

# Beyond the stats | About magazine | Stark County

**Similar to an offensive lineman in football, a catcher in baseball or Tristan Thompson of the Cleveland Cavaliers, Stark County schools offer valuable educational programs that don't always show up on the state's stat sheet.**

Here are some highlights of what makes these Stark County high schools unique:

## **Alliance City School District**

Nearly a fifth of Alliance High School's student body has joined the school marching band, which, along with competitive show choir, earned recognition at various competitions and events this year. The high school's orchestra and symphonic band earned superior ratings at this year's state competition.

## **Canton City School District**

Timken Early College High School, which is a program under McKinley High School, continuously has outperformed similar early college high school programs across the nation by helping students, many of whom are from low-income families, graduate on time with not only a high school diploma but also at least a semester of college credits. Of the 359 students who have graduated from the program since 2009, 222 of them also earned an associate degree from Stark State College.

## **Canton Local School District**

Canton South High School offers a unique small-animal science and care program that gives juniors and seniors the ability to explore careers as wildlife rehabilitators, zoo keepers and veterinarians by caring for animals that go well beyond the standard farm or companion variety.

## **Fairless Local School District**

While many high schools offer college-level classes on their campus, few do it like Fairless High School. Through a partnership with Kent State University at Stark, Fairless has dedicated two classrooms in its high school for Kent professors to teach classes, such as math, writing and science. The school now offers more than 40 college credits through the Kent State arrangement, as well as through college-level classes taught by Fairless teachers who have adjunct professor status. The Falcons also are known for their lively student section at athletic events. The Ohio High School Athletic Association named the Dirty Birds as co-champion of its 2015-16 Battle for the Golden Megaphone Challenge, which rewards the student sections that are the loudest and demonstrate the most pride.

## **Jackson Local School District**

Jackson High School's curriculum emphasizes preparing globally competent students. It offers the Jackson Academy for Global Studies, which is an international school within the high school that integrates a global perspective into the students' core classes and includes courses to help students become fluent in either Chinese, French or Spanish, as well as learning expeditions to other countries for students to experience different cultures.

Jackson also is one of only 22 high schools in Ohio that offers the demanding international baccalaureate diploma program, which is a two-year curriculum for juniors and seniors that includes a strong international focus and prepares students for college. The district also will add an international baccalaureate career-related program for those students who want to enroll in career technical courses.

### **Lake Local School District**

Lake High School is one of the few Stark County school districts to offer a two-year legal studies program for students interested in pursuing a career as a court administrator, paralegal, court reporter, legal assistant, legal case administrator or lawyer. The course, which offers college credit, includes visits to the county courthouse and jail, exposure to lawyers and judges, as well as a three-day Washington, D.C., seminar to see lawmakers in action and visit monuments and historical sites. Students also compete in the Ohio Mock Trial. Lake students consistently have received gold medal awards in the annual Moot Court Competition held by the Stark County Bar Association. Law and legal services also were identified by the website "My College Options" as the most popular career major and career interest of Lake High School students.

### **Louisville City School District**

Louisville High School's speech and debate program ranks among the top 10 percent of schools nationwide and has earned membership in the National Speech and Debate Association's prestigious 100 Club. This milestone recognizes the school's commitment to teaching students life skills such as communication, research, listening, writing and organization. Louisville's speech and debate program also has produced at least two national champions.

### **Marlington Local School District**

Marlington High School offers an extensive agriculture program and a 30-plus-acre land lab to prepare students for a range of careers in horticulture, landscaping, turf management and wildlife and animal sciences. Marlington also offers courses for students to get hands-on learning about the oil and gas industry, as well as renewable energy sources.

### **Massillon City School District**

More than 70 percent of Washington High School students are enrolled in career-technical courses, formerly known as vocational programs, ranging from accounting and auto body, to cosmetology and manufacturing, to nursing and pharmacy. The 13 programs consistently have earned high marks from the state, and the school had among the highest placement rates in Ohio in 2014. The school also has the only career technical program in Stark County that has seen a consistent increase in students taking classes in nontraditional fields for their gender, such as girls taking auto body or boys in cosmetology, according to state figures.

