

Bluffton Exempted Village Schools

2020-2021 Summer District Newsletter

~ News from the Superintendent~

We are excited to be welcoming over 1200 students into our district on the first day of school, whether in person or in our remote learning platform. Our goal is always to provide high quality education—no matter what the platform; this is a point of pride in our district and in our community. To that end, we will be adjusting the school week to accommodate the dual platform approach: students will attend school four days per week (Monday through Thursday), and on Fridays, all students will learn remotely. Our teachers will continue to be physically at the school Monday through Friday. However, designating Friday as an asynchronous remote learning day will allow teachers the opportunity to provide more targeted instruction to those who may need extra help. Additionally, teachers will be working on recordings, lesson plans, Zooming with students who have questions or require additional assistance, and posting assignments for the week to come. We realize this schedule will put a burden on some families, and we apologize for that. However, we believe this is the best way for us to provide instruction at a high level in both platforms. We will evaluate this arrangement at the end of the first nine weeks (October 30) and decide if we will continue with this weekly schedule for the rest of the semester.

Several new staff members are joining the district this year. Sarah Jebson, who finished last school year as our school nurse, will continue in that role. She replaced Joyce Suter who was our nurse for over 26 years. Madeline Goecke is a new kindergarten teacher for this year, and Abby Diller is new to the 4th grade. Due to the large 4th-grade numbers, the addition of another 4th-grade teacher was necessary. Diana Kiser will be a new language arts teacher, and Paul Utendorf is the new math teacher at the middle school. These new hires are the result of two staff members departing at the end of last year. Our two librarian aides, Rhonda Wenger (HS) and Cheryl Morris (MS), retired this summer; new this year in that capacity are Amanda Hohenbrink at the high school and Jamie Shaw at the middle school. Erika McCrory will replace Jaime's aide position in the middle school. Our new middle school custodian is Megan Morris. Robin Miller and Missy Ritter retired from the middle school cafeteria, and their replacements are Rachel Mathewson and Julie Wolfe. We welcome all these new employees to our Pirate staff and look forward to working with them for many years to come.

It is with great disappointment that we announce the cancellation, for this school year, of the monthly senior citizen breakfast performances. While we still would like to see everyone each month for these great events, we believe it is wise not to congregate in large numbers at this time. Thank you to the following sponsors who so generously provided last year's breakfasts: Citizens National Bank, First National Bank, Sprunger Insurance, Ellerbrock Spine and Soft Tissue, Lewis Family McDonald's, Blanchard Valley Hospital, Senior Citizen Center and Mennonite Home Communities. We look forward to bringing these events back in the 2021-2022 school year.

The financial report on this page shows our general fund carry-over balance of just over \$6.7 million for the 2020 fiscal year. We have been able to achieve financial stability due to the cost-saving measures that have been put in place over the last several years. Our district spends less than the state average per pupil, but achievement levels for the district remain consistently near the top in the state. This could not be achieved without the support of parents, students, staff, and community. Everyone plays an important role in helping each of our students succeed. While our carry-over balance is healthy, we are

trying to be prepared for whenever there is a downturn in the economy. Should there be a cut to our state funding, our goal is to continue to operate near the same capacity of staff, without having to return to our taxpayers for more funding. We will continue to look for ways to be fiscally responsible to you, our community, while still providing our students with an excellent education.

Our professional staff development this year will focus on providing the very best content delivery both in person and in remote learning. We are trying to take what we do on a daily basis in the classroom and transfer that to the remote learners at home. Please contact us if there are any problems with the delivery of this content, whether that is in person or remotely.

The permanent improvement projects, listed on the second page of this newsletter, were completed over the course of the past year. Available funds allow our district to make repairs and improvements to our facilities for students and the community. While our buildings are not new, we believe the updates and upkeep on each of our facilities make for an excellent learning environment. We thank the community for its support.

As a reminder, when school begins next week, please be careful around all our school buildings. Please watch closely at all intersections around our district and proceed with caution, both as a driver and as a pedestrian.

We look forward to the privilege and opportunity to educate the students in our district this year. Thank you for your continued support of Bluffton Exempted Village Schools and the students we serve. If you ever have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to stop in or call me at 419-358-5901.

