

# THE NEWS-HERALD

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## Third, fourth grade test scores show sizeable gains

### Nearly 90 acres of school property declared surplus

BY ANN CARTER  
CORRESPONDENT

The Owen County Board of Education met this week for its April meeting, where elementary principal Jacklyn Fink presented iReady testing results for 3rd and 4th grade students.

Fink reported that the 3rd grade reading scores improved from 32% of students on grade level at the beginning of the year to 52%, while the number of students two or more grade levels behind dropped from 46% to 22%.

Fourth-grade reading scores also showed significant growth, increasing from 21% on or above grade level to 48%, with students two or more grade levels behind decreasing from 34% to 10%.

Math scores displayed similar gains across both grades, with increases in the number of students performing on grade level and sharp decreases

in those falling multiple grade levels behind.

"This is reflective of intentional teaching, utilizing our high-quality instructional resources, and the amazing relationships we have with our students as we continue to encourage them to do their very best all of the time, not just on testing," Fink went on to say she has plans to expand reading and phonics strategies into math instruction next school year.

The board also received its annual financial audit report from Rupert White of White and Associates. White praised the district's financial practices, telling board members that the finance office closely follows procedures established by the state and the district. "Overall, from an audit standpoint, you all do an excellent job," White said.

In other action, the board voted to declare 88.2 acres of property located behind the middle school as surplus. The district plans to move forward with surplusing the property in accordance with guidelines set by the Kentucky Department of Education. The process includes determining surplus status, obtaining KDE approval, securing a certified appraisal, advertising the sale publicly, and completing the

sale through approved methods such as public auction or sealed bids before receiving final KDE approval.

During board member comments, traffic congestion at school drop-off and dismissal times were raised by board member Joy Colligan, citing concerns shared by a parent. Colligan referenced gridlock during both morning arrival and afternoon student release.

Superintendent Reggie Taylor said traffic flow is addressed annually prior to the start of school and noted that an increase in parent transportation has contributed to heavier traffic in recent years. "More parents transport their kids than in the past," Taylor said.

Colligan asked whether adjusting morning drop-off times could help relieve congestion, particularly while buses are arriving. She shared that arriving around 7:15 a.m. has shown to be lighter traffic based on her own experience. Taylor responded that the district will review possible options during a meeting ahead of the next school year to look for ways to improve traffic flow.



Photo by Ann Carter

Harper Duvall and Josie Holtzapple pose for a photo before heading into the prom.

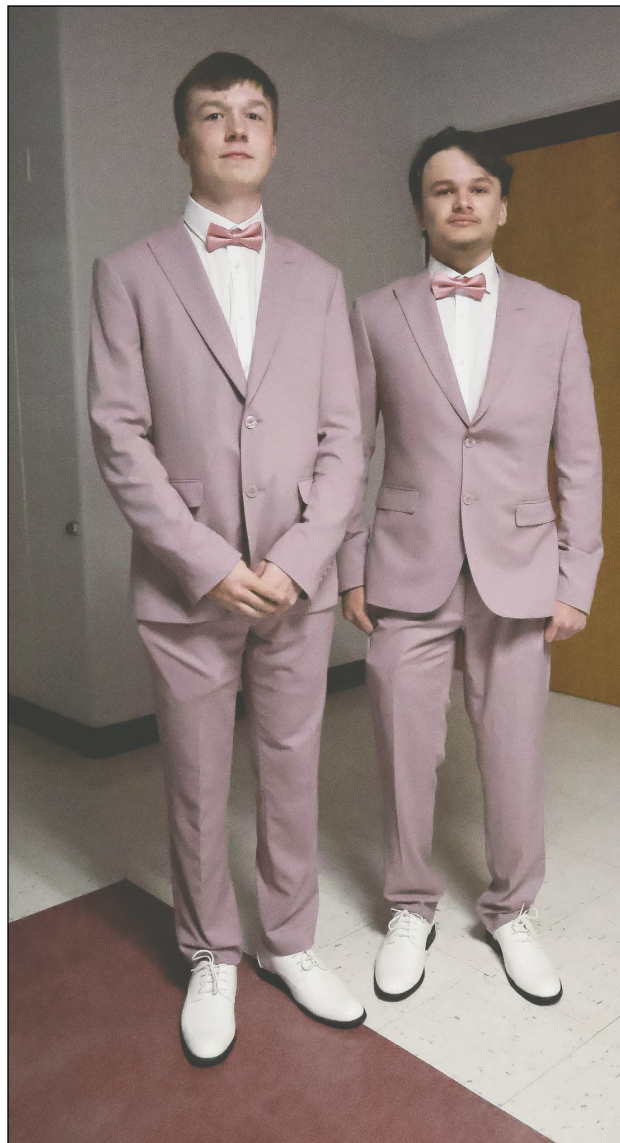


Photo by Ann Carter

Damien Smith and Heath Phelps head into the prom.



Photo by Ann Carter

Owen County High School students Colton McDaniel, Cloie McGuire, Dallas McGuire and Callie Fitzgerald are all smiles as they head into the prom over the weekend. The annual event was held at Prinkle Barn in Walton.

## All dressed up: Students enjoy 2026 prom

BY STAFF REPORTS

Students stepped out in style last weekend for the 2026 Owen County prom. The ladies dressed to impress in gowns that sparkled and shined and their dates in their matching tuxes.

The day began with hair appointments, makeup, and photos before prom goes took part in the traditional Grand March at the high school, where families gathered to see the students dressed in their attire.

