

OAK HILLS

LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Highlander Insider

"If you're by yourself, you have a bigger chance of losing, and if you're in a team, you have a bigger chance of winning." – J. F. Dulles second-grader Jack Farlow

A Message from the Superintendent

Dear Highlander Community,

As the gray skies of winter linger, it seems like a good time to share a little good news. In fact, it's been an exceptional year here at Oak Hills Local Schools:

- We're very proud to share that the Ohio Department of Education has nominated C.O. Harrison Elementary for the National Blue Ribbon Award. The award, given by the U.S. Department of Education, recognizes exemplary teaching and learning. It's one of the highest honors a public or private school can receive.
- Our staff is always looking for ways to supplement the financial support we receive from our community. The Oak Hills Athletic Department was grateful to receive a \$25,000 grant from the Heber Holbrook Hutchinson Endowment Fund that will provide athletic equipment for 11 teams and students with special needs. The groups benefiting from the award include OHHS student-athletes, Oak Hills physical education classes, Oak Hills Youth Athletics, Little Highlanders, and Special Olympics.
- While school districts across the state continue to be concerned about the EdChoice voucher program that drains resources from public schools, the Ohio Legislature wisely voted to postpone the enrollment period from February to April. We believe legislators will use that time to reject an ill-conceived expansion of the program and to reconsider the criteria for placing schools in the program.

• As you've probably noticed, it's been a season of great success for our athletic teams, fine arts programs, volunteer projects, and other student activities. Frankly, we've rocked things. Our art students have brought home a variety of honors, including Scholastic Art Awards, Overture Awards, ArtPossible, Ohio PTA Reflections, and other competitions. The majority of our winter sports teams have had winning seasons, and several have been in the running for GMC championships.



Our middle-school and high-school competition cheerleading squads and Oakettes have received well-deserved recognition. Our music students have performed at Disney World, in school musicals, the first-ever JazzFest, and other popular events. Meanwhile, our students, staff, and families have continued the Oak Hills tradition of volunteering, donating, and advocating for good causes. You'll find more honors listed further down in this newsletter.

• We are constantly grateful for our hard-working, student-centered staff. This winter, several OHLS staff members received regional recognition. OHHS visual arts educator Jamie Schorsch was named the Hamilton County Education Foundation's Educator of the Year for Oak Hills. J.F. Dulles kindergarten teacher Kellie O'Brien was honored as the Outstanding Mentor Teacher by the Cincinnati Association and local universities' Schools of Education. OHHS business teacher Paul Limpert was named VFW Teacher of the Year. OHHS Head Swim Coach Andy Schroeder was named the GMC Co-Coach of the Year. We are extremely proud of all four.

• We continue to appreciate the input and support from community members, local business leaders, our staff, and students as we put the finishing touches on a productive year of strategic planning. Strong relationships with our community underscore everything we do. A case in point: The Preschool Partner Community Nights we hold throughout the year. From early childhood on, we work with our

community to wrap each child in a world of connection, enrichment, and support.

Thank you for your continued interest and support, and for celebrating our successes along with us! We couldn't do it without you.

Sincerely,
Jeff Brandt, Superintendent

Robotics Class at OHHS

What Education Needs to Become



It was Meredith Stein's version of winning the lottery. Her robotics teacher, Joe Dunkle, had given the OHHS junior a problem to solve. A fellow student who has limited use of her hands was practicing life-skills and needed to use a Swiffer floor sweeper, but couldn't grasp it. Could Meredith come up with a solution?

Could she?

The honor student — who grew up disassembling and reassembling remote controls, and cobbling Bluetooth speakers back together with glitter glue — set to work immediately. She measured the student's hand, checked the strength of her arm, and determined where she would have maximum control. Then Meredith mentally designed an attachment and transferred it to the design software Onshape. She used Cura Ultimaker to send the plan to a 3D printer, picked up the completed project six hours later, and successfully fitted it to her schoolmate's arm.

"I can make anything out of anything," she says with a small smile.

Meredith's story, her *modus operandi*, zeal for all things mechanical, and ultimate success come as no surprise to assistant principal Dan Boles, who started OHHS's engineering program. "What really drives the work — what really gets the kids excited — is when you get them to design solutions for other people. That's where they find their purpose," he says.



In addition to the improved Swiffer, the robotics class has produced a shaker table for the science department, instrument racks for C.O. Harrison's band department, and a 3D-printed test-tube rack for chemistry classes, among many other projects. A huge attraction is the robotics competitions the class — and Scotbots team — take part in each spring.

But arguably, the most important thing the class has produced is the wild enthusiasm of the students enrolled in it.

"It's about the energy — there's so much going on, all the time," Meredith says. "Even if you're exhausted, you walk into that class, and it's like a shot of caffeine to the bloodstream. There's a huge work ethic. Everybody in there is like, 'I want to do this!' That's a huge part of why it works because you don't have to force yourself to work, you have to force yourself to stop."

