



# SUPERINTENDENT'S MONTHLY UPDATE

Blue Ridge CUSD #18

#br\_u\_knighted

September 2022

We're settling into our school routines and we're enjoying some cooler temps, so it must mean that Fall is here!

I am very pleased to announce that the Blue Ridge Board of Education is one of 33 school boards in IL to earn the IL School Board Association's School Board Governance Recognition designation for engaging in activities and modeling behaviors that lead to excellence in local school governance in support of quality public education. Thank you BR Board of Education for continually keeping the best interest of students at the forefront of your minds.

It may be timely to let you know that school board elections will be held in April 2023. Petitions can be picked up at the county clerk's office and they may be distributed for signatures beginning September 20, 2022. Petitions are due between December 12- December 19, 2022. We have four open seats. Would you consider running for election?

My hope for all Blue Ridge families is that you find our schools to be safe places for learning and developing friendships. Our staff is a group of dedicated individuals who strive to do their best each day for the sake of your children.

We continue to live into our new mission statement:

*Blue Ridge Schools will embrace, engage, equip, and empower students, staff, families, and the community.*

We challenge ourselves to view each decision through the lens of that statement. I want to let you know that if you have any questions or comments for our staff, please feel free to reach out to myself or any of our building principals. We appreciate hearing from you directly when concerns arise.

We are getting ready for a special community event in October that we've titled **Connect, Create, and Collaborate!** This event is open to all Blue Ridge families and we strongly encourage you to attend. On October 19, we will meet in the BRIJHS Intermediate Gym for our Fall Art Show beginning at 5:00 pm. Our art teachers will be sending home a communication to let you know if your student's work will be displayed in the show. At 5:30 we will break into three groups, based upon school attendance, and have conversation about digital citizenship. If you've ever wondered how other families handle digital safety at home, or if you've wondered if your student is developing an unhealthy relationship with technology, this event is for you! Come join us for a safe space to have conversation with parents of similar age children. BR Technology Coordinator and Technology Teacher, Andrea Weedman, will share what the district does to protect students online and remind you about the access you have to these tools at home. Our hope is for meaningful conversation on a critically important topic that will equip and empower families to make the best decisions for those they love most. Please watch for more details and be sure to RSVP on this link so we know that you're coming. <https://forms.gle/LBUKqni2JNTyCbMu8>. Do you need another reason to attend?

Tonya Evans is planning to provide samples of her new menu items, and trust me, you won't want to miss out! We'll see you there! Please note: If you can't make the 5:00 start time, please come when you can.

Were you excited to see the window wraps with our refreshed Knight logo at BRIJHS and BRHS? The wraps are an outward and visible sign of all the great work that is going on inside the buildings. Thank you to our Boosters for making the wraps possible. We love the school spirit! #br\_u\_knighted



## PARTIAL ACTION FROM THE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

- Pam Houser has been approved by ISBE for the Retiree Return to Work Program, which is one way that districts are responding to the teacher shortage. Pam is teaching 7th and 8th grade SS at BRIJHS. Welcome back, Pam!
- We welcome Nathan Johnson and Michelle Castor who will both be serving as paraprofessionals at BRHS. Welcome to the team!
- Connie Burris will fill the part time opening in the BRIJHS Cafeteria. Thanks, Connie!
- Jacy Dean, BRHS graduate, returns to the soccer field as a volunteer coach. Thank you for returning to BR, Jacy!



## UPCOMING EVENTS

October 7 Teacher Institute- No Student Attendance

October 10 Columbus Day- No School

October 17 Picture Retake Day

October 19 Connect, Create, and Collaborate!, BRIJHS Intermediate Gym, 5:00-6:30 p.m.

October 19 Board of Education Meeting, BRHS Library 7:00 p.m.

## IN OTHER NEWS



### SCHNEIDER ELEMENTARY

**\*Pre-K's Growing Together** - Pre-K hosted its first family night at the Mansfield Forest Preserve. This event was a great opportunity for parents to interact with other families and enjoy a night filled with play and food. Thank you to our Pre-K team for putting together this school-community event!