The special day wrapped

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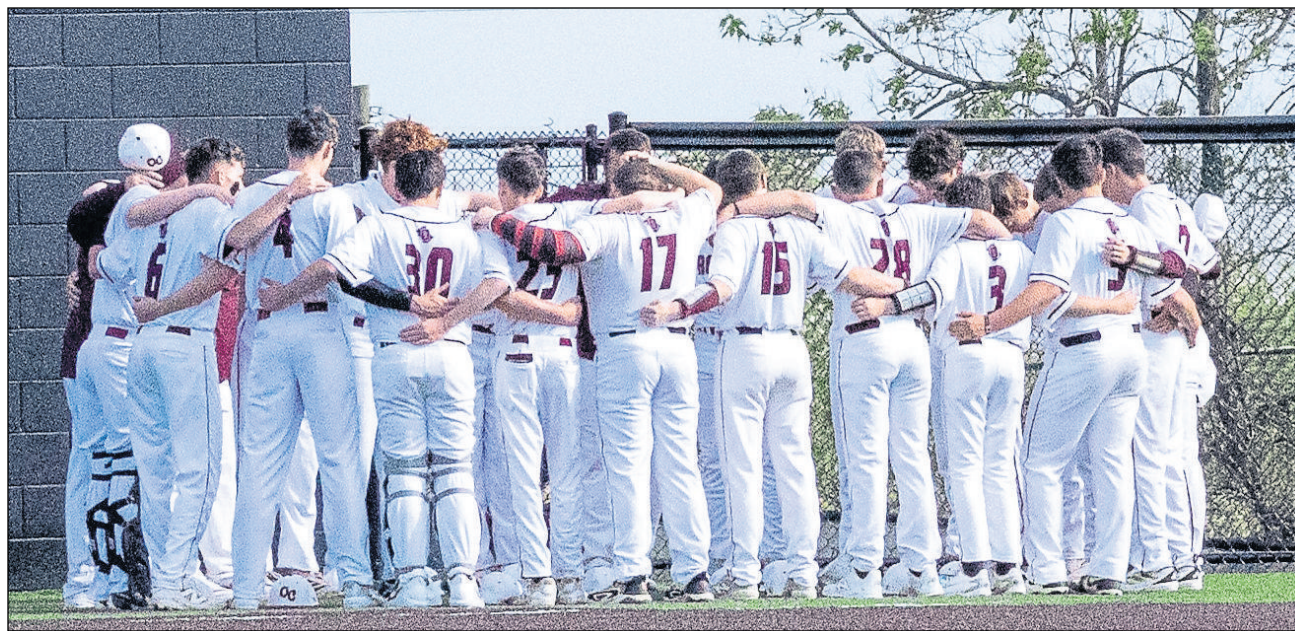


Photo by Ann Carter

The Rebels gather for a team prayer before opening up the new Dunavent Field against Carroll County on Tuesday.

## Newly renovated fields greet baseball, softball teams

BY STAFF REPORTS

Owen County baseball and softball hosted their home openers Tuesday on the newly renovated fields.

Athletic Director Megan Hearn said it was an exciting night tonight with the opening of both facilities.

"It was great seeing so many people out to support our girls," she said. "Baseball we had an excellent crowd as well."

Hearn went on to say that several alumni that came just to see the new facility.

The new facility was good to the boys baseball team, which knocked off visiting Carroll County 4-3 in nine innings. The girls softball team fell show against visiting Carroll County, 8-4.

In baseball action, Carroll County scored first and led 3-0 before Owen County answered.

Owen County managed to plate one run in three straight innings. The Rebels pulled even during the bottom half of the sixth frame.

Owen County plated one run in the bottom half of the ninth inning to claim

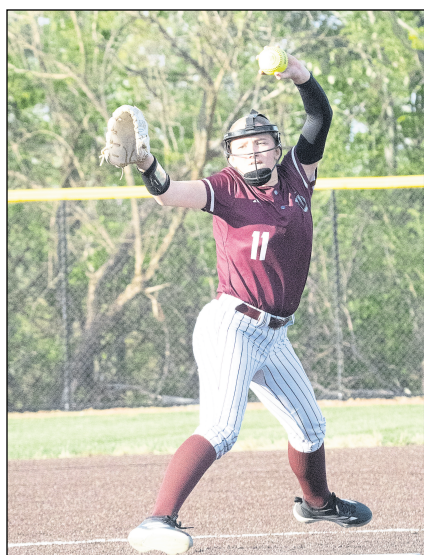


Photo by Ann Carter

Hallie Tirey delivers a pitch during Owen County's opening game at the newly renovated field.

the win.

Brody Hearn pitched a complete game for Owen County and earned the win on the mound. Hearn recorded seven strikeouts.

Bryce Furnish pitched one and two-

thirds innings in relief of Carroll County and suffered the loss on the mound. Furnish struck out one Owen County batter.

Mason Ogden started on the mound for Carroll County and pitched six and two-thirds innings. Ogden recorded six strikeouts.

Owen County scored four runs on nine hits. Hearn (three hits, one RBI), Michael Smith (two hits, one RBI), Connor Dezarn (two hits), Trip Allnut (one hit), Hatcher Smith (one hit) and Bryson Tirey (one RBI) each produced offensively for the Rebels. Showing speed on the basepaths, Dezarn tripled.

Carroll County plated three runs on five hits. Brayden McIntyre (two hits, two RBIs), Dalten Wilson (two hits) and Luke Taylor (one hit) accounted for Carroll County's offense. Both Wilson and Taylor doubled.

Owen County was scheduled to visit Carroll County for another 31st District baseball game on Thursday, April 23, the results of which were not available at press time.

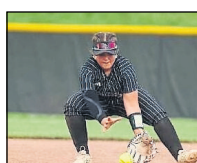
In softball action, Owen County faltered late as visiting Carroll County

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