Adds classmate Rebecca Gilligan, who will major in robotics next year at the University of Cincinnati, "In this class, you're learning leadership. You're learning problem-solving. You're learning how to learn. I think this is the most important class I've taken."

While the district has many successful initiatives to improve student learning, the robotics class stands as a noisy, vibrant, somewhat messy model of an environment that brings students alive. A belt sander whirs in one corner. Four 3D printers stand ready along the back wall. A pair of students deftly whittle down a chunk of wood with a bandsaw. Others sit on desks collaborating on computers while Rebecca Gilligan sketches out a diagram on the blackboard to show classmate Luke Miceli.

"What works in that class is the student ownership," says OHHS Principal Travis Hunt. "It's real-world, applied learning. They're taking a problem and figuring out a solution that might not be in a textbook."

The course grew out of a science department curriculum review in 2007 that revealed the need for engineering classes. It was the start of a partnership with the University of Cincinnati that would lead to classes in Introduction to Engineering, Engineering Design, and eventually Robotics.

Robotics Class at OHHS (Continued)

What Education Needs to Become



“UC would help you, give you access to materials, access to staff, and a video model to help you design a course about engineering design thinking — how many solutions are possible, how do you start finding solutions, how do you know which solution to go with, how do you prototype something, and collect data to see how well it works,” Mr. Boles recalls.

The engineering courses were instantly popular and continue to expand, with Design Thinking II being added next fall. Of the high-energy robotics class — which has a perennial waitlist — Mr. Boles says simply, “It’s what education needs to become.”



Meredith Stein couldn’t agree more. She says students experiment, teach each other, and sometimes teach their teacher. “We’re self-driven people, and this is basically a self-driven class. First, we understand why something doesn’t work, and then we make it better.” She looks around the humming, buzzing classroom. “In here, it’s constant improvement.”

Six Reasons Robotics Class Works

Engineering-oriented students are used to taking things apart and analyzing them, so it’s probably no surprise that junior Meredith Stein can quickly explain why her robotics class works for her. Here’s her take:

1. **The group mentality.**
2. **The hands-on mentality.** *“No one is being lectured to. No one is ever sitting down in that class. I haven’t sat in a chair in that class for a week.”*
3. **Peer teaching.** *“The teacher is there to guide us, but we ultimately teach each other. We can see the physical effects of what we’re doing.”*
4. **Community outreach.**
5. **Accountability.** *“You’re held accountable — ‘Do your job.’ If you don’t do it, everybody knows — ‘Hey, dude, do it.’”*
6. **Enrichment.** *“There’s an outlet for my energy. I’m being productive. I’m being an engineer at 17. I’m making something that’s bigger than myself. It’s great to know we can use our gifts — our funky gifts — and make a funkier robot.”*

Tariel Koberidze

Staying Strong in the Midst of Tragedy

On Sunday, January 5th, Americans awoke to news of a terrifying crash of a Cincinnati-bound travel bus and three tractor-trailers on the Pennsylvania Turnpike. Five people were killed and 60 injured.

What they didn't know was that a Bridgetown Middle School sixth-grader on the bus helped guide emergency workers to the scene and prepared them for what they'd find there.

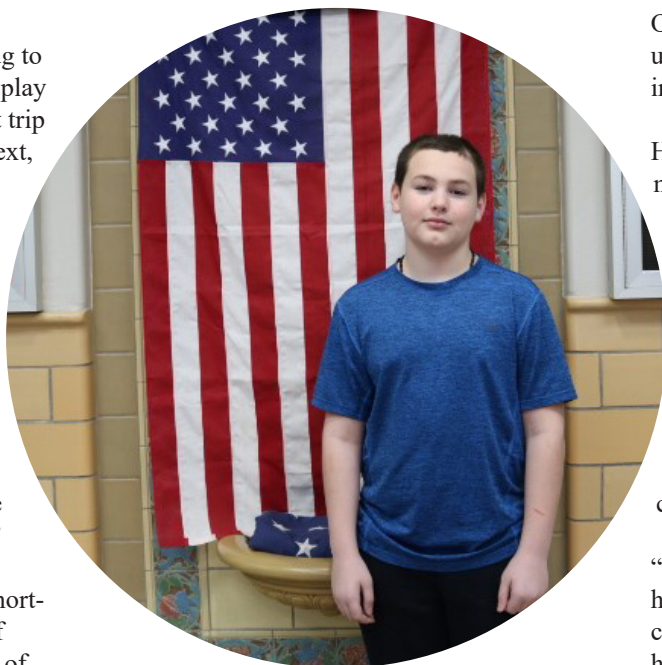
One minute 11-year-old Tariel Koberidze was searching for a plug to power his phone, so that he could play a video game during his overnight trip home from New York City. The next, he and fellow passengers were crawling in broken glass, diesel fuel, and darkness through their overturned bus. "Men were jumping on the seats. A woman was trying to crawl under them. Everybody was in a hurry to get out because they thought the bus was going to explode," Tariel says. "Everybody was trying to get out of the front of the bus — but the front wasn't there."

