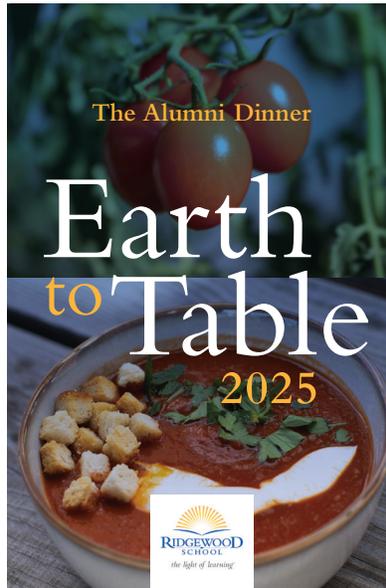


# Celebrating Our Alumni

The Earth to Table Alumni Dinner on September 26, 2025, brought together alumni from the classes of 1955–2025 and members of today’s Ridgewood family who gathered to celebrate our alumni and Ridgewood’s outstanding history. The evening opened with a welcome from Ridgewood Association President Marta Wojcik. Following her remarks, Distinguished Alumnus Rob Rue ’84 provided the evening’s invocation and Head of School Aliya Ranganwala reported on Ridgewood today. Mrs. Ranganwala shared that Ridgewood School’s scores on the 2025 state exams were the highest among Springfield City and Clark County schools, that Ridgewood is working on completing its ISACS reaccreditation, and that it is engaged in a major fundraising effort, the **Ignite Campaign**, that when completed will establish a million-dollar endowment to support teacher salaries.



Following dinner, Corwin Georges, Alumni Director, presented President Wojcik the candidates for Ridgewood’s Distinguished Teacher, Honorary Alumni, and Distinguished Alumni Awards. The program opened with the presentation of the new honor established this year, the Distinguished



Teresa Foreman

Teacher Award. The award was presented to Teresa Foreman, a former Ridgewood teacher. In 2001, after teaching for twenty-five years in public schools, Mrs. Foreman came to Ridgewood. She retired from Ridgewood in 2021, having taught at Ridgewood for twenty years. Since then, she has continued to serve Ridgewood as a tutor and substitute teacher.

When presented her award, Mrs. Foreman received a standing ovation.

Mrs. Wojcik next conferred this year’s Honorary Alumni Award on Bonita Heeg and Margaret Roark. The status of honorary alumni is conferred on individuals who although they are not Ridgewood alumni have served Ridgewood by making a significant contribution of time, effort or resources to the school’s welfare, reputation, and/or prestige and by serving as role models for Ridgewood School students. Mrs. Heeg has been a Ridgewood supporter since her children attended Ridgewood. At that time, she was active in the Mother’s Club and for many years served as the yearbook advisor. In 2017, she became Ridgewood’s Director of Development and led Ridgewood through its successful Centennial Campaign. Mrs. Roark has served as a trustee of Ridgewood School and chaired its board accreditation



Margaret Roark



Bonita Heeg

team. Under her chairmanship, Ridgewood was accredited by the Independent School Association of the Central States. Thanks to her leadership, Ridgewood is one of only 33 elementary and middle schools with ISACS accreditation.

The final award presented was Ridgewood’s Distinguished Alumni Award. Recognized as distinguished alumni were James B. McGregor, Jr. ’90 and Juan P. Dahdah ’89. This award is presented to Ridgewood alumni who have distinguished themselves in their chosen fields; served in local, state, or national affairs or provided service to society; and demonstrated outstanding support of Ridgewood School. Mr. McGregor is CEO of McGregor Metal, a highly respected local businessman, civic leader, and philanthropist. He oversaw the recent rebranding and expansion of McGregor Metal. Mr. Dahdah, a resident of Scottsdale, Arizona, is the founder of Vantage Self-Directed Retirement Plans. He has received numerous

awards and recognitions as a business leader. In 2008 he established Advance Guatemala, a foundation that supports education, economic and health initiatives in Guatemala. Mr. Dahdah was unable to attend the evening’s celebration but provided a video in which he thanked Ridgewood for his award and talked about the foundation Ridgewood built for his life and career.



James McGregor, Jr.



Juan P. Dahdah

Closing remarks for the evening were provided by Distinguished Alumnus James B. McGregor, Jr. ’90 who recalled his Ridgewood School days. He talked about specific teachers and activities and their influence on his academic and personal development.

**Congratulations to our 2025 honorees!** Thank you to the Ridgewood family members who attended the dinner.

## Alumni Awards 2026: Nominate Now

The Ridgewood Association Board of Trustees will consider Distinguished Teacher, Honorary Alumni, and Distinguished Alumni nominations at its March 19, 2026, meeting. To nominate someone, you may write directly to Corwin Georges, Alumni Director, Ridgewood School, 2420 Saint Paris Pike, Springfield, OH 45504 or email your nomination(s) to [cgeorges@ridgewoodschool.org](mailto:cgeorges@ridgewoodschool.org). When nominating your candidate(s), please tell how she, he, or they meet the criteria for the award. Award criteria can be found at the Ridgewood School website under Alumni: Alumni Awards and About: Faculty and Staff.

# Multicultural Night 2025

Ridgewood's student body is culturally diverse and that leads to the school enjoying a truly exceptional Multicultural Night. In preparation for this popular event, each class chooses a country or culture to study. This includes researching the geography, history, food, arts, people and customs of that country or culture.



Papers, posters, and projects resulting from students' research is exhibited in the school halls, commons, and classrooms the night of the event. Some students and their families wear the ethnic dress of their families' homelands.



Song, dance, and band performances provide those attending a first-hand experience of the cultures. And the international potluck dinner provides the opportunity for people to sample the foods of other cultures while visiting with families from those cultures. It is a unique community-building event that focuses on our school's values of diversity, respect, creativity, citizenship, and engaging the whole child.

The night of the dinner, the school was decorated with student research—a French history timeline and an Eiffel Tower, posters sharing our students' family traditions, drawings of some of the 2,000+ castles of Germany, and a poster and masks for Brazil's Carnivale.



