heard, making our school a more inclusive and supportive environment.

Our vocal and instrumental artists stay busy throughout the year. While we were unfortunately unable to host senior citizens for the annual Buccaneers Senior Citizen Holiday Luncheon and Performance due to weather, our talented singers were still able to spread some holiday cheer by caroling through our neighborhoods. Recently, several of our band and choir students participated in the Ohio Music Education Association (OMEA) solo & ensemble contest earning high marks, including 10 superior and 7 excellent ratings from the judges and our choir participated at the Lake County Music Education Association's Choir Festival in Mentor on February 12th.

Over spring break, our music department will be taking a trip to Orlando to perform at Disney! I invite you to join us for our Spring Concert on April 22nd at 7pm in the Goodwin Theatre, as well as the Buccaneers and Jazz Band Concert on April 15th. Additionally, the annual District Art Show & Student Learning Showcase will be on April 24th at 5pm where student artwork will line the halls. After the show, join us for the 7th and 8th Grade Spring Concert in the Goodwin Theatre.

We are fortunate to have dedicated fine arts educators who inspire and challenge our students every day, and make the events mentioned above successful. Their passion for the arts and commitment to excellence create opportunities for students to showcase their talents at competitions, exhibitions, and performances. Whether it's a concert, an art show, or a musical ("Cinderella" opens on April 4th), these events bring our community together and allow us to celebrate the hard work and creativity of our students.

As we continue to support and grow our fine arts programs, we encourage students to get involved and explore their creative potential. The arts provide lifelong skills and memories, fostering confidence and resilience that will benefit students well beyond high school. At Perry High, we believe that the fine arts are not just an extracurricular activity—they are an essential part of a well-rounded education, helping students shine in ways that will shape their futures.

Superintendent *continued from page 1*

According to our governor, the Ohio school funding debate will focus on fully funding the Fair School Funding formula in the final two years of its implementation. If lawmakers adhere to past budget trends, they may allocate an additional \$500 million to \$1 billion in the upcoming budget to continue the implementation. We will monitor the current budget process closely and stay in touch with our legislative representatives to ensure they are aware of our financial condition and the need for our state funding to continue at its current levels.

Another Bill to watch closely is HB 15. This bill outlines the House's energy plan aimed at reforming utility regulation in Ohio. In the Senate, SB 2 was introduced which currently contains placeholder language. Both chambers have indicated that their respective energy plans are a priority and will begin hearings soon. This bill has the potential to significantly decrease the tax revenue Perry Schools receives from the Perry Nuclear Plant. We need to send a strong message to our representatives that we cannot afford to lose tax revenue from the plant.

Additionally, we may need to expand our coalition with other school districts to include those that have natural gas generators within their boundaries. This collaboration would help legislators understand how the proposed tax changes affect local school funding.

School funding and the energy bills above are likely to be one of the most contentious issues during the budget process. We will monitor this debate and stay updated on what's happening so we can respond and properly represent the Perry Local School's financial needs.



Participants from the OMEA Solo & Ensemble Contest.



The Buccaneers perform at the Mentor Show Choir Festival.

Middle School

Robert Knisely
MS Principal



achievements to athletic excellence, our students continue to make us proud.

Academic Growth and Engagement This year, we have placed a strong emphasis on personalized learning and student engagement. Through our revamped intervention system during flex time, students receive targeted support in reading and math, helping them grow and gain confidence in their skills. With the continued support of our Huntington Learning Center tutors, students benefit from additional academic guidance tailored to their individual needs. We are excited to see the positive impact these initiatives have on student learning and achievement.

A special congratulations to Alex Searson for winning this year's Perry Middle School Spelling Bee! Alex's hard work and dedication to spelling excellence truly paid off, and we are so proud of this accomplishment.

Authentic Learning and The Career Exploration Lab

At Perry Middle School, we believe in providing students with real-world learning experiences that extend beyond traditional classroom instruction. One of the most exciting additions this year has been our Career Exploration Lab. This innovative space offers students the opportunity to explore various career paths through interactive stations, guest speakers, and practical applications of essential job skills. From STEM-related careers to the arts and trades, students gain valuable insights into potential futures, making learning more meaningful and inspiring.

Winter Athletics: A Season of Determination

Our winter sports teams have been hard at work, showcasing their talent, determination, and teamwork. Whether on the basketball court, the wrestling mat, or the cheerleading sidelines, our athletes have embodied the true spirit of competition and sportsmanship. Their dedication to their teams and perseverance throughout the season highlight the values we strive to instill at Perry Middle School.



