



# 50 Reasons to Love Wadsworth City Schools

*(A Triple "A" District - Academics, Arts, and Athletics)*



- 1. Top Performing Academics:** Wadsworth City Schools has earned the grade of "Excellent with Distinction," or "A+," for three consecutive years and is the ONLY district in Medina County to achieve this performance level. This ranks the district in the top 2% statewide.
- 2. Award-Winning Fine Arts:** Several fine arts programs annually receive recognition for their success. The Grizzly Marching Band and other instrumental music programs are well-known around the state, entertaining fans at half-time and concerts during the year. Our Speech and Debate program is recognized as one of the top 10% programs in the nation, our vocal program is award-winning, and our visual arts program has a unique partnership with the only art museum in Medina County.
- 3. Championship Athletics:** Grizzly sports teams capture Suburban League Titles annually. The state-ranked wrestling team has notched 20 Suburban League Titles to accompany their Division I State Championship in 2010. The Girls' Basketball program is another powerhouse with 19 SLT in the last 21 years, and Volleyball has won 29 straight league matches, adding to Grizzly Athletic domination.
- 4. Low Spending:** The school district boasts the lowest per student expenditure in Medina County and, on a statewide comparison, is 30% below the state average. In addition, of the top 2% of high-performing districts in the state, Wadsworth City Schools is the 2<sup>nd</sup> lowest-spending district in this select group.
- 5. Low Tax Rate:** The school district has the lowest tax rate per student in Medina County, giving residents a high return on the dollars they invest in the schools. Lowest taxed, lowest spending and highest performing equals Fiscal Responsibility.
- 6. Managing Money Well:** Wadsworth Schools has received clean audits of our fiscal records for over 20 consecutive years. Recently, Standard and Poor's upgraded the district credit rating to AA-, and in 2008 the State Auditor named Wadsworth City Schools as a 'Peer District,' citing money management procedures as 'best practices' for other districts to follow.
- 7. Award-Winning Schools:** Wadsworth Middle School - Ohio School to Watch; Central Intermediate School - Ohio School to Watch; Lincoln Elementary - a National Blue Ribbon School in 2012; Isham Elementary – OAESA Hall of Fame School in 2013; Franklin Elementary School - Zone 6 Hall of Fame School; Wadsworth High School - Recognized by College Board for AP Testing results.
- 8. Best of the Best:** Wadsworth City Schools was named "Best of the Best" School District by readers of the Medina County Gazette in 2010 and 2011. This honor demonstrates the district's respect and leadership throughout Medina County, where every school district has earned a rating of "Excellent" or above by the Ohio Department of Education.
- 9. Dedicated Board of Education:** Our Board of Education oversees the policies and procedures that guide the operation of our school district. The 5 board members are an experienced group, with 51 total years of school board experience between them.
- 10. Successful Leaders:** Leadership is critical to the success of any organization and the Administrative Team in Wadsworth Schools is regularly recognized for leadership success. Building level and Central Office officials average 12.4 years of school administration and have been recognized with honors such as Medina County Educator of the Year, Business Leader of the Year, and Citizens of the Year, and a finalist for Ohio Distinguished Principal of the Year honors.
- 11. Excellent Teachers:** Wadsworth City Schools is proud of the accomplishments of our teachers who are dedicated, high-quality professionals. Approximately 85% possess Master's Degrees. In addition, our teaching faculty has been recently honored with awards such as Ohio Music Educator's Award, Governor's Award for Excellence in Youth Science, and many are active in the Jennings Scholar Program. The District is known for having an intensive, research-based hiring process for teachers which includes authentic teaching demonstrations and emotional intelligence analysis to ensure that top-quality candidates are hired.
- 12. Support Staff:** The support staff at Wadsworth City Schools is critical to the success of the district. Whether supporting students or administrators, support staff personnel are dedicated individuals who take pride in their jobs and pride in WCS.
- 13. All-Day Kindergarten:** We know the importance of students starting with a sound academic foundation as they matriculate into Wadsworth City Schools. The district is committed to educational excellence and strongly believes in having kindergarten students attend school all day, every day. Providing an all-day experience in kindergarten helps to ensure success in the primary grades and beyond.



