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ANTHONY WAYNE LOCAL SCHOOLS EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTER | APRIL 2024

From the Superintendent's Desk

The Countdown Begins: Let's finish strong!

Dear Staff,

Upon returning from spring break, I had a staff member say to me that we only had 38 days with students remaining in this school year! Honestly, it was surprising to me to hear this number. This school year has had its ups and downs, but the time has flown past us!

As we near the end of this school year, we have some unanswered questions about the future of the District. In the next few months and into next school year, we will all know the direction of the path the community desires the District to take to provide the quality of education we have grown to know. While the future comes with uncertainty, what is without question is your commitment to our students.

I want to take a moment to express my gratitude for your dedication and hard work through this journey. Your unwavering commitment to the AW students is amazing and appreciated!

COMING SOON...



As we enter the final stretch, I encourage each and every one of you to continue giving your best effort every day. Let's maintain our focus, enthusiasm, and positivity to ensure that we finish this year strong.

Remember, every interaction, every lesson, and every moment counts in shaping the future of our students. Let's rally together, support one another, and make these last few weeks memorable and impactful for our students.

Thank you for your ongoing dedication and commitment to our school community. Together, we will accomplish great things in these final weeks of the school year.

Thank you,
Jim Fritz, Superintendent
Anthony Wayne Local Schools

Anthony Wayne Local Schools empowers students to be future ready!

AWLS BOARD OF EDUCATION WORK SESSION AND MEETING LOCATION CHANGE

The AWLS Board of Education will hold a work session at 8:00 a.m. on Monday, April 8 to discuss the implementation of the [District's Financial Recovery Plan](#) following the failure of the proposed operational levy. The work session will be held at the CAO. More information about pay-to-participate, transportation reductions and other details will be shared in the coming weeks.

APRIL MEETING MOVED

Due to the recognition of our military-connected students and a presentation from the AW Bands, the April 15 Board of Education meeting will be held at 6:00 p.m. in the AWHS Gymnasium. The meeting will be live streamed for those who cannot attend in person.



CONSIDERING RETIREMENT?

The District will host Voya representative, Denise Zellers on Tuesday, Apr. 23 at 4:00 p.m. at the Central Administrative Office to discuss retirement and the AWLS Accumulated Leave Plan. The Accumulated Leave Plan is the program that the district uses to initially tax-defer an employee's severance payment at the time of retirement per Article 25 of the AWEA contract.

If you are eligible to retire now or within the next few years, we encourage you to attend this meeting. The earlier you start planning, the more prepared you will be. Spouses/family members are welcome to attend.

Please feel free to contact the Treasurer's office with any questions you may have. You can also discuss your situation with our Voya representatives:

[Denise Zellers](#),
Financial Advisor and Client Support Specialist
419-534-4413 x3

[Matthew Snyder](#),
Financial Advisor
419-725-4470 opt. 2

APRIL RECOGNITION CELEBRATIONS

This month, we celebrate our assistant principals, secretaries, paraprofessionals and media center staff. Your contributions to our school community are immeasurable and the connections you form with our students help to ensure they have a positive school experience.

You bring professionalism, efficiency and friendliness to your work, ensuring the smooth operation of schools and serving as a resource for all of us! Thank you for always going the extra mile to ensure that our schools run smoothly. We couldn't do it without you!



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED



Whitehouse Primary School is in need of volunteers to help with the annual Powerhouse 5K Race and 1K Fun Run on Saturday, April 13. [Sign up details are available online.](#)

If you have the need for speed, and would rather run or walk the event, [registration is still open!](#)

AUTISM ACCEPTANCE MONTH MOVING FROM AWARENESS TO ACCEPTANCE

Submitted by: Jennifer Liber,
Waterville Primary Intervention Specialist

In 2020, April was changed to be Autism Acceptance month instead of Autism Awareness Month. People are now more aware of those in the autistic community, but there these individuals still face prejudice and other hardships, which is the reason behind the name change.

The puzzle piece symbol began to be viewed in a negative light by the autism community. Those who spoke out in opposition said they felt it created the impression that autism was a riddle to be solved or that those with the condition were incomplete.

Instead, the autistic community wishes to be seen as neurodiverse, which means they just have a different way of seeing and interacting with the world than someone whose brain develops neurotypically.

The criticism over the puzzle piece symbol was handed over to the *Autism Research Journal's* editors, who initiated the process of updating the symbol. That is why you will see infinity symbols with rainbow colors instead of a blue puzzle piece.

Again, some families and people are okay with the puzzle piece, we have to respect their own voices and decisions, but there is a push from the majority of the autistic community to move forward with an infinity symbol.