**\*Knight Walk** - Knight Walk will be at BRHS this year. On Friday, October 14 at 5:30 p.m. the event will begin with a walk/run around the high school track. The event will conclude with a movie on the football field starting around 6:15 p.m. Thank you to P.I.E. for organizing this fundraiser which supports our students and teachers.

**\*Kindergarten Report Card** - After a few years of using our Kindergarten Report Card, which is modeled off the KIDS assessment by the State of Illinois, we would like to make an adjustment to better fit the students of our district. This adjustment includes replacing Cognition: Math 5: Patterning. After further review, COG: Math 5: Patterning, does not align to the Kindergarten IL Learning Standards. We plan to replace this measure with Cognition: Math 4: Measurement. This measure assesses the child showing an increased understanding of measurable properties such as size, length, weight, and capacity (volume), and how to quantify those properties. This measure aligns to two Kindergarten IL Learning Standards.

### **Congratulations and Kudos:**

**\*PBIS Kickoff Assembly/Gotcha Party** - We kicked off the school year with our PBIS Kickoff Assembly and Gotcha Party. The morning consisted of an assembly where we reviewed our respect rules and behavior expectations, including a respect skit put on by our high school thespian troupe. The day ended with some high school athletes coming to Schneider for an afternoon play date. We are so thankful for having the high school collaborate with us!



## **\*Exemplary Knights:**

**Jaxon Keeler (K)** - Jaxon is a positive presence in class. He listens and follows directions. He is always one of the first students to volunteer to help out the teacher as well as friends in and out of the classroom. Jaxon works hard to complete his work and is eager to learn. Jaxon contributes in conversation and always has a good story to tie to our conversations. I feel Jaxon is a kind person inside and out and deserves to be recognized for his great start to the school year.

**Taya Brumfield (1st)** - Taya is a leader in the classroom. You will find her following our four Respect Rules all throughout the day. She follows directions, is always eager to participate in class, works well with others, and includes all of her peers when playing at recess. She works hard even when something is challenging and always has a smile on her face. Taya helps to take care of our school community by pushing in chairs as she walks by and picking up trash even if it is not hers.

**Ava Meier (2nd)** - Ava always shows respect to peers and adults without needing any reminders. She gives 100% effort each and every day. Ava displays a positive attitude no matter the situation. She is a model student and always helps others the first chance she gets.

**Brantley Blacker (3rd)** - I have nominated Brantley Blacker for our first Exemplary knight of the year. Brantley comes to class everyday with a smile on his face and ready to learn. He takes his time to do his best work. He also challenges himself to go above and beyond what is assigned. He is kind to his classmates and shows respect for the adults in the building. He is a great role model and friend to everyone at Schneider. I can't wait to see him continue to grow and learn this year.

**Megan Maxwell (Staff Member)** - This year we added three new classroom teachers. Megan has been very welcoming to them and provided useful resources to help improve student learning. She even pulled over to help one of our new teachers on the way to school earlier this month. Megan has transitioned from classroom teacher to special education teacher this school year. This move has clearly displayed her passion for teaching, learning and helping her students achieve their goals.



BRIJHS

## **iReady**

BRIJH implemented the first stages of the iReady pilot in September. All students took diagnostic benchmarks in reading and math. These diagnostic tests establish goals for students and set a learning path that will be part of their intervention time during the week. Mr. Huddleston, Mrs. Trimble, and Mrs. Soliday met with 4th, 5th, and 6th grade teachers during scheduled collaboration time to go over the results and set up intervention groups. Junior High staff have implemented iReady interventions during the 5th period. The diagnostic data will be shared with them during the next JH staff meeting.

## **September Exemplary Knights**

Staff Recognition:

We have two staff members that are being recognized at Exemplary Knights for the month of September, **Ken Peters and Dustin Meinert**. Ken has worked diligently to get the new principal acclimated to the building. He has been extremely responsive to addressing issues around the school. Additionally, he continues to collaborate and

mentor our new custodian, Dustin, to help our school run successfully each day. Dustin's praise is regularly on the lips of numerous staff each week due to his consistent care for the school. He has learned the routines quickly and is always on the lookout to help where he can. Both of these staff members worked hard through the summer to have our school shining on the first day. They continue to find ways to help each other out each day from quickly cleaning the cafeteria between grade levels to lowering swings for new students to our building. We are blessed to have these two on our team.

