



# The PERRY

www.perry-lake.org

Way

## Featured Events

### OCTOBER

26 Trunk or Treat,  
ES Bus Loop, 6:00pm

### NOVEMBER

22 Compensatory Day, No School

23-24 Thanksgiving Break, No School

### DECEMBER

1-8 Holiday Food Drive

5 Buccaneers Senior Citizen Luncheon and Performance  
11:30am

11 Perry Elementary Yearbook/  
Group Photos

12 5th & 6th Grade Concert  
Goodwin Theatre, 7:00pm

13 7th & 8th Grade Concert,  
Goodwin Theatre, 7:00pm

14 HS Concert,  
Goodwin Theatre, 7:00pm

22 Early Dismissal

25 Winter Break, through Jan 1

### JANUARY

2 Staff Development Day,  
No School

## SEASON OF CHANGE

by Jennifer Capo, CFO



This has been a season of change in our Finance Office and for the District's finances, in general. As you may have heard, we have had some shifting of responsibilities in our office, and I am the District's new CFO. While I am new to this position, I am not new to the District. I have been here for seven years, first as an Accounts Manager, and then, for the last five years, as Assistant Treasurer. During that time, I had the good fortune to observe and learn from my predecessor, Mr. Lew Galante, who served the District for over 19 years. I am very excited to have the opportunity to continue to serve the Perry Local School District, and like Mr. Galante, I will continue to strive for fiscal responsibility and transparency.

One of the best tools we have to achieve both fiscal responsibility and transparency is our five-year forecast. The five-year forecast shows us what actually happened in the prior three fiscal years and what is projected to happen in the next five fiscal years. Data on the prior three fiscal years provides accountability, as it allows all our stakeholders to see exactly what revenues we received and how responsibly we spent them. Projected data on the upcoming future fiscal years allows us to see if and/or when certain challenges may arise that we need to address. It is important to keep in mind that the five-year forecast is not a set plan, but rather a tool we can use to create the best plan for our future. When the forecast shows deficit spending in upcoming years, it does not mean it is unavoidable; instead, it is a signal to us that we need to start having conversations and taking the necessary actions to reduce or even avoid those deficits. We also need to remember that the forecast is simply a snapshot of data at a certain point in time, and that data can, and often does, change. This is one of the reasons that we are required by law (O.A.C.3301-92-04) to submit forecasts twice a year, first in November and then again in May.

We are currently in the midst of one of those periods where the data changed enough to materially change our forecast. Changes include an anticipated increase in our interest revenues and additional savings realized from attrition, but the biggest change affecting our forecast was the passage of the governor's biennial budget at the end of June. At the time of our last forecast submission in May, the biennial budget had not been approved yet, and there was uncertainty around the direction the legislature was going to take regarding school funding. In the previous biennial budget, the legislature had approved a new school funding formula called the Fair School Funding Plan. This plan, developed by a bi-partisan team of school treasurers, superintendents, and other administrators, is an inputs-based formula that relies on actual data and best practices to provide students with the resources they actually need to succeed. Since it was a new program with a hefty price tag, the legislature decided to phase it in over six years. The two biggest unanswered questions in May were whether the legislature would continue the phase-in of the Fair School Funding Plan and whether the base inputs, which were derived from 2018 data, would be updated to more accurately reflect the costs we were seeing in 2022. With no clear answer as to what the legislature would do, we had to take our "best guess", based on past data. As a good steward of taxpayer funds, Mr. Galante erred on the side of caution and projected a 2% increase in state funding, since that has been the historical trend. Fortunately for us, the final version of the budget did continue the phase-in and also increased the base inputs. As a result, we should see a substantial increase in our state funding starting this fiscal year. The most current projections from the Ohio Department of Education show that we should

### Mission Statement:

"Inspire all students to achieve personal excellence, pursue world-class standards and be self-directed, lifelong learners."

