

Summer 2024



# LDHAM COUNTY SCHOOLS

Our Schools,  
Our Stories:  
Connecting Our  
Community

972 Graduates



**\$19.3 Million**  
in accepted scholarships



# Welcome to the second edition of

## **OUR SCHOOLS, OUR STORIES**

### Connecting Our Community



I am thrilled to share with you the remarkable progress we've made in enhancing our facilities for the benefit of our students, staff, and the entire community. Through diligent planning and strategic allocation of resources, we've been able to utilize restricted funds to breathe new life into our athletic facilities, renovate existing school buildings, and pave the way for some truly exciting developments on the horizon.

Our commitment to providing top-notch educational environments remains steadfast. Whether it's upgrading our sports fields to ensure our athletes have the best possible facilities to compete and thrive or renovating classrooms to create dynamic learning spaces that inspire creativity and collaboration, we're dedicated to fostering an environment where every individual can engage, empower, and elevate. This commitment extends to our staff as well, as our district and Board has taken great strides to improve the experience for our

staff through unprecedented salary increases and other incentives.

I am particularly proud to announce the recent graduation of 972 high school students from our district. Their achievements are a testament to their hard work, determination, and the support they've received from our dedicated educators, family, and community members. As we celebrate their successes, we also look forward to the exciting opportunities that lie ahead for our current and incoming students.

In this publication, you can explore the diverse array of opportunities available to our students as they pursue their passions and chart their courses for the future. From evidence-based reading curriculum to advanced placement and dual-credit courses we're committed to providing a comprehensive educational experience that prepares our students for success in whatever path they choose to pursue.

In addition to our traditional offerings, I am delighted to introduce Liberty Academy, our new online school option designed to meet the changing needs of families in our community. Starting this fall, Liberty Academy will be its own distinct school and play a vital role in our district for those students, grades 6-12, who desire, and would thrive with a different learning platform and environment.

As we continue on this journey together, I am confident that we will continue to strengthen the bonds that unite us as a community. By working collaboratively, supporting one another, and remaining steadfast in our commitment to excellence, there is no limit to what we can achieve.

Thank you for your continued support and dedication to our schools, our students, and our community. Together, let's engage, empower, and elevate as we strive to create a brighter future for all.

## The Oldham County Board of Education



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# Engaging Minds with Evidence-Based Curriculum

Oldham County Schools is dedicated to promoting a strong reading culture among our K-5 students through an evidence-based curriculum to ensure their success. Our comprehensive literacy approach includes phonics, comprehension, and vocabulary strategies, ensuring students become proficient readers and laying a solid foundation for their academic future. Collaboration among educators, administrators, and families creates supportive environments where reading flourishes, empowering every student to reach their full potential and excel academically.



During the 23/24 school year, La Grange Elementary highlighted the importance of literacy by giving away over 1500 books from their PTA-sponsored Book Vending Machine (Book Box). Students earned tokens by demonstrating monthly character traits, following library expectations, and cashing in classroom rewards.



Crestwood students learned from a virtual visit with an author, read together and then took the books home to share with their families. They were so excited to share that they were pulling them out of their backpacks in the car rider line!



Writing letters and having a penpal is a fun and effective way to improve literacy skills. This year, Harmony Elementary students have been penpals with students at North Oldham Middle School. They loved getting together to read their mail and write responses.



These Goshen kindergarteners are proud to show off that they've mastered all 26 letters!



# Empowering Tomorrow's Innovators

Exciting news for the upcoming school year as all four middle schools will feature Innovation Labs, dedicated spaces designed to foster creativity and problem-solving skills through the lens of design thinking. These facilities will provide students with the opportunity to collaborate in teams, tackle real-world challenges, and cultivate innovative solutions. By immersing students in hands-on experiences, the Innovation Labs aim to ignite a passion for exploration and discovery while equipping them with the essential skills needed for success in an ever-evolving world. From ideation to prototyping, these labs will serve as incubators for ingenuity, empowering students to become critical thinkers and change-makers in their communities and beyond.



EOMS students study different reasons to use fidgets and how they help different types of consumers.

They then created their own fidget using the MakerSpace in the Innovation Lab.



Students develop competencies in critical thinking and problem solving in the NOMS innovation lab.

Not only do they learn how to use 21st century software and equipment, they also tackle complex problems with innovation, collaboration and emotional intelligence.



This year, 1665 OCS students took a total of **3897** AP exams. While scores for this year's tests aren't in yet, last year, **70%** of exams taken by OCS students received a passing score, which outperforms the state and global average! Additionally, OCS students have amassed a significant number of dual-credit hours throughout their high school years. Together, they have accumulated **9,063** college credit hours, allowing them to begin their college careers with credits already earned.

## Elevating The Pathway to Success

Our commitment to preparing high schoolers for their future endeavors extends beyond the classroom, ensuring they are equipped to pursue their passions with confidence and competence. With a comprehensive curriculum that enables students to graduate with substantial college credit, they have a solid foundation for higher education, providing them with flexibility and opportunities for academic exploration. Additionally, through our pre-employment transition program, students engage in a multifaceted learning experience that encompasses job exploration counseling, work-based learning, workplace readiness training, post-secondary counseling, and instruction in self-advocacy. From career counseling and job search assistance to internships and on-the-job training, students gain valuable insights into various career pathways and develop essential skills for success in the workforce. We empower our students to pursue their passion, whether they choose to further their education or enter the professional realm, with the tools and confidence needed to thrive in any endeavor.



Pre-Employment Transition students visited Churchill Downs to learn about opportunities such as groundskeeping, horse trainer, jockey, concessions, tourism, and working in the equine industry.