#### **4th Grade: Bennett Denney**

Bennett is a very focused student who always comes to school prepared, ready to learn, and shows responsibility. He is a hard worker and often helps those around him. Bennett shows kindness to all of his classmates and is a joy to have in class.

#### **5th Grade: Aaron Covington**

Aaron is a hardworking, caring, and kind student. He is always there to lend a helping hand to his peers, whether in the classroom or out on the playground. Aaron is always giving his best, is a great friend to others, and a positive citizen in our classroom community.

#### **6th Grade: Ellie Clark**

Ellie is the sort of student who throws herself whole-heartedly into the pursuit of her own education. She participates and volunteers, she does everything asked of her, and is responsible with school work and organization. Ellie was anxious about the start of 6th grade, but pushed herself to adjust to the new environment and expectations. Ellie is quick to apply her learning to her own experiences, allowing her to integrate new knowledge and share it with other students.

#### **7th grade: Mariska Lipkovitch**

Mariska has made so much progress between 6th and 7th grade. She has a positive attitude and expresses concern for her classmates. Mariska has been participating in class regularly, has made a conscious effort to use class time wisely and complete work on time. She has wonderful ideas to share and is doing a great job being a leader among her peers!

#### **8th grade: Aerilyn Johnson**

Aeri Johnson has made an incredible transition to 8th grade. Her level of independence this year has been impressive. She gets started on assignments immediately and attempts the work before asking for help. Her writing has shown amazing growth, too! Aeri is a conscientious student and friend who is always prepared for class and concerned about work completion and success.



BRHS

*Here are some highlights from our daily announcements over the past month:*

The 2022 Homecoming court:

Freshman Attendants: Devin Wrestler, Dakota Thrasher

Sophomore Attendants: Ellie Schlieper, Joshua Berkler

Junior Attendants: Phoebe Reynolds, Cole Pemble

Senior King Attendants: Cadin Dozier, Kaleb Southern, Dylan Coffey and Riley Pruitt

Senior Queen Attendants: Alexis Wike, Anna Place, Mady Wingert, Gracie Shaffer

Little Miss – Brynne Soliday

Little Mister – Atticus Funderburk

Your new Homecoming Queen is Gracie Shaffer and King is Riley Pruitt.

CONGRATULATIONS to the Junior class for their winning Homecoming Float! 2nd place was the Sophomore class, 3rd place went to Seniors and Freshman finished 4th.

The Knight Buddies program is back of high school students helping Schneider students. We have over 30 helping this year!

Several clubs have started up already this fall. STEM Club is back along with our new THRIVE group with good conversations and good community (Thursdays during lunch). The Dungeons and Dragons group meets on Fridays after school. Art Club is starting up soon!

### **Congratulations and Kudos:**

#### **\*Staff and Student of the Month (Exemplary Knights)-**

Our staff winner for Exemplary Knight for the month of August/early Sept is **Lauren Lacy**. Lauren certainly stands out in all that she does for students and staff here at BRHS. She has been eager to be a part of many different committees/teams, giving her a tremendous amount of insight into many programs and students here at BRHS. She has been a faculty representative at various conferences on school safety. Most recently, the way she helped our staff navigate the i-Ready testing was truly selfless. She even ran a session after school one day last week for any student from any class who needed more time to finish. This allowed those students to be able to do this without missing any more instruction time during the day. Ms. Lacy truly cares for each of her students and is a tremendous asset to our staff!