Shoeless, dressed in jeans and a short-sleeve t-shirt, Tariel found himself outside in the bitter cold. Because of the danger of fire, there was no going back into the bus for his sneakers, the jacket he had used as a blanket, or his favorite possession — his Rubik's Cube. But Tariel did have his cell phone and was one of the first on-scene to call 911.

The dispatcher quickly realized that in the calm, steady 11-year-old, she had a perfect set of eyes on the ground. She asked what vehicles were involved, what highway they were on, what direction they were headed, and for one more crucial piece of information that would send help directly to the crash scene.

"She told me to look for a sign — a highway marker — and I did, and it was right there," Tariel remembers.

For the next hour, the dispatcher would keep Tariel on the phone for constant updates on passengers and site conditions. She would also ask him to remind other passengers to stay calm, and that help was coming. Only when he saw the blue and red flashing lights from oncoming police cars did the dispatcher release him from his crucial duties.



Tariel Koberidze

"I felt nervous about what was going to happen, but also mostly calm because that's what the person on the phone told me to do... When I saw the blue and red — the police cars — I was thinking, 'We're not going to be out in the cold all night.' The police came, and I was happy."

**— Tariel Koberidze,
Bridgetown Middle School,
6th Grade**

"I felt nervous about what was going to happen, but also mostly calm because that's what the person on the phone told me to do," he says.


"When I saw the blue and red — the police cars — I was thinking, 'We're not going to be out in the cold all night.' The police came, and I was happy."

On the outside, Tariel's injuries — facial cuts and bruises and cuts to his left arm and shoulder — are healing. On the inside, he's only beginning to understand the pivotal role he played in a difficult and tragic situation.

He smiles when he's told his actions mirrored how he approaches solving his Rubik's Cube — 'I can't solve the whole thing, but I can solve a color.'

Since the accident, the BMS staff has surrounded Tariel with support — including replacing his Rubik's Cube and sneakers — and his classmates have found an even greater appreciation for the quiet, calm, capable friend in their midst.

"Three things keep coming into my head about Tariel," says his school counselor Teri Egbers. "He's strong, he's brave, and he's heroic."



5 Questions for Kelly Weldele

Kelly Weldele with students

Kelly Weldele brings the skills of an administrator, the loyalty of a team member, and the instincts of a mother to her work as Director of Food Services for Oak Hills Schools. She is organized and efficient, but it's her devotion to her clients and her staff that defines her.

Mrs. Weldele knows what students should eat, but she also cares about what they want to eat. She knows what her staff members are required to do, but she also notices all the extra, remember-it-for-a-lifetime deeds they quietly do. She works through sheaves of red tape behind the scenes to put appealing and nutritious choices in front of OHLSD students and staff every day.

Mrs. Weldele's family is through-and-through Highlander. Her husband Brian, a Delhi Township police officer, is the SRO at Rapid Run and Delhi middle schools, and Delshire and C.O. Harrison elementary schools. Her mother, Marcy Hayes, works across the hall from Mrs. Weldele as her secretary. Her children, Madeline, Addison, and Mitchell, are Oak Hills students, as well as their mom's customers.

So what are you most pleased with in the Food Service Department?

What I love about Food Service — and I see this in so many buildings — is that when the kids come in, those ladies give them the best five minutes of their day. A student might be having a hard day, and the ladies give them a hug.

From my standpoint, we're not only feeding kids, but we're giving them that smile they need to get through the rest of their day.

You oversee a huge operation. What are the challenges?

The biggest challenge is definitely the regulations. We are so regulated by state and federal guidelines. They determine what we can offer each week. For example, we have to offer beans every week — but elementary kids are not big fans of kidney beans. It's good to offer them, but it's a struggle to get kids to take them.

Another challenge is that you have to do everything from a cost-effective standpoint. For example, our students love certain chicken products — like bone-in and boneless chicken wings and chicken and waffles — that are not cost-effective enough to serve as often as they'd like.

Most of us are challenged to put a meal on the table for our own family. Talk about the scope of your work.

We serve nine buildings. Some of our bigger elementary schools serve in excess of 400 students on a given day, and the smaller schools serve 200 to 270. At the middle school, the serving numbers are harder to calculate because it's à la carte, but revenues at the high school could be as high as \$5,000 on a good day. About 50 employees work in food services. My staff would tell you that it feels like we have deliveries every day, but most schools have them three times a week. We're a self-sufficient operation — we're not funded by taxpayer dollars. Our salaries, food costs, and new equipment are paid out of our budget.

Besides being the Director of Food Services, you're also the busy mother of three. How do you get your own kids to try new things and eat healthfully?

I'll make my kids try things at least once. It dates back to what my mom and dad did. I had to try sauerkraut once, and then I never had to eat it again.

A doctor asked my daughter, "Do you eat a lot of home-cooked meals?" and my daughter said, "My mom cooks all the time." Homemade lasagna is my go-to. (Mrs. Weldele shares her recipe on page 14.)

We like to grill out, although that's my husband. I'm not a baker — I leave that to my mom. I like casseroles, and we also eat a lot of salads.