# High School



Todd Porcello  
HS Principal

The Perry Local Schools has a long tradition of excellence in the classroom, on the athletic field and in the fine arts. We are proud of the many accomplishments over the years.

Recently, our new motto was launched, "World Class Opportunities, Hometown Pride." I would like to congratulate our students, staff and families for the 5 Star Rating that was received on the most recent Ohio Department of Education Report Card. While I often write about World Class Opportunities and Academics in this space, today I would like to focus on examples of our Hometown Pride.

- A K-12 Pep Rally was held during Homecoming week. Our Homecoming court was introduced, the band got everyone going with the fight song, the National Anthem, and various other selections. The cheerleaders performed and a major highlight was the thunderous cheer-off between each of the three schools. You could sense the excitement in the air and the hometown pride.
- Also during Homecoming week, we held our annual parade with various school groups and the homecoming court present. The fire trucks, police cars, and our band led the way. The event was enjoyed by many as candy was thrown and people of all ages took in the parade.
- On Saturday, September 16, we had the return of the Ritley Run. Community members and some of our student-athletes completed the 5K run or the walking course. Even though I never had the opportunity to meet Coach Ritley, the stories I have heard over the years shows what an amazing impact he had on the lives of so many.



- A Veteran's Pancake Breakfast was held on September 9th. Students Against Destructive Decisions hosted the event as our students served breakfast and had the opportunity to share our appreciation for veterans in attendance.
- On September 8th our Perry Service Learning (PSL) students teamed up with the American Legion to remove tattered flags from the 1,000 veterans buried in the Perry Cemetery.
- Once again, the Giving Garden was a success. Our students efforts over the growing season resulted in a generous donation to the annual fund which supports service programs, volunteer recognition awards, and the PSL scholarships. We received news recently that our district has received a grant to establish a Greenhouse, which will provide additional academic enrichment and service opportunities.
- Students conducted cleanups at Lake Erie Bluffs and Perry Township Park.
- Our Perry High School Band performed at the Lake County Marching Band Festival held at Mentor High School. We appreciate the many community events they perform at and their efforts to further build the hometown pride you feel when you hear the band playing.
- Finally, many of our Athletic Teams are performing at a high level once again this fall. As of this writing the girls soccer team is currently 10-1-1 and the boys soccer team is 7-2. The girls golf team won a CVC Championship and advanced to the District Tournament, and our Football team beat perennial state powerhouse Kirtland and is currently ranked #1 for Division 5 in the state of Ohio for the first time in school history.

It has often been said that it takes a village to raise a child. We are fortunate to serve a community that wants the best for our children and provides World-Class Opportunities with amazing Hometown Pride.

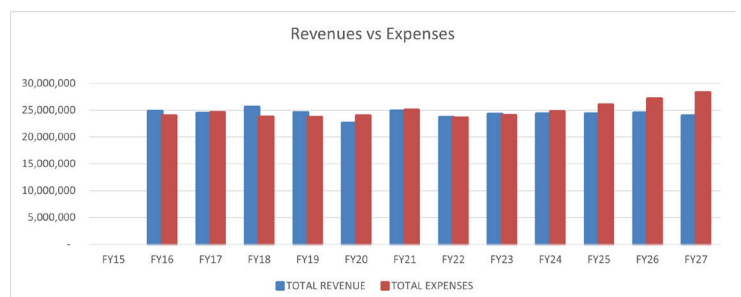
## CFO *continued from page 1*

receive around \$598,000 more in FY24 and \$521,500 more in FY25 as compared to FY23. This is an increase of around 15.7% in FY24 and 13.7% in FY25 as opposed to the projected 2% increase, and you will see it reflected in our next forecast. When you look at that forecast, you will see that this increased funding should allow us to avoid deficit spending in FY24, and that it will greatly reduce any deficit projected for FY25.

