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MP23SCHOOLS.COM



GO TOPPERS!



UPCOMING EVENTS

Early Dismissals

Friday, October 30 – 11:30 AM

Friday, November 13 – 11:30 AM

Tuesday, November 20 – 2 PM

Friday, December 18 – 11:30 AM

No School

November 25 thru 27 for
Thanksgiving Break

Board Meetings

October 21, 2026 – 7 PM

@ Grade School Learning Center

November 18, 2026 – 7 PM

@ Grade School Learning Center

December 16, 2026 – 7 PM

@ Grade School Learning Center

Superintendent's Message

Jason Spang

As we approach the holiday season and the midpoint of another school year, I want to take a moment to recognize the outstanding work of our students and staff throughout Mt. Pulaski CUSD #23. There is a great deal to celebrate across our district. Our students continue to experience success in the classroom, with encouraging academic growth and strong fall MAP results, while also representing the Hilltop with tremendous pride through athletics, activities, the arts, and service to others. From state and national accomplishments by our student organizations and athletic programs, to the everyday successes taking place in our classrooms, our students continue to give us many reasons to be proud. Those accomplishments would not be possible without our dedicated teachers, support staff, coaches, sponsors, and administrators who continually go above and beyond for our students.

There is also a great deal of excitement about what lies ahead for our district. We continue to thoughtfully plan for the future of our facilities and instructional spaces, with the goal of providing learning environments that will serve generations of Hilltoppers while remaining responsible stewards of our community's resources. As we have entered the fall season and push on toward winter break, I want to sincerely thank our families and community members for the tremendous support you continue to show our schools. One of the greatest strengths of Mt. Pulaski is the pride our community takes in its students and its schools. I hope the upcoming holiday seasons provide everyone an opportunity to slow down, spend meaningful time with family and friends, and appreciate the people who matter most. On behalf of Mt. Pulaski CUSD #23, I wish all of our students, staff, families, and community members a safe, restful, and very happy fall season. We look forward to continuing the great work taking place throughout our district.

OCTOBER MEDALLION WINNER

RANDY REETER



Mount Pulaski High School News

By Mrs. Fricke, MPHS Principal

What a great start to the school year at Mt. Pulaski High School! As we wrap up our first quarter, there is so much to celebrate about our students, staff, and school community!

Academically, our students started the year strong, with fall MAP testing showing schoolwide median achievement at the 74th percentile in both reading and math! Students have also been setting individual learning goals and working hard to strengthen their skills through personalized IXL practice. We are proud of their efforts and excited to see their continued growth throughout the year.

We also have some outstanding student accomplishments to recognize! Congratulations to Carter Clark and Juan Andrade, our September and October Seniors of the Month, and Audrey Cooper, our Senior Class President! We also celebrate Hayden Morris and Vincent Tabor for serving as National Youth Leadership Trainers for Scouting America. These students are wonderful examples of the leadership, involvement, and dedication we see throughout MPHS! Beyond academics, our students have been taking an active role in shaping our school culture through Student Council, class meetings, and the creation of our schoolwide Social Contract. Our staff has also been working hard to build positive relationships, celebrate students, and create a welcoming environment where everyone feels valued and connected.

Another important focus this quarter has been strengthening the support systems that help our students succeed. Our teachers have participated in professional development focused on instructional strategies, student well-being, technology, and meeting the diverse needs of learners. We have also continued to prioritize communication with families through personalized academic updates, phone calls, and parent-teacher conferences. By working together and using student achievement data to guide instruction, we are better able to recognize successes, identify areas for growth, and provide individualized support.

We know that student success is a team effort, and we appreciate the continued partnership between our school and families!

As we head into Quarter 2, we look forward to building on this momentum, celebrating even more student successes, and continuing to make MPHS a place where students can learn, lead, and thrive. Thank you to our students, staff, families, and community for helping make our first quarter a great one! Go Toppers!

Homecoming Highlights

MPHS celebrated Homecoming Week the week of September 14! The classes competed for points through participation in activities. The freshman came close to overcoming the class of 2027, but the seniors prevailed to earn the title of 4 Time Homecoming Champions! Participation was at an all time high this school year and ample fun was had by both students and staff! The week was capped off by the dance with a Vegas theme. Special thanks to the Student Council for planning all of the fun events.

HOMECOMING QUEEN AND KING



Mackenzie Johnston & Keoni Charron



in Mt Pulaski
Saturday, October 24, 2026
4 pm – 6 pm

Please join us at our family-friendly event.

- Over 20 trunks to "trick or treat".
- Costume contest for kids & adults at 5:00 pm on the courthouse lawn.
- Community Band will be playing some spooky music.
- Isaac Bell will be creating balloon art for the kids.
- Vonderlieth Living Center will serve FREE hot dogs & drinks.
- Please enter at the corner of Cooke & Lafayette streets, under the water tower. Look for the bright green tent where you can register to win a prize.

Mt Pulaski 2026 Trunk or Treat on the Square is brought to you by the Community Association of Mt Pulaski. Follow us on Facebook (Community Association Mt Pulaski) and check out Mt Pulaski Today at www.mtpulaskitoday.com/halloween for more information.

Mount Pulaski Grade School NEWS

By Mrs. Lora, MPGS Principal

It is hard to believe that we have already reached the end of the first quarter! The 2026–2027 school year is off to a great start at Mt. Pulaski Grade School, and I am incredibly proud of the work our students and staff have accomplished during these first several weeks.

Our focus this year continues to be Every Student. Every Day. Every Opportunity. We are committed to creating a learning environment where every student feels supported, challenged, and valued. From the classroom to the playground, our students have demonstrated tremendous growth, enthusiasm, and Hilltopper pride.

