BULLDOG CONNECTION

FALL 2025

MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Celina City Schools Community,

What an energizing start to the school year! Since students' return in August, our campuses have been buzzing with learning, laughter, and a renewed sense of purpose. Thank you to our families and staff for setting such a positive tone, and a special thanks to our community partners whose supply donations helped prepare our Bulldogs to begin the year.

This newsletter you are holding marks the first of two printed and mailed district newsletters you will receive each year. While we will continue to share updates online, I am excited to deliver highlights right to your mailbox, so every household can stay connected. Inside this issue, you will find stories that reflect our theme of Building Excellence Together and the many ways our students and staff are growing every day.

Please be sure to read our Treasurer's Update, which outlines the renewal levy on the November ballot — a renewal that would not increase taxes and helps fund day-to-day operations that keep our schools running.

You will also see our State Report Card summary: one source of data that shows areas of strength, including a five-star rating in Graduation, and areas of opportunity for growth.

Across our buildings, we have made improvements you can see and feel, from a freshly paved elementary parking lot to exciting upgrades on the playground. Around campus, you will meet Officer Bruns, our newest School Resource Officer; see how Tri Star welcomed a special guest; check out the Food Services team's new menu items; and learn how a grant is helping our engineering students dive into real-world STEM learning. The snapshots of reading in action, our marching band stepping into a new season, and athletes making us proud, including a big win for girls' golf and a spirited alumni soccer game, help to capture so many positive opportunities our district has to offer.

We also invite you to explore our new website for news, events, and resources in just a few clicks. Your support is foundational to our district's success. It allows us to ensure every Bulldog is prepared for a bright future, which means we are fulfilling our mission – challenge, prepare, empower.

Brooke Gessler
Superintendent

STUDENTS BACK ON CAMPUS

The excitement for the new school year was contagious as students returned to campus starting the week of Aug. 18!

Thank you to the Grand Lake Rotary for organizing and running this year's Stuff the Bus drive so our students are well prepared for the year ahead.

WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH OUR FACILITIES?

It was a smooth ride into the elementary parking lot at the start of this school year! The parking lot received a fresh coat of blacktop and the playground got some exciting upgrades too!

TREASURER'S UPDATE

Celina City Schools remains in a strong financial position, even as the state budget process introduced some uncertainty for districts across Ohio this year. Careful planning, responsible spending, and the support of our community have helped us provide stability while continuing to invest in students.

Forecast and State Budget

The district routinely prepares financial forecasts. At the time of the May forecast, the district's outlook appeared healthy. As we update the forecast this fall, we will factor in the changes from the state budget bill to better understand both the short-term and long-term impact on our district.

November Ballot Issue

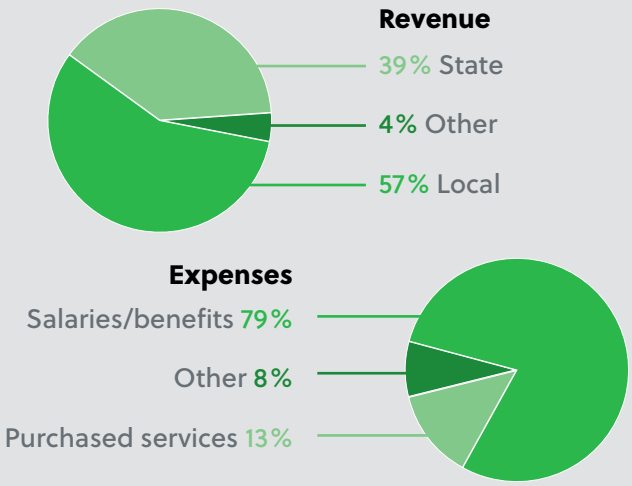
On the November ballot, Celina residents will see a five-year renewal levy. Because this is a renewal, it will result in no tax increase for residents. The levy generates $4.9 million each year — representing 13.8% of the district's annual operating budget. Operating funds can be used for day-to-day operations, including:

- Staff salaries
- Curriculum and classroom materials
- Supplies
- Utilities and building maintenance

Originally approved by voters in 2011, the levy has been renewed every five years since. Learn more at celinaschools.org.