While that is certainly good news, we cannot ignore the fact that there are still challenges ahead. We are still reliant on state funds that are only guaranteed for two years at a time. The state legislature could decide to roll back the Fair School Funding Plan or to implement a new, less favorable funding plan starting in FY26. Another challenge we face is that the new state funding formula is based on enrollment, and we are in a period of declining enrollment, which means we could see decreases in our state funding for that reason. Finally, over the next 10 years we will need to address several capital project repairs on our campus, including new roofs. Due to all these factors, you will still see deficits in FY26, FY27, and FY28 on the next five-year forecast. I, like my predecessor, will tend to err on the side of caution. Especially when dealing with tax dollars, I believe we should plan to have less and be surprised with more, than to plan

to have more and find ourselves without enough. Again, deficits on the forecast are not necessarily unavoidable eventualities, and none of these upcoming challenges are insurmountable. We are so appreciative of the support received from our board members who work tirelessly for our District and am confident that this support will continue as we embrace the challenges that lie ahead.

We welcome any questions or insights you may have. Please reach out at [CapoJ@perry-lake.org](mailto:CapoJ@perry-lake.org).



## THE FIVE-YEAR FORECAST FROM MAY 2023



# Middle School



**Robert Knisely**  
*MS Principal*

**I**t is with great pleasure that I welcome you all to the 2023 fall semester at Perry Middle School. I'm excited to embark on this journey with you, and I want to take this opportunity to share some important updates and highlights for the upcoming months.

## **STUDENT SUCCESS AT THE HEART OF OUR MISSION**

At Perry Middle School, we are committed to fostering a positive, safe, and nurturing learning environment where every student can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. This year, we will continue to focus on our core values of Pride, Purpose, and Perseverance, providing your children with the tools they need to succeed in middle school and beyond.

## **CURRICULUM AND ENRICHMENT**

Our curriculum is designed to be challenging and engaging, providing students with a well-rounded education. This fall, we are excited to continue and expand the opportunities our students have in personalized and authentic learning. Our goal, regardless of the learning environment selected, is to ensure that 100% of our students engage in authentic activities through exploratory classes, core classes, CAL Connected and Authentic Learning,

and our School-Wide Authentic Learning Experiences. We are encouraging students to stay active and connected this school year. There should be something of interest to all with a wide variety of clubs and sports. Check out our website for information about our clubs, extracurricular activities, and special events to enhance your child's educational experience.

## **PARENT-TEACHER PARTNERSHIP**

We strongly believe that a successful education is a collaborative effort between parents and educators. Communication is key, and we encourage you to stay actively involved in your child's education. Our teachers and staff are here to support you, and we look forward to your participation in conferences and school events.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY FIRST**

The safety, health, and well-being of our students and staff remain a top priority. Our school, in partnership with the district and local safety forces, continually reviews and updates safety procedures, and just recently completed an assessment following our School Safety Week in September.

## **STAY CONNECTED**

To stay updated on all school news, events, and important dates, please check out our weekly announcements sent via email and follow us on social media. We also encourage you to check our school website regularly for announcements and resources.

I want to express my gratitude for your continued support and trust in our team here at Perry Middle School. Together, we will make this year memorable and successful for your children.

# Transportation



**Randy Usher**  
*Supervisor*

**W**e are excited to express our appreciation and recognize the outstanding efforts and dedication of the entire transportation department. The role played by the members of the Transportation Department cannot be overstated. They are unsung heroes who ensure that our students arrive safely to school each morning and back home each afternoon. Their commitment to excellence is truly commendable in the face of various challenges.

The drivers, mechanics, administrative staff, and all other team members. Have worked diligently to maintain the highest safety standards, ensuring that our students' well being is the top priority. Their efforts have instilled confidence in parents and guardians, assuring them that their children are in capable and caring hands.



Beyond their duties, the Transportation Department has fostered a sense of community within our district. The positive relationships they have built with our students contribute to a nurturing and supportive educational environment.