SOURCE:
[Teachers Pay Teachers](#)



LANGUAGE MATTERS

- It is often preferred to say "autistic person" instead of "person with autism."
- This is called *identity-first language*. Some people may still prefer person-first language. It's okay to ask which someone prefers.
- People used to talk about autism as an illness that needed to be cured. Now we know that neurodiverse individuals just see and interact with the world differently.

FAMOUS AUTISTIC PEOPLE



[Armani Williams](#)



[Elon Musk](#)



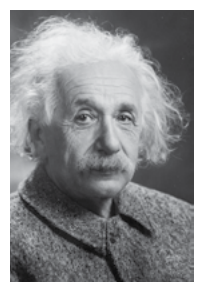
[Susan Boyle](#)



[Daryl Hannah](#)



[Temple Grandin](#)



[Albert Einstein](#)

AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER (ASD) REFLECTED IN POP CULTURE



BROADWAY MUSICAL
["How to Dance in Ohio"](#)

PBS KIDS' ANIMATED SERIES
["Carl the Collector"](#)

BOOK AND FILM
["The Reason I Jump"](#)

DOCUMENTARY
["Autism Goes to College"](#)

CARTOON FOR KIDS
["Pablo"](#)

SESAME STREET
["Meet Julia"](#)

NETFLIX ROMANTIC DOCUSERIES
["Love on the Spectrum"](#)

APRIL 8, 2024: TOTAL SOLAR ECLIPSE

HERE COMES THE SUN

The upcoming eclipse is a **once in a lifetime**, event - the next total solar eclipse in Ohio will be in 2099! A solar eclipse happens when the moon casts its shadow on the Earth as it passes between the Earth and the sun. In this case, it will appear as if the moon is totally blocking the sun. [More information about viewing the eclipse in Ohio is available online.](#)



EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

WHAT IN THE WORLD?

There is no school on April 8, but there are lots of engaging learning activities you can do with students to learn about the celestial event. Check out these resources for teachers:

[LESSON PLANS: My NASA Data](#)

[GUIDE FOR EDUCATORS: Solar Eclipse Double Header](#)

[ACTIVITY GUIDE: Sun, Moon & Shadows](#)

[VIDEO SERIES: Everything Eclipses](#)

[ECLIPSE BOOK LIST: Recommendations from Librarians](#)

YOU'LL FIND US CHASING THE SUN

BE PREPARED FOR CROWDS

Northwest Ohio is expected to be a hot spot for eclipse viewing - the population of Wood County alone is expected to double. The large number of people flocking to our area is just one reason why schools chose to cancel on April 8.

Crowds are expected to slow travel and increase traffic to parks, grocery stores, rest stops, gas stations, ATMs and restaurants. There may be issues with cell service and first responders are expecting to be busy. It's best to have a safety plan and extra patience. [Eclipse preparedness information is available this video from the Emergency Management Agency.](#)

ECLIPSE TIMELINE

PARTIAL PHASE START

1:56 p.m.

TOTALITY START

3:11 p.m.

TOTALITY DURATION

1 minute, 54 seconds

WATCH IN-PERSON

You don't need to **fly your lear jet up to Nova Scotia to see a total eclipse of the sun.** NW Ohio offers prime viewing of the total eclipse.

[Waterville Solar Spectacular](#)

2:00-4:00 p.m.

Prairie Trail Park

[Whitehouse Viewing Party](#)

12:30-4:30 p.m.

Whitehouse Village Hall

Blue Creek Metropark

Metroparks Toledo, the Toledo Mud Hens, Toledo Zoo, Imagination Station, and other local organizations are also hosting [eclipse-related events and activities.](#)

WATCH ONLINE

Ohio's spring weather is notoriously fickle. If the clouds **steal my sunshine**, you can catch the eclipse live online.

[NASA OFFICIAL BROADCAST](#)

[THE EXPLORATORIUM](#)

[TIMEANDDATE BROADCAST](#)



(DON'T GET) **BLINDED BY THE LIGHT** SOLAR ECLIPSE SAFETY

Taylor Swift **may stare directly at the sun**, but the only time it is safe to look directly at the eclipse is during the brief phase of totality when the moon completely blocks the view of the sun.

You also risk immediate eye injury if you try to view the event through a camera lens, binoculars, or a telescope without a specialized filter.

DO NOT take ZZ Top's suggestion to go get yourself some cheap sunglasses. You **MUST** wear special solar eclipse glasses to view safely. If you can't get your hands on a certified pair of viewing glasses, you can also make a pinhole projector out of household items.



