



SUPERINTENDENT'S MONTHLY UPDATE

Blue Ridge CUSD#18

March 2022

[#br_u_knighted](#)

From the Desk of the Superintendent

Spring is upon us when the temperatures begin to rise, the daylight hours increase, and the celebrations begin. Recently, we had a few very deserving staff and students recognized by the Farmer City Chamber of Commerce. Congratulations to Mrs. Tracy Parson, Ms. Jacalyn Meisner, Ms. Morgan Drozs, Ms. Lily Enger, and Mr. Kaleb Southern. Each of you model determination and positivity each day that is noticed by those around you. Thank you for leading the way!

The administrative team continues to work on developing goals for the District's Strategic Plan. The District Instructional Leadership Team will be working on the development of the District Mission Statement based upon guidance provided during the October 2021 Strategic Planning Day. Both the Strategic Plan and the Mission Statement will be presented to the Board of Education this spring for their approval.

April 20 is the date of the next board meeting. Earlier that evening, we are pleased to bring back Blue Ridge Connect. We will be meeting in the Bellflower Community Center from 5:30-6:30. Snacks, drinks, and dessert will be served while you visit with board members and administrators. We will enjoy a few musical performances from our BRIJHS students and we have a small gift for those who attend. Please plan to join us. You can RSVP here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BD2XNFN>.

Do you ever wonder what a superintendent actually does? Some of the things that fill my days include: meeting with principals to keep each other informed about building happenings, meeting with Department Heads- those who take care of feeding and transporting our students, those who keep our buildings safe and clean, and those who keep our technology lifeline operating properly. Many reports are filed, grants managed, and financial plans coordinated. Over the last year, I've participated in a leadership course with about 30 other superintendents from all throughout the state. Some of my most meaningful learning experiences have included the practice of mindfulness. For many years, I pushed that thought to the side, thinking that wasn't something for me. It seemed hokie to me. Well, I'm sure that many of you can relate to having a mind that is difficult to turn off. Do you wake up with work on your mind and remain awake for hours with thoughts racing through your mind? Through the work with my leadership cohort, I have made some progress in the practice of mindfulness. I'm not an expert by any means, but I'm now understanding that I'm not alone in having a racing mind and it takes practice to be able to turn the thoughts off for the sake of a restful night's sleep. Does any of that ring true for you? If so, I strongly encourage you to explore the practice of mindfulness. There's no one model that is the right way. It's all about what works for you.



PARTIAL ACTION FROM THE MARCH BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

Blue Ridge welcomes Erin Carr as our District Speech and Language Pathologist beginning in August 2022. Erin completed her clinical placement under the guidance of Mrs. Tracy Barding last school year. Welcome, Erin!

Looking for the hidden trivia question this month? Rather than a question, it's a repeat request. Would you send a note of thanks to a staff member and copy me? Encouraging others is good medicine. My email begins with hstanifer and ends with @blueridge18.org.

Ben Wallace will join BRHS Baseball in the role of Assistant Coach.

Lauren Lacy and Marcus Minter will be teaching English 1 and Math 1 credit recovery courses this spring and summer.

Dawson Raines is returning to help the Technology Department this summer.

UPCOMING EVENTS



March 21-25 Spring Break, No Student Attendance

April 9 BRHS Spring Play, 7 pm, Moore Gym

April 13 PSAT/SAT testing

April 15 Good Friday, No Student Attendance

April 17 Easter

April 20 Blue Ridge Connect, 5:30-6:30, Bellflower Community Center, RSVP:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BD2XNFN>

April 20 BOE Meeting, 7 pm, BRHS Library

IN OTHER NEWS

SCHNEIDER ELEMENTARY



***Pre-K Screenings, March 31 and April 1** - The developmental screening is for children who are 3 or 4 years old at the time of the screening. Children who turn 5 on or before September 1, 2022 are not eligible for the screening. Please allow up to 2 hours for the screening. We ask you not to bring other children with you since you will be asked to join us during your child's appointment. Parents will be asked to complete an

information packet and return it to the school a week before the appointment. Please call Schneider Elementary at (309)928-2611 to schedule an appointment or ask any questions. Thank you!

***Open House** - Schneider will host a spring open house this year. On April 7 from 6:00-7:00 p.m. families can visit classrooms to celebrate a variety of student projects and learning artifacts. We will also have a scavenger hunt with a special prize for each student who completes it!

***Out of the Blue** - Thank you to the members of the High School Key Club and Student Council for assisting us with this month's PBIS Out of the Blue celebration. Students who received zero referrals last month got to have an extra 20 minute recess. The high schoolers played various games with our students and they loved it!



Margaret Leonard (K) - Margaret is the ultimate rule-follower and sets a great example of responsibility for her peers. She listens very carefully when directions are being given so she can successfully complete class work and gets the most possible out of lessons. She always tries her best to follow our school respect rules and has a positive attitude.