I would like to take this opportunity to extend my heartfelt appreciation to the entire Transportation Department team. Their tireless effort, professionalism, and dedication to serving our community are truly commendable. It is their collective hard work that enables us to provide the vital transportation services that keep our community connected and thriving.

I want to assure you, our valued community members, that our transportation department remains committed to upholding the values of safety, reliability, and excellence. We are deeply grateful for your trust and support.

If you've ever asked yourself, "How can I make a difference in the lives of our youth", join the Transportation Department and touch the lives of everyone in the community. We are always looking for people like you to sub as bus drivers, bus attendants, and office staff. Apply today on our district website at [www.Perry-Lake.org](http://www.Perry-Lake.org).

## DISTRICT BOARD OFFICE

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440-259-9200

**DR. JACK THOMPSON, Superintendent**  
440-259-9200, EXT. 9299

**JENNIFER CAPO, Chief Financial Officer**  
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**DR. BETTY JO MALCHESKY, Asst. Superintendent**  
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**TODD PORCELLO, HS Principal**  
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**ROBERT KNISELY, MS Principal**  
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**AMY STAVAR, ES Principal**  
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PERRY, OH 44081

## Elementary School



**Amy Stavar**  
*ES Principal*

I am excited and honored to be continuing my career as the new principal at Perry Elementary School. Perry Local Schools hired me in the summer of 1993, and in the thirty years since, I have had the good fortune to be a member of the Perry family. I have gotten to know high school, middle school, and elementary school staff, students, and families in the classroom, through arts programs, during volunteer experiences, and on athletic fields. I have seen the schools through the lens of a teacher, an administrator, and a parent. Reflecting on these experiences, I understand how fortunate we are to be a part of this community, and as my journey continues at Perry Elementary School, I am acutely aware of how much there is to celebrate.

Perry Elementary School is the beginning of a life-long educational journey for our students that leads to middle school, high school, and beyond. While children's paths may vary, our job is to give them a strong foundation in literacy, mathematics, inquiry, and citizenship skills. As I have visited classrooms, I have seen that our teachers work daily (and nightly) to plan differentiated reading, math, science, and social studies lessons. They collaborate with colleagues to develop work that will both challenge students and help them when they struggle with a concept or skill. Our teachers strive to make their classrooms places that are interesting, fun, comfortable, safe, and where students both can and want to learn.

Perry Elementary School also offers choices in learning environments since all students do not learn in the same way. Our traditional classrooms offer differentiated learning opportunities to students

in a structured, classic elementary environment. We also have co-taught classrooms in third and fourth grades, which allow our students to interact with a larger group of students. Finally, we have our Perry Ingenuity Institute classrooms, which engage our students in inquiry learning and provide them with a variety of transitions and teachers with whom to interact. In all of these environments, our students are gaining strong foundational skills that will serve them through the rest of their lives. They are challenged to not only be good students but also creative artists, healthy and active humans, lifelong readers, and good PEEPs.

Our students have unique opportunities, both in and out of the classroom, no matter which style of learning best suits them. They have created biomes - the Arctic, the woodlands, a rainforest - right in their classroom. The student-designed and maintained Pollinator and Calm gardens have attracted butterflies and provided reflective spaces available to all. In the coming months, students are headed to Century Village, the Pioneer School, the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo, Lake Farmpark, Patterson Fruit Farm, Severance Hall, and more! They have also learned how to be helpful, safe citizens here in Perry through PSL lessons and our Safety Week drills.

As the year started, at the PTA's Donuts with Grownups event, I was reminded of why I am proud to be a part of the Perry Community. After Mrs. Pavicic and I talked with students and families over donuts, coffee, and juice, we reflected on the people we had seen, and it dawned on us that the majority of parents were former students who had come back to Perry to raise their own families. These parents have pride in their alma mater and recognize what the world-class opportunities that Perry offers can do for their own children. We are both very proud to continue to serve the families and Perry Community. Please do not hesitate to reach out to either Mrs. Pavicic or me if we can be of assistance.