Other posters depicted the cultural differences of indigenous peoples, and the hallway ceiling was a gallery for dreamcatchers, Kente cloth, spiders and other pieces of student art inspired by the different cultures.\* Before each dance or piece of music, students introduced the work sharing the cultural origin of the piece

Anticipating that this year's attendance would once again be large and crowd the Cole Carpentieri Commons, music and dance programs were divided into two performances. The preschool, kindergarten and first grade classes were the first to perform their dances and songs from Switzerland, Germany, and Brazil.



Following their performances, there was a break, and everyone moved to the schoolyard for the international potluck dinner. After dinner, Grades 2-8 performed dances and music from Canada, Ghana, France, Japan, Mexico, Italy and the United States of America.



Thank you to our teachers who developed our students' understanding and appreciation of other cultures while developing the students' research, reading, writing, and performance skills and increasing their knowledge of world literature, geography, history, and science. It was a festive evening that concluded with our culturally diverse families working together to help store chairs and tables and set up the commons for the next day's morning assembly.

\*See student art article, p. 12 .

## RAP (Ridgewood Advising Parents)

RAP (Ridgewood Advising Parents) works with Ridgewood's teachers and staff to provide educational and social experiences for students and their families. Whether it's Fall Fest, Trunk or Treat, classroom parties, field trips, the Thanksgiving feast, or the Hearts & Hands Dinner and Auction, RAP works to create an outstanding experience.

RAP meets on the second Thursday of every month at 2:30 p.m. in the Spanish Room. If you are unable to attend but would still like to be a part of RAP, there is a virtual option to attend. Invitations are sent out the



week of the meeting by email and include the information needed for virtual participation. Please join us. We can use your support and are always looking for new and exciting ideas to continue to provide a best-in-class experience for students and their families.

The next RAP meeting will be February 12, 2026, at 2:30 p.m. If you have any questions about RAP, please contact Director of Development, Dan Funk at [dfunk@ridgewoodschool.org](mailto:dfunk@ridgewoodschool.org). ☀





# Ridgewood School and Teachers Receive STEM Award!

We recently learned that Ridgewood School was awarded The Governor’s Thomas Edison Award for STEM Education and Research for the 2024–2025 school year. The award presented by The Ohio Academy of Science recognizes Ohio schools and teachers for excellence in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics education and honors schools for promoting scientific inquiry, technological design, and hands-on STEM learning opportunities for students. It is presented by the Academy in partnership with the Office of Technology Investments and the Ohio Department of Development.

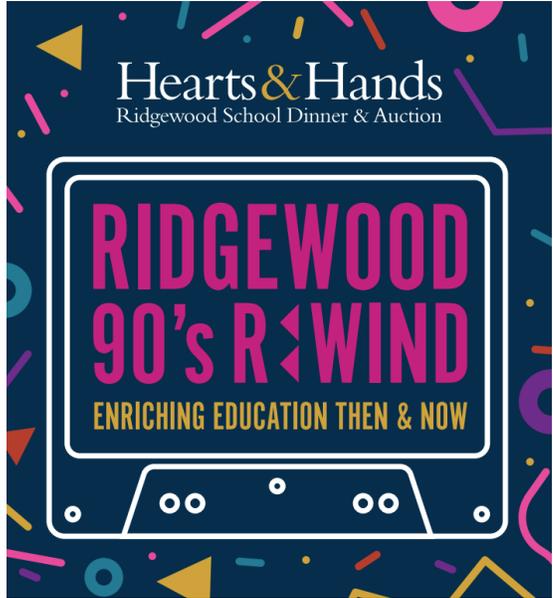
The five Ridgewood teachers recognized for their interdisciplinary approach to STEM education are: Amy Fischer, Dan Metzger, Megan Miller, Paul Sauter, and Rachel McLaughlin. Each of the teachers will receive a complimentary membership to The Ohio Academy of Science.

Michael E. Woytek, Executive Director of The Academy of Science, wrote, “We are proud to honor these schools and teachers for preparing students for the future.... Science is a critical driver of economic growth by fostering innovation, creating new industries, and generating high skilled jobs.”

Lydia Mihalik, Director of the Ohio Department of Development added, “The brilliant minds in today’s classrooms are laying the groundwork for our state’s future economic success.... We’re deeply grateful to the schools and educators molding these young scientists into the problem-solvers and visionaries who will create a brighter tomorrow across Ohio.”



Mrs. Fischer      Mr. Metzger      Mrs. Miller      Mr. Sauter      Ms. McLaughlin



# Hearts & Hands Dinner and Auction 2026!

This year’s Hearts & Hands Dinner and Auction is taking us back in time with a *Ridgewood 90s Rewind* theme! Our focus remains the same as always: bringing families and our community together and raising vital funds for Ridgewood.

On April 24 at 6:30 p.m., join us in the Cole Carpentieri Commons for dinner and an exciting evening featuring both live and silent auction items, all supporting our school. Beyond fundraising, this is a special opportunity to connect, socialize, and celebrate the strong community that makes Ridgewood so special.

To make the night even easier for families, **free on-site childcare** will be provided for children ages three and older, including crafts and food for your child, so you can relax and enjoy an evening of fun, connection, and support for Ridgewood. Pre-event registration for childcare is required.

Please keep an eye on our social media and your email for the registration link soon. We hope you join us! If you have any questions, please direct them to Director of Development, Dan Funk, at [dfunk@ridgewoodsschool.org](mailto:dfunk@ridgewoodsschool.org).



# Creating the Next 100 Years!

## Ridgewood Legacy Society

Our legacy society is a group of thoughtful individuals and families who during the years ahead will play a significant role in creating Ridgewood’s future. They have committed to ensuring Ridgewood’s well-being by including Ridgewood in their estate plans. If you would like information about our legacy society or to discuss the various options for including Ridgewood in your estate, contact Dan Funk, Director of Development at [dfunk@ridgewoodsschool.org](mailto:dfunk@ridgewoodsschool.org) or phone 937.399.8900.

# Academic Accolades

## The Bebras Challenge

The Bebras Challenge is an annual international online competition for students ages 5 to 18 that introduces and develops computational thinking skills through fun, interactive problems. Participants have a set time, usually 45 minutes, to complete as many tasks as possible. Tasks are designed to encourage problem-solving and logical thinking without requiring prior preparation or programming knowledge. Congratulations to these students and Mrs. Fischer our computer teacher and upper-level math tutor. ☀

### Ages 10-12



Best of School:  
Jacek Rose



Honor Roll:  
Blaze Skinner

### Ages 13-14



Best of School:  
Matthew Comer



Honor Roll:  
Jaxson Avery



Honor Roll:  
Vivian Guest



Honor Roll:  
Aliannah Smith

## Beyond the Schoolyard

It's always a treat to see what our students are doing outside of school.

