EAST HOLMES LOCAL SCHOOLS

DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

FALL 2026

East Holmes Celebrates Growth on the 2026 Ohio School Report Card

Overall Rating — ★★★★☆ — *Exceeds state standards*

Achievement	Gap Closing	Early Literacy
★★★★☆	★★★☆☆	★★★☆☆
Progress	**Graduation**	**College, Career, Workforce and Military Readiness**
★★☆☆☆	★★★★★	★★★☆☆

All the hard work of East Holmes students, staff and families is paying off. East Holmes earned 4 stars on the 2026 Ohio School Report Card, up from 3.5 stars last year. A 4-star rating means the district exceeds state standards.

Districts throughout Ohio receive ratings across six components: Achievement, Progress, Gap Closing, Graduation, Early Literacy and College, Career, Workforce and Military Readiness. Together, these measures determine a district's overall rating.

Students continue to perform above state standards on state assessments, which once again earned East Holmes a 4-star Achievement rating. The district also maintained a strong Performance Index across tested areas.

Thanks to the work of teachers, counselors and staff members who help students stay on track, East Holmes earned 5 stars on the Graduation component, significantly exceeding state standards. The district also saw improvement in College, Career, Workforce and Military Readiness, another sign that East Holmes students are building the knowledge and skills they need for life beyond the classroom.

A 4-star rating is something to celebrate, and East Holmes will work to build on this year's growth. The district leadership team will continue its focus on instruction through a multiyear plan designed to strengthen classroom consistency and support student progress.

Congratulations to the teachers who go the extra mile, the staff members who support students every day, the students who continue to challenge themselves and the families who stand behind their children and their schools. This achievement is a credit to the many people who show up each day and do their part to help East Holmes students succeed.

MISSION *Inspiring excellence to prepare students in becoming productive and responsible citizens through a partnership of exceptional leadership, dedicated staff, and a supportive community.*

Understanding Ohio's School Attendance Requirements

Regular school attendance is one of the most important parts of helping students stay on track. Being at school each day gives students opportunities to learn, participate, build relationships and stay connected to their school community.

Ohio recently updated its attendance laws to place a greater emphasis on identifying attendance concerns early and working with students and families to provide support.

When a student misses 5% of instructional time, schools are required to notify families of the student's attendance. That equals approximately 45 to 50 hours, depending on a student's grade level and schedule. This notification ensures families are aware of attendance concerns early, so the school and family can work together to identify potential factors affecting attendance and determine whether additional support is needed.

At 10% of missed instructional time, a student is considered chronically absent under Ohio law. Importantly, all absences count toward chronic absenteeism, including both excused and unexcused absences. That means a student can be considered chronically absent even when all their absences are excused.

Chronic absenteeism is different from truancy. Truancy is based specifically on unexcused absences and has separate requirements under Ohio law. Being identified as chronically absent does not mean a student or family is in legal trouble.

At East Holmes, the goal is to partner with families, communicate early and provide support when it is needed. If a student begins to accumulate a significant number of absences, the school may reach out to the family to talk about attendance and explore how the school can help. Families play an important role in helping students understand the value of regular attendance, and together, schools and families can help ensure students have every opportunity to learn, participate and stay connected each day.

Next Phase of Safety Improvements Underway at East Holmes

East Holmes continues to focus on safety and security enhancements this fall with the rollout of a new wearable emergency alert system for staff. The system will provide an additional way for staff to quickly communicate during an emergency and help first responders access important building information.

The system is designed to provide staff with a fast, direct way to send an emergency notification and activate a lockdown when needed. It also gives first responders access to digital maps of district buildings, helping them quickly locate important areas and navigate the building during an emergency.

The district is beginning the rollout at Hiland, where the system will be tested and staff will have an opportunity to become familiar with how it works. Following that initial implementation, the district will continue introducing the system at its other buildings.

The new alert system is part of East Holmes' ongoing effort to strengthen safety and equip staff with the tools and resources they need to respond quickly and confidently in an emergency. As with all safety improvements, the goal is to provide an added layer of protection while maintaining safe, welcoming learning environments for students and staff.



Say Something Anonymous Reporting System

East Holmes Local School District uses the Say Something Anonymous Reporting System (ARS) in partnership with Sandy Hook Promise, a national leader in school safety programs. This initiative is part of East Holmes' commitment to creating a safer, more supportive environment for all students, educators and community members.

The Say Something ARS program is designed to educate students and staff on how to identify warning signs and threats, whether online or in person, and respond effectively. Through this program, students learn to recognize at-risk behaviors in their peers, take them seriously and act promptly. They can choose to talk to a trusted adult or report concerns anonymously via the Say Something ARS mobile app, website or a 24/7 crisis hotline.

Berlin Students Put Their Writing in the Spotlight

Sixth-grade students at Berlin Elementary are getting a chance to see their writing in print. This fall, students created the first edition of *Paper Airplane*, a class magazine featuring their own articles, ideas and creativity.

