

BLACK HISTORY MONTH bec students' annual performance

writer anniston powell
designer ava mejia
photo credits ava mejia

This Black History Month the high school looks beyond the famous faces to honor the hands that built America and shaped it to be what it is today. Many African Americans have changed the face of America people live in today by diversifying the music, sports and work industries.

“Black people have helped our community because they have set new standards for things like music, sports and work life. They have just broadened the industries and led to new styles,” sophomore Reagan Miller said.

Black History Month is a time to honor those who have risked their lives to end segregation, such as Martin Luther King Jr. and all African Americans today.

“Martin Luther King Jr. would be proud because he really made an impact with his speech on our community,” junior Jude Osei said.

King gave his famous “I Have a Dream” speech that sent the nation into a spiral. One of his most famous lines is “I had a dream that my four little children would one day live in a nation where they would not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.”

“I am participating in a club called Black Empowerment Club, people also say B.E.C. It is so much fun, and I have made so many new friends,” Miller said.

On Feb. 6, the Black Empowerment Club performed in the theater for Black History Month. They mentioned many famous African Americans, such as Duke Ellington.

“We rehearsed for about two and a half months and rehearsed for about a week on stage. We worked on it for a

long time, and we tried to make sure it was very entertaining and successful,” sophomore Gabby Pendleton said.

The Black Empowerment Club does numerous initiatives to try and get the community to learn more about their culture and learn about past events, especially seen through the assembly. During the assembly, the club highlighted important African Americans who made a difference today by singing and creating skits.

“The core mission of the club is how we are going to promote inclusivity and show people around the school about our club and our culture,” Pendleton said.

There were various scenes the club demonstrated during the assembly, such as “The Wiz” and “The Sinners”.

“My favorite scene to perform was ‘The Wiz’ because it was so much fun to rehearse and being able to play the character on stage was very thrilling and exciting,” Pendleton said.

This play is about a girl named Dorothy and her journey to find her place in the world. It emphasizes resilience, black culture and self-discovery

“We performed a total of 10-12 scenes. It took quite a while to memorize all the scripts and make sure our parts were perfect before we went on stage.”

Balancing that many scenes took hours of preparation and dedication for the club to perfect their performance.

“The Sinners was a specific scene that the club wanted to emphasize because we believed it represented black culture the best and most accurately,” Pendleton said.

This assembly performed by the Black Empowerment Club opened up new perspectives to many Pioneers and enhanced the importance of the month of February.



Members of Black Empowerment Club perform during their annual Black History Month assembly on Feb. 6. This year had an award show theme, which showcased a red carpet and awards given throughout the performance.

SPRING SPORTS PREVIEW

a preseason look at spring sports

writer wes shroff
designer madeline riley
photo credits ava mejia

With the winter sports season coming to an end, and spring preseason nearly fully underway, it's time to take a look at spring sports.

After a late season regional semifinal loss to Grove City, baseball is looking at another great season. The 'Neers face off against some out of town teams, such as Butler and Cincinnati Archbishop Moeller. When the boys go on their spring break trip, they will face some out of state teams: Cox High School from Virginia and Covenant High School from North Carolina.

Last year, softball suffered a tough loss to Gahanna Lincoln in the district semifinal but also have high hopes for this season, as the team faces off against Grove City week one this season.

After a loss to Dublin Jerome in the regional final last year, and along with a change in coaching staff, with new Head Coach Nathan Nelson and Offensive Coordinator Nathan Robey, boys lacrosse is looking to go to the Region 1 final again to hopefully pull off some wins in the tournament this year.

"This season the biggest

challenges for the team will be depth, with our loss of the seniors. We will definitely have fewer players," senior defenseman Connor Rhoden said.

Boys lacrosse will struggle with having bodies to put on the field, with the shift of new freshmen.

"The team to beat this year is definitely going to be Liberty. Like every year, they have a really good team with looks from colleges, but they aren't as good as last year, and we can beat them," Rhoden said.

Girls lacrosse also dropped a tough loss in the regional semis last season to Liberty. Also with new Head Coach Kent State and Capitol alum Andi Henry, this season the girls are looking for another trip to regionals, and some payback wins against rivals such as Liberty and Olentangy.