Michelle Mawer
Treasurer

Celina Schools is primarily funded through local, state and federal funding. Below is the breakdown.



State Report Card Results Are In

Celina Schools showed consistency and growth on the 2024-2025 school report card! This is only one measure of our progress that communicates to staff, families, our community, and state legislators how we are preparing students for their future.

Report cards are based on a five-star rating, with one meaning needs support and five meaning significantly exceeds state standards. Our overall score of 3.5 means we are meeting state standards. In the Graduation category, we increased from 4 to 5 stars. This is also the first year a new component — College, Career, Workforce, and Military Readiness — has been graded, and we received 3 stars.

To learn more about Ohio's school report cards, visit reportcard.education.ohio.gov.

Overall
3.5 ★★★½

Achievement
4 ★★★★

Gap Closing
4 ★★★★

Early Literacy
3 ★★★

Progress
2 ★★

Graduation
5 ★★★★★

College, Career, Workforce, and Military Readiness
3 ★★★

Tri Star Hosts Special Guest

A special visitor toured Tri Star Career Compact in August. Lt. Gov. Jim Tressel met with local leaders and learned from our teachers about the exciting opportunities we are offering students here in Mercer County!

Grant Helps High Schoolers Take Learning to Next Level

Engineering students at Celina High School are making waves with the U.S. Navy Maritime Industrial Base Program. They are designing and building submarines thanks to Jon Gudorf, Battelle Teacher Academy member, who was awarded $12,000 worth of SeaPerch kits and reusable tools.

This unique opportunity through BlueForge Alliance and buildsubmarines.com is connecting students to real-world STEM careers in naval engineering.

New Year, New Menu

A healthy and well-rounded diet is key to learning! That is why our Food Services team introduced new menu items this year, including:

- Upgraded chicken strips
- Bold and spicy sauces
- Ramen bowls
- Tasty new snacks

Bulldogs Welcome New SRO

Officer Bruns is the newest addition to the Celina team! He is a School Resource Officer (SRO) and joins the district with more than 11 years of experience, with the majority of these years in New Bremen. If you see Officer Bruns, please give him a warm Bulldog welcome!

School Resource Officers are responsible for helping develop emergency response plans, patrolling school grounds, and building relationships with staff, students, and community resources to create a safer school environment.

Celina Schools SROs are members of the Celina Police Department, and we are grateful for their partnership in keeping our schools and community safe.

Reading Basics

Third graders in Mrs. Germann's class are hard at work in small groups practicing two-syllable words. Strong readers create strong students.

ARTS

Band Marches Into New Year

Our marching band kicked off the season at the annual Mercer County Fair Band Show.

ATHLETICS

Girls Golf Starts Season With Big Swing

Our lady Bulldog golfers won the Lincolnview Invite with contributions from Brooke Baucher, Claire Kuehne, Ava Kelley, and Bryn Baucher. Morgan Link and Jada Sharkey also had rounds to remember! Brooke was the tournament's medalist while Claire finished fourth. Congratulations!

Alumni Game a Success

Our high school student-athletes aren't the only ones having fun this fall season. Several alumni soccer players returned in August for the annual alumni game to see if they still had what it takes to get the job done. A good time was had by all!

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NEW WEBSITE LIVE

We recently launched a new website, designed to give our students, families, and community the latest news, event information, resources, and more in three clicks or less! Check it out at celinaschools.org.

CELINA CITY SCHOOLS

NOV. 4 FIVE-YEAR EMERGENCY RENEWAL LEVY

KEY FACTS

Celina City Schools is on the Nov. 4 ballot with a five-year emergency renewal levy that represents a zero tax increase.

- The emergency levy was first passed in 2011.
- It has been renewed by voters every five years since then.

The renewal levy represents 13.8% of the district's annual operating budget.

- The levy generates $4.9 million per year for the district.
- These dollars help partially fund day-to-day operations, including:
  - Staff salaries and benefits
  - Curriculum and supplies
  - Utilities and building maintenance

Celina City Schools manages taxpayer dollars carefully.

- The district reduces costs by leaving some positions unfilled when staff retire or resign and by renegotiating service contracts.