



BRHS VOCATIONAL CAREERS STUDENTS WITH WOODS PROJECTS

Blue Ridge CUSD 18 Superintendent's Monthly Update



FEBRUARY 2019

Blue Ridge CONNECT is Coming - March 9!

You are cordially invited to Blue Ridge CONNECT, Mon, March 9, 6-8 pm, BRHS Library. A light dinner will be served. Talk with district leaders about your thoughts, concerns and questions. Details are posted at <https://5il.co/cq5h>.

RSVP to 309-928-9141 or at

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

SCHOOL CALENDARS FOR 2020-21 and 2021-22

View the School Calendars for 2020-2021 at <https://5il.co/d586> and for 2021-2022

at <https://5il.co/d58c>

UPCOMING DATES

February 20	PIE Meeting, Schneider Cafeteria, 6 pm
February 22	Students in Technology Conference
February 28	BRHS Talent Show
March 3	National Honor Society Induction Ceremony, BRHS, 7 p.m.
March 4	BRHS Winter Sports Awards Banquet
March 5	Key Club Blood Drive, BRHS (public is welcome)
March 9	Blue Ridge CONNECT - BRHS, 6-8 p.m.
March 10	Kindergarten Registration, Schneider Cafeteria, 6 pm
March 12	PreK Parent Mt., Schneider Cafeteria, 5:30 pm
March 13	End of 3 rd Quarter
March 14	BRHS Boosters Cash Bash
March 19	Grade 2 and 3 Spring Program, 7 p.m.
March 18	Board Meeting – BRHS Library, 7 p.m.
March 19	PreK Parent/Teacher Conferences
March 20	Report cards go home, 2:20 Dismissal
March 23-27	Spring Break – NO SCHOOL
April 4	BREF Daddy Daughter Dance, BRHS Old Gym, 7 p.m.

FC Chamber of Commerce Recognition

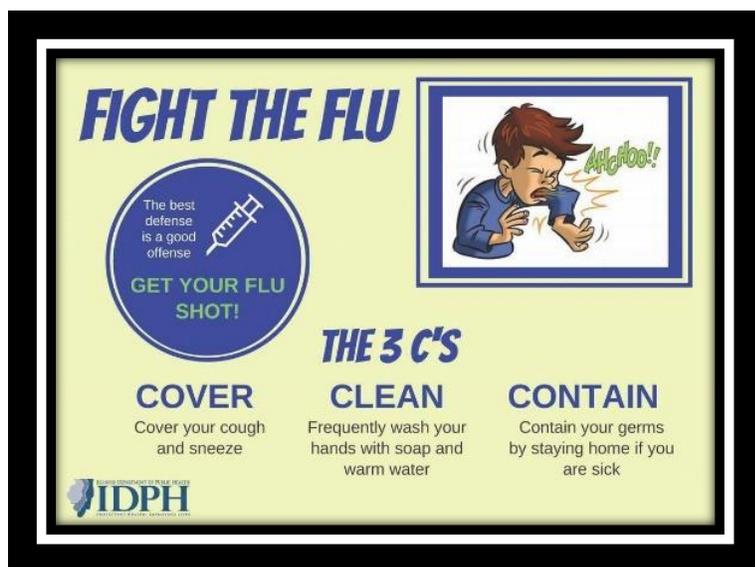
The Farmer City Chamber of Commerce will recognize Teachers Shawna Kollross, Brian Sparks and Ken Seneca for exemplary service to Blue Ridge students. The Chamber will also recognize Blue Ridge students Madi Houser, Kaitlyn Bradford, and Ty Meeker for excellence and community service. Congratulations to all for these very special honors!