Track is looking forward to the upcoming outdoor season with lots of new varsity runners looking to take the wheel. With many of the state placers from last year graduated, track will have to work hard with new athletes with hopes of state tournament looks. Last year, boys track had eight regional qualifiers, in 10 different events, with four of those athletes going to state at OSU. Last year for girls track, they sent a relay to districts, with seven separate athletes at districts also.

Boys volleyball has had a rough time in the last few springs, with last season's record being 4-18, but with new Head Coach Jackson Deubner, the boys are hoping for a comeback season.

"I definitely have very high hopes and expectations for this team this year. This is going to be an up year for our program, and most other programs are down. We have so much potential for this season, and I cannot wait to see how we use this potential and put our name on that banner in the gym," sophomore Nate Powell said.

The boys are looking forward to a district or even state title this year. "I definitely want to go after Thomas Worthington this year, especially last year they had such a great season. Beating them and ending their hype from last year would be amazing for our team," Powell said. Boys volleyball plays Thomas Worthington on March 24.

Boys tennis won its first OCC title since 2022 last year. Coming off that title this year, the boys already secured their reputation as a top team in Ohio.

With that wrapping up the spring sports season preview, good luck to all of our talented Pioneer athletes this spring.



Spring sports athletes competing during the 2025 season.



SENIOR PROFILE:DEVYNN HANNA

the solo senior on girls basketball

writer kate purlee

designer wes whroff

photo credits gracyn lidke

Nearing the end of the winter sports season, students and staff recognize the solo senior on the girls basketball team, Devyn Hanna.

The girls basketball team consists of one senior, no juniors, and is primarily made up of underclassmen. Though they are young, the team continues to work toward getting better and gaining experience every chance they get.

Last year, the girls basketball team went 2-7 in conference and 3-15 overall team. The team was again short of seniors, with Bella Thorn and Nora O'Brien leading in the only two on the roster.

The team still thrived on underclassmen with Olivia Loftis starting as a freshman. Loftis is now a sophomore and is the team's starting point guard. Hanna began playing basketball in eighth grade and has continued to grow her love for the game. She explained that her grandpa was the person who got her into basketball and shared how playing makes her feel closer to him.

"He's the one who really got me into basketball," Hanna said. Being the only senior on the team, comes with great responsibility and leadership. Hanna has learned how to navigate this new leadership role with the help from her teammates and coaching staff.

"I honestly couldn't do it without them," Hanna said. Throughout her whole high school career, Hanna went through three different coaching staff's, which really challenged her to adapt to the changes. The friendship she made throughout her four years, are what ultimately kept her motivated and committed. With no other seniors

on the roster, she's grown closer to the underclassmen and made many new friends. Hanna shared that one thing she will be missing the most are the friendships she has made during her time as a player.

One thing that especially makes Hanna stand out as a leader is her ability to listen to others. "I'm always going to hear you out on your perspective before I tell you my opinion on the situation," Hanna said. Hanna is also highly respected and appreciated by her teammates and friends.

"Everyone will miss Devyn's uplifting and positive personality when she graduates because she makes the environment fun for everyone around her," Loftis said.

Not only does Hanna contribute leadership, but she is also a major contributor on the court.

"Her post skills and rebounding is really effective in games," Loftis said.

Off the court, Hanna continues to stay active and enjoy time with those closest to her. She likes to play volleyball or soccer with her friends for fun, and she enjoys going on walks and jogs.

"I love spending time with my friends and family whether it's spending a fun night inside or outside," Hanna said.

After she graduates, Hanna is planning on attending college and majoring in business or marketing. She also said one of her future goals is to continue to stay active and maintain strong relationships with friends and family.

As she closes out her final basketball season, Hanna experiences a mix of emotions. She is happy and excited to take this next step in her life and is grateful for all of the memories and friends she has made along the way. At the same time, it is bittersweet

knowing that this chapter of her basketball career is coming to an end.

"Overall, I'm so grateful for being able to have the opportunity to play, and for basketball to be a part of my life," Hanna said.