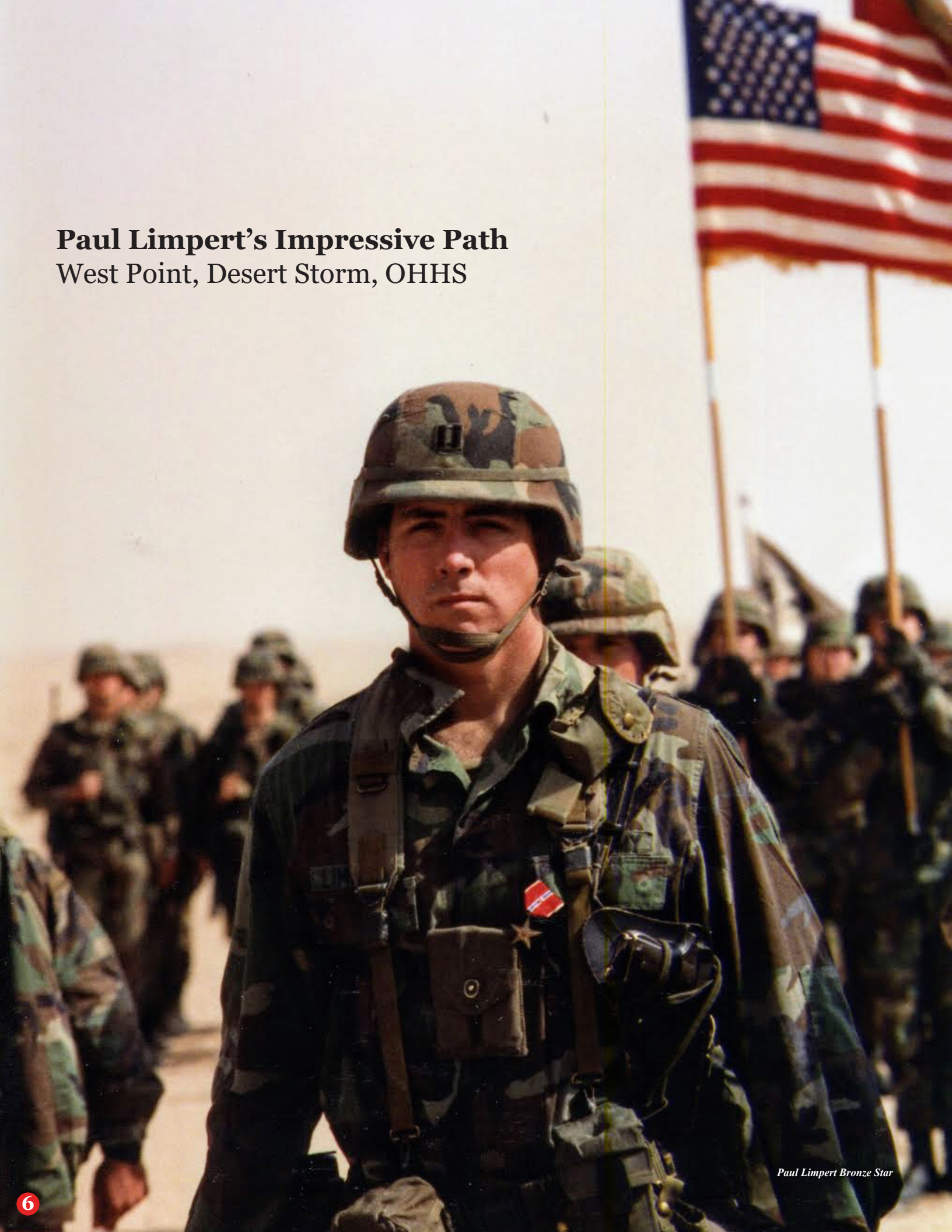
Restaurants talk a lot about the dining "experience" they offer their customers. What kind of experience do you want for your customers?

I want them to enjoy their lunch to the point they say, "I want to buy — I don't want to pack my lunch anymore." And I want them to come in and see people who are smiling, who ask about their day. At the middle school level, I want them to see a variety of things to buy that encourage them to come back. At the high school, I want them to see the variety — like all the salads and wraps we offer — and to say, "This is a restaurant I want to come back to."

Lunch should be fun for our students. They should be able to come in, talk to their friends, and eat something that they want to eat.

