



# ORIOLE UPDATE

FALL 2021



Nearly 1,400 Avon Schools educators and support staff gather for the 2021-22 Back-To-School Celebration on July 27.

## Page 2

- AHS Experiences Yet Another Enrollment Bump
- AHS Passes Enrollment Projections
- AIS East and West Go Portable

## Page 3

- 2021-22 Teacher and Support Staff of the Year Michael Brooks and Sharol Todd
- Administrator Transitions
- Construction Updates

## Page 4

- Baby and Golden Oldie Orioles
- A Word from our Generous Sponsor

## The Biggest Little Word We Know From the Superintendent



We are well into the 2021-22 school year! Years from now, when we look back, I remain hopeful we'll get to say this was the year life returned to "normal" after the COVID-19 pandemic and the year we got to return to all we know and

love about school. I couldn't be more excited for what the rest of this year has in store for all of us.

My colleagues and I have been thinking about the word 'all' a lot. We've decided 'all' is the biggest little word we know. We use it frequently:

- How can we be sure **all** our students are learning and growing?
- How engaged are **all** our educators and support staff in our mission?
- How can we enlist the active participation of **all** our students' parents and caregivers?
- What more can we do to create an environment in our schools where **all** feel welcome and included?

These questions fuel much of what we do here in Avon Schools. In fact, we've adopted a new mission statement: **all belong, learn, and grow**. This short, simple phrase is a new way of expressing our long-term and ongoing commitment to ensure our destination is clear and that we all remain united through each phase of our journey.

Will you partner with us in the coming months, joining more than 10,000 students, 1,400 staff members, and countless friends in the community in making sure this is the best school year yet—for all of us?

Thank you for your active participation and support.

Sincerely,

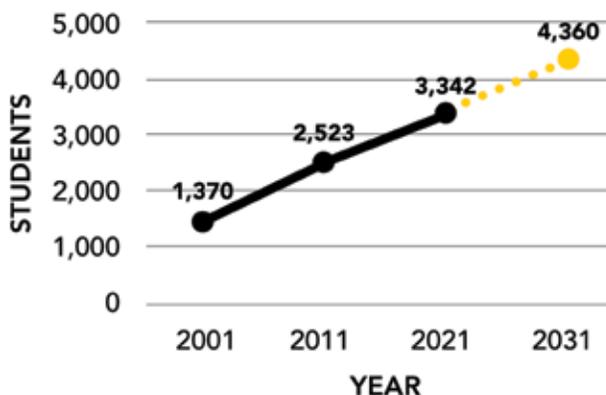
Scott Wyndham, Ed.D., Superintendent  
smwyndham@avon-schools.org

P.S. See inside for construction updates, all accomplished with **no increase to taxpayers**.



AHS Groundbreaking: Photo Courtesy of Pam DeWeese

## Avon High School Enrollment



**1999**  
AHS OPENS

**1,850**  
CAPACITY IN  
1999

**2,400**  
CAPACITY IN  
2007

**3,300**  
CAPACITY IN  
2010

**3,342**  
STUDENTS IN  
2021-22

## AHS Passes Enrollment Projections

Approaching 25 years old, AHS in need of expansion

Enrollment projections always present challenges for school corporations. However, as districts all over Indiana struggle with declining enrollment, the Town of Avon and the Avon Community School Corporation (ACSC) continue to be places more families want to call home.

This growth is most apparent at Avon High School (AHS), where student enrollment continues to grow. As of mid-October, there are 3,342 students enrolled at AHS.

The 2021 updated base forecast projects total AHS enrollment will increase by nearly 900 students in the next 11 years, passing the 4,000 student milestone in the 2028-29 school year.

- 2021-22 enrollment = 3,342
- 2028-29 projected enrollment = 4,005
- 2031-32 projected enrollment = 4,360

"We have been watching AHS enrollment closely for several years now," says Assistant Superintendent Dr. Michael Sullivan, "and the growth we've been experiencing there and across the school corporation is simply

not slowing down. We are committed to providing a top-notch, 21st Century learning environment for AHS students. To ensure we do so, it is vital for us to make plans today in anticipation of the enrollment increase we know is coming."

AHS Principal Matt Shockley, along with Assistant Principals and staff have been working hard to mitigate growth pains and to help all students succeed while laying the groundwork for the future. Shockley notes, "This facility and campus has served us well for nearly 25 years. I'm not sure that the leaders who planned the original construction of this school could have envisioned our facility supporting 4,000 students. The question is not if we will reach 4,000 students but when."

ACSC Administrators are hard at work creating plans to accommodate enrollment projections **without increasing costs to taxpayers.**

To learn more about enrollment projections at AHS and across the school corporation, visit [avon-schools.org/about](http://avon-schools.org/about).

## East & West Go Portable

Intermediate schools growing quickly



Avon High School isn't the only school to feel the pinch as total K-12 enrollment is projected to increase by 2,011 students over the next decade. Avon Intermediate School East and West have added portable classrooms this year to ease congestion. In the likely scenario that enrollment projections are accurate, AIS East and West will both require classrooms for 225 additional students by the 2025-26 school year.