Academic success is only one part of what we do at MPGS. We continue to place a strong emphasis on social-emotional learning, positive behavior, relationships, and student well-being. Our staff work together to support students academically, behaviorally, and emotionally so that students are ready to learn and have the tools they need to be successful.

Our Student Support Team and intervention processes continue to focus on finding solutions rather than simply identifying problems. Our classroom teachers remain an essential part of this process as we work collaboratively to provide the right support at the right time.

We have also started implementing attendance incentives to recognize and celebrate students for making school attendance a priority. During the month of September, we drew weekly winners from students who were in attendance every day that week. Winners were treated to ice cream at lunch as a fun way to celebrate their commitment to being at school. In October, we will continue our attendance celebrations with Surprise Attendance Days, where students may be surprised with special recognition or incentives for being present at school. We are excited to continue finding fun and positive ways to encourage students to be here, be engaged, and make every school day count!

Every Student. Every Day. Every Opportunity.
Go Hilltoppers!



ACTIVITIES DEPARTMENT NEWS

By Mr. Washko, Activities Director

It has been an exciting fall for Hilltopper Athletics and Activities! One of the highlights was our inaugural Mount Pulaski School District Hall of Fame induction ceremony, held on September 12, during the Mount Pulaski Fall Festival on the courthouse lawn. The event brought together former athletes, coaches, families, and community members to celebrate the rich tradition and history of Mount Pulaski.

Congratulations to our inaugural individual inductees: Jake Stahl, Dr. Forrest Van Hook, Ed Butkovich, Dennis Werth, Jeff Clements, and Tina Rogers-Smith. We were also proud to recognize four outstanding teams: the 1936 Boys Basketball team, which finished fourth in the state; the 1976 Boys Basketball State Championship team; the 1989 Girls Volleyball State Championship team; and the 2007 Girls Volleyball State Championship team. These individuals and teams have made lasting contributions to our school and community, and we are proud to celebrate their accomplishments. Thank you to everyone who helped make this inaugural ceremony such a success!

Another memorable moment this fall was hosting our first-ever home football game at Veterans Park. The MP/Unity Christian football team gave fans an exciting finish, earning a 38-35 victory over Oblong on the final play of the game! The strong community turnout made this historic event even more special and created a memorable day for our school and community.

As fall sports begin to wind down, I want to thank our student-athletes, coaches, families, and community for their dedication and support throughout the season. We are proud of the effort our athletes have put into representing Mount Pulaski, both on and off the field and court. As we transition into the winter season, we look forward to continuing to provide opportunities for our students to compete, grow, and represent the purple and gold with pride.



MPHS Art Club

The MPHS Art Club meets on a monthly basis. Students exhibit their creativity in projects as a part of this club. Many of their works of art can be seen when visiting the high school during evening events in the display case at the multipurpose gym entrance. Our talented crew even enjoyed a "Paint the Street Night" event at the Fall Festival. The club enjoyed being a part of such a fun community event.

MPHS Yearbook Club

The MPHS Yearbook Officers have been busy planning for the yearbook this school year. The Club will have a workshop in November to finalize the details of the new book. If you are interested in purchasing a 2026-2027 yearbook, sales are online only through the Jostens website at www.jostens.com.

Our yearbooks are printed and delivered after the summer. So, keep an eye out! There will soon be an announcement when the 2025-2026 yearbooks are available for pickup. Again, these were by pre-order last school year.



SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN UPDATE

By Mr. Spang, Superintendent

Mt. Pulaski CUSD #23 has begun the 2026–27 school year with continued focus on the five priorities identified in our District Strategic Plan: Communication, Highly Qualified Staff, Student Centeredness, Resources for a Growing Special Education Population, and Safety & Security. Across the district, staff have completed professional development in areas such as emergency response, CPR/AED, Stop the Bleed, school law, and specialized student supports. We have also continued strengthening communication through newsletters, Board meeting summaries on the website and social media, weekly Board briefs to the Board of Education, parent contacts, and many other forms of community outreach. Safety remains an ongoing priority through regular emergency drills, improvements to building access and security, and continued review of district procedures and policies.

Most importantly, our improvement efforts remain centered on students. Both schools have incorporated MAP assessment data and student goal setting to help students understand their academic progress and allow teachers to provide more targeted support. At the high school, the fall MAP median achievement percentile was 74th in both Math and Reading, while individualized English and Math interventions are already being provided based on student MAP results. At the grade school, efforts have included student goal setting, mentoring for new teachers, increased collaboration around IEP and 504 needs, attendance initiatives, family engagement, and school-wide expectations designed to promote a positive and safe learning environment. As the year progresses, we will continue monitoring our progress and using student data, staff and family feedback, and identified needs to ensure our School Improvement Plan remains an active roadmap for improving opportunities and outcomes for every Hilltopper.



When Housing Becomes Uncertain: Support Is Available

By Mrs. Mott, Student Support Coordinator

When people hear the word homeless, they often picture someone living in a shelter or without a place to stay. But for children and families, homelessness can look very different.

Through the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, schools can provide support to students whose families are facing housing challenges. This may include families who are:

- Temporarily staying with friends or relatives due to housing loss or financial hardship (often called “doubled up”)
- Living in a motel, hotel, campground, or shelter because they have nowhere else to stay
- Living in a car or another place not intended for housing

Eligible families may receive assistance with transportation, school supplies, clothing, school-related expenses, and other basic needs.

If your family is experiencing housing uncertainty or wondering whether you might qualify, please reach out. We understand these situations aren't always easy to talk about but we're here to help.

You don't have to know whether you qualify before contacting us.