[NASA Total Solar Eclipse Safety](#)

[How to spot solar eclipse scams](#)

[Where to buy certified eclipse viewing glasses](#)

[How to make a pinhole projector at home](#)

**And all that is now. And all that is gone. And all that's to come.
And everything under the sun is in tune. But the sun is eclipsed by the moon.**

Eclipse, Pink Floyd

SOLAR ECLIPSE PLAYLIST

DANCING IN THE DARK

Ain't No Sunshine, Bill Withers
Blinding Lights, The Weekend
Bad Moon Rising, Creedence Clearwater Revival
Ring of Fire, Johnny Cash
The House of the Rising Sun, The Animals
Blister in the Sun, Violent Femmes
Sunshine on My Shoulders, John Denver
The Moon and the Sun, Heidi Berry
Moonshadow, Yusef/Cat Stevens
Total Eclipse of the Heart, Bonnie Tyler
Let the Sunshine In, The 5th Dimension
Dancing in the Moonlight, King Harvest
Fly Me to the Moon, Frank Sinatra
Darkness on the Face of the Earth, Willie Nelson
When There is No Sun, Sun Ra
Blackhole Sun, Soundgarden
Moondance, Van Morrison

BE A CITIZEN SCIENTIST

KEEP WATCHING THE SKY

Will the birds sing? Will it get chilly? How will people react? What will you notice during the eclipse? Below are a few places you can contribute your observations as a citizen scientist!

[Eclipse Soundscapes](#)

[Science News Explores](#)

[Sunsketcher App](#)

[SciStarter](#)

[Eclipse Mega Movie](#)

[Globe Observer](#)



CHALLENGE: Can you find the other song title and lyric references?

WELLNESS COMMITTEE NEWS

2024 UPCOMING EVENTS

BLUE CREEK METROPARK

- 2 MAY** Kayaking 4-6 pm
- 9 MAY** Kayaking 4-6 pm Rock Wall

Open House - Drop-in events
More information coming soon

LEARNER'S MINDSET 2024 WELLNESS LUNCH & LEARNS

Unleash the power within you as you explore the keys to unlocking a stress-free and joyous life. The final Pro-Medica Employee Wellness Program lunch and learn webinar is this month.

Stress Management: Steps to Increase Happiness
Wednesday, Apr. 17
2:00 - 12:30 p.m.

Dive into evidence-based practices that elevate your happiness by reducing stress levels.



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY: Thank you to everyone who tried something new during the staff professional development day on March 19! We hope you found the sessions to be informative and useful and that you explored new ways to support your wellness! Many thanks to the AWHs FFA chapter for providing lunch!



STAFF CPR TRAINING The District, in collaboration with the American Red Cross provided hands-only CPR training to staff members on March 21. Thank you for taking the time to learn a skill that could save someone's life!



APRIL EVENTS

- APRIL 1** CLOSED: Spring Break
- APRIL 8** CLOSED: Solar Eclipse
- APRIL 15** Board of Education Meeting
- APRIL 15-19** Purple Week for Military Students
- APRIL 22** Earth Day
- APRIL 23** Monclova First Grade Music Program



GENERALS ATHLETICS

The spring sports season is in full swing! [View the calendar online](#), and make plans to cheer for the Generals. See you at the game!

MAMMA MIA!



The AWHS spring musical is April 18, 19 and 20. [Purchase your tickets online](#) and get ready for a toe-tapping good time!

[See all upcoming events on the District calendar](#)



AWLS BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETINGS

The Board of Education meets at the Central Administrative Offices, unless otherwise noted.

- April 15 | 6:00 p.m.
AWHS GYMNASIUM
- May 13 | 6:00 p.m.
- June 3 | 8:00 a.m.
- June 27 | 8:00 a.m.

[Meeting agendas and Board policies are available online.](#)

[A live stream is available for those who cannot attend.](#)

FINAL LPDC MEETINGS FOR 2023-24

- April 15
- May 6

ANNUAL FFA PLANT SALE



The annual AWHS-Penta FFA Plant Sale is the one of the chapter's largest fundraising efforts and supports sending students to leadership conferences, local activities and scholarships.

You can [place your plant order online](#), and payment can be made with exact cash or a check made out to AW FFA. Items can be picked up April 25-26, April 29-30, May 1 or May 6-9 between 7:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.

Please email cbockbrader@anthonywayneschools.org with questions.

SUPPORTING MILITARY-CONNECTED STUDENTS

April is recognized as the Month of the Military Child, a time set aside to acknowledge the unique experiences of children whose loved ones have made a commitment to serve in the U.S. military. We are proud that each of our schools is designated a Purple Star school for their efforts to support these students and their families.