Feb. 19 School Board Meeting

Partial List of Actions Taken:

- The Board has begun planning for Blue Ridge Connect, March 9, 6-8 p.m. at BRHS. Mark your calendar now to join the board and school district administration for informal 2-way conversations about issues in and around the district. This is your chance to ask questions and give your ideas on how we can better serve our students and community!
- School Calendars for 2020-21 and 2021-22 were approved. **View the School Calendars for 2020-2021 at <https://5il.co/d586> and for 2021-2022 at <https://5il.co/d58c>**

- Hired the following individuals: Paige Trimble, Curriculum Coordinator for 2020-21; Tim Brown, full time bus driver; Greg Alvis, JH Baseball Coach; Brian Sparks and Greg Builta, HS Baseball Coach and Asst. Coach, and Kyle Broward, Volunteer Baseball Coach; Ross Harden, BRHS Asst. Softball Coach and Lori Beck, Volunteer Softball Coach; Football Asst. Coaches David Kramer and Matt Shubert
- Transferred April Griffin from Schneider Spec. Ed. to JH Spec. Ed. teacher for 2020-21.
- Approved the Bus Lease and Vehicle Purchase plan for the transportation department
- Approved compensation for non-union personnel with a 3% increase for 2020-2021 school year. Non-union personnel do not receive an additional step increase.
- Discussed proposed maintenance and facilities projects for the district, both those that are ongoing and future projects. The Board prioritized the projects and offered guidance as the budget is developed for the 2020-21 school year.
- Approved \$44,226 in HVAC repairs for BRIJHS.
- Approved ADM's request for structures and landscaping on property leased from the school district.
- Approved staff seniority lists, and changes to the District Behavior and Discipline Code, Chromebook Usage Agreement, and District Flu Pandemic Plan
- Dr Stanifer presented financial projections to the Board - posted at <https://5il.co/d5g1>
- District Tech Coordinator Andrea Weedman and Network Specialist David Kramer presented the annual technology report to the Board. It includes a summary of activities from this past year and plans for the upcoming year. The report is posted at <https://5il.co/d5ht>



Cold and flu season is here. Prevent the spread of illness by covering coughs and sneezes, washing your hands often, and staying home if you are ill.

AdvancED/Cognia Accreditation Visit

Our AdvancED improvement journey began in the Fall of 2017 when staff members participated in a self-evaluation exercise using a tool called the Readiness Diagnostic that looked at three domains: Leadership Capacity, Learning Capacity, and Resource Capacity.

In January 2018, AdvancED, using our combined results from our Readiness Diagnostic, found us ready to proceed in our journey to meet accreditation requirements. Various activities have occurred since then in preparation for the recent review team visit.

Each of our three buildings developed a school leadership team to complete the IL Quality Framework and Rubric. While this was a state tool, rather than an AdvancED tool, we were able to include those building-level self-evaluation results for our accreditation review.

In the Fall of 2019, as AdvancED was being renamed Cognia, the principals and Dr. Stanifer revisited the Readiness Diagnostic Tool and began collecting updated evidence across the three domains: Leadership, Learning, and Resources. Faculty and staff help in this collection process across the elements of the learning domain was invaluable.

Our formal accreditation review was completed by a four-person team that came to us from Chicago, Oklahoma, and Kansas. Their goal was to gather first-hand information to evaluate our district's performance against the Cognia Performance Standards through interviewing various stakeholder groups, reviewing the evidence that we shared with them, and observing our learning environments.

The team conducted 107 interviews, including Board of Education members, parents, community members, staff, and students. They completed 31 classroom observations, looking at 7 domain areas—equitable learning, high expectations, supportive learning, active learning, progress monitoring and feedback, well-managed learning, and digital learning. Our combined district classroom observation scores all exceeded Cognia's average scores in the 7 domain areas.

The team's initial findings were summarized as follows:

Areas of strength:

- The district has made it a priority to provide and maintain adequate resources and facilities that optimize learning.
- Faculty and staff have developed a rich comradery and cohesion as they work together. Interviews and observations demonstrated that teachers share a close bond and actively seek to help one another. Frequent mention was made of the effectiveness of our mentoring program.
- The district provides remarkable selection of academic and athletic opportunities, rivaling the offerings of other districts in the region.

Areas for improvement:

- Variations were noted in learning environments resulting in inconsistencies in behavioral and academic expectations.
- Data is being collected, analyzed, and used by some, but not all, stakeholders.

- Consistency in use of instructional strategies, high expectations of students, and level of rigor vary among classrooms throughout all subject areas.

A final report will be made available to us in mid-March. This report will include various ratings as well as a narrative describing themes noted across all areas of the review. While we can already celebrate our strength areas and begin making plans to remedy our areas for improvement, the findings from the review visit will be very helpful for us, as a district, to consider when developing our next strategic plan this coming fall.