Perry Schools Spelling Bee winners (from left to right) 3rd place, Penny Chongris, 2nd place, Izzabella Stradford, and 1st place, Alex Searson.

School Spirit and Community Involvement One of the defining aspects of Perry Middle School is the strong sense of community we foster. Our student section continues to bring enthusiasm and energy to sporting events, cheering on their classmates with pride. This unwavering support strengthens our school culture and reminds us all of the importance of unity and encouragement.

Beyond athletics, students have embraced opportunities to give back to the community. From participating in service projects to supporting local initiatives, their commitment to making a difference is truly inspiring.

Looking Ahead As we move through the winter season and look ahead to spring, we remain committed to fostering an environment where students can thrive academically, athletically, and socially. We are grateful for the dedication of our students, staff, and families in making Perry Middle School a place where every student can succeed.

Stay warm and stay engaged, Pirates! The best is yet to come.

Elementary School



Amy Stavar
ES Principal

The Perry Local School District Learner Profile is our district's vision for student success. We strive for our graduates to be engaged in the world, healthy, innovative, self-directed, and resilient young adults who understand how to get better every day, are stronger together, and prepared for life. While these characteristics are visible in Perry graduates, they don't just occur. Students develop these characteristics through family, community, and

school beginning at a young age. Starting with some of our preschool students, Perry Elementary School offers a range of experiences to help them begin their journey.

Self-Directed & Resilient

Our teachers and staff help our students learn how to shape their futures by teaching them to set goals and reflect on their progress. We also encourage students to develop and use executive functioning skills. Some of the ways that students practice these skills across their day include:

- Working with classroom teachers and Mrs. Darnell, every student in the school has a Perry Service Learning class. They share their goals and reflect on their progress.
- Through whole-class, small-group, and individual lessons,

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DISTRICT BOARD OFFICE

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CURRENT RESIDENT
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MISSION STATEMENT: "INSPIRE ALL STUDENTS TO ACHIEVE PERSONAL EXCELLENCE,
PURSUE WORLD-CLASS STANDARDS AND BE SELF-DIRECTED, LIFELONG LEARNERS."

Elementary School *continued from page 3*

our guidance department helps students to identify and regulate their feelings when they face challenges.

- We start each day with our chant that reminds our students that their response to the events in their day will determine the outcome.

Engaged

Engaged students think critically, question, exhibit curiosity, listen, and think about ideas and information. They can communicate their ideas effectively and collaborate with others to solve problems as a team. We see the beginnings of these engagement skills in a variety of places:

- Students exploring their community and asking questions about the sciences at places like Holden Arboretum and the Lake County Farm Park. They experience history at the Perry Historical Society, the Pioneer School, and Burton Century Village. They learn about their library, police department, and fire station by visiting and engaging with the people who work there and serve the community.
- Our students experience the arts at Playhouse Square, in music class, and through a variety of classroom projects. They explore their creative impulses through reading, writing, performing their class programs, and transforming the school during our Art Show and Student Learning Showcase.

Healthy

Healthy students know how to build positive relationships, and they work at being well in all parts of their lives. We see our students learning and practicing being healthy daily.

- Students have 25 minutes of recess each day with adults who help them practice unstructured, cooperative play inside and outside. They also have extra recess time scheduled each day.
- We have a mentorship program through our guidance department that helps all students to have champions in their lives.

- Perry Elementary students have an hour of physical education each week.

Innovative

Innovative students know how to use creativity to solve problems. Our students start to learn how to apply their creativity to problems early in their education.

- We have a variety of flexible classroom structures that provide students with opportunities to come together as a grade level or across grade levels.
- Our students see problems - in their school or their community - and come together to create solutions. Whether they are collecting pop tabs to donate to the Ronald McDonald House, reading to residents at Danbury, planning their own holiday parties, or suggesting ways to make it easier to move through our halls during winter boot season, students regularly propose and act on ways to make our community better.



The Perry Fire Department visits with our students.

Perry students begin to learn the power of relationships, the pursuit of greatness, and personal responsibility early in their time in Perry Schools; however, it is important to note that these lessons don't start or end in the schools. We are fortunate to have families and a community who support our students and help them to become engaged, healthy, innovative, self-directed, and resilient adults.