Kamdyn Shaw (1st) - Kamdyn works hard to get his classwork done on time. He stays on task and asks for help when he needs it. He is a good friend. He is always first to help others clean up at recess. Kamdyn is respectful of teachers and other adults in the building. He follows directions and is a great role model for his peers.

Maddison Hoffman (2nd) - Maddison is such a joy to teach. She comes in each day ready to learn with a positive attitude and a big smile! She is an active listener and participant in the classroom. Maddison is kind and respectful to her teachers and her peers. She celebrates the success of others and is always willing to lend a helping hand when needed.

Braelyn Woliung (3rd) - Braelyn is a one-of-a-kind student! She is kind, caring, thoughtful and hardworking. She is a huge help around the classroom, always offering a hand to get something set up or ready for the day. She shows up to class everyday with a smile on her face and a joke to tell. She is a good friend to those in her class and is always ready to help her peers. Braelyn goes above and beyond what is asked of her everyday.

***Exemplary Knights Staff Member** - Our Exemplary Staff Member for February is Barbie Burns. Mrs. Burns goes above and beyond on a daily basis. She has outstanding lessons and dives into each subject with so much passion. She builds relationships with her current students and has wonderful relationships with past students. Mrs. Burns always has high expectations for every single student in her class and pushes each student to do their very best each and every day.



BRIJHS

- #Comeback2022 Updates:
The Jr. High team is starting a Homework Club. This will run after school on Wednesdays. Students will be able to stay and work with staff members until 5:30 and then ride the activity bus home.
- Staff Exemplary Knight: Erica Duvall passed this on to Zach Marcopulos. Zach student taught with us in the fall and is now the long term sub in Jr. High PE. Zach's positive attitude is infectious. He works well with all staff and students. His "can-do" is a great addition to the Jr. High team.
- 4th Grade Exemplary Knight: Oliver Vandiver-Oliver has been working hard on staying focused in class and doing his work. He is more self-aware and can turn things around when he gets off track. He has done a great job and the quality of his work shows it. Oliver has been really kind to his classmates lately.
- 5th Grade Exemplary Knight: Billie Peterson-Billie has a great attitude. He is polite, funny, and works well with others. He works hard in class and gets along well with all of the adults that work with him.
- 6th Grade Exemplary Knight: Lana Malsberry-Lana does a great job of turning in assignments on time, participating in class, getting along well with others, and has really shown growth this year.
- 7th Grade Exemplary Knights: Caleb Buskirk-Caleb transferred to Blue Ridge this year, and he has been a welcomed addition! I can always depend on him for participation in class discussions and a respectful, positive attitude. The adjustment to a new school was probably challenging, but he's meshed well with his new classmates and teachers.
- 8th Grade Exemplary Knights: Devin Wrestler-Devin is very in tune with his grades, asks to stay after for extra help, is very accountable, and proactive as a student. Devin communicates with teachers when he is absent to get his missing work. For the second quarter, he set a goal to make high honor roll. He worked hard and met that goal.



BRHS

The Fine Arts Expo was held on March 8th. Student art work was on display for students, staff and parents to view and vote for their favorite pieces.

Art Winners for the year include:

Best of Art 1: Marcene Salmi, Cats

Best of Art 2: Lyn Shankles, Sewn to Perfection

Best of Art 3: Camille Buchanan, Waxing Corvus

Best of Studio Art: Kayla Cole, Rebirth

Best of Art Appreciation: Al Johnson, Light Landscape

Best Senior display: Sarah Whitehouse.

Best of Show award goes to: Breanin Flannell for Art Angel.

Honorable mentions, for many votes for various pieces include Dillon Tarter, Rachel Light, Alexa Hobbs, Caleb Hirschman, Riley Freden, Nevaeh Burris, and Alexis Lane.

Congratulations to all of the winners on a job well done!

March 9th was the FFA District Proficiencies in Mt. Zion. Congratulations to our FFA students in the awards: Morgan Drozs, Runner up in Specialty Crop Production, Sami Boogren Winner in Ag Science-Plant Systems, Gracie Shaffer – Winner in Diversified Crop Production Entrepreneurship, Tray Hardesty – Winner in Ag Mechanics and Repair and Maintenance Placement, Kaleb Southern – Winner in Equine Science Placement, Hank Mitchell – Winner in Forage Placement. Sami, Gracie, Tray, Kaleb and Hank will all advance to the state competition on March 26th!

Our BRHS Scholastic Bowl team finished up the season with a runner-up finish at the IHSA regional tournament on March 7th. Their final overall record was 52-15. Congratulations to the team on a memorable season!