Her dedication and positive attitude helped support the team, encourage younger players, and create a welcoming environment that made practices and games more enjoyable throughout her final season together



Senior Devyn H. lines up for a free throw on Feb 3, at home vs. Liberty (Top)

Senior Devyn H. shooting a free throw at The Challenge vs. Liberty (Bottom)



Gracyn Lidke
PHOTOGRAPHY

I SUPPORT THE GIRLS club works together to advocate for the

writer kate purlee
designer elleanor winland
photo credits anniston powell

I Support The Girls Club is a club that partners with the non-profit organization, I Support The Girls, also known as ISTG. The organization works to help people who are experiencing homelessness, poverty, domestic violence or other kinds of distress by providing essential items they might otherwise be unable to afford.

“Every woman should have their dignity protected, no matter their income class,” senior and Club President Abi Wykoff said.

They collect things like undergarments, menstrual hygiene products, toiletries and other self care

products. The organization works through a network of local branches across the United States and internationally. They will collect donated items going toward these organizations.

“Feminism is so important to talk about in high school and provide more education to young women,” junior member Keira Dickson said.

ISTG began in 2015 by a woman named Dana Marlowe after she saw the struggles that these women go through every day. Since then, the organization has grown immensely and has made a difference in the lives of women and

individuals in need across communities around the world.

At the high school, the club helps to collect donations that will go towards the organization. They even hold events like self defense lessons and work with other clubs at the school to raise awareness about women’s issues while supporting those in need.

As women’s history month is approaching, the club is planning to do a spirit week to raise awareness about women’s issues and supporting individuals in need within the community.

Ultimately, ISTG’s work is about giving people dignity and comfort during difficult times, so basic human needs don’t go unmet.

DECA UPDATE

deca competes in the state competition

writer riley colvert
designer elleanor winland
photo credits anniston powell

At the high school, DECA is a fast-paced club where students develop leadership, competition skills and real-world business experience. Students apply these new skills to various competitions like the district and state competitions.

As these rigorous competitions approach, with districts on Feb. 24-25 and states on April 25-29, class time becomes more focused around preparation.

“I prepare for states by learning all the key terms of my event and practicing my presentation many times since it’s a prepared event,” senior co-president Cameron Guy said.

Students in DECA not only work

on their own events, like Guy with a writing on community awareness, in and outside of the classroom, but they also support one another.

“I help my classmates by running mock judging for role-plays and giving them feedback like a real judge would,” Guy said.

Each class period can look different depending on responsibilities and the time of year; the beginning of the year is more easing into DECA and around

the time states roll around it’s in full swing.

“My average day is finding what needs to be improved, judging role-plays and updating Fantasy DECA spreadsheets and leaderboards,” senior co-president Linden Marin said.

The competition process challenges students to perform under pressure, and it only ramps up as the season and school year continue.

“To advance to states, you have to place in the top eight–12 to make day two, and then top four to five to qualify further,” Guy said.

Outside of competition, DECA emphasizes leadership and preparing the next generation of members.

“Toward the end of the year, it’s about passing the torch to the juniors and helping them succeed in their senior year,” Marin said.



Olentangy Orange DECA letterman jacket

IT HAS BEEN A QUARTER

the real side of third quarter slump

writer peyton johnson
photo credits ava mejia

When the third quarter hits, the course work feels like it never ends. Procrastination hits, and the work just continues to pile up.

As a senior, it has been especially hard to come to school and complete assignments that I should be doing. The classes feel long, and the work feels quite optional and overwhelming.

Although the case worsened as I entered the third quarter of my senior year, there has always been a slump in the third quarter all throughout high school. Not showing up to school, missing assignments, not studying and being happy with what I am able to complete.

Something that does not help the

severe slump of the third quarter is the weather. There is no sunshine, snowing, cold and ice; it feels like summer is never going to arrive.

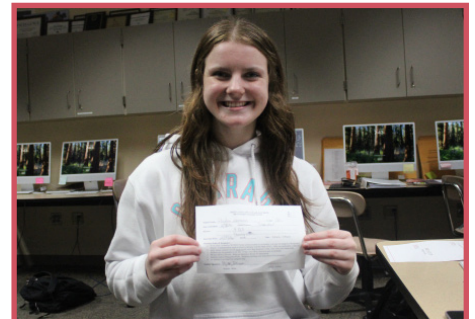
The only break that students can look forward to is spring break all the way at the end of March and the wait feels neverending.

