

WEST LIBERTY-SALEM NEWS

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Student Spotlight

Abbie Thoman, Spokesperson for Dream Program

Abbie Thoman, '26 graduate, was selected to participate in the filming of the Ohio Department of Public Safety's DREAM (Drug Resilience Education Awareness and Mentorship) program. The statewide K-12 video series focuses on drug and alcohol education, healthy coping skills, and positive decision-making. As part of the project, Abbie served as the on-camera spokesperson for the 9-12 grade alcohol awareness video, representing students from across Ohio. Her participation is a reflection of the leadership and advocacy she has demonstrated through her work with the Ohio Student Safety Advisory Council.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Summer Break!

May 21st - September 1st

Orientation & Important Dates...

8/18-19 Senior iPad pick up
8/18-19 Junior iPad pick up
8/19-20 Soph. iPad pick up
8/23 Freshmen orientation
8/24 6th grade orientation
8/19 7th grade sports pass day
8/20 8th grade sports pass day
8/31 Elementary orientation

First Day of School 9/2



Senior Spotlight

West Liberty-Salem Celebrates the Class of 2026 During 65th Commencement Ceremony

West Liberty-Salem Schools proudly celebrated the Class of 2026 during the district's 65th Commencement Ceremony on Sunday, May 24, at 7:00 p.m. in the high school gymnasium. Ninety-two seniors crossed the stage to receive their diplomas surrounded by family, friends, staff, and community members. The ceremony opened with welcomes from High School Principal Dr. Greg Johnson and Superintendent Mr. Kraig Hissong. Class officer Amani Grantham welcomed the audience on behalf of the graduates and led the Pledge of Allegiance, and High School Counselor Mrs. Molly Smith recognized the Top 10 Seniors of the graduating class. Dr. Johnson introduced Salutatorian Emma Smith, who delivered her address titled "Stepping Outside of Our Comfort Zone." Co-Valedictorian Geneva Estep followed with her speech, "Dear Younger Me," and Co-Valedictorian Dylan King concluded the student addresses with "What's at the Finish Line?" Closing remarks were delivered by class officer Emery Longaberger before Garrett Wallen led the traditional moving of the tassels. Musical selections throughout the evening were provided by the West Liberty-Salem Band under the direction of Mr. Paul Waibel and the West Liberty-Salem Choir directed by Miss Anastasia Hiatt.

Message from the Superintendent

I'm proud of our student's efforts in tackling difficult subjects and supporting one another. Next Semester, let's stay focused, meet our goals, and show respect in all settings—class, online, and beyond. Keep pushing; you can do it!
-Kraig Hissong, Superintendent



Class of 2026 cont...

The Class of 2026 leaves West Liberty–Salem with an impressive record of academic achievement and future readiness. Of the graduating class: • 46% will attend a four-year college or university • 13% will attend a community college or trade school • 36% will enter the workforce • 5% will serve in a branch of the United States Armed Forces.

Academically, the class achieved tremendous success through the College Credit Plus (CCP) program. The Class of 2026 earned 1,577 free college semester hours, equating to more than \$551,000 in free college credit using the average tuition rate of a four-year public university. Fifty-five seniors earned college credit during high school, averaging 28 semester hours each and saving nearly \$10,000 per student toward future degrees.



The academic leaders of the Class of 2026:

• **Co-Valedictorians:**
Dylan King
Geneva Estep

- **Salutatorian:** Emma Smith
- **#4:** Emery Longaberger
- **#5:** Lyndee Harrison
- **#6:** Elijah Christison
- **Tied #7:** Levi Miller and Victoria Douthwaite
- **#9:** Caleb Ling
- **#10:** Brevin Loudon



Your Child's Healthcare

Close to Home, All Year Long

Our School-Based Health Centers (SBHCs) make it easier for students and families to access convenient, quality healthcare throughout the school year and beyond. **When school is out, care doesn't stop. Schedule a visit at any CHWP location, all summer long.**

WHAT WE TREAT

Sick visits &
minor illnesses

Preventive care
& physicals

Sports & well-
child physicals

Mental health
& counseling

Immunizations
& screenings

Chronic condition
management



FLEXIBLE CARE, THAT WORKS FOR YOUR FAMILY

Scheduled Visit Schedule a visit at a CHWP location near you

Walk-In Care Use walk-in clinics for urgent concerns

Telehealth Connect with a provider by phone or video



*Scan to learn more about our
School-Based Health Centers*



CHWPCares.org
CHWPCares.org

937-599-1411

Teacher Feature**Melvin boosts reading confidence**

Our 4th graders transformed the gym and cafeteria into a living museum, bringing historical figures to life through research, creative displays, costumes, and first-person performances. Visitors could press a "button" and watch presidents, athletes, inventors, and activists come alive!

Huge shoutout to our students, staff, and families for making this favorite WL-S tradition another incredible success! We wish we could have captured everyone!

**Tiger Connections: Ag Science Day!**

West Liberty-Salem FFA Chapter hosted Elementary Ag Science Day, giving young students a hands-on look at life on the farm! From sheep, goats, bunnies, chickens, a donkey, pig, cow, and calves, to tractors and other implements brought in by our own students, it was an incredible day of learning and fun!