# Nutrition Services

## Empowering Minds & Bodies

Nutrition Services has partnered with local farms to bring fresh, farm-to-table food to our schools. This collaboration ensures that meals are made with high-quality, nutritious ingredients, supporting both local agriculture and public health. Some of the partnerships include fruits and vegetables from Stepping Stone Farm, vegetables and beef from Brenneman and Bucks Farm, and chicken and pork from Faul Family Riverside Farm.



Smoked chicken and pork from Faul Family Riverside Farm



Chuck roast, beef and vegetables from Brenneman and Bucks Farm



# FREE SUMMER MEALS

The Oldham County Board of Education is pleased to announce our summer meals site for kids and teens! Starting now and running through August 2, everyone 18 and under can receive FREE meals Monday-Friday. No registration is required. Breakfast and lunch will be offered to eat on-site at La Grange Elementary. We will be closed July 4.

Breakfast will be served beginning at 8 a.m.

Lunch will be served beginning at 11:30 a.m.



# Elevating the EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE

OCS has been focused on retention and recruitment of highly-qualified employees. In addition to 2% salary increase in 2023 and 3% increase in 2022, our Board approved a 7% increase for salaried certified/classified employees and \$2/hour raise for all hourly classified employees beginning July 1, 2024.

We appreciate our legislators for prioritizing our needs to increase the base SEEK funding, increasing funding for transportation. Ultimately, they passed a budget that increases support to public education, which helps us recruit and retain high quality staff for the ultimate benefit of our students. And of course, we thank our Board for recognizing the need to increase compensation as much as possible for every employee.

In addition to salary increases, OCS implemented measures to enhance employee satisfaction and enhance their overall experience within our school district. These measures include:

- Six weeks paid leave for mothers recovering from birth
- Extended leave beyond FMLA
- Free tuition for any full-time staff member's child
- Convert unused personal days into sick days
- \$35/hour for all extra-duty certified work
- Paying the La Grange city tax for all employees
- Flexibility to complete planning on your own time
- Staff seeking advancement no longer will take a pay cut
- Reduced the amount of time it takes for classified staff to earn vacation days
- Provided 2 flexible days when planning professional development
- Increased substitute teacher pay
- Expanded SRO support
- Tyto Clinics - on-site virtual urgent care that connects employees and their families with medical professionals to obtain a diagnosis and even a prescription immediately

As part of our strategic plan, Oldham County Schools continues to investigate ways to elevate the experience for our employees, as a well-supported team creates an environment that positively influences student success.

*Kenwood Station Elementary teacher and expecting mother, Julie Hill, talks to WLKY News about her excitement for the paid leave for mothers recovering from birth she will benefit from in the fall.*





# Engaging in Our Community to Ensure **STUDENT SUCCESS**

Serving our community is one of the goals in our strategic plan. Community engagement empowers students to take on leadership roles and serve their community, helping them develop essential life skills such as teamwork, leadership, and empathy. By creating a supportive environment for both educational and social development, students are encouraged to actively participate with the world beyond school walls, creating a sense of value and trust among community members.

The Young Adult Transition Program focuses on developing life skills, vocational training and community involvement. These students actively participate in the community through work and volunteer opportunities. By being integral members of the community, these students not only gain valuable skills but also help to build a diverse and empathetic community.

*YATP students make meaningful connections with the children at Kids Haven, a local childcare center. They engage with the kids by reading together, playing games, and working on puzzles, creating a lively and supportive environment.*



*Whether working on landscaping at Yew Dell or sorting clothes at the local Goodwill, YATP students are making a difference in the community.*



*North Oldham High School seniors spent a day of service on the NOHS campus, at Goshen and Harmony, Lifeline Centre, and HighPoint Charitable Services.*



South Oldham Middle School counselor, Lucas Mattera, facilitated the return of Relay for Life of Oldham County. Relay for Life honors cancer survivors and warriors while raising money to help those facing a cancer diagnosis. Over **\$16,424.25** was raised and over **200** community members participated in the event. It was an incredible night full of strength, support, and hope!

*If you or your business/ organization are interested in contributing to our mission, whether through mentorship, job shadowing, internships, co-op opportunities, or other collaboration, please use this link to provide some information and someone from Oldham County Schools will follow up with you.*





# Elevating The Student Experience through Transformative FACILITIES UPGRADES



Big changes are underway at OCHS and Buckner Alternative High School. The Board of Education has reviewed design plans for a major project which includes brand new facilities for the alternative school, Little Colonel's Daycare, and multi-purpose spaces.

## OCHS Gym Plaza

In keeping with the Board's commitment to improve facilities for all students, the project will include a new arena-style spectator gym, multi-sport training room, and indoor sports team rooms. The major demolition and new construction project will also provide the opportunity to improve site access, increase parking facilities, and improve pedestrian/vehicular circulation.



## SOHS

The Board of Education has reviewed the masterplan for the South Oldham High School Phase 3 Renovation and Addition Project. The masterplan includes a major classroom wing expansion, new Career Tech Education spaces, new auditorium, and ECS and fine arts suites. Major renovations of the existing "core" of the building include new kitchen, cafeteria, media center and gymnasium renovations. The masterplan will also include the next round of athletic improvements including, further site improvements to stadium perimeter, a multi-sport training facility and terraced practice fields.



These are just a few of many projects in various design and implementation stages throughout the district. Soon you will also see changes to the Oldham County Schools Arts Center and La Grange Elementary. As always, monies spent for these projects are restricted funds, and cannot be used for salaries, benefits, or instructional resources. The District Facility Plan is a comprehensive review and evaluation of the district's facilities and is prepared every four years. This plan guides the district in setting priorities for facility improvements, additions, renovation or new facilities.

You can learn more about the District Facility Plan here:



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