Greg Denecker – Superintendent

Financial Information for 2019-2020 General Fund

Beginning Balance (July 1, 2019)	6,156,558
Outstanding Encumbrances (FY 2019)	112,406
Beginning Cash Balance (July 1, 2019)	6,268,964
Revenue:	
Local Sources:	
Real Estate	3,625,683
Personal Tangible	1,808
Investment Earnings	102,476
Other Local Sources	1,590,760
State Sources:	
Foundation Program	4,556,832
Rollback & Homestead	409,974
Other State Sources	130,394
Other Receipts:	
Total Receipts Above	10,417,927
Plus Cash Balance	6,268,964
TOTAL REVENUES	16,686,891
Expenditures:	
Salaries & Wages	5,915,655
Fringe Benefits	2,256,934
Purchased Service	1,248,521
Materials, Supplies, Texts	239,049
Capital Outlay	-0-
Other Expenditures	123,360
Transfers/Advances	73,206
TOTAL EXPENDITURES:	9,856,725
ENDING CASH BALANCE	6,830,166
Outstanding Encumbrances	129,963
Ending Balance (June 30, 2020)	6,700,203

Bluffton Schools Permanent Improvement Projects

Over the course of the past year, our district has completed many different permanent improvement projects. In each summer's district newsletter, The Bluffton News, and the Bluffton Icon, we outline the revenue that was brought in from this 1/2% permanent improvement income tax and the projects completed with these tax dollars. Below is the revenue chart of the combined monies brought in by the tax and the list of expenditures for the projects completed thanks to this fund.

Date	Revenue
Balance Forward from August, 2019	\$365,452.35
October, 2019	\$179,699.84
January, 2020	\$173,002.16
April, 2020	\$220,965.15
July, 2020	\$249,679.84
Projects Sept. 2019-Aug. 2020	Expenditures
Plumbing Repairs and R/R Updates	\$44,421.20
Technology	\$314,272.22
HVAC Repairs and Updates	\$51,919.39
Outside Facilities Maintenance and Updates	\$4,348.96
Flooring	\$52,048.47
Painting	\$30,422.19
Furniture	\$26,122.36
Windows	\$3,616.76
Equipment and Repairs	\$29,099.04
Security	\$68,881.70
Safety	\$42,661.32
Electric and Lighting Updates	\$3,870.51
Building/Classroom Repairs and Updates	\$90,594.37
Classroom Equipment	\$28,327.80
Textbooks/books	\$77,972.69
Concrete/Brick Maintenance and Repairs	\$48,723.00
New Bus	\$94,422.00
Total	\$1,011,723.98

Bluffton Schools will continue to use these funds to update our facilities as promised to the taxpayers of this community. As always, we at Bluffton Schools appreciate the community's support of our district's efforts to maintain and improve facilities. If you would like to see these improvements in person, please call me to set up a convenient time to view these updates first hand.

Greg Denecker – Superintendent

Pirate Pride!

If you do not want your child's name or picture released to any media outlet or on our website, please tell your child's building office in writing by September 25, 2020.

**Bluffton Exempted Village Schools
Mission Statement**

The mission of the Bluffton Exempted Village School District is to provide a safe and stimulating environment in which flexibility is encouraged in meeting the needs of every student, and to value all persons and learning in order to develop individuals who demonstrate problem-solving skills, personal responsibility, and a desire for lifelong learning.

New Additions to the Staff....

Abby Diller - Elementary Teacher

Abby Diller, the new 4th-grade teacher, graduated from Cedarville University in 2018 and began her teaching career in the 4th and 5th grades at Trotwood-Madison. Originally from Dayton, she married and moved to Pandora in May. In her free time, she enjoys running, biking, reading, playing piano, and spending time with her husband and dog. She is excited to begin the school year at the elementary school, meet new people, and help students learn and grow.

Madeline Goecke – Elementary Teacher

Madeline Goecke is a graduate of Ottawa Glandorf High School. She received her Bachelor of Science in Education degree in Early Childhood Education from The Ohio State University. Madeline will be teaching kindergarten this fall and is excited to begin her teaching career at Bluffton Elementary. She looks forward to meeting many new families and encouraging her students to reach their highest potential during these difficult times. She believes all students are individuals and her job is to teach for understanding by providing educational methods that meet the students' learning styles. Outside school, Madeline enjoys spending time with her family and friends.