Paul Limpert's Impressive Path

West Point, Desert Storm, OHHS



Paul Limpert Bronze Star

Paul Limpert's Impressive Path (Continued)

West Point, Desert Storm, OHHS

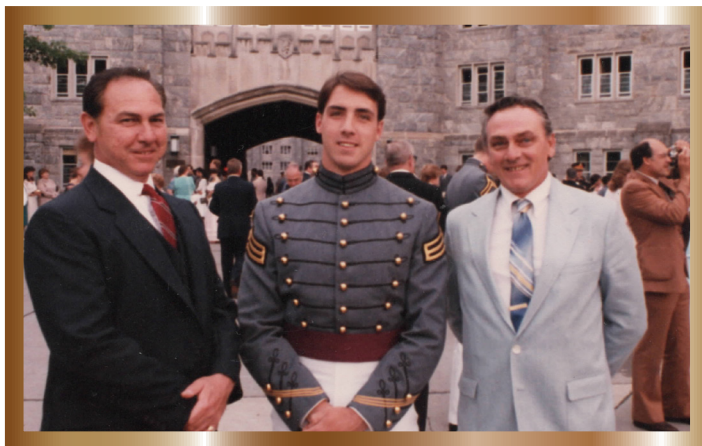
It was the early winter of 1991. Paul Limpert, a 29-year-old U.S. Army company commander, was in a windowless Humvee in the pitch-black darkness of the Saudi Arabian desert. His job was to orchestrate the medics, mechanics, engineers, ammunition handlers, and fuelers that supported an armored division pushing forward to engage with Saddam Hussein's Republican Guard. The event was Desert Storm.

The tanks moved in a wide V with 63 support vehicles in the middle and Capt. Limpert and his driver shuttling back and forth among them.

The division had just pushed into northwest Kuwait when they encountered mountains of rock and sand that the Iraqis had left behind as obstacles. The U.S. tanks could go over them. The supply vehicles couldn't.

"We had all the supplies the tanks needed — fuel, bullets, medics," Mr. Limpert remembers now, seated in his business classroom at Oak Hills High School. "I knew if we didn't get these 63 vehicles reconnected, the tanks were going to get stopped. They were counting on us."

So the commander and his driver set out nine times — several of them under enemy fire — to find a safe route through the desert. When they did, Capt. Limpert moved his company into defensive formation and moved out.



Paul Limpert, West Point

The result: all 63 vehicles — and all 88 troops in them — made it safely through.

For his efforts, Paul Limpert was awarded one of his nation's highest honors, the Bronze Star, in a ceremony in the desert.

Explaining that and other challenging Desert Storm missions, Mr. Limpert says simply, "I knew where I wanted to go."

Today, the students who file into his popular personal finance, honors entrepreneurship, and honors international business classes at Oak Hills High School have, in fact, only a limited idea of where their teacher has been. The bent for leadership that shaped Paul Limpert's life showed up first during his high school years outside Pittsburgh, where the honor student was class president and team captain for several sports. It led on to West Point and then to Army Airborne School, Army Rangers training, and eventually armor officer training.

His military service was exemplary; his ability to lead unquestioned. But from his high school years, Paul Limpert had harbored another goal: to teach and coach athletics at a high school.

Because he had no teaching degree, Mr. Limpert entered business after leaving the military. He was quickly successful as a mid-upper level manager in various industries, but an after-work position coaching lacrosse for Mason Schools reawakened the desire to teach. He earned his certification through Ohio's alternative licensure program, taught at a small school district, and in 2012, joined the Oak Hills faculty.

"He could have been a CEO, but he followed his passion back to teaching — that's impressive," says OHHS Principal Travis Hunt.

Mr. Limpert's goal for his students echoes that of his own life — having a strong sense of where they want to go, and then building the knowledge base to get there.

"It's imperative that we get our kids to take charge of their own destiny. I tell them, 'You're capable of more than you can fathom,'" he says.



VFW Teacher of the Year Award

"I love teaching these courses because I can develop them any way I see fit. We don't teach from a script. It's constantly changing. It's alive." Each fall, Mr. Limpert combines his love for learning with his devotion to the military by organizing the high school's legendary Veterans Day program. In November, more than 300 veterans entered the gym to the cheers of 1,200 students, then spent the day sharing their stories in small-group sessions. The event is, in part, why Mr. Limpert was chosen as this year's VFW Teacher of the Year.

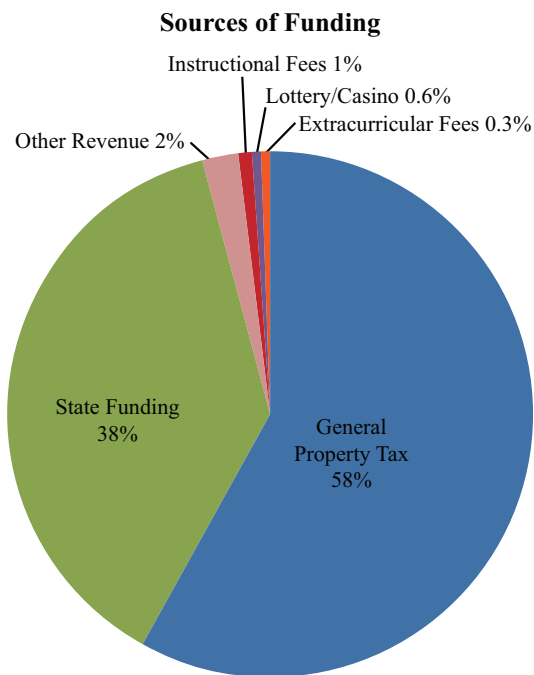
"Paul goes over and above to make sure the day is well planned, to make sure as many veterans are included as want to be, and that students have a valuable experience — and he does it without fanfare," Mr. Hunt says. "And then I always see him sitting down and having personal conversations with individual veterans."

