

GENERALS BULLETIN

Anthony Wayne Local Schools Employee Newsletter



How Servant Leadership Helps Us Grow

Servant leadership means putting others first, understanding their needs and helping to remove obstacles so they can grow and thrive.

In a school setting, servant leadership means prioritizing students' learning, well-being, and potential by listening, encouraging, and building trust.

Chances are, you chose to work in a school because you like helping others and seeing them succeed. Servant leadership comes easily to you.

Like gardeners nurturing plants, you focus on the needs of those around you making sure they have the right balance of nutrients to grow and thrive.

Leading by serving aligns with the *Portrait of a General* and *General Way* and helps us:

- Build trust and respect
- Empower students and our colleagues
- Create a supportive, valued community
- Model empathy and collaboration

Turn to page 3 for ways you can practice servant leadership with your students.



What is servant leadership?

FOCUS

Putting others first

KEY PRINCIPALS

Empathy, listening, stewardship and commitment to the growth of people.

GOAL

To empower and uplift team others, ensuring their needs are met so they can perform at their best.

A Message from Our Superintendent

What a wonderful start we've had to the school year! Just as a gardener begins with a seed, this year has already seen the beginnings of something truly special. The seeds we've planted are the relationships you are forming with students, families, and one another. These first weeks are vital as we carefully nurture those connections, setting the foundation for growth and success in the months ahead.

As we move forward, our responsibility is to continue tending to these seeds. With care, encouragement, and consistent support, we will help our students grow into their potential. Through strong instruction, meaningful opportunities, and a wide variety of experiences, we give each student the chance to discover their passions and develop their strengths.

I could not be prouder of the preparation and dedication that went into opening this school year. Every detail—whether seen or unseen—made it possible for us to welcome our students with open arms and provide them with the very best start.

As I've said before, no matter your role, each of you is essential to the experience of our students. Together, your work creates an environment where every child feels valued and inspired.

As we continue our journey, I want us to always approach our work with a servant's heart. Servant leadership reminds us that when we put others first, everyone benefits. It strengthens relationships, builds trust, and creates a culture of respect and collaboration. It encourages empathy and understanding, helping us see through the eyes of those we serve. And ultimately, it helps us grow as leaders and as people, because in serving others, we also discover the best within ourselves.

I am truly excited about the path ahead this school year. Thank you for the incredible work you have already done—and for what you continue to do each day for our students, their families, and our community. It is an honor to serve alongside you.

With Gratitude,
Kevin



– Planting Seeds Through Servant Leadership –

Creating the Right Climate for Student Growth

As educators, we are gardeners of potential — planting seeds of knowledge, compassion, and curiosity in our students. Servant leadership reminds us that our greatest impact comes not from authority, but from service. When we focus on meeting students' needs first, we create the climate where every seed can grow strong. Here are a few ways to nurture growth using a servant leadership mindset:

PREPARE THE SOIL : BUILD TRUST

Healthy plants thrive in rich soil; students thrive in safe, trusting environments. Learn names quickly, follow through on promises, and show genuine interest in who they are.

WATER REGULARLY : PROVIDE ENCOURAGEMENT

Just as plants need consistent watering, students need ongoing encouragement. Notice small successes, give specific praise, and remind them they are capable — even when growth is slow or hidden.

PROVIDE LIGHT : SHARE KNOWLEDGE GENEROUSLY

Light fuels growth. Be intentional in making learning accessible, relevant, and inspiring. Offer multiple ways for students to connect with concepts and encourage them to shine in their own way.

PULL WEEDS : REMOVE BARRIERS TO LEARNING

Weeds show where nutrients are missing. Address distractions, inequities, or unmet needs early so students can focus their energy on growth, not survival.

PRUNE FOR STRENGTH : OFFER LOVING CHALLENGE

A good gardener prunes to help the plant grow stronger. Provide constructive feedback and stretch opportunities, paired with the support they need to meet those challenges.

ROTATE THE CROPS : ADAPT YOUR APPROACH

Not all plant types grow the same way. Adjust your teaching to suit the needs, learning styles, and strengths of each student. Flexibility keeps the learning climate healthy and productive.

CELEBRATE THE HARVEST : RECOGNIZE GROWTH IN ALL FORMS

Celebrate academic gains, social-emotional progress, acts of kindness, and moments of perseverance. The harvest is not just the final product — it's every step of the journey.

Wellness Committee News



It was great seeing our staff take advantage of the sunny day and all Side Cut Metropark had to offer during our Staff Picnic! Families enjoyed canoeing, geocaching and archery while reconnecting after a summer away.

YOUR INVOLVEMENT & IDEAS WANTED!

