



Superintendent's Report

Submitted by Nick Verhoff

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CGHS Wrestlers are Back-to-Back NWC Champions!

Last year, the Columbus Grove Wrestling team made school history, as they earned the district's first ever Northwest Conference Wrestling Championship. The Bulldogs made sure fans didn't have to wait quite so long for the next NWC Championship, as the CG Wrestlers won the NWC Championship again last weekend, outpacing second place Allen East by a score of 286.5 to 263. Placing for the Bulldogs were Owen Beam (4th), Ethan Beam (2nd), Evan Pitts (2nd), Boat Thompson (1st), Collin Sautter (3rd), Levi Schroeder (4th), Jameson Rader (4th), Logan Mershman (2nd), Kyle Lathrop (1st), Layton Blankemeyer (2nd), Loudon Auchmuty (2nd), Ty Meyer (3rd) and Brady Fuerst (3rd). Congratulations to Coach Eric Siefker and his staff for putting the Bulldogs in a great position to win back-to-back conference championships!

Ohio School Bus Safety Working Group Releases Recommendations

You may have recently heard or read about Governor DeWine's special taskforce releasing a set of recommendations for increased safety on school buses. This taskforce's creation was a result of a student death on a school bus last August in Clark County. Sadly, there was another accident in November involving fatalities of students and staff on a charter bus that was rear-ended on I-70. Both accidents were the result of driver error from the other vehicle, not the bus driver.

There were 17 recommendations from this taskforce, with many of these recommendations including further training for bus drivers. While this may sound reasonable in a theoretical manner, Ohio Bus Driver Standards are already some of the most stringent

in the United States, per Joe Dietrich, Northwest Ohio Preservice Bus Driver Instructor. Bus drivers are already required to participate in four hours of professional development annually. Furthermore, the preservice program to become a bus driver is a rigorous process as well. Licensed bus drivers in Ohio are well prepared when they begin driving for schools.

Another recommendation of the taskforce is for the Department of Education and Workforce (DEW) to work with the Ohio General Assembly to develop and fund a grant program to help school districts to invest in school bus safety features. While this will be a financial benefit for school districts if it comes to fruition in the future, Columbus Grove Schools, like many in the state, have already invested in the latest bus safety features to maximize safety both inside and outside of our school buses. The continued improvement of flashing exterior LED lighting on buses is just one example. Furthermore, our district's buses are equipped with multiple interior and exterior cameras, which provides a good deal of help handling student behavior and illegal bus passes.

In my 12 years at Columbus Grove, the biggest safety concern with our buses is the illegal passing of school buses at stops. We have anywhere from 6-10 of these illegal passes in a school year. Sadly, we have seen a number these illegal passes due to the fact that the driver is not paying attention when coming up on a bus stop. The Putnam County Sheriff's Office has worked well with the district in making sure offenders are prosecuted for such infractions, but not having them in the first place would obviously make it safer for everyone involved.

Columbus Grove buses drive an average of 600 miles and transport just over 300 students on a daily basis.

As the data will show, bus transportation is the safest mode of transportation for students to and from school. In the past six years in the state of Ohio, there has been one student fatality involving school bus transportation, while there have been far more school-age children and teenagers killed or injured while riding in a passenger vehicle, walking, or riding a bike. Data from the Ohio State Highway Patrol show that school buses are involved in less than 1% of all crashes in the state. I am happy to say that this statewide data is in direct correlation with our school district's bus safety. Many thanks go to our dedicated bus drivers at Columbus Grove who make student safety a top priority transporting our children to and from school: Deanna Ricker (23 years), Shelly Schroeder (20 years), Linda Ridenour (16 years), Mike Fanaff (14 years), Joanne McKanna (9 years), Janel Hardeman (8 years), Brad Anderson (7 years), Bill Heilman (2 years), Chad McCluer (2 years), Jeff Gertsen (1 year), and Nita Maag (1 year).

Resource Fair Coming to the Putnam County ESC

The Putnam County ESC will be holding a Resource Fair for Individuals with Disabilities and their Families on Thursday, March 7, from 3:30-6:30 p.m. The fair will connect you with programs and services in the community and surrounding areas to meet the needs of your family. There will be over 25 exhibitors and Hot Topic Discussion that will take place starting at 4:00 p.m. If you have any questions, you can contact Karen Maag at 419-523-5951 ext. 3015 or karen.maag@putnamcountyesc.org.

CG Baseball Club Announces Raffle Winners

Earlier this winter, the CG Baseball club sold raffle tickets for this year's fundraiser. Congratulations goes to last week's winners from the drawing: Gabe Hardeman (\$250), Brady Laudick (\$75), Chris Sautter (\$100), Mary Ann Michel (\$150), Jenna Lopez (\$75), and Nick Gilgenbach (\$50).

Vidette's Publishing Coming to an End

As you have probably heard, the weekly publication of the Vidette will end in the near future. It has been a pleasure submitting these Superintendent Updates to the community over the last 12 years and I greatly appreciate the Vidette publishing these articles on a weekly basis. It has always been my goal to provide as much school related information to our community in an easy to read fashion. In villages like Columbus Grove, we understand that the school district is in many ways is the hub of the community. I hope that reading these articles from time to time over the years has provided you more insight of the workings of our district and the many fantastic achievements of our students and staff.

While the Vidette's weekly publication will soon cease to exist, I will continue submitting Superintendent Updates on a weekly basis throughout the school year. Here are the following ways you can read these articles:

- Facebook and Twitter- Go to the Columbus Grove Local Schools account and double click the blue link after the post that states "Superintendent Report."
- Columbus Grove Schools Website- Go online to cg.noacsc.org to reach our district website. Once our district's homepage comes up, click on "Superintendent" along the left side. Once you click on "Superintendent," a page of the most recent Superintendent Reports will appear. Click on whichever report you would like to read.

If you have any issues finding these updates online, please call the Superintendent's office at 419-659-2639 and we will provide further assistance. Thank you again for your readership!

Bulldog Bites

With their victory over the Pandora-Gilboa Rockets last Saturday, the Lady Bulldog Basketball team won a share of the Putnam County League Championship. This is the sixth PCL Championship under Head Coach Brian Schroeder (2016, 2017, 2020, 2021, & 2022). Prior to Coach Schroeder's tenure, the Lady Bulldogs had won a total of three PCL Championships (1982, 2026, & 2007).

2024-2025 Kindergarten Registration Now Open

Kindergarten registration for the 2024-2025 school year is now open. If your child will turn 5 years old prior to September 30, 2024, they are eligible for kindergarten. You can register on our website (cg.noacsc.org) by clicking the link in the Parents/Student/Community tab or you may contact the school at 419-695-2631 and we will walk you through the registration process. At the beginning of March, a letter will be sent informing you of your date and time for screening. The dates for screening will be in April 11 and 12. Documents needed are a birth certificate, immunization records and/or Kindergarten boosters, parent ID, proof of residency (if new to the district and no other siblings attend CG schools) and custody papers if applicable.

Upcoming Events:

Friday, February 23rd

Boys JV & Varsity Basketball @ Allen East – 6:00 p.m.

Saturday, February 24th

Girls Varsity Basketball vs. TBA (Sectional Tournament) – 7:00 p.m.

Tuesday, February 27th

Boys Varsity Basketball @ Bluffton (Sectional Tournament) – 7:00 p.m.