As he shuttles behind the scenes at the Veterans Day event, only a close observer would notice the Bronze Star he sports on his dress shirt. It's there as a silent witness that Paul Limpert not only knows where he's going but also where he's been.

"My philosophy is, always be learning, always be improving your knowledge base," he says quietly, "and then apply it to something that does service for others."

A Message from the Treasurer

Sharing our Financial Picture: Revenues and Expenditures



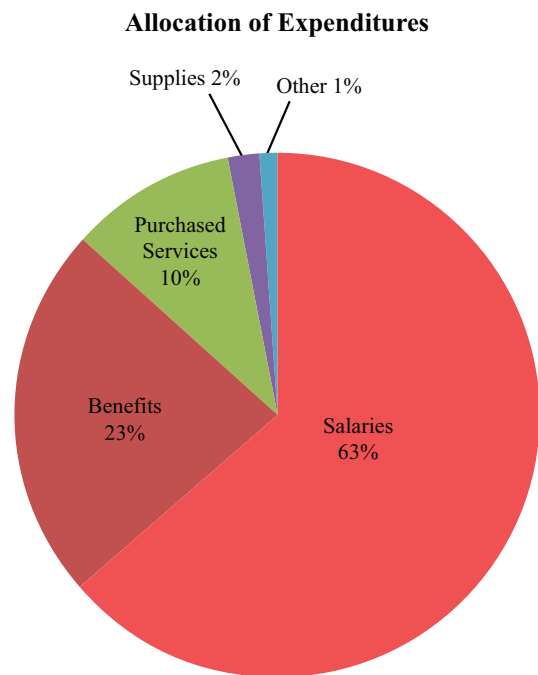
As the chief financial officer for Oak Hills Local Schools, my goal is to continually provide our community with updated and easy-to-understand information on district finances and a road map for future financial decisions. This month, I'm sharing our financial foundation — revenue sources and allocation of expenditures — along with some background on both.

The chart above illustrates that 58% of our revenue comes from local funding, which is generated by levies voted on by our 45,000 constituents.

Our last new operating levy was passed in 2013. Since state law prohibits school districts from receiving inflationary growth as property values increase, our local property tax collection has grown by only 0.2% (which was from new construction), while the cost of living has increased by roughly 2.5%.

The next largest source of revenue is state funding, which makes up 38% of our revenue. Every other year, state legislators determine each school district's funding. This short-term commitment to funding makes it difficult to forecast the state's contribution beyond a 24-month period. After deducting the funds the state has diverted to charter schools, vouchers, and other sources, state funding to OHLSD has increased less than 1% annually since 2010 — again, as the cost of living has increased by roughly 2.5%.

Finally, 4% of our revenue comes from school fees, rental income, investment income, and other sources. Casino and lottery proceeds — which were heavily marketed as funding sources for schools — account for less than 1% of overall revenue. Our fees are set based on the market rate of other southwestern Ohio districts. Meanwhile, state law requires our district to invest in conservative vehicles yielding a low rate of return.



Our expenditures reflect the fact that Oak Hills Local Schools — like other public entities — is service-based, meaning the largest portion of our budget is devoted to personnel costs. Consistent with other districts, we allocate 86% of our budget to salaries and benefits. Through negotiated contracts with our certified and classified unions, we work to keep our compensation competitive with other districts in the region, even as we constantly strive to manage resources and contain costs. Our commitment to our students is evident in the fact that 72 cents of each dollar go directly to instruction. (The state average is 68%.) A challenge in predicting and managing expenditures is the volatility of such factors as medical insurance costs, workers' compensation, retirements, and student enrollment.

Ten percent of our expenditures is allocated to purchased services, which include utilities, HVAC, flooring, fleet insurance, vouchers, and substitute costs. We contain these costs by a comprehensive, preventative maintenance plan, which acts as a roadmap for updates and improvements in all of our 12 buildings and grounds.

Finally, 4% of our expenditures is discretionary costs, including textbooks, student workbooks, and technology needs that help prepare our students for college and career readiness.

In next month's newsletter, I'll answer some of the most frequently asked questions about OHLSD revenues and expenditures.

If you have a question you'd like answered, please contact me at (513) 574-3200 or at bain_s@ohlsd.org. You will find additional financial information — including our Transparency Tracker — on our website, www.ohlsd.org.

Sincerely,
Steven R. Bain
Treasurer

Oak Hills Alumni & Educational Foundation

Foundation Grants Provide a Wealth of Experiences for Students

One of the best gifts anyone can be given is the gift of experiences. How fortunate, then, that it's a gift in which the Oak Hills Alumni & Educational Foundation specializes.

In December, a Foundation grant provided copies of the novel, *A Christmas Carol*, and then a Playhouse in the Park workshop on it for eighth-graders in Kenny Boatright's Honors English I classes at Delhi Middle School.