This month, we invite you to **Paint the Town Purple** by displaying purple ribbons, lights, bows and wreaths. All military-connected students in the District are invited to attend the April 15 board meeting where they will be recognized. [Families are asked to RSVP online.](#)

We will also honor our military-connected students with activities in our schools during the week of April 15-19. Look for more information to come from your buildings.



PURPLE STAR GENERALS HOST MIC3 REPRESENTATIVES

The Purple Star Generals at Waterville Primary School and Anthony Wayne Junior High met with representatives of the Ohio Military Interstate Children's Compact Commission (MIC3) on March 20. The students shared their experiences as military-connected students and the many activities that they take part in to show their appreciation for our military. [Read more and see video highlights from the day.](#)



HRCKA PRESENTS AT NATIONAL SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK CONFERENCE

School social worker, Rebekah Hrcka, MSW, LISW was selected to present at the National School Social Work Conference in Baltimore, Maryland. In collaboration with Perrysburg Local Schools Social Worker, Christina Harper, Beka spoke on the topic of "Getting Off the School Social Work Island: Finding Your People Through Collaboration and Transformational Leadership."

The session was designed for social workers who are the only one in their positions at their districts, and gave them advice for collaboration with other school social workers for networking, resource sharing and advocacy.

Beka has served as the school social worker at AWLS just since August, 2023 but has been instrumental in providing support to students and families by connecting them to resources within our community.

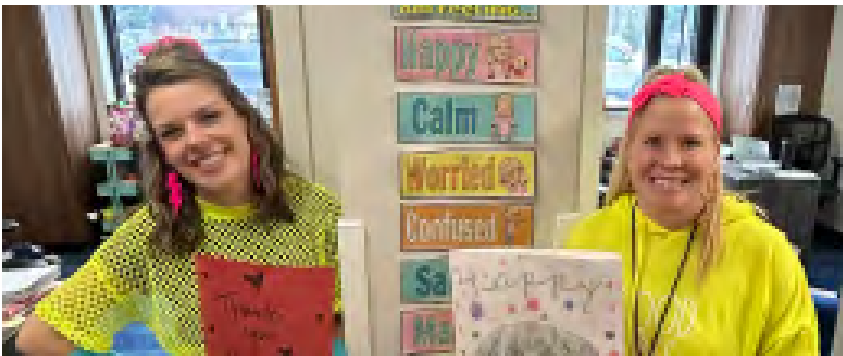
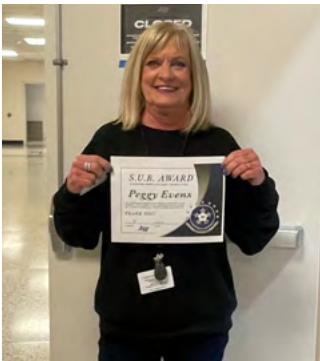
HONORING OUR SUBSTITUTE EMPLOYEES S.U.B. AWARD RECIPIENTS

Submitted by: Brad Contact, *Director of Human Resources*

The individuals who choose to serve as substitute employees in our district are invaluable to ensuring our students get students to school, continue learning, are fed, and facilities are clean and maintained when regular employees are absent.

S.U.B.s are Someone Unbelievably Beneficial to our team here at Anthony Wayne!

Thank you to Peggy Evans, nominated by HS staff, and Candi Crawford, nominated by FT staff, for their dedication to our district this school year as S.U.B.s! They have both added value to our team and are appreciated by both staff and students throughout our district. Thank you!



FTMS RECOGNIZED BY OMLA

Fallen Timbers Middle School was recognized as the Building Member of the Day on March 11 by the Ohio Middle Level Association. Matt Smith, *Principal* and Terry Tansel, *Asst. Principal* nominated the building counselors, Jenni Minni and Stephanie Huntley [for recognition during Middle Level Education Month](#).



DIRECTIONS GRANT FUNDS GUEST SPEAKER

Social studies students at Fallen Timbers Middle School had the chance to learn about the cultural, religious and medicinal significance of henna art thanks to grant funds provided by Directions Credit Union.

Carla Rygalski sought the \$500 award after attending a recent henna event at Waterville Public Library.

"I thought it would be the perfect culmination of our study of Egyptian and Indian history," she said. "I'm grateful to have the grant funding, because without it I could not share this experience with my students."

Just before spring break, [students learned about the historical and cultural significance of henna](#) and got to experience having henna art application.

AW NEWS



YouTube

VIEW BACK ISSUES: Previous editions of the *Generals Bulletin* can be found on the [Staff Forms and Information page of the District website](#).