If you are interested in the wellness of our district, consider joining the Wellness Committee. This group meets once a month on Wellness Wednesdays to discuss ways to enhance the wellness of the district through engaging activities, resources, and challenges. A few items that have come from the committee include: expanded access to AW fitness facilities, organized fitness classes, YMCA access, book studies, the BGSU Family Wellness Day, and the many challenges for prizes throughout the year.

Our first meeting is on Wednesday, Sept. 3, at 3:45 p.m. at the CAO.

We are looking for more ideas and ways to promote the wellness of our team - join us!

Healthcare on the Go

TELEDOC HEALTH

Did your students share a back to school bug? No time to get to the doctor? Remember that Teledoc Health is available for any time, any where access to a physician.

[Set up your account online today!](#)

TALKSPACE GO

Talkspace Go is a free EAP benefit for you and eligible family members aged 13+. It's a mobile app you can use to improve your mental health and wellbeing in just 5 minutes a day.

[Click here for full details.](#)

Opportunities

NASA TECHRISE STUDENT CHALLENGE

Guided by an educator, teams of students in grades 6-12 can submit ideas for experiments to test on a suborbital flight. Sixty winners will be receive:

- \$1,500 to build their experiment
- A flight box in which to build it
- An assigned spot to test their experiment on a NASA-sponsored flight
- Technical support during the experiment build phase



[More information is available in this flyer.](#)

COACH BEYOND: SUPPORTING STUDENT-ATHLETE MENTAL HEALTH

In this self-paced webinar, coaches and teachers will learn practical strategies to support student-athletes including recognizing signs and symptoms, addressing mental health issues, and linking athletes to appropriate resources. [Course registration is online through OSU.](#)



RISE AWARD NOMINATIONS OPEN

Recognize an exemplary classified employee who goes above and beyond to support their schools, students, colleagues, and community. [Nominations for the 2026 RISE Award are accepted through September 30.](#)



WILDLIFE EDUCATION GRANT

The Ohio Division of Wildlife offers \$500 grants to support projects that improve habitats on school grounds, materials for wildlife-related research, field trips and professional development. [Click here for details.](#)

MARTHA HOLDEN JENNINGS FOUNDATION GRANTS: ON HOLD

[The foundation](#) is pausing applications for the August and October cycles in preparation for the launch of its new strategic vision in January 2026. The next proposal deadline is February 15.

🌶️ *Hot Topics in Education* 🌶️

GUIDING STUDENTS IN RESPONSIBLE CELL PHONE USE

With cell phones out of student hands at school, they will be looking to us more than ever for mentorship in how to use them properly. As educators, we have a unique opportunity to model responsible and effective phone habits during the work day.

- **Demonstrate appropriate phone etiquette:** Show students how to use technology professionally.
- **Minimize distractions:** Silence your device or set to airplane mode for focus.
- **Stay focused:** Keep social media, texting, and calls off-limits during class.
- **Don't text & walk:** Make eye contact and greet students and guests as you're moving through and around the building.

By demonstrating mindful and intentional phone use, we help students develop the skills to navigate technology responsibly—not just in school, but in life.



EXPLORING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

As adults and kids start learning more about artificial intelligence, important conversations around the use of this technology in schools are starting. We want to eliminate the gray areas around what's appropriate and what's not for both staff and students.

During the 2025-26 school year, the District will begin to discuss and explore AI for the purpose of identifying and developing best practice guidelines for AI use in our classrooms. A committee of teachers, administrators, parents, and community members will be spearheading these efforts.

If you are interested in being selected as a part of this committee, please send your name, role and phone number to Chris Hamady, *Director of Technology* at chamady@anthonywayneschools.org.



DO YOU KNOW YOUR ROLE IN SCHOOL SAFETY?

by Brad Contat, Director of Human Resources

September is emergency preparedness month. Be sure to review all necessary safety materials and ensure you are fully aware of the ins and outs of how to act/react when it comes to the various safety situations we may face in a school. Be sure you know your role in any given situation. Unsure? Be sure to ask a building administrator for additional guidance, training, or resources.

A few safety reminders:

- Know your roles in any given situation. If you are unsure, ask.
- Wear an ID badge. Law enforcement and visitors should be able to ID you as an AW employee.
- Ensure all building entrances are secure and never prop doors.
- If someone looks unfamiliar or lost in a building, engage with them and help them find their way to the office if they have not checked in.
- Keep important documents such as student rosters and medical information ready to grab and go if needed.
- Keep your lockdown key on you at all times.
- If assigned a radio, conduct radio checks and practice using it.
- During drills, discuss the importance of remaining calm and model this for students, as they will follow your lead.

The safety and security of our district relies on a comprehensive approach and a team working together. Together, we are safer, especially when we all know our roles.

— *Setting the Foundation* —

One of the goals for this school year is to establish a new philanthropic foundation in support of the District. While planning is still in the very early stages, keep reading for more details about the purpose of [*Generals for Generations*](#).