Around the world!

Spanish 3 & 4 students took a delicious trip to Spain this week as they learned how to make traditional Spanish paella in Señora McDole's class!

From learning about Spanish culture and cuisine to working together in the kitchen, students got a hands-on experience that brought language learning to life.

**Ellery Wygal Selected for Ohio Student Safety Advisory Council**

Junior Ellery Wygal has been selected as one of just 16 students statewide to serve on the 2026-2027 Ohio Student Safety Advisory Council.

Created by Governor Mike DeWine, the council empowers students to help shape school safety initiatives across Ohio. Ellery becomes the third consecutive Tiger selected to serve, continuing WL-S's proud tradition of student leadership and service.

"Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire." — William Butler Yeats

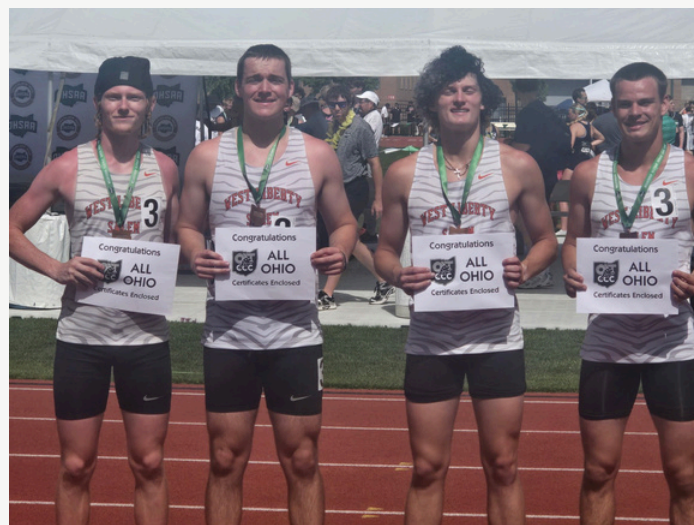
Get Involved!

Interested in joining a club or starting something new? Check out a full list of clubs, or to start one of your own, speak with Mrs. Nieman or Mrs. Watson!



ROOTED IN TRADITION

Tiger Athletics continues to thrive as a vital part of the West Liberty-Salem experience, with hundreds of students participating across multiple sports and seasons. Our teams consistently demonstrate commitment, discipline, and sportsmanship while competing at the league, district, regional levels, and state. This spring, Tiger athletes logged countless practice hours, games, and competitions, all while maintaining strong academic standards and representing WL-S with pride. Backed by dedicated coaches, supportive families, and a strong community presence, Tiger Athletics builds leadership, resilience, and a winning culture that extends far beyond the scoreboard.



Both the boys and girls track and field teams delivered outstanding performances at the OHSAA Division IV State Track & Field Championships. The boys 4x800 relay team of Zeke Longshore, Brayan Gullett, Caleb Larson, and Asher Cole finished as State Runner-Up while setting a new school record. On the girls side, Tori Douthwaite earned All-Ohio honors with an 8th-place finish in pole vault. Numerous Tiger athletes and relay teams advanced to the state finals, capping off another remarkable season for WL-S Track & Field.





West Liberty-Salem HS Boys Track and Field finished 11th overall at the D4 OHSAA State Championship



Grant Krabill collected three hits in three at bats, as WLS JV defeated Fairbanks 9-5. Krabill doubled in the fourth inning, singled in the first, and singled in the third.



The West Liberty-Salem baseball team put together another outstanding season, showcasing determination, teamwork, and Tiger pride. The Tigers earned postseason success and saw several players receive All-Conference and All-District recognition. Congratulations to our athletes and coaches on a successful season and for representing West Liberty-Salem with excellence both on and off the field.



Fun Game at Day Air Stadium! Tigers win 7-3! JJ Johnson is game MVP!



The girls Track & Field took 21st place out of 59 teams at the State Championship. We are so proud of our athletes and all their accomplishments.



The Tigers were on Fire and got Past Twin Valley South Varsity Panthers in their First Round Tournament Game.

A Season in Pictures



The West Liberty-Salem softball team enjoyed another successful season, highlighted by strong performances throughout conference and tournament play. Several Tigers earned All-Conference and All-District honors, recognizing the hard work, dedication, and commitment displayed by the team all season long. Congratulations to our players and coaches on a memorable year and for representing Tiger Nation with pride.



New York, New York!



Biology students wrapped up a great week of review preparing for the state test. From hands-on activities to applying what they've learned all year long, these students put in the work, and had some fun along the way!



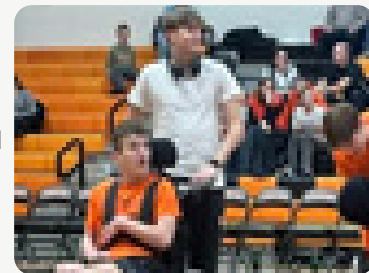
Middle and High School Art students recently showcased their incredible artistic talents at the Champaign County Arts Council's Annual Middle & High School Art Competition in Urbana!