Staff and Student Exemplary Knights -

Our staff winner for Exemplary Knight for the month of January is *Elizabeth Raines*. Mrs. Raines certainly stands out in all that she does for students and staff here at BRHS. Last month's winner, Coleen Paullin, had this to say about Elizabeth -

Liz does an amazing job getting subs for the entire district especially since subs are so hard to come by! Not only is she in charge of subs she is also our AMAZING librarian aide who goes above and beyond when it comes to helping students. There are many students that she is helping on a one on one basis during their study hall. She serves as a check in and check out person for these students, she encourages them, and is a tutor to them when they need it. She does a FANTASTIC job of helping these students get back on track to be successful. The school district is VERY fortunate to have someone like her working for the district.

We have 2 students that we are recognizing this month - *Madyson Wingert* (Jr.) and *Breanin Flannell* (So.). These students were selected by a committee of high school faculty and staff. They were chosen for their achievements and also for going above and beyond the expectations for our high school students.

Here are some things that teachers say about these awesome students:

***Breanin Flannell* -**

- Brea Flannell does an awesome job in art class! She puts in a lot of extra time and works hard to make her projects reflect her personal views. Brea is always striving to improve her work and be the best artist she can be. I love seeing what she creates because she has really thoughtful ideas for her projects
- Brea works hard and is always trying for an A+! Won't stop working until she gets it
- While the term "model student" is a cliché, I cannot think of a better way to describe Brea Flannell. Not only is she hard working and reliable academically, but she also stands out from the crowd for her character. Brea is kind to everyone, whether face-to-face or in the (often brutal) realm of social media. Brea rises above the social conflicts and drama that so often distracts young adults; she respects everybody for who they are and knows how to walk away from unnecessary personal conflict. Her mature, conscientious nature makes her a pleasure to teach and a wonderful representative of Blue Ridge High School.
- Brea is a perfectionist and always strives for that perfect score. She is a hard worker and is always willing to help whenever needed. She is a joy to have in class.
- Brea had the highest grade of all 30 Illinois History students last semester!

- Brea is one of the most compassionate and kind students I know. She is extremely hardworking and has surpassed every expectation I have had in chemistry. She is incredibly deserving of this award and recognition!

Madyson Wingert -

- I have Madyson in Spanish and she gets my vote for grit. She stayed with Spanish even though it has not been easy. She is a good all around student. She is smart, has common sense, cares about people and knows how to mind her own business. My grandpa would say she is one you want to ride the river with.
- Besides being a great student, Mady always has a smile on her face and is always willing to help other students when they are in need.
- Mady Wingert is a great role model in class. She always participates and asks great questions. Mady always strives to do her very best.
- Mady is a kind gentle soul, and always has a smile on her face!
- Mady has always been conscientious about her grades. Mady also participated in volleyball contributing on both the varsity and JV teams this last fall. Mady does a good job juggling school, work and volleyball.
- Mady is an incredibly hard worker and always gives it her all no matter what. This year she is in 2 incredibly hard, high level science classes and is excelling in both. She is not afraid of a challenge and is destined to accomplish great things!

Boys Basketball - Isaac Price. Isaac has worked relentlessly to improve his game by continuing to ask what he needs to improve on while staying after practice to work on his game as late as he can. This type of hard work has shown in his game throughout the season.

Scholastic Bowl- Conner Otto. Conner is a 4 year participant who captained and led the JV team his junior year and as a senior has turned out to be quite the contributor getting key toss-ups in high leverage matches as well as scoring his first double digit varsity toss-up triangular vs. Mendota. Conner comes from a high pedigree of scholastic bowl in his family and carried that tradition through his four years here at BRHS.

Girls Basketball - Sydney Beckman. Sydney brings truly incredible endurance and athleticism to our basketball team. She had to play a ton of minutes this year and she never seemed to get tired. Sydney always hustles in practice and games. Her stamina, enthusiasm, and willingness to learn will serve her well as we head into next season.

Cheer- Dylan Kelly. Dylan has been a huge asset to the cheer squad from year 1 but this season he really stepped up his game all around and it has not gone unnoticed!

TECHNOLOGY



- New website is still on the radar for publishing soon, working on a spotlight section for families and staff
- Spring Assessments setups are underway: ELL test complete, next up is Illinois Science Assessment (Grades 5, 8, 11) followed by Illinois Assessment of Readiness (Grades 3-8)
- Testing phones and door readers; Network equipment testing completed
- New amp for JH bell system arrived, install pending
- Met with the Learning Technology Center to navigate next steps for Emergency Connecting government funding

- Ordered equipment with Emergency Connectivity Funds
- Troubleshooting database issues with PK and early graduate exits
- Brainstorm K-12 conference
- Working with Aptegy on mascot image replacements
- Met with Paige to amend ESSER III funds to reallocate appropriately
- Met with Heart to bid cabling for E-Rate funds at BRIJHS
- Met with Midwest AV for cabling bid
- Ordered touch screen chromebooks for KG
- RFP for Networking equipment
- Replacement Cell phones have been ordered for staff with phones
- BREF grant funded for Digital Signage set up and installed in HS Commons, Schneider
- Backup Drive replacement in process
- Updates for Desktop Systems Completed

Entering the fourth quarter...

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