SCHOOL FOUNDATIONS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

A school foundation raises and manages private donations, builds community awareness and advocacy, and reconnects alumni to support programs and opportunities beyond what limited public funding allows.

IMPACT AREAS

The District has identified three primary areas in which a foundation could have the largest impact on Anthony Wayne Local Schools students: Academics, Arts, and Athletics.

STRUCTURE

Generals for Generations is being established as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization independent of the District and the Board of Education. It will be led by a Board of Directors composed of volunteers who are passionate about providing a strong educational foundation for AWLS students.

TIMELINE

Thanks to a generous donation, the District has contracted to work with Jenny Perin of Shift Consulting to establish the Foundation's framework. This month, networking events will begin to connect community supporters to opportunities for volunteerism, philanthropy, and guidance. The goal is to have the Board of Directors and legal structure in place by early 2026.

CONTACT

More information will be available as planning continues. Questions can be directed to [Kevin Herman](#), or [Kevin Pfefferle](#).

Events Calendar

MONDAY, SEPT. 1

CLOSED: LABOR DAY

WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 3

Wellness Wednesday

LPDC Materials Deadline

MONDAY, SEPT. 8

LPDC Meetings

TUESDAY, SEPT. 9

7:30 a.m.

AWLS Board Work Session

THURSDAY, SEPT. 11

Payday

MONDAY, SEPT. 15

6:00 p.m.

AWLS Board Meeting

SEPT. 15 - 19

HOMECOMING WEEK

WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 17

5:00 p.m.

Jr. Cross Country Race #1

WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 24

5:00 p.m.

Jr. Cross Country Race #2

THURSDAY, SEPT. 25

Payday

SATURDAY, SEPT. 27

7:00 p.m.

Showcase of Bands

WEDNESDAY, OCT. 1

Wellness Wednesday

LPDC Materials Due

5:00 p.m.

Jr. Cross Country Race #3

MONDAY, OCT. 6

LPDC Meetings

THURSDAY, OCT. 9

Payday

MONDAY, OCT. 13

6:00 p.m.

AWLS Board Meeting

TUESDAY, OCT. 14

END: 1st QUARTER

7:00 p.m.

AWJH Choir Concert

THURSDAY, OCT. 16

7:00 p.m.

AWHS Choir Concert

THURSDAY, OCT. 23

Payday

FRIDAY, OCT. 24

NO SCHOOL: PD DAY

TUESDAY, OCT. 28

7:00 p.m.

AWHS Band Concert

District Events Calendar

Homecoming: September 19

5:00 P.M. PARADE

6:30 P.M. ROYALTY ANNOUNCEMENT

7:00 P.M. AW GENERALS VS. BG BOBCATS

See you at the game!

www.AnthonyWayneSchools.org/Homecoming

Special Offers



BGSU HOMECOMING: EXTRA YARD FOR TEACHERS

Anyone working in education can get a free ticket for the BGSU Homecoming game against Liberty on Saturday, Sept. 13. Guest tickets are \$17. Kickoff is at 5:00 p.m. [Claim your ticket.](#)



UT ROCKET EDUCATOR APPRECIATION DAY

School employees can enjoy discounted tickets to watch the UT Rockets take on the Morgan State Bears on Sept. 13. [Buy Tickets.](#)

YOUR TIME. YOUR CHOICE. SIGNING DAY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TOLEDO

Families of students in grades 4-12 are invited for free admission to the UT vs. Akron game on Sept. 27 where they can enjoy free lunch, drug prevention activities & swag. [Registration is required.](#)

Staff News



THANK YOU to the Monclova Primary team for helping out at the Back to School Bash to provide our students with the resources they need to have a great start to the school year.

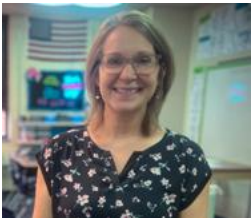


The Administrative Retreat was held on the base of the 180th Fighter Wing. Many thanks to Col. Voltz and the rest of the team for the tour and use of their conference room. We look forward to returning the favor this fall!

Staff Members of the Year



Congratulations to Mary Dressel, 6th Grade Teacher at FTMS, Claudine Strayer, Monclova Primary Secretary, and Bryan DeKay, AWHS Art Teacher for being [named staff members of the year](#)! Your dedication to our students and demonstration of the Portrait of a General competencies make you shining examples of what it means to be a General. Thank you!



[Mary
Dressel
Staff
Spotlight](#)



[Claudine
Strayer
Staff
Spotlight](#)



[Bryan
DeKay
Staff
Spotlight](#)

Staff Spotlight



Congratulations to AWHS Asst. Principal, Stephanie Buckenmeyer for earning her Ph.D. from Johns Hopkins University School of Education.

[Read more about Stephanie](#) to see what her research revealed about change in the school setting -- and to discover what sparked her to become a lifelong learner and educator.