### Scary Stories

Clark County Library's 2025 Halloween-inspired, original, scary short story contest provided an opportunity for three of Ridgewood's young authors to shine. Ridgewood winners in photo are on the left Matthew Comer, on Matthew's right is Devyn Cardinal, and in the striped shirt is Devyn Crawford.



### Altrusa Spelling Bee

Ridgewood Spelling Bee Champion 7<sup>th</sup>-grader Matthew Comer was joined by faculty members Paul Sauter and Rachel McLaughlin and participated in Altrusa's 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Literacy Sting held September 23<sup>rd</sup> at the Courtyard by Marriott.



### Chess Tournament

Carter Keriazes who is beginning his third year as a member of Ridgewood's Chess Club placed fourth in the Scholastic Chess

Tournament held in October at Fairborn Middle School.

### Scarecrow Contest

The National Road Commons in downtown Springfield was the site for the National Trails Park and Recreation's Scare-a-Crow Contest. Contestants were to reimagine a famous work of art as a scarecrow. Ridgewood students reimaged Jean Michele-Basquiat's *Dog and Boy* in creating their scarecrow.



### Haunted Forest

Lilly Harbaugh participated as an actress in the National Trails Parks and Recreation's Haunted Forest.



### Finding Nemo, Jr.

Mrs. Ranginwala visited backstage with actors Kinley and Devyn Cardinal after their performances in Springfield's Youth Arts Ambassadors' production of *Finding Nemo, Jr.*, and with Ridgewood alumnus Mylo Frazier and his sister Ridgewood student Emmarie Frazier.



### The Nutcracker

There were familiar faces onstage when the Ridgewood student body attended the Ohio Performing Arts Institute's performance of *The Nutcracker*. Ridgewood students Emmarie Frazier and LillyAnn Harbaugh were members of the company that danced the classic ballet. ☀



# Citizens of the Month

Each month, Ridgewood students focus on embodying a specific positive behavior. Teachers then select a student from their class that best exemplified this behavior during the month, and we recognize them as a Citizen of the Month.

Congratulations to our exemplary citizens!

## September: Preparedness

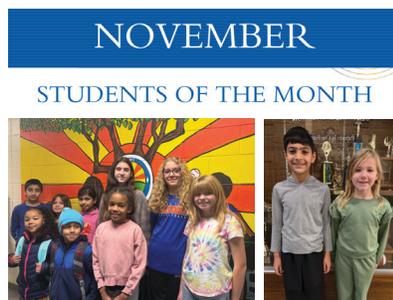
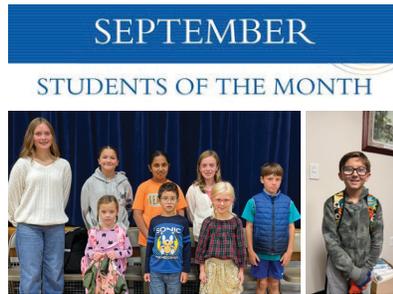
- Kindergarten: Sybil Mattox
- 1st Grade: Ellen Krogg
- 2nd Grade: Gabriel Rojas
- 3rd Grade: Carter Keriazes
- 4th Grade: Arlo Prince
- 5th Grade: Meredith Blair
- 6th Grade: Veera Patel
- 7th Grade: Cameron Mowers
- 8th Grade: Julia Doss

## October: Responsibility

- Kindergarten: Penelope Taylor
- 1st Grade: Quentin Bollinger
- 2nd Grade: Theo Schmidt
- 3rd Grade: Zosia Rose
- 4th Grade: Natalie Thompson
- 5th Grade: Jacek Rose
- 6th Grade: Hezekiah Zima
- 7th Grade: Devyn Crawford
- 8th Grade: Lujain Bilal

## November: Kindness

- Kindergarten: Selah Clark, Shaka McMahon
- 1st Grade: Eleanor Cliff
- 2nd Grade: Dahlia O'Neil-Jones
- 3rd Grade: Abdullah Edhi, Eva Reyes
- 4th Grade: Kavya Kathuria, Dhruv Mohindroo
- 5th Grade: Ella Tanksley
- 6th Grade: Iris Mohler
- 7th Grade: Lorelei Nevius
- 8th Grade: Lillianne Dobbins



# Summer Enrichment Program 2026

It's not too early to think about summer! We hope that when you do, you'll think about our outstanding Summer Enrichment program. The program will present weeklong classes for students PreK through 9<sup>th</sup> grade and is scheduled for the weeks of June 8, 15, and 22. Classes for the youngest children are 45 minutes in length and for others an hour and a half. The popular program is open to Ridgewood and non-Ridgewood students. Planning for classes is underway and will include offerings in sports, art, music, foreign language, science, math, writing, computing, and the great outdoors. Watch for more detailed information on our Facebook page and in materials that will be sent home with students. Classes fill quickly!

Note: If you are interested or know someone who would like information about offering a course in our Summer Enrichment program, contact [kkeriazes@ridgewoodsschool.org](mailto:kkeriazes@ridgewoodsschool.org).

## Summer Enrichment 2025



# Coming Soon! *Frozen Jr.*



It may be cold and the middle of winter but Ridgewood's production of *Frozen, Jr.* will warm your heart. The Disney classic, *Frozen, Jr.* will be performed on February 27th and 28th at 7 p.m. in the Cole Carpentieri Commons. Based on the 2018 Broadway musical, *Frozen, Jr.* brings Princesses Elsa and Anna and the magical land of Arendelle to life. Featuring the wonderful songs from the animated film, with music and lyrics by Kristen Anderson-Lopez and Robert Lopez, the musical is a story of

true love and acceptance between sisters, Anna and Elsa. Facing danger, the two discover their hidden potential and powerful bond of sisterhood. It's a show filled with magic, adventure, and plenty of humor. Admission is free but tickets must be reserved due to limited seating. Watch our

Facebook page for information about how to reserve tickets.