We have 2 students that we are recognizing this month - **Dylan Coffey** (Sr.) and **Lillian Enger** (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:

#### **Dylan Coffey (Sr)**

- When on the soccer field, Dylan is a good leader. He is supportive and helpful to other players. He also shows a desire to work hard and hustle to help the team succeed.
- Dylan is an outstanding student who always gives 100% in class. He is also a wonderful teacher's aide and always ensures others are taken care of if they need anything!
- Dylan is always on task during class. He shows his fellow students a deep respect when he asks questions about the class, comments on their ideas, and encourages them to achieve greatness. Dylan is a great motivator for his peers and makes the learning environment fun for everyone.
- Dylan is President of Student Council and on the Soccer team this year and with homecoming being so soon after school started he facilitated meetings during the summer to get everyone on board and keep everyone updated on schedules and what to do for homecoming week. He's a leader of the group and motivator to keep the meetings going and everyone on task.

## **Lillian Enger (So)**

- Lillian is such a dedicated student and member to her sports and activities. She is not afraid of having fun and letting her personality shine but also knows when it is time to work and be focused. As the FFA Reporter, she has started back up with the monthly newsletter and hasn't shied away from learning a new skill.
- Lillian Enger stands out among her peers for a variety of reasons. Not only is she bright and hardworking, but she also has a wonderful sense of humor that shines through her creative projects. She's truly a joy to have in class!
- Lillian is in my Woods class and I find her to be engaging, thorough, and quite humorous; her knowledge of belt sanders is second to none.
- Lillian is a very hardworking and bright student. She is not shy to speak up in class and will always try her hardest no matter what!
- Lilly is a great student to have in class. She is always ready to learn and stays on task. She is one of the top students in her Spanish class.
- Lilly is in multiple things in high school including Golf, FFA and Student Council. She is always punctual and we look for her opinion on most items that are discussed. She loves what she gets involved with and has fun in whatever she does.

**A big shout out/thank you** to the football team and Coach Schubert for painting the back of the school! They stayed after practices a couple of times to apply primer and then blue paint to the exterior wall that faces west towards their practice area.

Our Athletes of the Month for August are:

**Girls Golf** - Lillian Enger always gives her best. She does what is asked of her and continues to be cool under pressure.

**Boys Golf** - Caden Kimball has come a long way in a short period of time. He is taking everything that is being taught and utilizing it to show great progress.

**Football** - Cole Pemble is an excellent student and teammate. In the first game of the season he totaled 220 yards rushing with 4 TDs.

**Volleyball** - Madi Wingert has a positive attitude and has developed into a great varsity defensive specialist. Currently Madi leads our team in service pts.

**Cheerleading** - Rylee Burnett was selected because of her work ethic. She has stepped up as a leader since being named captain of the squad. She helps each member of the team by going through all the cheers and making sure everyone knows the choreography. Rylee is willing to help in any way that she can to make the cheer team better.

**Soccer** - Dylan Coffey works hard and is very supportive of the other players. He clearly communicates with the coaches and the other players to help develop the team. He is interested in the future of Blue Ridge soccer and wants everyone to be successful.



- iReady rolled out for individualized student interventions in Math & Reading
- Shield upload for students and staff consented to test
- BR18 Website debut
- Met with counselors and art teachers for BR Connect planning for Oct. 19
- All preliminary state reporting uploads done
- Troubleshooting for state's data quality dashboard from 21-22 info resolved
- Replaced hard drive fail for Intermediate side cameras
- Updated all student images in Skyward
- Discussion re Viewboard purchases with ESSER 2
- Verified Graduate info from class of '22
- Servers - Waiting for break to perform physical move of systems. Servers are operational
- Paging/Bell System replaced in all buildings - Still working on integration for Intermediate building
- Phone system Auto Attendant call routing setup and tested
- Primary Hyper-V server operational at HS
- Hyper-V Server for Mansfield Setup and Running - All services operational except PDC
- Technology install in Transportation Building Completed - Phone issues resolved
- Preparations in progress to decommission primary server at FC Campus - Scheduled NOV 22
- Replacement Switch installs on hold pending down time
- Google OU Clean Up in progress
- Viewboard management Software Fall update scheduled for Nov 22
- Backup server deployment in progress
- Lab thin client PC installs completed
- New asset tracking setup and operational for all district equipment

Entering the fall season...

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