### **Minerva Local School District**

Increasingly more Minerva High School juniors and seniors plan to attend R.G. Drage Career Technical Center this upcoming school year to explore careers such as welding, construction trades, cosmetology and graphic design. Of the 168 students who will be juniors this upcoming school year, 88 of them plan to attend R.G. Drage, despite

the 35-minute bus ride to the Massillon vocational school. Minerva school officials say the arrangement also allows its teachers to focus on preparing the remaining students for their college careers.

### **North Canton City School District**

Hoover High School is the only school in Stark County to own a fabrication lab that has been outfitted with such tools as a commercial-grade 3-D printer, vinyl cutter, industrial sewing machine, a laser engraver and a CNC milling machine. Beyond teaching the students how to use the machines for their designated careers, teachers also have used them for business and marketing lessons where students make their own products and then sell them.

### **Northwest Local School District**

Among Stark County high schools, Northwest High School boasted the highest percentage of students from the class of 2012 who were enrolled in college two years after they graduated. It saw 81.3 percent of its 139 students who graduated in 2012 enrolled in college by 2014. The rate is a 21-percentage point increase compared to 2007, when roughly 60 percent of students had pursued a college degree. School officials pride themselves in the school's ability to offer the variety of courses and programs seen at Stark County's large schools, even though it has a third of their enrollment. The school also provides an online program that students can use if the course they want is not offered.

### **Osnaburg Local School District**

East Canton High School students have been flourishing in the school's science, technology, engineering and math courses, which include an introductory course, robotics and land use, and community project learning. According to the My College Options Annual Report, which surveys more than 700,000 students nationwide, about 52 percent of East Canton High School students plan to pursue a STEM-based career versus 28.2 percent nationally. The report also states that 95 percent of its students plan to attend a four-year higher education institution following their high school graduation.

### **Perry Local School District**

Perry High School offers roughly 35 courses that offer college credit and are taught by its own high school staff, which is seven times more offerings than six years ago. As a result, the high school has watched more of its students graduate high school and enroll in college. In the past two years, more than 10 Perry seniors have graduated high school while also earning 60 credit hours of college coursework and an associate degree from Stark State College at no additional cost. Roughly 250 Perry High School students were enrolled last school year in College Credit Plus classes, which are college-level classes through Stark State College or Kent State University at Stark that are taught by Perry Local teachers who are adjunct professors. Perry students also can earn college credit through the school's 12 Advanced Placement classes, four online courses, as well as through the international baccalaureate program by taking classes housed at Jackson High School.

### **Plain Local School District**

Nearly 2,000 GlenOak High School students—roughly a third of the high school's student body—are enrolled in a class revolving around the arts. Among the most popular classes are ceramics, marching band, choir and art survey. The high school also is the site of a black-box theater and the Plain Local Community Center for the

Performing Arts, which allows students to learn about the technical aspects, marketing and catering that goes on behind the scenes of a performance. Some of the national acts that have come to GlenOak include Gin Blossoms, Kellie Pickler, The Temptations and Eddie Money. The district also operated with the lowest cost-per-pupil among Stark districts at \$7,206 in 2014.

### **Sandy Valley Local School District**

Sandy Valley High School's visual arts program is thriving and literally making an impact in the community. Under the watch of art teacher Kayla Bigler, the school's new Art Club is finishing its second mural of the summer and has created other public art displays. The school also has seen an increase in students interested in taking art classes, entering art competitions and exploring a career in the arts.

### **Tuslaw Local School District**

Tuslaw High School's instrumental and vocal music programs have hit the trifecta. For the first time in 20 years, the school's concert choir, concert band and men's chorus each received superior ratings during a recent state adjudicated event. The school traditionally has boasted a large choir.

Sources include Ohio Department of Education, Ohio Department of Higher Education, Niche.com, GateHouse Ohio Media archives, U.S. News & World Report, My College Options Annual Report, Stark Education Partnership publications, district newsletters, websites and course descriptions books.