The musical is being directed and choreographed by Abbie Hawke. Musical direction and lighting design is by Bailey Compston. Theresa Lauricella, Ridgewood parent and Professor and Program Coordinator of Theatre and Music at Clark State Community College, is the Production Supervisor. 🌟

# Fall Semester 2025-2026 Memories!



The final weeks before the opening of school were a busy time for Ridgewood's faculty and staff. Ms. Yoakem polished the floors and washed the windows while Mr. Linardos reviewed his menus and ordered what he would need for lunches that first week. Teachers set up their classrooms, worked on lesson plans, and participated in professional development classes in which they were the students.



On August 24<sup>th</sup>, three days before school started, there was the ice cream social for everyone.



And then it was the first day of school, a red-carpet day! Mr. Metzger, our Dean of Students, rolled out the red carpet and took photos of everyone arriving,



He captured the faces of happy students



the faces of happy parents and students,



and the faces of some not so happy.



During the first weeks of school, the preschoolers and their parents took a field trip to Jim and Gail Suzel's farm where the preschoolers shared with each other the woodland discoveries they made.



The kindergarten students worked on getting to know each other and to establish a schedule for their days.



On the first Fridays in September,



Ridgewood parents and grandparents joined faculty and students for Pastries with Parents.



It didn't take long for Ms. McLaughlin to get the sixth graders into the middle of everything. Here they are imagining that they are the earth while learning about the phases of the moon. What did they learn? That it is the earth's position that determines how much light we see reflected on the moon's surface by the sun and that is the basis for determining phases of the moon.



On September 26<sup>th</sup>, our Earth to Table Alumni Dinner brought together alumni and the Ridgewood family to celebrate Ridgewood's rich history and to honor 2025 's Distinguished Alumni, Honorary Alumni, and Distinguished Teacher. (See article p.1)



The next day the schoolyard was filled with students and their families enjoying our annual Fall Fest with its hayrides, bounce house, fishing pond, photo booth, cake walks, face painting, reverse dunk tank, food trucks and other fun activities.



When Science Club met in early October, young club members learned that different liquids have various properties. Having dropped a piece of candy corn in glasses that contained oil, vinegar, water, or Sprite, the students discovered that the candy's color disappeared, the candy dissolved, partially dissolved or remained the same.

In late September, Mrs. Loftis introduced the upper-level students to the works of Michelangelo by having the students create self-portraits while lying on their backs beneath their worktables to which the paper on which they were drawing was taped. After they completed their drawings, they had greater appreciation for the Sistine Chapel's frescoed ceiling which took four years for Michelangelo to complete lying on his back.



On September 22<sup>nd</sup>, kindergarten and first-grade students headed off to Great Life Farm where each found a pumpkin just their size.



In early October, our first graders met members of the Springfield Fire Department, inspected a fire truck, and learned about safety.



Our annual Multicultural Festival held this year on October 16<sup>th</sup> remains one Ridgewood's favorite events! (See article on p.2)



A week later it was time for "Trunk or Treat" and that Friday afternoon the school was alive with numerous cinematic personalities.



Parents and grandparents' cars lined the parking lot with their trunks filled with treats.



On the last Wednesday in October, Mr. Sauter and the members of the Venture Club explored Gallagher Fen.



On October 30<sup>th</sup>, the Clark County Public Library Bookmobile came to school.



October ended with the Upper-Level Halloween Bash. The school has never been scarier thanks to the efforts of Mr. Sauter and the eighth graders!



On November 7<sup>th</sup>, it was as if a rock star had come to school. Ridgewood students were *very* excited to meet Springfield's mayor, Rob Rue '84, a Ridgewood Distinguished Alumnus. He visited and had lunch with the students before he went to the first-grade classroom where he was their mystery reader for the week.



On November 11<sup>th</sup>, students honored our military veterans by writing thank-you letters to the veterans and contributing \$450 to Honor Flight.

*continued>>*

### Would You Prefer to Receive Our Newsletter Via Email?

Please send your email address to either [cgeorges@ridgewoodschool.org](mailto:cgeorges@ridgewoodschool.org) or to [chreynolds@ridgewoodschool.org](mailto:chreynolds@ridgewoodschool.org). Thank you!

Find us on Facebook and Instagram!



(Continued from p. 7)



On November 13<sup>th</sup>, Kindness Day, the “bigs” honored their “littles” and the “littles” honored their “bigs” by creating personalized chalk drawings on the school’s sidewalk.



November 15<sup>th</sup> was Ridgewood’s Night at the Springfield Symphony Orchestra.



The week of Thanksgiving saw each class in the kitchen working with Mr. Linardos to prepare a dish for our Thanksgiving luncheon.



The meal was delicious, and the Cole Carpentieri Commons looked festive thanks to RAP members who decorated the Commons, and served the students.



The Pocket Bear Book Club met on November 17<sup>th</sup> to discuss Katherine Applegate’s newest novel and then made their own bears.



And we started December with a snow day,



but by the next week, we were ready to enjoy our Winter Concerts. The 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Grades performed on December 9<sup>th</sup>



and the PreK-3<sup>rd</sup> on December 11<sup>th</sup>.



With the month drawing to a close and the winter break just a week away, K-8<sup>th</sup> students spent the morning at Kuss Auditorium enjoying a performance of Tchaikovsky’s ballet *The Nutcracker*.



And then came the eagerly awaited December 19<sup>th</sup> and Winter Break! ❄️

## Do You Pay Ohio Income Tax?

If you pay Ohio income tax, it’s 2026 and you may already be thinking about filing your taxes. Whether you are or not, we hope you will consider becoming a Ridgewood SGO donor in 2026. How does your income tax relate to being an SGO donor? What is an SGO donor?

SGO is short for *scholarship granting organization* and an SGO donor is a person or couple who contributes to Ridgewood’s Panther Scholarship Fund via the Ohio Association of Independent Schools (OAIS). How does that relate to your taxes? Ohio allows **each** taxpayer to deduct the amount they contribute

to an SGO, from \$1 **up to** \$750, from what they owe in Ohio income tax. What a donor contributes to Ridgewood via OAIS offsets a portion of what the donor owes in Ohio income tax. If you contribute \$250 to our SGO Ridgewood Panthers Scholarship Fund and owe Ohio \$400 in income tax, you then owe Ohio only \$150. Couples filing jointly may contribute **up to** \$1,500. SGO donations cannot exceed what is owed in income tax.