The students learned what's expected of actors, their rehearsal routines, and how the Playhouse prepared to stage the play. Then the students used what they learned to put on related skits of their own.

Then things got even cooler. The Foundation grant paid for the students to attend the play at the Playhouse in the Park and enjoy lunch afterwards. For some students, it was their first chance to see live professional theater. For others, it was a way to bring literature alive.

"We were very involved with it visually instead of just reading a book," says eighth-grader Justin Watson.

"We got to see it actually play out."

For Dylan Searcy, the play clarified parts of the novel that had been confusing. "It was such a great and wonderful experience — I hope they'll keep giving the grants so that more students can go," he says.

Their teacher says students benefited from the breadth of the experience — from classroom study to a small-group session with a Playhouse associate, to dressing up and visiting an area arts venue. "They were well-dressed and well-behaved, and thoroughly enjoyed seeing the play," he said.

Eighth-grader Liz Savage asked to send this message to the Foundation. "Of course, thank you for providing the money to see the play, but we also want them to know this was an amazing experience for all of us."



Save the Date for These OHAEF Events

May 6, OHAEF Annual Dinner,
Western Hills Country Club

June 26, OHAEF Golf Outing,
Aston Oaks Golf Course

Sept. 19, Highlander Food Truck
Frenzy, Oak Hills High School

Reconnect and Reflect at OHHS Class Reunions

June 20, Class of 2015 Reunion,
Westside Brewing
(Search: OHHS Class of 2015
Reunion Eventbrite)

July 11, Class of 2010
Class Reunion,
JTapps,
6441 Glenway Ave. 45211

Sept. 11, Class of 1975
45th Reunion,
Western Hills Country Club

Oct. 9, Class of 1970 Reunion,
Receptions West



DMS Christmas Carol

A Sampling of Recent Honors & Special Events

#OHBetterTogether



Bridgetown Middle School Eighth-grade Band, Orchestra, and Choir perform at Margaret B. Rost School



J.F. Dulles kindergarten teacher Kellie O'Brien named Outstanding Mentor Teacher



C.O. Harrison Elementary named StEP School of the Year by the U.C. Economics Center



OHHS senior Cailee Plunkett, finalist in visual art in the Overture Awards



OHHS Marching Band, Orchestra and Choir performed at Walt Disney World



J.F. Dulles and Oakdale choirs perform at Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden



Andy Schroeder named GMC Boys Swimming Co-Coach of the Year and Owen Pelzer named GMC Male Swimming Athlete of the Year



Winter College Signing Day for OHHS student-athletes: Front row, DJ Shaw, Sebastian Bachler, Cailee Plunkett, Grace Armentrout, Molly Ewry, Isabel Dragotta, Rosalie Pictor. Second row, Ryan Huellemeier, Kayla Roddy, Josie Wefer, Emma Bode, Rachel Winkler, Brianna Schneider, Joey Siegel, Michael Hehman

A Sampling of Recent Honors & Special Events



*Oak Hills Middle School Competition
Cheerleaders named State Champions*



*Oak Hills High School Varsity Competition
Cheerleaders named State Runner-Up*



*OHHS Art and Design students receive record-
breaking recognition in Scholastic Art Awards —
60 honors, including eight Gold Keys*



*OHHS visual arts educator Jamie Schorsch
named Hamilton County Education
Foundation's Educator of the Year*



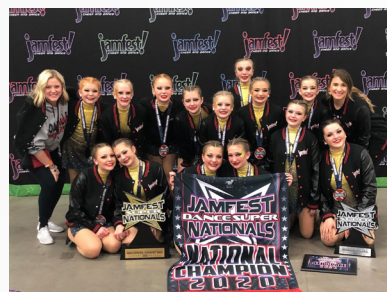
*Delshire Elementary chosen for Hamilton
County Educational Service Center's Innovation
Showcase for work with childhood trauma*



*Rapid Run Middle School musical,
The Music Man Jr.*



*Springmyer Elementary second-grade musical,
The Bear Went Over the Mountain*



*Oak Hills Juniors Dance Team named National
Champions in their division at JAMFest Super Nationals*

Inside Oak Hills

A Conversation with Reid Ryan — and the Highlander



Oak Hills High School sophomore Reid Ryan is, in a word, a character. Humble and funny in the halls of OHHS, he becomes larger-than-life when he

dons an over-sized, ginger-haired foam head and transforms into the Oak Hills mascot, the Highlander.

After portraying the Ram at Rapid Run Middle School, Reid's big break came when he was asked to model the new Highlander suit at a charity game in 2018. Maybe it was his jaunty wave of the hand or the clever mimicking of a cheer, but Reid claimed the character and never looked back.

"I'm sure there are some people who are mascots who are shy," he says. "But when I put on the suit, it's me doubled. Your confidence rises. Your enthusiasm rises."

While his Highlander portrayal is light-hearted, his devotion to mascoting is not. Besides appearing at 50 sporting events each year, Reid enrolled in boot camp training at the Mascot Hall of Fame in Whiting, Indiana, and — as you're about to find out — has even bigger plans for mascoting.

