

2026 John Lewis Award Winner

Kacey L. Sanders is an exceptional rising ninth-grade student who will enter high school in the fall of 2026 with a record of outstanding academic achievement, leadership, and well-rounded involvement. A scholarship recipient and nominee for the Angelica Award, Kacey has consistently demonstrated excellence, maintaining honor roll status throughout her academic career and earning straight A's for the past two years while enrolled in advanced coursework, including advanced math, advanced science, gifted ELA, and advanced world history. She will continue this rigorous path in high school and is also enrolled in the College Credit Plus program through Sinclair.

Kacey's passion for learning extends beyond the classroom. She has been an active participant in Science Olympiad for three years, earning multiple medals and competing at the state level. Her commitment to the arts is equally impressive—she has played the violin for four years and has already earned a place in the high school orchestra while still in middle school. She is also involved in choir and has attended the Springfield Symphony Orchestra camp, further refining her musical talents.

A dedicated athlete, Kacey plays volleyball and has pursued her interest in equine science through hands-on experiences, including three years at Camp Kern's Equestrian Camp and volunteering at the Therapeutic Riding Institute in Spring Valley, Ohio. Her aspiration to become an equine veterinarian reflects both her academic focus and her passion for animal care.

Kacey has broadened her educational experiences through participation in prestigious enrichment programs, including the STEM-Ag Camp at Central State University, the Cybersecurity and STEM Innovation Camp at Benedict College, and the Dayton Art Institute Art Camp. She is also actively engaged in leadership and service, serving on her school's Superintendent's Advisory Council, creating video announcements for the student body, volunteering at a private daycare, and running for high school class president.

With a commitment to continued growth, Kacey plans to read 20 books over the summer as she prepares for the next chapter of her academic journey. She is a driven, disciplined, and community-minded student whose achievements and ambitions position her for continued success in high school and beyond.