If you’re thinking that it sounds too good to be true, there must be a catch, it must be difficult and time-consuming, no, no, no, and no.

To contribute:

1. Go to the SGO website (oais.gosgo.co).
2. Choose “Make a Donation.”
3. Follow the steps and designate “Ridgewood School” when prompted.
4. Make your donation. You’ll receive a letter from Ridgewood acknowledging your gift.
5. Claim your tax credit. You will need your SGO receipt when filing your taxes.

It’s that simple, so reported Ridgewood’s twenty-seven donors who provided our students \$31,680 in SGO scholarships last year.

# Student Council Report

The Student Council was active during the summer months volunteering weekly on a variety of projects at the Homeless Shelter, Food Bank, Project Woman, and Pass the Hat.



In July and August at the Farmers Market, students sold produce as well as baked goods, stepping-stones, and bracelets they had made.



Their lemonade stand in August raised almost \$250 for Alex's Lemonade Stand, an organization that supports childhood cancer research. The students wrapped up the summer by helping collect and organize shoes for the WaterStep program.

The school year kicked off with students serving at our Pastries with Parents events and the annual Spirit Sale.



Students also made salsa to raise money for the eighth-grade trip and the Alzheimer's Association. At Ridgewood's Fall Fest council members ran some of the games, sold concessions, and hosted the reverse dunk tank which featured two eighth graders. The night before Fall Fest, they worked as servers and babysitters at Ridgewood's Alumni Dinner.



This fall, for the first time, Student Council sponsored a hole at the Pink Out Golf Tournament

In October, Student Council raised \$2,025 for the Breast Cancer Endowment Fund by running a bake sale, hosting the annual Waffle Breakfast, and running a movie night.



Its Ridgewood Alzheimer's Walk with its promise garden of hand-painted flowers at the school's front entrance raised \$595 that was donated to the Alzheimer's Association. The student council's upper and lower-level gym games in October included a variety of sports, games, obstacle course, and more. For Halloween, students delivered cards and decorated pumpkins to residents at local nursing homes and treat bags to children at local shelters.



The month wrapped up with our annual Halloween Bash and haunted house. The haunted house was a project of the eighth-grade students under the guidance of Mr. Paul Sauter.



Our November food drive filled a record-breaking 6 barrels, 10 boxes, and 8 bags with food for the Second Harvest Food Bank.



Incentive days that encouraged students to bring in food items included crazy hair and hat day, sports day, and the annual match day which brought in over 1,200 food items in one day.



The second annual Gobble Games featured physical and intellectual challenges and raised money for the Springfield Soup Kitchen.



On the Tuesday before Thanksgiving, students delivered 36 pies to the Homeless Shelter, Project Woman shelter, and local soup kitchens. Council members also worked with Mr. Linardos to bake two cakes and four pies to donate in honor of the school's former cook, Grandma Jo, to the Second Harvest Food Bank's dessert auction.



*continued*>>

(Continued from p. 9)

Also, during the month, the students created turkey cards for nursing homes, made buckeye candies for Buckeye Week, and hosted a student skate at the Chiller.



The eighth graders attended a Youth Summit at Wittenberg University and participated in a program promoting mental health. On Kindness Day, students wrote positive messages in chalk to their “bigs” and “littles” on the front sidewalk. On Veterans Day, Council members wrote thank-you cards to veterans and sent them along with a \$450 Honor Flight donation to the local VFW.

Our December Babysitting Night that provided parents with a few hours away from their children at this busy time of year entertained children with cookie decorating, bingo, games, stories, crafts, dinner, and a movie. The toys that parents brought in return for babysitting were donated to the Parent Infant Center. We continued our “bookcase and books” project and delivered bookcases and books to four families this month.



The upper-level classes competed again in our holiday tree challenge and decorated four trees that were donated to the Trees for

Tots program that placed the trees with local families. Student Council members supported the Salvation Army by manning three kettles as part of its holiday fundraising effort.



We wish to thank the parents, grandparents, friends, faculty and staff that have supported our efforts. We extend a special thank-you to the Springfield Foundation for its support throughout 2025! 🌟



## Business Partners in Education Campaign 2026

With the start of this new year, we are launching our 2026 Business Partners in Education Campaign. This annual campaign provides an opportunity for local businesses to support Ridgewood students and teachers by becoming one of our partners in education. In return, Ridgewood proudly recognizes and promotes our partners through a variety of media. If you have a business or know someone who has a business that would like to support Ridgewood students and teachers, please have them contact [dfunk@ridgewoodschool.org](mailto:dfunk@ridgewoodschool.org). He'll be happy to see they receive our 2026 Business Partners in Education materials.

We want to take this opportunity to thank our 2025 Business Partners in Education. Their support was instrumental in providing Ridgewood students outstanding educational opportunities throughout 2025. Thank you!

## Thank You to Our 2025 Business Partners in Education!

### Citizenship Level



### Academic Excellence Level



### Critical Thinking Level

Business Equipment Company  
The Comer Group at Coldwell Banker Heritage  
Comprehensive Vein Care  
Dye and Doss, Inc.  
Esterline and Sons MFG  
Ferncliff Cemetery and Arboretum  
The Heart House Research Foundation  
Hi-Hat Social  
KAPP Construction  
Link-Hellmuth Insurance

Martin, Browne, Hull & Harper PLL  
McGregor Metalworking Companies  
Mercy Health  
The Miami Valley School  
Park National Bank  
Seasons Kitchen  
Springfield Arts Council  
Springfield Foundation  
Springfield Symphony Orchestra  
State Theater  
Wallace and Turner, Inc.  
WesBanco, Inc.  
Westcott House

### Student Engagement Level

Cintas  
Community Health Foundation  
Daniel C. Harkins, Esq.  
KB&P Financial Partners  
Krogg and Jayjohn Family Dental  
North Spring Dental  
Orthodontic Specialists of Ohio  
Springfield Health and Fitness



# Winter Concerts 2025

What makes the winter concerts so special? Is it the snowflake decorated stage, the red and green of sweaters scattered onstage, and in the audience? Is it the little girls in their finest frocks with colorful bows in their hair,



along with the young boys wearing holiday sweaters and their hair neatly combed?



