



Superintendent's Report

Submitted by Nick Verhoff

January 24, 2025

2024-25 School Closings Update

As of yesterday, we have used five calamity days for the 2024-25 school year, meaning we will make up for any additional calamity days. As we did last year, if we reach a sixth calamity day or beyond this school year, we will first refer to the board-approved 2024-25 school calendar to see if there are any scheduled days remaining that are designated to make up for in-person instruction. There is one pre-scheduled make-up day for in-person instruction on this year's calendar, February 17 (Presidents Day). If we reach a sixth calamity day (or beyond) after February 17, we will make these days up via virtual school days of instruction, with students completing their instruction and assignments online.

One of the biggest benefits of using this approach is that it will eliminate school days getting added to the end of the school year, during a time when families have vacations already planned. If you have any questions about this process, please contact Mr. Verhoff at 659-4301.

Board Approves Installation of Field Turf for Baseball and Softball Diamonds

At last week's January Board of Education Meeting, the Columbus Grove Board of Education approved an agreement with the J. Earl Belch Charitable Trust which will fund a permanent improvement project to install field turf to the infields of the district's softball and baseball diamonds. The Board also approved a Letter of Intent with Maumee Bay Turf Center/Turf Nation, the contractor scheduled to complete this work. This project, estimated at approximately \$556K, will be fully funded by the generous monetary donation of the trust. Please see the Q&A below for more information related to this project.

What is the purpose of this project?

The project aims to enhance the quality and usability of the district's baseball and softball diamonds by installing infield turf. Maintaining baseball and softball infields requires significant time and expense. This upgrade will provide a safer, more durable, and consistent playing surface for athletes, reduce maintenance costs, and allow for extended use during various weather conditions. The turf installation will provide athletes with high-quality facilities and reduce game cancellations, giving students more opportunities to practice and compete.

How is this project being funded?

The project is fully funded by a generous \$600,000 donation from the J. Earl Belch Charitable Trust. The estimated project cost is \$565,000, meaning the donation is projected to cover all expenses without requiring additional district or taxpayer funds.

Why are we prioritizing infield turf installation?

Installing turf addresses several challenges with natural infields, including frequent game cancellations due to weather, uneven playing surfaces, and high maintenance requirements. The turf will create a more reliable and professional-quality playing field for our teams.

Will any taxpayer dollars or school funds be used for this project?

No. This project is entirely funded by the charitable trust's donation, ensuring no financial impact on taxpayers or the district's general fund.

What will happen with the excess funds from the donation, if any are left after the project?

If funds remain after the project is completed, they will be used to maintain the new turf, maximize its lifecycle, or be earmarked for the turf replacement fund.

How were the estimated costs determined?

The \$556,000 estimate was developed through consultation with Maumee Bay Turf. It includes all necessary expenses, such as materials, labor, and turf upkeeping equipment. Maumee Bay is the same company that installed the infield turfs for Kalida Schools.

When will the project begin, and how long will it take?

The timeline for the project will depend on final approvals and contractor availability. Once construction begins, it is expected to take several weeks to complete. Updates will be shared with the community as details are finalized. We are targeting a start date for this summer.

Why not use the funds for other district needs?

The donation is specifically designated for installing infield turf on the baseball and softball diamonds. The district is committed to honoring the wishes of the J. Earl Belch Trust and ensuring the funds are used for their intended purpose.

Will the turf installation affect other district programs or facilities?

No. Since this project is fully funded by the donation, it will not impact the budget or resources allocated to other district programs or facilities.

These synthetic turfs need to be replaced every 10-12 years. How will the district pay for this?

The district receives approximately \$50K per year from the state from casino revenues. In 2012, the Board created a special projects fund for these dollars to pay for various projects as needed. Part of these annual casino dollars will be earmarked to develop a replacement fund for this infield turf. These funds, in coordination with fundraisers conducted by the baseball and softball programs, will be earmarked to replace the original turf. Industry experts estimate the replacement cost for existing turf is about 50% of the original installation.

How can I get more information or stay updated on the project?

Updates will be shared through superintendent updates, the website, and public meetings. For specific questions, please contact the Superintendent's office at 419-659-4301.

Special Recognitions Tonight!

Please join us tomorrow evening for the boys' home basketball game versus Spencerville, as we recognize the accomplishments of our student-athletes. During the halftime of the junior varsity game, the 2024 Final Four football team will be recognized for their phenomenal season. We will also recognize Kylan Mayes and Trenton Barraza, as they both earned 1st Team All-Ohio honors. During the halftime of the varsity game, we will recognize Lauren Auchmuty and Ruth Myers for earning All-Ohio honors in soccer this past season. Come out and join us, as we recognize the outstanding accomplishments of these student-athletes!