We hope that everyone who has an interest in the success of our schools will take part in the strategic planning process this fall. This includes Parents, guardians, students, faculty and staff, community and business leaders, and residents throughout our district. Every person has an important stake in the success of our schools and the development of our children. We look forward to widespread involvement in the planning for the future of our district.

Schneider School News

Dental Exams and Cleanings - We had 18 students participate in the free dental clinic offered at Schneider Elementary by the Dewitt-Piatt Bi-County Health Department. We are thankful for this community partnership which supports our students and families.

Handwashing Lesson - Each classroom in the building received a handwashing lesson, recently. This lesson is an attempt to decrease the spread of germs across the building, hopefully, leading to higher student attendance rates. Thank you to Ms. Sandy, nurse, for teaching students proper handwashing techniques.

Challenger Learning - Second grade students visited Challenger Learning Center at Heartland Community College last month. This experience allows students to experience an exploration mission in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), which encompasses multiple learning standards related to Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). Thank you to the Blue Ridge Education Foundation for sponsoring this fun learning event!





Breakfast with Someone Special – We hosted our annual PIE Breakfast with Someone Special. We had a great turnout, 89 adults and 134 students! Thank you to our faculty and staff for helping make this event a success and to PIE for decorating the cafeteria.

B.U.G. Recognition - We recognized 70 students at Schneider Elementary for their academic accomplishments last month. This program is designed to provide recognition to students who raise their grades to an acceptable range and maintain or continue to raise them from one grading period to the next.

Attendance: We had 80 students with perfect attendance in January. We are up 13 students from December.

Behavior: We had 19 referrals during the month of January. These 19 referrals came from 11 students, which results in 92% of our students being ticket free during the month of January. This is a 3% increase from December (95%). Overall, 92% is well above our 80-85% target and schoolwide expectation.

BRIJHS News

Radon Mitigation Update: The temporary radon mitigation system was installed at the beginning of the month. Radon levels were spot tested on the Jr. High side of BRIJHS and were well within acceptable limits. The report for the results was posted at <https://5il.co/cv3j>. Jr. High classes then returned to their normal classroom spaces during the week of February 10th. The permanent mitigation system is underway and should be completely installed by Feb. 24. Once the system has been



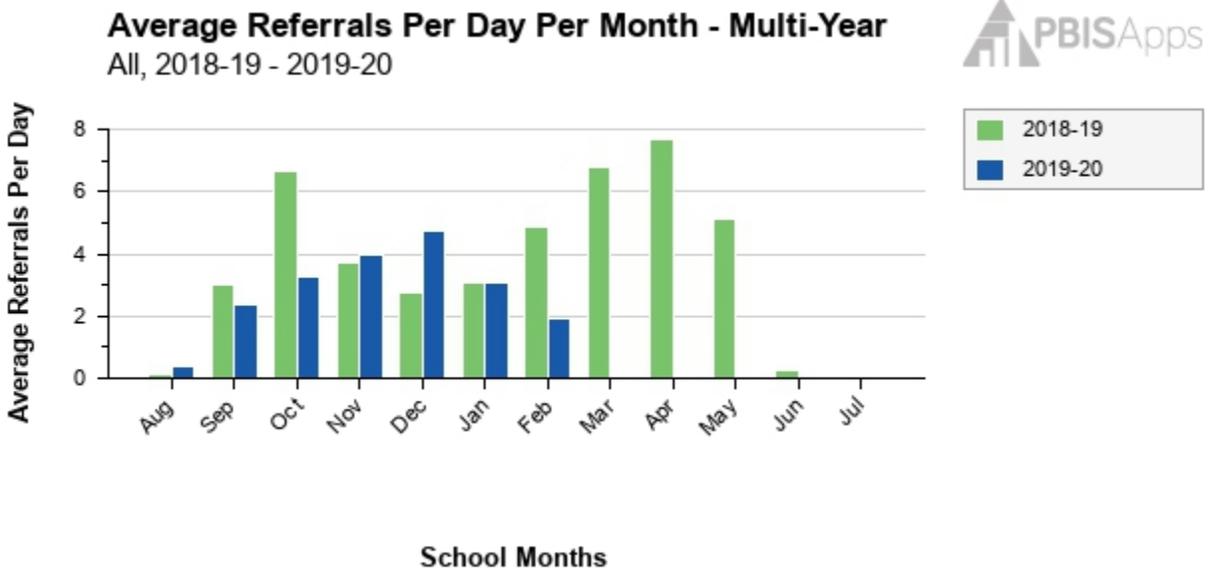
functioning for a week or so we will conduct a full radon re-test of BRIJHS and report the results to the public.