Is it the sound of parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles chattering noisily before each song and dance or the performers waving to their families from the stage and their families waving back? Perhaps it's all of these. Each is a sign of anticipation, anticipation that it's going to be a special time. And the winter concerts on December 9<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> were special!

On December 9<sup>th</sup>, the 4<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup>-grade students presented a concert that opened with the 4<sup>th</sup> graders dancing a winter maypole dance, "Evergreen." They followed their dance by singing a round, "Jingle, Jingle, Jingle," and the familiar "White Christmas."



"Jingle, Jingle, Jingle"

A special moment in the program was the performance of the song "The Gift" by a small student ensemble put together by Mr. Sauter our language arts teacher. The ensemble included guitar, piano, violins, and vocalists and delighted the audience.

Under the direction of our new upper-level music teacher, Lisa Grove, the 5<sup>th</sup> Grade, 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> Grades, and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Bands performed eight familiar pieces.



5th-Grade Band



6th & 7th-Grades Band



8th-Grade Band

The audience especially appreciated Tchaikovsky's "Trepak" from *The Nutcracker* played by the 8<sup>th</sup> graders. As we moved from the selections played by the 5<sup>th</sup>-Grade Band to the selections played by the 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup>-Grades Band, and finally to the 8<sup>th</sup>-Grade Band pieces, it was rewarding to hear how our students are growing as musicians year to year.

On December 11<sup>th</sup>, our preschool, kindergarten, and 1<sup>st</sup> through 3<sup>rd</sup>-grade students performed to a standing-room-only audience. The preschool opened the evening with an audience-pleasing "I Made a Snowman" and then an energetic ribbon dance.

Next, the kindergarten impressed us with their "The Twelve Days of Christmas" that they had mastered under the direction of our new lower-level music teacher, Lori Whitaker.



"The Twelve Days of Christmas"

First graders enjoyed performing the "Penguin Dance" and charmed the audience singing with careful attention to dynamics the lovely "A Holiday Madrigal."



"A Holiday Madrigal"

Mrs. Suzel, our resident choreographer, and the second-grade students are to be congratulated on their "Candy Cane Lane" performance in which the students were truly focused and self-confident. They followed their dance by singing the ever popular "Silver Bells."



"Candy Cane Lane"

The evening concluded with our third graders singing the 1934 winter classic, "Winter Wonderland."

Ridgewood students under the direction of our talented faculty members Gail Suzel, Lisa Grove, and Lori Whitaker created winter concerts that were special evenings. They were evenings that gave students a chance to demonstrate their growth as musicians and performers, and the opportunity to perform in front of audiences. They were evenings that provided parents the opportunity to assess what their children are learning, and perhaps most important, evenings that brought us together as a family and celebrated the winter season. ☀️

# Learning About Art and People Around the World

One of the things I enjoy when walking down Ridgewood's long hallway is to stop outside the art room door and view the students' latest creations. I don't ever recall not being impressed by their creativity, artistry, and knowledge; I don't ever recall not being impressed by the work of our art teacher Molly Loftis. What I appreciate about Mrs. Loftis' work is that she is not only developing students' skills as artists, but at the same time their appreciation for art, including its history, various forms, media, and techniques, and how it represents the cultures in which it is created.

This year's Multicultural Night's art exhibits contributed again to the success of this annual event and revealed that through their art our students were able to connect with the countries and cultures they were celebrating. When you look at the photos below and read their descriptions, I trust that you, too, will appreciate the work of our students and Mrs. Loftis.



## Kindergarten: Germany

In art class, students were read Eric Carle's *The Artist Who Painted a Blue Horse*, a book about German painter Marc Franz and

his painting *Blue Horse*. Students created a mixed media art piece in the style of Eric Carle inspired by Franz's *Blue Horse*.

## First Grade: Japan

In art class students learned about Japan's Takashi Murakami, an artist who is known for the "super flat" art form and is often referred to as the "Andy Warhol of Japan." Students created flowers out of salt dough inspired by the flowers of Murakami.



## Second Grade: Canada

Canada is known for a group of artists known as the "Group of Seven." These artists are famous for painting landscapes of the

beautiful country of Canada. Students painted landscape watercolors in the style of Ted Harrison who is a Canadian illustrator inspired by the "Group of Seven."

## Third Grade: Ghana

In class, students read *Anansi the Spider: A Tale from the Ashanti* and *The Spider Weaver: A Legend of Kente Cloth*. Students created a weaving of construction paper to resemble Kente Cloth.



## Fourth Grade: Native Americans

Students read *Grandmother's Dreamcatcher* and *Dreamcatcher*, both of which told the Native American story of the dreamcatcher. They then created their own dreamcatchers.

## Fifth Grade: France

While exploring the country of France, students read *Louise Bourgeois Made a Giant Spider and Wasn't Sorry*, a book that tells the story of French artist Louise Bourgeois who is famous for creating an iconic sculpture of a spider, titled *Maman*. Using wire and papier-mâché, students created their own renditions of *Maman*.



## Sixth Grade: Japan

Students read *Yayoi Kusama Covered Everything in Dots and Wasn't Sorry* before they created their interpretations of

Kusama's famous dot-covered pumpkins from cement and decorated them with dots.

## Seventh Grade: Mexico

While reading *Lucia the Luchadora*, the story of a girl who wasn't afraid to fight for what was right, students learned also about *lucha libre*, the acrobatic and theatrical style of wrestling popular in Mexico. Using papier-mâché, students created their own *lucha libre* wrestling masks.



## Eighth Grade: Italy

Inspired by Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel frescoes, students created their own frescos. ☀

## Help Us Stay in Touch

If you move, please provide us a new address so we can remain connected! Email your new address and other contact information to [cgeorges@ridgewoodschool.org](mailto:cgeorges@ridgewoodschool.org). Thanks!

# We Need Your Talents and Skills!

We hope you are willing to share your talents and skills with our 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade students in May when we hold our annual Learning Series. This popular program offers Ridgewood students the opportunity to learn something that is not part of their everyday curriculum, a chance to discover something that may become a lifelong pursuit. We're looking for volunteers to offer these mini classes.