Bulldog Bucks Raffle Tickets for Sale!

Have you purchased your Bulldog Bucks raffle ticket yet? If not, you are missing out on a chance to win \$5,000, \$10,000, or \$50,000! The Columbus Grove Athletic Boosters, in conjunction with the Columbus Grove Volunteer Fire Department and Columbus Grove Lions Club, are selling only 800 tickets for this raffle. The drawing for the three lucky winners will take place on Saturday, June 14 at 10:00 p.m. at the June Jubilee, before the fireworks display. You need not be present to win. Tickets can be purchased in the high school office this year for \$100 apiece. You may also purchase tickets from members of the various groups sponsoring this raffle. All proceeds will go to these groups sponsoring the raffle. Thank you in advance for your support of these important groups that do so much for the community of Columbus Grove!

Please Utilize the Remind Communication System

With the winter weather upon us, it is a good time to remind you of a quick and efficient way to receive the latest information from the district through our Remind notification system. You can sign up with an email address, a cell phone, or both. Students and Parents have been automatically added to the main district alert list as well as class groups for the teachers that will use Remind for classroom communication. For community members who are not staff, students, or parents, it is very easy to sign up with Remind to continue receiving alerts via one of three ways.

- Use the code @cgrovehs in the Remind App on your smartphone
- Text the message @cgrovehs to 81010
- Visit <https://www.remind.com/join/cgrovehs> on your computer

When asked what your role is, select "Parent." This system is very efficient in getting the latest information regarding school delays and closings, as well as other district-related information. Please contact Technology Coordinator Mike Keehn at cg_keeheh@cg.noacsc.org if you have any questions.

Discover the Putnam County Resource Directory!

Looking for community events, educational opportunities, or local resources in Putnam County? The **Putnam County Resource Directory** is your one-stop shop for information and assistance! This user-friendly directory includes a wide range of resources, such as:

- Upcoming community events
- Educational opportunities
- Service directories
- Child care options
- Churches
- Clothing assistance
- And much more!

Whether you're seeking support or simply want to stay informed, the Putnam County Resource Directory has you covered. Explore it today at [Putnam County Resource Directory](#) and discover all the resources our community has to offer!

Discover Career Opportunities with PutnamCountyWorks.com!

Looking for a new job, career advancement, or opportunities close to home? Check out **PutnamCountyWorks.com**, your one-stop resource for connecting with employers and job openings in Putnam County. This easy-to-navigate website features a wide range of positions across industries, tools for building your resume, and resources to help you succeed in your job search.

PutnamCountyWorks.com is powered by the **Workforce Partnership of Putnam County**, a collaborative initiative dedicated to supporting local businesses, job seekers, and students. The partnership works to strengthen the community by connecting employers with a skilled workforce and offering valuable career development resources.

PutnamCountyWorks.com serves as a hub for job seekers, students and parents, educators, and employers. Whether you're a seasoned professional, just starting your career journey, or exploring options for the future, PutnamCountyWorks.com and the Workforce Partnership of Putnam County are here to help you succeed. Visit today and take the next step toward your future!

Upcoming Events

Friday, January 24th

Boys Varsity Wrestling – Thunderbird Invitational – 4:00 p.m.
Boys JV/Varsity Basketball vs. Spencerville – 5:30 p.m.

Saturday, January 25th

Boys JH Wrestling @ Home - Grove JH Invitational – 9:00 a.m.
Boys Varsity Wrestling @ Thunderbird Invitational – 9:00 a.m.
Boys 7th grade Basketball vs. Delphos Jefferson – 12:30 p.m.
Boys 8th grade Basketball vs. Crestview – 1:45 p.m.
Boys JV/Varsity Basketball vs. Ottoville – 6:30 p.m.

Monday, January 27th

Boys JH Basketball @ LCC – 5:00 p.m.

Tuesday, January 28th

Boys JH Basketball vs. Delphos Jefferson – 5:00 p.m.
Girls JH Basketball @ Delphos Jefferson – 5:00 p.m.
Boys Varsity Wrestling @ Ayersville – 5:30 p.m.
Girls JV/Varsity Basketball @ McComb – 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday, January 29th

Girls JH Basketball @ Bluffton – 5:00 p.m.
Boys JH/Varsity Wrestling vs. Elmwood – 5:30 p.m.