"My favorite part of being the Highlander and being a mascot is that you're the connection between the fans

and the team," he says. "You're the bridge between the fans and the field, and that's the best feeling."

We agree. Nobody does mascoting better than Reid. Here's a glimpse into his life (and, coincidentally, that of the Highlander):

Favorite mascot: The U.C. Bearcat is probably overall number one, and I like the Philly Fanatic. And I like Brutus.

Favorite piece of clothing: Everyone likes Nike sweatpants. I don't. I like khaki pants. I hate shorts. I don't know why.

Favorite word: Flabbergasted.

If you were a superhero, you would be: Superman.

Best family holiday tradition: Eating cinnamon rolls on Christmas morning — the Pillsbury dough boy.

Favorite possession: My Bearcat bobblehead.

Nickname: None. Reid is already short and simple. You can't shorten or prolong Reid.

If you had gotten to choose your name: I love Reid.

What you hope to do in college: All I want is to be the U.C. Bearcat and then to bring the Bearcat into the Mascot Hall of Fame.

What you want to be when you're grown up: I'm not going to lie, I want to be a professional mascot or a comedian. I've wanted that from around fifth or sixth grade.

If you had \$25, what you would do with it: Get food.

Healthiest food you regularly eat: Water. I don't think there's anything healthier than water.

Three words to describe you: I don't like describing myself because I always feel I'm wrong. Charismatic, maybe. Distracted. Funny.

Three words to describe the Highlander: (Answers quickly.) Clumsy, proud, and fun — just fun.

Pet peeve: For the mascot, it's the constant questions — take off your head, who are you, who are you? Outside that, it's when people don't realize what the mascot does. They're like, 'All you do is show up for games and stand around.' But there is so much more than that.

Biggest talent: I'm not the most athletic. I think my best gift is mascoting or being able to have fun anywhere — having fun where there isn't fun.

Favorite food: Sandwiches.

What you're most proud of: I'm really proud of the Highlander, and what he's turned into in the last year. I feel like the Highlander is a known thing. I feel like he's more a part of the school.

What you'd most like to be known for in life: Making other people laugh and have fun. For people to be like, "Reid was always making me feel happier and better."

By The Numbers
OHLSD Transportation Department



With 7,865 students, 926 employees, 9 schools, 12 buildings, and 150,974 acres of grounds, the Oak Hills Local School District is one of Southwest Ohio’s largest school districts and a major public partner in Delhi and Green townships.

To help you better understand the size and scope of our operation, each month, we’ll give you a snapshot look at one of our departments, beginning with the OHLSD Transportation Department.

Number of bus drivers: 48, with 38 route drivers and 10 substitute drivers

Number of miles driven daily: 2,975 miles

Number of miles driven annually for field trips (including sporting events): 62,701

Size of bus fleet: 41 buses, including 26 full-size buses, 15 mid-size buses equipped for students with special needs, and 11 vans

Number of students transported daily: 1,894 public-school students and 523 parochial-school students

Number of parochial schools served: 8

Senior driver: Karen Lyons, with 25 years as a route driver

Number of other transportation staff members: 3 mechanics, 17 regular bus aides, 3 substitute bus aides, 8 crossing guards, 2 substitute crossing guards

All buses must pass an annual inspection by the Ohio State Patrol, which also conducts periodic spot inspections.

OHLSD has never failed a State Patrol inspection.

Not to Miss!

February 20.....	Kindergarten Parent Information Night, OHHS, 6:00 pm – 7:30 pm
February 21.....	Springmyer, 5th Grade Cornhole Tournament
February 25.....	Springmyer, Fine Arts Night
March 5, 6, & 7.....	RRMS, Rapid Run Revue and Art Show, 7:00 pm
March 12.....	End of the Quarter
March 13.....	Inservic Day, Staff Only
March 16 – 20.....	Spring Break, No School



Kelly Weldele's Go-To Lasagna

Ingredients

One 16-ounce box of lasagna noodles

One pound ground chuck

One pound Italian sausage

Two 8-ounce bags of Italian-mix cheese

Two 8-ounce bags of mozzarella cheese

Two 26-ounce jars LaRosas' Pasta Sauce

Instructions

Prepare noodles and set aside. Brown ground chuck and Italian sausage together. You can add garlic salt to taste while browning. Drain and set aside.

Spread sauce on the bottom of a 9" x 13" baking pan. Place three noodles on the sauce and then spread more sauce on top of the noodles. Place half of the meat mixture on the noodles. Cover with one bag of Italian-mix cheese and half a bag of mozzarella cheese.

Repeat with the remaining meat mixture, the second bag of Italian-mix cheese, and the remaining half-bag of mozzarella. Add one more layer of lasagna noodles and cover with remaining sauce. Sprinkle the remaining bag of mozzarella cheese on top.

Bake at 350 degrees for approximately 45 minutes, until the cheese is brown on top. Serve with a green salad and garlic bread.