Don't think you have anything to share? Think about your talents, hobbies, skills, career, or favorite activities. Past presenters have

offered classes in photography, jewelry making, cooking, archaeology, painting, acting, engineering. What about gardening, juggling, yoga, knitting, origami, cartooning, accounting, archery, magic, golf, or graphic design? What can you introduce to our students? Learning Series sessions can be either 25 or 55 minutes in length and will be scheduled between 8:30 and 11:20 a.m. If you would like to be a presenter or have questions about the event, contact Mrs. Ranganwala at [aranginwala@ridgewoodschool.org](mailto:aranginwala@ridgewoodschool.org).

# Alumni Spotlights



## Stephen Seftenberg '46

completed his law degree at Harvard Law School and went on to practice law in Illinois and Florida. He is now retired and with his wife resides in West Palm Beach, Florida.



## Marian Lindblade Gowan '59

and her husband William moved to Hendersonville, North Carolina after a thirty-year career with Eastman Kodak Company, Rochester, New York. She is a graduate of Northfield

Mount Hermon School, East Northfield, Massachusetts, and Tufts University. Marian is the author of *Notes from the Trunk*, a memoir written from materials her mother, Helen Belger Lindblade, had saved to write her memoir one day. Ms. Gowan's father Eric Lindblade was Ridgewood's head of school and her mother Ridgewood's science teacher in the 1950s and 60s.



## Rick Wobbe, Ph.D., '71

earned his B.S. in biochemistry and molecular biology at Centre College and completed a doctorate in biochemistry at the University

of Tennessee, Knoxville. His career has included working in various capacities in the field of education. Today he is the owner of Greater Goals Project Management in Worcester, Massachusetts, and works with medical relief and social advocacy organizations to build capacity, expand outreach, and achieve greater goals.



## Michael Pomputius '85

graduated from Western Reserve

Academy and in 1993 completed a BS degree in electrical and electronic engineering at Lehigh University followed by a master's in engineering degree from Cornell University in 1994. Today he lives in San Jose, CA, and is a circuit design engineer at Intel.



## Elizabeth Varghese '89

serves as the Director of the Office of Financial Innovation for FINRA. FINRA is a non-governmental self-regulatory organization that oversees and regulates brokerage firms and broker-dealer personnel in the United State. Its mission is to protect investors and ensure the integrity of the U.S securities markets. Elizabeth received her bachelor's degree in mathematics from Bryn Mawr College and an M.B.A. in finance from Carnegie Mellon University.



## Alumna Dheepa Balakrishnan, M.D.

joined Kaiser Permanente in California in 2009 as an obstetrician-gynecologist. She earned her medical

degree at Northeastern Ohio University College of Medicine and completed her residency at the University of Cincinnati Hospital. Dheepa and her husband live in Sacramento.



## University of Dayton

## Tim Kao '94

joined the Global and Intercultural Affairs Center

at the University of Dayton in 2010 and now leads the International Student and Scholar Services Office. Prior to joining the University of Dayton, Tim worked in Shanghai, China, as an international school administrator and later at Miami University (Ohio). He holds a B.S. and an M.S. degree from Miami University.



## Jessica Win, M.D. '01

has been an Assistant Professor of Clinical Neurology on the faculty of the Indiana University School of Medicine since 2023.

She earned her medical degree at the University of Cincinnati and completed a child neurology residency in Jacksonville, Florida with the Mayo Clinic and Pediatrics with UF-Jacksonville. She is married and the mother of two.



## Talal Akhter, M.D. '03

earned his medical degree at Northeast Ohio Medical University in 2014, having completed his Bachelor of Science

degree at New York University in 2010. Since 2023, he has worked as a vascular and interventional radiologist at Swedish Hospital in Chicago.



## Madiha Khan, M.D. '04

is a graduate of Northeast Ohio Medical University. She completed her residency in Family Medicine at Wright

State University Boonshoft School of Medicine in Dayton. She is board certified by the American Board of Family Medicine and practices in Dayton.



## Isabella Gianakopoulos '15

completed her master's degree in speech pathology at The Ohio State University and is now completing a

fellowship at the Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit, MI.



## Mary Cunningham '22

received the Ohio Prevention Professional Association's 2025 Youth Prevention Excellence Award. OPPIA works to prevent substance use and mental disorders.

Mary is now a student at the Miami Valley School in Dayton.



**Emerson Babian '23** (left), **Usayd Ashraf '23** (third from left), **Mary Cunningham '22** (fourth from left), and **Annia Ameer '25** (right) testified before the Springfield City Commission before speaking to the Ohio legislature opposing Ohio's HB 152. 🌟

# The Ridgewood Fund 2025-26

What is the Ridgewood Fund? The Ridgewood Fund is our annual fund drive that raises money to help cover the difference between our tuition revenue and operating expenses. The money raised through this effort makes it possible for us to continue to offer students an outstanding education.

Thank you to the families, friends, and alumni who have already contributed to the Ridgewood Fund 2025-26. The fund launched July 1, 2025, and will close June 31, 2026. We are now halfway through the year, so it's not too late for you to contribute.

You can contribute by scanning the QR Code on the next page or by going to [ridgewoodschool.org/giving/the-ridgewood-fund](http://ridgewoodschool.org/giving/the-ridgewood-fund) and charge your donation to your VISA, MasterCard, or AmEx card, or by completing the form on the next page and mailing it and your contribution to Dan Funk, Director of Development, Ridgewood School, 2420 St. Paris Pike, Springfield, OH 45504. Thank you!

On behalf of every one of our students, we want to thank those who have already donated to the 2025-26 Ridgewood Fund!

