

# TIGER TALES

FALL 2023



Dr. Laura Kagy, Superintendent

## Message from the Superintendent

Seneca East Local Schools has started the 2023-2024 year off with a bang. From high marks on Ohio's School Report Card to making U.S. News & World Report's list of best high schools, I know this will be another year of resounding success for our district.

We know students learn best when they feel safe and supported in school. While the physical safety of our staff and students will always be a priority, so too is their mental well-being. We are fortunate to have added a school psychologist and social worker to our team this year (see page 2 to learn more), and we continue to foster inclusivity in our schools through annual activities like Start With Hello Week.

Our students haven't wasted any time getting back into the groove of learning — and representing our district well. From another phenomenal 9/11 remembrance and Stars, Stripes and Lights cross country meet to a group of our students attending the N10 leadership workshop, we are continuing to provide opportunities that give our learners a well-rounded educational experience, both inside and outside of the classroom.

Read about all of this and more throughout the next few pages, and I hope everyone has a wonderful fall season.



## Seneca East Earns High Marks on State Report Card, U.S. News & World Report

Each September, the Ohio Department of Education releases Ohio's School Report Cards. They are a tool for the community to see the progress of districts in raising achievement and preparing students for their future.

This year, Seneca East Local Schools received an overall rating of 5 out of 5 stars, which indicates that we are significantly exceeding state standards. Similarly, we received high marks (4s and 5s) in all rated categories, including Achievement, Progress, Gap Closing, Graduation, and Early Literacy.

Additionally, Seneca East High School was named to U.S. News & World Report's 2023-2024 list of Best High Schools. Schools

are ranked based on their performance on state-required tests, graduation rate, and how well they prepare students for college through Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate courses and test scores.

Seneca East came in 116th in the state out of 741 schools and ranked high nationally as well. We were 3,111 from the list of nearly 18,000 schools making us the highest ranked school in Seneca County, the surrounding area, and the N10 Conference.

We are incredibly proud of the dedication, hard work, and excellence of our students, staff, and community!

# From the Treasurer's Desk



I am honored to be serving my first year as Treasurer for Seneca East. I am enjoying working with the Board of Education, administration and staff to maintain the fiscal integrity of our district. We are continuing to focus on improving the effectiveness and efficiency of our day-to-day operations. Here are a few financial highlights from this school year to date.

- We are partnering with North Point Educational Service Center on grant funding that allows Seneca East to have a full-time psychologist and social worker.
- Federal funding levels are expected to be consistent with the last fiscal year.
- We are expecting additional funding from the State Foundation as a result of Ohio's FY24-25 budget. This will help the district maintain services currently provided to our students as other funding sources expire. The dollars will also help offset the impact of rising operational costs.

Please don't hesitate to contact me at (419) 426-3344 x6923 if you have any questions about Seneca East's finances, and thank you for your continued support.

Kyle McConnell  
Treasurer



## District Gains Social Worker and School Psychologist From Mental Health Grant

Thanks to a mental health grant, Seneca East welcomed two new staff members this year: Mrs. Alison Basilone, a social worker and Ms. Amanda Nowak, a school psychologist.

Mrs. Basilone is taking her first year at Seneca East to determine the needs of the district. Each year, she hopes to bring new programming and resources to the students and families of Seneca East to meet the ever-changing needs of the community. Another goal of hers is to bring more of an awareness to the district regarding the various mental health concerns impacting our students through individual and group sessions, classroom lessons that promote social-emotional learning, school-wide activities that promote kindness, and implementing a hygiene locker.

A Seneca East alumna, Mrs. Basilone holds a bachelor's in social work from the University of Findlay. She also has a master's in social work from The Ohio State University and has worked in various areas of social work.

For the past five years, however, she has been based in schools providing mental health support.

In her full-time role, Ms. Nowak participates/ collaborates with intervention teams, conducts special education evaluations, and provides support to both students and staff, along with the many other hats those in education wear!

She is also a Tiger alumna who says her pride for the district runs strong. She has enjoyed seeing so many familiar faces since her return. She graduated from Bowling Green State University and the University of Toledo before working as an intervention specialist for nine years. She plunged into the world of school psychology because she said it combines the many aspects of education that she loves - students and learning, connecting with families, monitoring growth, problem solving, and more.