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14. **Special Education Services:** Our Transition to Work Program for Students is unique to Medina County. In our effort to educate and prepare ALL students to be responsible citizens and contributing members of society, our Special Education Department focuses on preparing students to be independent and works with each on an individual basis, tailoring educational plans to meet each student's needs.
15. **CARE Team:** Wadsworth Middle School is proud to have the first CARE Team in Medina County. This group of professional agencies comes together under the leadership of the Middle School to maximize services and resources to assist at-risk students.
16. **Bear Cub Before/After School Program:** Bear Cub offers convenience to working families at an affordable rate. The program offers homework help, tutoring and enrichment activities in addition to providing child care. The energetic and student-centered Bear Cub staff loves our kids!
17. **Career Tech Success:** The Four Cities Educational Compact (Wadsworth, Copley, Norton, and Barberton) is one of the most successful Career-Tech Planning Districts in the state. Unlike other schools in Medina County, Wadsworth City Schools' taxpayers do not pay additional taxes for a Career Center. Under this Compact design, students can stay in their home school for both regular education and career-tech programs.
18. **Carrying Precious Cargo:** The Wadsworth City Schools Transportation Department has transported over 1,800 students daily, to and from school and to numerous extra-curricular and sporting events for 1,383 consecutive days without a chargeable accident.
19. **Volunteers:** Both parent and non-parent volunteers are valuable assets to our school buildings and programs. Their unselfish dedication helps us provide intervention, enrichment, and support programs to our students. Each school building is fortunate to have numerous volunteers step forward to assist in co- and extra-curricular programs and activities to help students succeed.
20. **Partnerships:** Wadsworth City Schools is proud to have formal partner agreements with several agencies to maximize efficiency and save money by sharing expertise, facilities and services. Partners include the City of Wadsworth, The Wadsworth Public Library, Summa Wadsworth-Rittman Hospital, The Wadsworth Salvation Army, The Center for Older Adults, Wadsworth Safety Forces, and The University of Akron. Sharing resources and services is very noticeable in the Wadsworth High School- Community Center project where the school district is working with the City of Wadsworth, The Center for Older Adults, WCTV, Summa Wadsworth-Rittman Hospital, The Wadsworth Public Library, and the Akron Area YMCA.
21. **Performing Arts:** Drama, Comedies, and Musicals comprise the Theater Arts productions in grades 7-12 with the Children's Play and the High School Spring Musical being community favorites. The district also boasts two performing arts venues: OJ Work Auditorium, which was renovated in 2002 thanks to the support of the Wadsworth Performing Arts Foundation, and a new Performing Arts Center at Wadsworth High School. In addition, a green room and a black box theater make our performing arts facilities one of the finest in Ohio.
22. **Local Leadership:** Wadsworth City Schools knows the importance of being involved in community organizations and events. School officials are active in the following organizations and have held officer positions, demonstrating leadership: Wadsworth Public Library, Leadership Medina County, Wadsworth Salvation Army, Wadsworth Lion's Club, Wadsworth Rotary Club, Wadsworth Chamber of Commerce, United Way of Medina County, Downtown Wadsworth, Blue Tip Festival, Wadsworth Cable Commission, and the Wadsworth Bicentennial Planning Committee.
23. **Community Service:** Annually, each school adopts at least one community non-profit organization to support. Students and employees contribute numerous hours and assist the organizations in fulfilling their missions. In addition, several hundred students volunteer throughout the community of Wadsworth, adding to the atmosphere that Wadsworth City Schools cares about the community of Wadsworth.
24. **Seniors Helping Seniors:** Each year, the graduating class at Wadsworth High School spends a day, and often part of the weekend, raking leaves for senior citizens or other physically challenged community members. On the average, the class rakes over 230 yards each year.



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25. **Veteran's Assembly Programs:** Students and staff pay tribute to our veterans by hosting a Veteran's Day Assembly program each November. This hour-long tribute is open to the community and is well attended by veterans. This is another example of developing Grizzly Pride and patriotism.
26. **Annual Food Drive:** Each year, students and employees participate in a canned food drive to assist the needy in Wadsworth. Employees donate to the local food pantry when they return from summer break and the student drive occurs in November. Between the two drives, approximately 28,000 items are collected and donated to the Wadsworth Salvation Army food pantry.
27. **Adopt-A-Family:** During the holiday season, students and staff adopt needy families and help share the holiday spirit by donating gifts to students and adults within the community. Schools work closely with the Wadsworth Salvation Army and the local FISH organization to make the holidays cheerful for more families.
28. **Grizzly Red for Red Cross:** Annually, schools conduct nine blood drives to benefit people in need of blood. The blood drives at Wadsworth High School receive regular recognition and thanks by the Red Cross for the high numbers of donations and caring student body.
29. **Community Education Program:** Continuing the theme of being community-minded, we offer a community education program for preschool through senior citizens. Topics range from crafts to technology, from hobbies to new skills or interests, and are widely popular.
30. **Food Service:** The Wadsworth City Schools Food Service Department is operated independently of the district's general fund. This self-sufficient department works hard to provide meals that meet strict state and federal guidelines, while containing costs. It is the only department in the district that does not rely on any taxpayer's dollars.
31. **Health/Wellness Initiatives:** The district is an area leader in Health and Wellness initiatives. Key features include creating a health care consortium with four other schools districts to minimize risk and control costs, hosting an annual health and wellness fair for employees, creating health and wellness incentives that focus on prevention, and educating students and employees alike to ensure healthier lifestyles.
32. **Parent Information Nights:** Frequently, parents are invited to hear presentations about important school-related activities or information on 'hot topics.' Past and current evening presentations include: "No Bullies, No Victims," Financial Aid Information, College Planning, Post-Secondary Option Information, Internet Safety, "Darkness to Light", Advanced Placement Course Information, NCAA and College Athletic Eligibility, and Course Selection/ New Student Orientation.
33. **Instructional Technology:** The district boasts a strong history of instructional technology, being the first school district in Medina County to connect all schools to a fiber-optic ring. Classroom teachers continually explore and implement the latest effective instructional technology tools to promote and enhance student learning.
34. **Grizzly Pride:** Red and White, Go Grizzlies!, Go Big Red!, A sea of red at sporting events, hearing fans chant, "Wadsworth"...."Grizzlies".... "Wadsworth"...." Grizzlies"..."We Are....Wadsworth!"... Wadsworth City Schools---Home of the GRIZZLIES.
35. **Alma Mater:** Standing arm in arm, the Student Cheering Section, Cheerleaders, Band, and Athletic Teams all enjoy the pride of singing the Alma Mater.
36. **Homes and Neighborhoods:** The community atmosphere is supported by many unique homes and a variety of home prices and options. Parents have the choice of new developments, historic homes, housing within walking distance of a quaint downtown, homes on large parcels in the township and small parcels in the city.
37. **Close-Knit Feeling:** In Wadsworth City Schools, everyone is a Grizzly and each day people work hard to support, promote, and encourage others to succeed. We are a big school district with a 'small' district feel as support staff, teachers, parents, administrators, and community members often work collaboratively for the betterment of students.
38. **Neighborhood Elementary Schools:** Our district supports the concept of neighborhood elementary schools, enabling many K-4 students to walk to school and attend the same school as siblings of different ages. The neighborhood elementary school concept supports the feeling of community.