HVAC Repair Update: Supplementary heat systems are providing needed heat support in the affected classrooms at BRIJHS. That said, if temperatures are not at a workable level, then those classrooms will be relocated as needed. Repair of four of the HVAC units at BRIJHS, including replacement of 8 compressors and 5 inverter boards is planned to begin next week. Additionally, our engineering team is identifying solutions to address concerns with the air handling systems on the Jr. High side.

Congratulations and Kudos to students Romero Fernandez, Maddison Grider, Josh Berkler, Isaac Price, Dane Williams, and Bryant Williams for participating in One Winter's Night for Champaign Urbana Mission. With the help of Trinity Church, they collected \$7000.00 for the homeless. The students spent the night in a box from 4:00pm Friday night until 6:30am Saturday morning. They received peanut butter and jelly sandwiches and a bottle of water that night. The same meal that is delivered to the homeless.

Attendance: We are placing an emphasis on the importance of good school attendance. We send attendance letters home to students. We have several students with individual attendance incentives. Our attendance in January of 2019 was 91.44% and our attendance in January of 2020 was 91.74%.

Behavior: There were 79 discipline referrals this month. PBIS and Restorative Practices are implemented throughout the building.



BRHS News

Congratulations to:

- Kalyn Warner, Student of the Month for January.
- Mr. Don Anton for being named “Teacher of the Month” by Mix 94.5.
- Jaton Shaffer and Audrie Mc Lain who will be receiving their State FFA Degree this year at the Illinois State FFA Convention in June

We had Future Freshman—8th Grade Orientation at the High School on Wednesday, February 12th. The Students toured Elective Classes during Periods 2-5. The Formal Parent Meeting was rescheduled for Wednesday, February 19th at 6:00 pm in the Commons.

Our CEO Students put on a Very Successful “Furry Scurry” 5K on Saturday, January 25th. This was their “Class Business”, which was an assignment for their First Semester.

The Life Skills Students under the Direction of Mrs. Sarah Ringel, Started a T-Shirt Business. WCIA News also did a News Segment on their business on Wednesday, January 29th. Mrs. Ringel and some of her students were interviewed.

The Life Skills Class also cooked a Lunch for the Faculty on Thursday, February 13th.

The Army came to school and helped our Physical Education Classes with a Fitness Day on Thursday, January 30th.

Behavior: From January 9, 2020 to February 12, 2020 BRHS had 2 Out of School Suspensions; 23, 37 Disciplinary Infractions, by 26 Students; 239 for the 2019-2020 School Year. This time Last Year there were 14 Disciplinary Infractions. 182 Students with No Disciplinary Infractions, or 87.5% of the Student Body.



Congratulations to Athletes of the Month for January: Basketball—Farrah Michaels and Bobby Schumacher, Cheer—Dylan Kelley, and Scholastic Bowl—Nadia Beadle.

Congratulations to Zach Stephens for Scoring his 1,000th Point against Arthur-Lovington-Atwood-Hammond in Basketball on Tuesday, February 11, 2020.

Thank You to Coach Mindy Whitehouse and the Girls Basketball Team for finishing an exciting Season. With only 6 players most of the time, that is quite an accomplishment. They also Won their First Regional Game in 7 Years. Senior girls Meah Carter and Savannah Stiger were recognized on senior night (pictured above with their families).

Blue Ridge recognized senior cheerleaders and boys' basketball players. Senior Cheerleaders are Madi Houser and Maddy Rosenbery. Senior basketball players are Wayne Bowns, Brenden Flannell, Brady Masengale, Lane Nichols, Bobby Schumacher and Zach Stephens.