Welcome, Ms. Nowak and Mrs. Basilone!



*We are grateful to have Mrs. Basilone and Ms. Nowak at Seneca East*



# Jim “Basketball” Jones Visits Elementary Students

Seneca East Elementary students held a Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) Kickoff Assembly Sept. 28 and a special visitor stopped by: Jim “Basketball” Jones! The children’s author and motivational speaker talked about our core PAWS values, including Pride, Wise Choices, and Show Respect.

He encouraged students to be nice by noticing what is happening around them, and caring for and encouraging others. He also shared the importance of having self-respect and not being afraid to fail. After the interactive assembly that featured participation from staff and students, one student at each grade received an original Jim “Basketball” Jones basketball. To learn more about his lessons and books, visit [jimbasketballjones.com](http://jimbasketballjones.com).



## Band Making a Splash

The Seneca East Tiger Pride Band has been working incredibly hard so far this year. Additionally, keep an eye out for the junior high band this year, which is returning to our local parade lineup!



# Students Represent Seneca East at N10 Leadership Workshop

Steve Mohr, a local learner-focused instructional designer and member of the John Maxwell Certified Leadership Team, recently hosted an N10 leadership workshop. The following Seneca East students attended:

**Jake Bowerman**  
**Nick Daniel**  
**Abbi Drosky**  
**Madison Enders**  
**Blake Foes**  
**Emily Frontz**  
**Mya Geary**

**Caroline Kagy**  
**Brycen Lantz**  
**Nathan Parks**  
**Keeno Ruffing**  
**Lilly Schiefer**  
**Leo Schreiner**  
**Gretchen Wise**

They heard from keynote speaker Jerry Snodgrass, executive director of the Ohio High School Athletic Association, on the topic of leadership and the ability to influence others. Students participated in activities that helped them define leadership as well as identify leadership aspects of their team and themselves that align with leadership principles. Thank you to our students for representing our district well. They even had the winning definition of leadership as voted by their peers: “Leadership is the ability to inspire others to strive to be the best version of themselves.”





# SENECA EAST COMMUNITY REMEMBERS 9/11



Each year, our 9/11 remembrance gets bigger and better. This year, we hosted a dinner for 100+ local first responders from 20 departments and each went home with a specially crafted gift from our students. Then, nationally renowned speaker Joe Torillo, former New York City Fire Department Lieutenant, shared his message of hope with more than 300 people. The event included a presentation of the colors, the playing of “Taps” by the Northern Ohio F.O.O.L.S., a breathtaking rendition of the national anthem and “You Raise Me Up” by the Seneca East Select Choir and State Highway Patrol Sergeant John F. McGlashan playing “Amazing Grace” on the bagpipes.

We also hosted the 9/11 Memorial, which honors the lives of those lost on Sept. 11, 2001. And our annual Stars, Stripes and Lights cross country meet included 75 schools, 250 teams, and more than 2,200 athletes along with a fireworks display, skydivers, and 2,978 flags representing each victim. The event went off without a hitch thanks to the more than 200 volunteers and 30 local businesses who came out to support our first responders and student-athletes. Scan the QR Code to view the highlights from the week.





# SE Hosts Third Annual Start With Hello Week

Start With Hello Week returned to Seneca East for the third year in a row Sept. 18-22! The celebration is designed to provide age-appropriate training and education on creating connected and inclusive classrooms, schools and communities.

This year's activities included a spirit week made up of:

- Saying hello to someone new
- Making a wave of difference by writing a kind note or coloring a picture for someone
- Wearing green, a symbol of solidarity with the Sandy Hook Promise and of change
- Showing a unique way of saying hello such as a fist or elbow bump

At Seneca East Schools we want every student to feel included. The week helped us accomplish this goal.

## Hall of Fame Nomination Form Opens



Seneca East inducted its first Hall of Fame class last school year. It's once again time to start nominating your favorite Seneca East alumni, athletes, coaches, teachers, administrators, staff, and community members for this prestigious award.

The purpose of the Hall of Fame is to recognize outstanding achievements and meritorious service to the district. Scan the QR Code to learn more and make your nomination.