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39. **WHYS:** Each school building has a parent support group operating under WHYS (Wadsworth-Home-Youth-School). Parents volunteer hundreds of hours to support and enrich school initiatives for students. In addition, officers from each school unit come together as "WHYS United" to keep the focus on collaboration, district-wide issues, and meet with school administration. It is not uncommon for the WHYS organizations to donate between \$75,000 to \$100,000 annually with the emphasis on improving the schooling experience for children.
40. **Business Advisory Council:** Fifteen business men and women volunteer their time each month to meet with school administration and provide feedback to the board of education on curricular programs, district operations, and other issues facing the board. Their service and input is invaluable and supports the motto, "Wadsworth City Schools, Where Quality Education is a Community Tradition."
41. **Career-Tech Advisory Committees:** Community members from businesses that align with our Compact programs serve our district by offering their input and evaluation of our Career-Technical Programs. The goal is to make sure each program is preparing students to succeed in their respective fields. This is another example of community support and involvement.
42. **Alumni Association:** The Wadsworth Alumni Association is a network of past graduates who stay connected with each other and the school district. Maintaining "Grizzly Pride" and fondly remembering WHS as their alma mater maintains valuable traditions and history.
43. **Booster Clubs:** Especially on the secondary level, parent booster clubs work hard to enhance the experience for students in extra-curricular programs. Parents devote countless hours and tremendous effort to raise money and enrich the experience for students.
44. **Supporting Youth Sports:** The community youth sports programs are closely connected to the school sports teams. Annually, high school coaches contribute their time to youth clinics and instruction, youth sports teams use school facilities at no charge, and youth programs are recognized at varsity sporting events. High school athletes often serve as role models and mentors to future Grizzlies.
45. **Local Scholarships for Students:** Each year, many civic clubs, organizations, and groups raise money for scholarships for graduating seniors. Each scholarship has specific criteria and are awarded to WHS graduates to assist with their post-secondary expenses and meeting their career goals.
46. **Friends of Wadsworth City Schools:** Adequate school funding is critical to the ability of a school district to provide programs and services to students. Wadsworth City Schools is blessed to have an organization of volunteers who provide manpower and financial support to run a campaign on school district ballot issues.
47. **Rapid Notification:** Wadsworth City Schools utilizes a rapid notification phone calling system to alert parents of important news about school closings, issues, or events. Under this system, every parent and employee in the district can receive a recorded phone message within 15 minutes. Keeping parents informed is a district priority.
48. **Grizzlies Going Green:** Grizzlies are eco-friendly and support sustainability of our limited resources with drives to recycle ink cartridges, cell phones, and other initiatives to support the Medina County Central Processing Facility. In addition, electronic communication is used for board meetings, school newsletters, and student forms to reduce the use of paper. Finally, the current school construction project meets or exceeds L.E.E.D. (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Silver level. This effort ensures that our new buildings will be environmentally friendly and support sustainability for the future.
49. **Medina County Shared Services Consortium:** Wadsworth City Schools and other schools in Medina County collaborate and share services and expertise in the areas of purchasing, technology, operations, and instruction to maximize effectiveness and efficiencies in this day of limited resources. The District also shares services with other school districts, governmental agencies, and a few private entities to maximize dollars and efficiency.
50. **New Facilities for Students and the Community:** With the 2012 completion of the High School/Community Center project and three new elementary schools, every school building in the district will have been newly built or renovated within the last 12 years. The community also benefits with access to new gymnasiums, recreation facilities, and public spaces.