Our seniors got a hands-on look at life beyond high school through the Real Money. Real World. financial simulation, presented by Ohio State University Extension.

Developmental Disabilities Awareness

March is a time to celebrate inclusion, raise awareness, and recognize the unique strengths and contributions of all students. But more importantly, it's a reminder that inclusion



"It's not just about winning—it's about solving real-world problems through creativity and collaboration."



Seniors gather outside for their final **'Lunch with a loved one'** of the year. This tradition allows families to eat with their high school students once a semester!

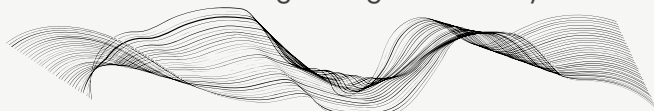
Stay Involved!

Middle School Milestones



Sixth Grade Visits COSI

Sixth Graders spent the day exploring interactive exhibits, participating in hands-on science experiences, and making memories with friends as they celebrated the close of another successful school year at COSI. From discovering new concepts to testing their curiosity, there was no shortage of excitement and learning throughout the day.



Ms. Buroker's **6th grade** language arts students took a short break from essay writing to review key skills, and they did it in style with a Winter Olympics theme! Students worked their way through Winter Olympics Parts of Speech mazes, tackled Figurative Language task cards, explored text structure through a "History of Ice Skating" timeline activity, and even enjoyed some friendly competition with games of UNO.

Middle School Choir students enjoyed a special field trip to the Holland Theatre to attend the matinee performance of *The Little Mermaid, Jr.*, and what a treat it was! The show was a fantastic performance starring three of our very own students, Isabel Gilley, Kinsley Brentlinger and Neema Smucker, who shined on stage.



Reading confidence grew one wag at a time! **7th Graders** in Mrs. Mazza's E & I class spent the last three quarters reading with Mrs. Perdue and everyone's favorite furry friend, Melvin. Thanks to their encouragement and a judgment-free listener, nervous readers became confident readers. Thank you to Mrs. Perdue and Melvin for helping our students discover the joy of reading!



We celebrated the **Class of 2030** at their 8th Grade Recognition Ceremony! From White Tiger Awards and department honors to Superintendent Award recognition, it was a special morning honoring the accomplishments, leadership, and bright futures of this outstanding class.

Kindergarten Breakfast Tunes! 🎵



Our **kindergarten** students once again filled the room with music, smiles, and lots of energy as they performed for family and friends under the direction of Mrs. Smucker. From seasonal songs to music fundamentals, these students showed just how much they've learned this year!



Nothing said spring quite like sunshine, fresh air, and lunch with friends! Our 5th graders kicked things off by enjoying lunch out in the courtyard, and it was the perfect day for it! From laughter to sunshine-filled smiles, it was safe to say this favorite tradition was officially in full swing.

5TH GRADE LUNCH!



Earth Day for Second Grade!

Ohio DNR from Buck Creek State Park visited our **second graders**, bringing pelts and taxidermy items to share. Students learned about being responsible stewards of the Earth, along with important safety tips for the wilderness and while camping.



Hatching Some Sweet Learning in First Grade!

Our **first graders** had an exciting (and adorable!) ongoing lab that's just too cute not to share! Students carefully observed eggs in their classroom incubators, and then the magic happened... they're started to hatch!



Operation State Testing!

Our **4th graders** transformed their classroom for Surgery Day as they prepared for upcoming state testing! Students in Mrs. Johnson and Miss Kale's classes "operated" on academic challenges, reviewing key concepts in a fun, hands-on way. This creative approach not only made learning memorable but also helped ease test-day nerves!



Third Graders explored The Ohio Caverns this spring! A little rain didn't stop the underground fun or mining for gemstones!

Tiger Strong Fieldhouse: Building Momentum for the Future



Tiger Strong Fieldhouse Project Continues to Take Shape

Exciting progress continues to be made on the Tiger Strong Fieldhouse and surrounding athletic facilities. One of the most noticeable changes is the addition of the new Fan Plaza. Construction crews are taking full advantage of the summer weather, and fans will soon begin to see the entire stadium complex transformed. By the start of the fall sports season, visitors can look forward to a new stadium archway, ticket booth, fan plaza, scoreboard, and, of course, the Tiger Strong Fieldhouse.

Inside the Fieldhouse, the project is entering its final stages. Painting has been completed, and the new epoxy flooring throughout the facility has given the space a polished look. Final fixtures and finishes will be installed in the coming weeks as crews work toward completing the project later this summer.

Improvements are also underway at Tiger Stadium. Replacement of the track surface is scheduled to begin later this month, providing student-athletes with an updated competition venue. In preparation for additional enhancements, current ticket booths at the stadium and athletic complex (baseball/softball/middle school fields) will be replaced with new construction at the stadium and a repurpose of the ticket booth at the complex.

Progress

Vision to Reality

These projects represent a continued investment in the future of West Liberty-Salem students, athletes, and community members. We are excited to see these facilities come to life and look forward to sharing additional updates as construction progresses.

Stay tuned...there is much more to come as we continue building the future of Tiger Athletics.



Restrooms



Trainer's Room