## The Ridgewood Fund 2025-26 Donor Honor Roll

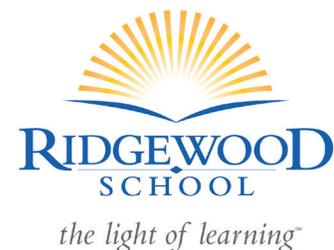
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Arbia & Mohamed Ameer  
Susan '83 & Bill Ayres  
Eliza Wize & Andrew Barnes  
Jenna and Justin Beck, DDS  
Danielle & Austin Blackshear  
Bristol & Jacob Blair  
Crystal & Mark Bollinger  
Anthony Bosca '80  
Jessica & Kyle Brady  
Deanna (H) & Bill Brougher  
Kevin Brown  
Nicholas (Tony) Bryan '79  
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Megan & Justin Cason  
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Morgan & Derek Harnly  
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Eleanor '49 & Donald Harris  
Stacey & Kevin Harrison

Cheryl & Paul, MD '63 Haupt  
Bonita (H) & Jim Heeg  
Kathy & David Henry  
Christina & Bradley Hopkins  
Bridget & Jake Houston  
Angel Howard  
Genesis Hunt & Evan Offenberger  
Claudia James '67  
Priya & Jonathan Johnson  
Jessimi Jones & Graham Davis  
Pierce Jones  
Kristyn & Kyle Keriazes  
Muhammed Khan, MD  
Ashley Krupp  
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Theresa & Joe Lauricella  
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Sarah & Chadwick Mackert  
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Phillip Metzger  
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Elle Millender  
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Marta Wojcik & Kevin Rose  
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Max Zima

'# = Alumni graduation year  
(D) = Distinguished Alumni  
(H) = Honorary Alumni  
\*\* = SGO Donor





# Every student benefits from your gift!

As we continue to provide an excellent education for children in our community, we reach out to our parents, alumni, and friends to help us achieve our annual *Ridgewood Fund* goal. Your support is essential in making Ridgewood a unique and transformative educational foundation that helps to create a successful future for our children.

It is through your generous donor support that we are able to employ talented teachers and provide them with the tools and resources they need to go above and beyond. Your donations are the catalyst for innovation and celebration.

As our admission numbers continue to climb, we truly depend upon the assistance of those who understand the vital role Ridgewood School plays in the lives of its students, families, and the four-county area (Clark, Champaign, Greene, and Madison counties) it serves. **All of our students need you!**

Your tax-deductible gift will directly support providing quality education, character development, and unique learning opportunities, setting students up for success. No gift is too small, whether you give \$5 or \$5,000, your gift makes a difference. You help write stories of success, transformation, and hope.

Please join us today. Together, let's continue to build a place where children learn, grow, and thrive.

Thank you for considering our sincere request,

Aliya Ranginwala, BBA, M.Ed.  
*Head of School*

Dan Funk  
*Director of Development*

Scan here to donate online!



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**Questions?** Please contact Dan Funk at [dfunk@ridgewoodschool.org](mailto:dfunk@ridgewoodschool.org) or 937-399-8900.

- Integrity Circle: \$25+**
- Creativity Circle: \$100+**
- Diversity Circle: \$250+**
- Inspiration Circle: \$500+**
- Joy of Learning Circle: \$1,000+**



- In Honor of \_\_\_\_\_  In Memory of \_\_\_\_\_
- Please direct gift to greatest need.
- Please direct gift to \_\_\_\_\_ (i.e., Scholarships, Grade, or Department)
- Please let us know if you have named Ridgewood School in your will, retirement plan, or insurance policy. If not, please consider placing us in your will and being a member of the H.S. Kissell Legacy Society.



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### Ridgewood Times

Published for families, alumni, and friends of Ridgewood School.

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### Ridgewood School Association Officers and Trustees 2025-26

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#D=Distinguished Alumni  
H=Honorary Alumni

Ridgewood School Association meetings are open to the public and are held on the third Thursday of the month at 6:30 p.m., at Ridgewood School. Anyone wishing to speak to the Board at a meeting, please write the Board president at least one week prior to the meeting requesting that you be added to the agenda and provide a brief statement of the subject you will address. Leave your request with Christine Reynolds, Administrative Assistant, at the school office.

## From the Head of School



Head of School Aliya Ranginwala

**Discipline: A Pathway to Success**  
Discipline is often misunderstood as a set of rules or limitations. In reality, it is the foundation for growth and achievement. For Ridgewood students, discipline is not about restrictions, it is about learning habits that lead to self-improvement and success.

Every day, discipline shows up in small but powerful ways: arriving on time to morning assembly, preparing for class, respecting peers and teachers, taking care of belongings, and following through on commitments. These actions may seem ordinary, yet they build extraordinary qualities such as resilience, focus, and integrity. A Ridgewood middle schooler is expected to balance academic responsibilities with community service commitments and extracurricular activities, both within Ridgewood School and outside organizations. While many schools have discontinued participation in writing

competitions like Power of the Pen and Young Authors, as well as academic challenges such as the Science Fair and Spelling Bee, Ridgewood students continue to persevere through these skill-building opportunities.

Discipline also strengthens our school community. It creates an environment of respect and trust where learning can flourish. Ridgewood teachers hold students to a higher standard, reminding them that success is not achieved overnight but through steady effort and consistent practice. Just as athletes train to reach their peak, our students practice discipline to unlock their potential.

As educators and families, we have the privilege of guiding students along this pathway. By modeling discipline ourselves—in our words, actions, and commitments—we show them that learning to be disciplined is not a burden but a gift. Working in tandem, educators and families can support and guide students toward achieving their dreams.

Together, let us encourage our students to embrace discipline and good habits not as a demand, but as a pathway to success—one that will serve them in school, in life, and in the future they are building.

## Spring Semester Schedule 2026

- January 5:** Return to school
- January 9:** End of Second Grading Period
- January 16:** Teacher Workday, No School
- January 19:** Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, No School
- February 6:** \*Early Release, 2 p.m., **Interim Reports**
- February 12:** Parent/Teacher Conferences
- February 13:** Conference Make Up Day, No School
- February 16:** Presidents' Birthdays, No School
- February 27 & 28:** Musical, *Frozen, Jr.*, 7p.m.
- March 6:** \*Early Release, 2 p.m.
- March 20:** End of Third Grading Period
- March 30-April 3:** Spring Break
- April 24:** Hearts & Hands Dinner and Auction, 6:30 p.m.
- May 1:** \*Early Release, 2 p.m., **Interim Reports**
- May 12:** Spring Showcase, 6:30 p.m.
- May 25:** Memorial Day, No School
- May 27:** End of Fourth Grading Period, **Graduation and Passing of Classes, 6:30 p.m.**
- May 28:** Field Day/2-hour delay/ Last Day of School
- May 29-June 1:** Teacher Workdays