As it gets closer to break, students get excited and start talking about their plans and talking about what they're going to do on their exhilarating spring break trips. I LOVE hearing about the exciting adventures of the high school students.

Although the third quarter is quite the slump for most students, there are some positive notes to it being the third quarter. Students can look forward to it being the fourth quarter soon. As soon as the third quarter

begins, the students just got off winter break, so that helps the vibes of the beginning of the third quarter.

As I continue through the third quarter slump, I am looking forward to the exciting end of my sports season, spring break and entering the final quarter of my senior year.



Senior Peyton J. receives first detention second semester of senior year.

HALLWAY TRAFFIC

the rules of the hallway

writer peyton johnson
designer ava mejia

One would think that being between the ages of 13 and 19 years old that high school students could walk in the hallway. My theory is proven wrong every single time I walk into the high school building.

In the hallway, there is a mix of slow walkers, stopping mid-hallway to have conversations with one's significant other, people using the elevators when they are not supposed to and countless other ways to maintain the hallway traffic.

The rules of the hallway are the same as the traffic laws, stay to the right side, no stopping in the middle of motion and no standing more than two people side by side.

While walking in the hallways every day, there are countless encounters of people walking five people side by side and taking up the whole entire hallway causing slow walking and possibly being late to class. Personally, I find it aggravating to be stuck behind a group of five people talking, slow walking in the hallway.

However, I realize that while walking in the hallway, there are certain things that can happen and one may need to stop. There could be a water bottle drop, a pencil drop or simply a conversation that needs to end. But, people should realize that before stopping in the hallway, there should be a look behind and to the side to make sure there is no collision causing more traffic.

Although there are a lot of ways to cause hallway traffic, there are some students who maintain good hallway etiquette. These people lead by example by not being on their phone, not stopping mid-hallway, not cutting across the hallway and walking with no more than one person by their side.

I personally appreciate those who maintain the correct hallway etiquette, which eliminates as much traffic as possible. I fully believe that walking in the hallways should be a skill that students should have learned before entering high school, or at least learn it within the first few weeks of their high school career.

If you find yourself or your friends not following the unwritten rules of the hallway, check yourself, and think the correct etiquette.

FAMILY CONSUMER SCIENCE

students make roasted potatoes

writer madeline riley

designer madeline riley

photo credits sydney coe

ROASTED POTATOES

INGREDIENTS

- 1 potato per student
- 3 Tbsp. canola oil
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. garlic powder
- 1 tsp. italian seasoning
- 1/2 tsp. black pepper

DAY 1

1. Scrub your potato with a vegetable brush
2. Cut the potato on a cutting board using a chef's knife. Your group must demonstrate two types of cuts out of julienne, medium dice, and slice.
3. All of your cuts must be uniform (consistent). Large pieces will not cook thoroughly
4. The entire group shows the teacher consistent knife cuts before storing in container filled with cold water that completely covers all potatoes or they will turn brown.

DAY 2

1. Preheat the oven to 450 degrees F
2. Mix seasoning (oil, salt, pepper, italian seasoning and garlic powder).
3. Coat all potatoes with seasoning mix by mixing together in a bowl.
4. 3/4 of your batch will bake: Line the baking sheet with aluminum foil and spray with nonstick cooking spray, spread out potatoes in a single layer and bake for 20-25 minutes.
5. The rest of your batch will air fry: 400 degrees F for 7 minutes- spray air fryer bucket with cooking spray, put in a single layer of potatoes, shaking half way through. The rest must be baked.
6. Serve with dipping sauce and enjoy!



Food for Fitness students prepare chilli during 11th period.

JANUARY STUDENTS OF THE MONTH

- Anthony Cruz
- Hannah Barnhart
- Morgan Bower
- Austin Ransburgh
- Richard Smith
- Linden Flower
- Laney Miller
- Adiza Wreh
- Tamryn Taub

FEBRUARY STUDENTS OF THE MONTH

- Cameron Graham
- Jaxon Trakalo
- Monica Do
- Sophia Ramirez Vargas
- Kaelyn Hedrick
- Emma Barker
- Preston Bronder
- Bo Siefker