Amanda Hohenbrink - High School Librarian Aide.

Amanda graduated from Ada High School and Rhodes State College. She and her husband Craig have been part of the Bluffton community for the past 18 years. They have two sons: Jack, a sophomore, and Carter, an 8th grader. In her free time, Amanda loves to spend time with family, be outdoors, read, and travel, especially going on cruises. Amanda is excited to start the new school year and continue to be involved in the community.

Sarah Jebson – School Nurse

Sarah Jebson will be the nurse for the elementary, middle, and high schools. Originally from Columbus Grove, she and her family lived near Omaha, NE, from 2001-2005 before moving to Bluffton in 2005. Sarah and her husband Chris have four children in the Bluffton School District: Nick (senior), Amy (sophomore), Luke (8th), and Roselove (6th). Sarah is a graduate of Rhodes State College, Bluffton University, and currently attends Wright State University. She has experience in a variety of settings through Blanchard Valley Health Systems, including medical/surgical, hospice, long-term care and rehabilitation, and the neonatal intensive care unit. She is excited in her new role and eager to serve the students, families, and staff at Bluffton Schools. In her spare time, she enjoys reading, walking, nature, and spending time with family and friends.

Diana Kiser- Middle School Teacher

Diana Kiser will teach 8th-grade English/Language Arts at the middle school. She is originally from Picayune, Mississippi (near New Orleans, LA). She moved to Ohio six years ago with her husband Chad, who is also an educator. They have three children: Alexis (21 – a senior at OSU), Drew (19 – an Airman in USAF), Gage (21 – a junior at USA), and a 2½-year-old cat. Diana has 20 years of education experience: 12 years as a teacher and 8 years as an administrator. She earned her Bachelor's, Master's, and Specialist degrees from the University of Southern Mississippi. Since becoming empty nesters, the family welcome suggestions for new ideas and adventures in the Northwest Ohio area.

Rachel Mathewson – Part-time Cafeteria Worker

Rachel and Eric Mathewson have been married 5 years. Seven children -- Michael, Melanie, Josiah, Logan, Kylie, Tony, and Rebecca – make up their blended family. Rachel is the assistant coach for the cross country team and volunteer coach for track. She grew up outside Wooster, Ohio, and attended Northwestern High School where she was a member of the track team and played multiple band instruments. In 1991 she attended Prairie Bible College to major in music. In 2016 she was awarded the Columbus Marathon Spirit Award. In 2011 and 2018, she ran the Boston Marathon. This past summer, she completed classes to become an EMT for the Bluffton EMS.

Erika McCrory - Middle School Educational Aide

Erika has been subbing at Bluffton Schools for the last 2 years. She and her husband Matt have four children: Kaiden, Kandler, Kaelyn, and Knox. In her free time, Erika likes to be with friends and family, watch sports, go to garage sales, refurbish things, and be outside at her home in her pond and flower garden. She is looking forward to beginning a new year in the middle school and getting to know and work with the great staff and students.

Megan Morris - Middle School Custodian

Megan Morris has been part of the Bluffton community for over 30 years. She is a Bluffton High School graduate and received her Bachelor's degree in Sports Management from Bluffton University in 2007. Megan and her husband Courtnee have two children, MaKaighla (18) and Siren (9). In her free time, Megan enjoys reading, doing volunteer work, and camping with family and friends. She is excited to once again be part of the Bluffton school district.

Paul Utendorf – Middle School Teacher

Paul Utendorf will teach 8th-grade pre-algebra and 8th-grade Algebra I in the middle school. Paul graduated from BGSU in 2016 and began his teaching career at Marion Local Schools. He and his wife Casey are originally from Kalida. In his free time, Paul enjoys traveling, being outdoors, and spending time with friends and family. He is excited to become a part of the Pirate community and meet his students.

Julie Wolfe – Part-time Cafeteria Worker

Julie Wolfe is returning for a second time as a cafeteria lady after spending 20 years as a cook at the Mennonite Memorial Home. She loves to cook and make people happy with food. Besides cooking, she enjoys going on motorcycle trips with her husband. Camping all the way, they have seen 48 states and 6 Canadian provinces. She looks forward to seeing the smiles of the children each day.