# Avon Names Teacher & Support Staff of the Year



Michael Brooks (pictured between Andy Mohr and Superintendent Scott Wyndham) is the 2021 Andy Mohr Teacher of the Year and a Top 25 finalist for Indiana's Teacher of the Year. Mr. Brooks teaches 7th and 8th grade Mathematics at Avon Middle School South. "Mike embodies what it means to be a teacher," says AMS South Principal Dan Chapin. "While Mike encourages students to be successful academically, he is also a leader, mentor, and support system for every student he works with." In addition to his work in the classroom, Mr. Brooks supports his coworkers as a team leader and mentor. Before and after school hours, Mr. Brooks can be found tutoring students, leading clubs, coaching golf, and serving as an athletic event manager.

Meet Michael and Sharol by listening to the Orioles In-The-Know podcast at [orioles-in-the-know.simplecast.com](http://orioles-in-the-know.simplecast.com).



Sharol Todd, Maple Elementary Custodian, is Avon Schools' inaugural Support Staff of the Year. "Sharol is one of the hardest working and most organized people I know. She has been a savior through the madness of COVID-19 and construction," says Principal Nikki Harrison. "She's just a good sport about everything and our staff and students love her." Sharol's quick wit, bright smile, and investment in Maple's students make her a vital part of the Maple Elementary family. Quick to share credit with those around her, Sharol's personal dedication has been an important part of helping staff and students remain effective and successful during the inconvenience and transitions that occurred during construction at Maple.

# Construction Updates

Multiple projects nearing completion



Construction projects at Hickory Elementary, Maple Elementary, Sycamore Elementary, and Avon Middle School South are nearing completion as the White Oak Early Learning Center project is well underway. These projects are being completed at **no additional cost to Avon taxpayers.**

# Administrator Transitions

## Administration Center Updates

Over the summer, we underwent a reorganization in our district administration. We were able to eliminate one Assistant Superintendent position in the process.



**Dr. Michael Sullivan** is now Assistant Superintendent. He had been serving as Assistant Superintendent of Business and Operations.



**Sheila Glass**, formerly Treasurer, transitioned to a new role as Avon's Chief Financial Officer, assuming many of Dr. Sullivan's previous responsibilities.

## School Principal Transitions

Elementary boundaries were redrawn this year to balance enrollment, provide a more equitable experience for all students, and pave the way for the opening of White Oak Early Learning Center.



**Jarrod Gatlin**, former White Oak Elementary Principal is now Principal at Pine Tree Elementary.



**Karie Mize**, long-time Pine Tree Principal, is now Principal at White Oak Early Learning Center.



**Heather Gorgas** is now River Birch Principal after a long tenure there as Assistant Principal.

## New Assistant Principals



**Craig Buckler**  
River Birch



**Karmesha Molton**  
Sycamore



**Jennifer McCann Thomas**, Pine Tree



**Tonya Moody**  
Hickory



**Melissa McCollum**  
Maple



**Beth Tharp**  
AHS



**AVON** COMMUNITY SCHOOL CORPORATION

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**ALL**  
belong · learn · grow  
avon-schools.org

## Celebrating Brand-New & Long-Time Educators

At the ACSC Back-To-School Celebration on July 27, we celebrated three notable Avon educators. Our annual "Baby Oriole Just Hatched" award goes to the person who was most recently hired, and we recognize the people who have the longest tenure in Avon Schools, our "Golden Oldie Orioles." Thank you, Mrs. Ruiz, Mrs. Albaugh, and Mr. Ayers, for your years (or weeks) of service!



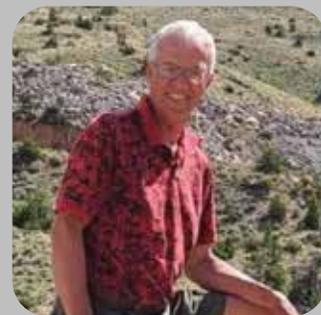
**Breann Ruiz**  
Teaches kindergarten at Pine Tree. Joined staff 12 hours before the Celebration.

*"I always knew I wanted to be a teacher. I love interacting with children. I love to watch them make connections between our content and their everyday lives. I'm proud to be on the team at Pine Tree Elementary."*



**Becky Albaugh**  
Special Education Assistant at AHS. She has served Avon students for 42 years.

*"What I do here has never seemed like a job to me. When I first started, it was something for me to do while my kids were in school and still be available for them when they were home. It very soon became more of a passion and a purpose. It is just part of what makes me who I am."*



**Gary Ayers**  
Technology Education Teacher at AHS. He's been serving Avon students for 39 years.

*"I never intended to become a teacher. I started in Architecture but switched to teaching with my roommate's encouragement. I have never regretted the choice. Seeing students learn is the ultimate thrill. On top of that, I love the dedication and positive environment at Avon High School."*

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