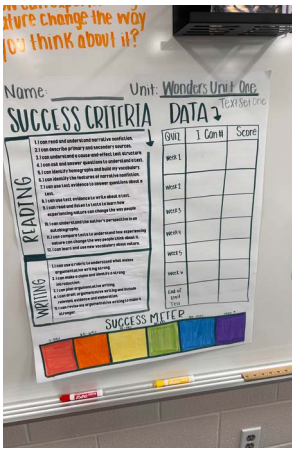
Fifth- and sixth-grade teacher Gennie Swartzentruber and intervention specialist Miranda McCullough designed the project to give students a real audience and purpose for their writing. Students rotate through three writing teams: Featured Writers, who develop essays; General Columnists, who work on informative, argumentative and descriptive responses; and Trivia Columnists, who focus on spelling, grammar and sentence structure.

For the first edition, students explored the question, “What do you do when life gets hard?” They pitched, drafted and edited their work before seeing it come together as a finished publication. Copies were then shared with teachers at Chestnut Ridge for review.

Mrs. Swartzentruber plans to continue *Paper Airplane* throughout the year, giving students a meaningful way to strengthen their writing, take ownership of their work and see their growth from one edition to the next.







Inspire. Prepare. Challenge.

Students Enjoy Sensory-Friendly Movie Experience

Students in the cross-categorical classrooms at Berlin and Hiland recently enjoyed a sensory-friendly movie at the Holmes Center for the Arts, joining other local groups for a fun day out.

Sensory-friendly movie experiences are designed to make the theater more comfortable and welcoming for everyone. The experience included dim lighting rather than complete darkness, a lower movie volume and no previews or trailers. Students were also free to move around, sing, make noise or take a break as needed, creating a relaxed environment where everyone could enjoy the movie in a way that worked for them.

The Holmes Center for the Arts provided a beautiful setting for this experience. Students and staff appreciated the chance to enjoy a movie together in an environment designed with their needs in mind.

Important Dates

NOVEMBER

16 Report Cards Sent Home (Elementary)

16 Elementary Parent-Teacher Conferences (Evening)

19 Elementary Parent-Teacher Conferences (Evening)

20 Elementary Parent-Teacher Conference Day
No School for All Elementary

25 Early Dismissal (2 Hours)

26 Thanksgiving Break (No School)

27 Thanksgiving Break (No School)

30 No School (Conference Compensation Time)

DECEMBER

22 Early Dismissal (2 Hours)
End of Second Nine Weeks (Hiland 7-12)

23 Christmas Break Begins (No School)

JANUARY

4 School Resumes

6 Early Dismissal (2 Hours)

9 Report Cards Sent Home (Hiland)

18 Martin Luther King Jr. Day (No School)

Board of Education

The board is composed of five elected citizens and meets in regular session on the third Friday of each month unless otherwise noted. Meetings are held at the East Holmes Administration Office and begin at 7:30 a.m. The public is invited to attend.

Board Members

Bryan Coblentz, President
Steve Miller, Vice President
Julia Ann Klink
Bryce Troyer
Wendyl Swartzentruber

2026 Meeting Dates

November 20, 2026
December 18, 2026

Superintendent's Message



Dear East Holmes Families,

This fall has given us several reasons to celebrate at East Holmes. From progress on our Ohio School Report Card to new safety improvements and our continued commitment to "Be the One," there is good work happening throughout our schools.

I am very proud of East Holmes' 4-star rating on the Ohio School Report Card, meaning our district exceeds state standards. Our students maintained a 4-star Achievement rating, earned 5 stars in Graduation and made progress in College, Career, Workforce and Military Readiness. These results are a credit to the hard work of our students and staff and the support our families provide every day.

We know that to keep this momentum going, students need to be in school. The state recently updated its attendance law, and we are committed to partnering with families to make sure students are supported and present so they can get the most out of their education.

Our theme for this school year is "Be the One. Inspire. Prepare. Challenge." Every day, I see staff putting this message into action by encouraging a student who needs a little extra confidence, challenging a student to reach higher, helping a student discover a new interest or simply making sure every student knows they belong. Those small moments make a difference and are part of what makes our district so special.

Thank you for your continued partnership and for making the start to the school year so successful. Together, we are helping East Holmes students learn, grow and prepare for what comes next.

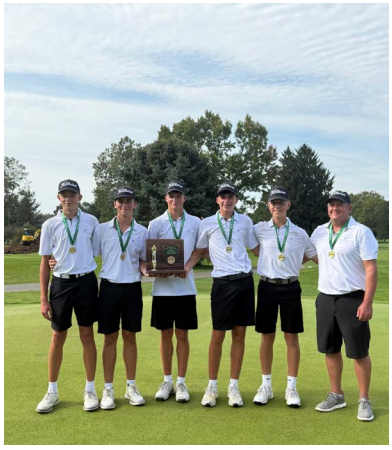
Warm regards,
Erik Beun
Superintendent

Fall Athletics Highlights

This fall, the Hawks competed with heart, showed dedication and athleticism across every sport and earned individual and team accolades.



Hiland boys varsity soccer player Christian Mullet became the school's all-time leader in career goals (62) and career assists (46).



The Hiland boys varsity golf team won the Division III district championship and placed fourth in the state tournament.



The Hiland cross-country team ran in the Amish Country 10K on Sept. 12.



On Sept. 1, senior libero Olivia Miller recorded her 1,000th career dig for the Hiland varsity volleyball team.