Please watch closely at all intersections around our district and proceed with caution both as a driver and as a pedestrian.

Transportation

Please be aware the parking lot next to the middle school will be closed from 2:30 P.M. to 3:15 P.M. for students to board their busses.

**2020-2021 School Calendar
Bluffton Exempted Village Schools**

August 31	Monday	School Opens
September 7	Monday	No School - Labor Day
October 30	Friday	End of 1st Grading Period
November 24/25	Tues./Wed.	No School-(Elem/MS)
November 25	Wednesday	No School – (HS)
November 26/27	Thurs./Fri.	No-School– Thanksgiving
December 22	Tuesday	Last Day of School for 2020
January 4	Monday	School Re-opens 2021
January 15	Friday	End of 2nd Grading Period
January 18	Monday	No School-King Day
February 15	Monday	No School-Presidents' Day
March 26	Friday	End of 3rd Grading Period
April 2 & 5	Fri/Mon.	No School-Spring Break
May 28	Friday	End of 4 th Grading Period
May 29	Saturday	Commencement
May 31	Monday	No School- Memorial Day
June 1	Tuesday	Staff Post-Service Day

Athletic Alerts - Go to blufftonschools.org under parent alert system to sign up for athletic event reminders that will be sent to you for upcoming athletic events.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Listed are the dates and times for parent-teacher conferences in the Bluffton Schools. This is an excellent time to meet with our teachers and discuss the educational progress of your child(ren). We hope you plan to attend.

Bluffton Elementary and Middle Schools

Monday, November 23	5:00 – 8:00 P.M.
Tuesday, November 24	9:00 A.M. – 4:00 P.M. 5:00 – 8:00 P.M.

Bluffton High School

Monday, November 23	5:00- 8:00 P.M.
Tuesday, November 24	5:00- 8:00 P.M.

**School Cancellations
or Delays/Parent Alert System**

During the school year there may be times, especially during inclement weather, that we may have to delay school or cancel classes for the day. Please listen to your local radio or television stations for announcements of delays or cancellations. Please do not call the offices.

Several stations make these announcements: **WIMA, WFIN, WKXA, WLIO (TV 35)**

In addition, you may go to www.blufftonschoools.org and click under parent alert system on the right hand column. Follow the simple steps to receive text messages and emails for delays, cancellations, or for cases of an emergency at school.

If we should close school in excess of five calamity days, we will use the following days as make-up days:

- #1 January 18, 2021
- #2 February 15, 2021

Additional days as needed will be added to the end of the year beginning with Tuesday, June 1, 2021.

Annual Notification to Building Users and Employees

In accordance with Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act of 1986, our facilities have been inspected, and a management plan has been developed for the control of any asbestos-containing material (ACM) found in our buildings. The inspection report and management plan were completed by a certified consulting firm. A copy of the inspection report and management plan is located in each building office for public review.

It is significant to report that the buildings in our district have had all accessible, friable ACM removed. All miscellaneous non-friable ACM has been well-maintained and is being managed by professionals through periodic evaluations and inspections. Any suspect ACM should not be disturbed. Contact Mike Wilson for additional information.

Visit Bluffton Schools Website:
www.blufftonschoools.org



Bluffton Exempted Village Schools
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Listed below are the phone numbers for each building in the Bluffton School District. Please call our offices with any questions and concerns you might have about the schools. We appreciate any input in helping maintain a quality education for our students.

- Central Office** 419-358-5901
- High School** 419-358-7941
- Middle School** 419-358-7961
- Elementary School** 419-358-7951

**Bluffton Exempted Village School
District Board of Education**

- Ken Lugibihl, President
- Wes Klinger, Vice-President
- Brad Dailey
- Larry Hoffman
- Jeremy Scoles

The Board of Education meets the third Monday of each month at 7:30 P.M. in the Elementary Media Center. If there is a change in the date, time, or meeting place, it is announced in the newspaper.

Annual Notification of Federal Funds

The Bluffton Exempted Village School receives federal funds in the areas of reading, math, library, and education of handicapped children. If you have any suggestions on how these funds should be used, please contact the district superintendent at 419-358-5901.