\*Please note: Individuals who were part of the original Attica and Republic High Schools before the district merging in 1970 are eligible.

# 2023-2024 Enrollment

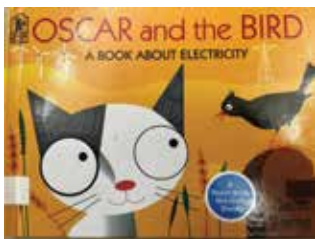
Seneca East now has nearly 850 students enrolled! These numbers show the strength of our community and the well-rounded education we provide!



**Total: 844**

## Seneca East FFA Soils Team Clinches State Title and Heads to Nationals

Congratulations to the FFA Soils team who earned the title of State Champions of the 2023 Ohio FFA Ag Soils contest. Members of the team evaluated soil for its physical properties, determined the degree of limitations and recommended management practices to be used in the field. Out of 193 teams and 1093 students competing across the state, Seneca East stood out with Ella Martin (3rd), Logan Snively (11th), Blake Martin (12th), and Caroline Kagy (14th). This accomplishment qualified them for the 2024 National Land Judging Contest in El Reno, Oklahoma. This is the first year Seneca East FFA has won a state contest since 1998, and the first time they have ever won the Ag Soils contest! Best wishes at the national competition.



## Beyond Books

During fifth grade library time, students recently read “Oscar and the Bird: A Book About Electricity.” Afterward, they explored circuits with Snap Circuits and Little Bits to help them better understand what they had read!





# Tiny Tigers are Back

Year two is underway for our Tiny Tigers Preschool! This year, we have two classrooms and an enrollment of 37 students who have been busy developing an understanding of routines, making friends, reading, coloring, creating, and more so they are better prepared for kindergarten and beyond.

We are so glad for the opportunity to provide this service to our community and to develop a love of learning in our students from such a young age. Information about signing up for next year's class of Tiny Tigers will be available after the new year.



## Scholarship Opportunities

**Did you know that all local scholarships are listed on our website?**

Visit [se-tigers.com/page/local-scholarships-new](https://se-tigers.com/page/local-scholarships-new) and please check back often for updates, particularly in the second semester of this school year. Additionally, college financial aid offices, community organizations, local businesses, civic groups, and employers can be other great resources for scholarship information.

# FAFSA Update

There is a significant delay in the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) application period for the 2024-2025 school year. In recent years, students and families have been able to complete their FAFSA application as early as October 1. This year, the application period isn't expected to open until December 1, 2023.

This may impact students' financial aid planning and college application timelines. It is important to submit your application as soon as possible for maximum financial aid opportunities, so mark your calendar! To get a head start, you can create your ID and password now by visiting [studentaid.gov/fsa-id/create-account/launch](https://studentaid.gov/fsa-id/create-account/launch).

For additional information and resources related to the change in the FAFSA timeline, please visit the Federal Student Aid website at [studentaid.gov](https://studentaid.gov).

## Child Find

In accordance with federal law, Seneca East Local Schools assumes responsibility for the location, identification, and evaluation of all children birth through age 21 who reside within the Seneca East Local School District and who require special education and related services. The Special Education Department of Seneca East Local Schools coordinates this child identification process. If you know of or suspect that a child may have a disability, you may contact the Seneca East Local Schools Special Education Department at 419-426-3344 or contact the building principal to discuss these concerns and determine a course of action.

## Title Funds

Title VI-B funds are federal allocations for the exclusive benefit of children with disabilities. Input as to how best to utilize these funds for Seneca East Local Schools is welcome. For more information or to share ideas, please call 419-426-3344.



**Seneca East  
Local Schools**

13343 E Us Highway 224  
Attica, OH 44807

Phone: 419-426-3344

Fax: 419-426-5400

[www.se-tigers.com](http://www.se-tigers.com)

Seneca East App

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 SenecaEast

## WE ARE EXCITED TO WELCOME MORE NEW STAFF MEMBERS



**SANDY  
SCHUMACHER**

Bus Driver  
and Cafeteria



**MARIE  
HARTLEY**

Cafeteria,  
Recess Monitor  
and Bus Driver



**ALAN  
RIDDLEBAUGH**

Bus Driver



**ANTHONY  
LANGHURST**

Educational Aide  
and Bus Driver