



LET'S THANK OUR FOOD SERVICE DEPARTMENT AGAIN FOR THEIR EXCELLENCE DURING REMOTE LEARNING!

# Blue Ridge CUSD 18 Superintendent's Monthly Update



JUNE 2020

## BLUE RIDGE ATHLETICS UPDATE

### BRHS

Summer workouts have begun following IHSA guidelines. We anticipate updated guidance by the end of June.

- BR is moving to 8-man football this school year. This sport is gaining momentum in our area.
- Soccer finished with a 9-14-3 overall record.
- Varsity volleyball finished with a 29-9 record, JV 26-6, and F-S 3-5.
- Boys' Golf will be coached by Myron Schroeder.
- The Girls' Golf team were the 2019 LPC Champions.
- Scholar Bowl finished with a 47-18 overall record.
- Varsity Boys' Baseball finished 8-22 and JV 2-15.
- Girls' baseball finished with a 12-20 record.
- Girls' Track, Boys' Track, Boys' Baseball, Girls' Softball, and Bass Fishing were all impacted by Covid 19.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

- 6/30 Re-Opening Meeting 6 pm
- 7/15 BOE Meeting, 7pm
- 8/17 Curriculum Day
- 8/17 Back To School Night-Schneider Elementary and BRHS
- 8/18 Teacher Institute Day
- 8/18 Back to School Night-BRIJHS
- 8/19 First day of student attendance
- 8/19 Board Meeting, 7 pm

## BRIJHS

- Softball finished its second season. Summer workouts are posted on their Facebook page.
- Baseball will be coached by Greg Alvis this year. Practice is scheduled to begin Aug. 3.
- Boys' basketball hosted a few open gyms in the spring.
- Girls' basketball will get started with practicing in late August.
- The cheer squad held virtual tryouts and the girls will be practicing their cheers over the summer.
- Volleyball continues to have strong player numbers.
- Track was cut short due to Covid 19.

We anxiously await word from IESA regarding our return to play guidelines.

## FFA UPDATE

- Jaton Shaffer was elected as the 2020-2021 Section 16 President and Gracie Myers-Nichols was elected as the 2020-2021 Section 16 Sentinel. Congratulations to you both on this prestigious honor.
- Trick or Treat for Hunger was a new event for Blue Ridge FFA this year. The team far surpassed their goal by collecting nearly 500 canned goods for Salt Creek Food Pantry. Thanks, FFA, and we look forward to supporting this work in the future.
- In February, FFA held its first FFA Week Assembly. Featured activities included relay races and a line dance competition. Activities throughout the week included Teacher Appreciation Day, College and Career Day, and the FFA Barnyard.
- Please follow the link to see the full presentation with many more accomplishments from the 2019/2020 year in FFA! <https://youtu.be/xktMjyN5Bmk>

# Superintendent's Update

## A letter of introduction from Dr. Stanifer

June 8, 2020

To the Blue Ridge Community,

As I assume the role of Superintendent of Blue Ridge Schools, I want to express my gratitude for the consistent and diligent leadership of my predecessor, Mrs. Susan Wilson. Mrs. Wilson's leadership was on display for the district as she skillfully led us through the beginning stages of the pandemic. For all her efforts over the last ten years in the superintendency, we are grateful.

As COVID-19 continues to impact our school community, there are many unknowns about what the fall will hold. A committee, comprised of members across job classifications, will be convened to examine various possibilities for our return to school. Options that will be considered will include the return to in-person learning, a version of remote learning, and a hybrid model that would combine both in-person learning and remote learning. As you can imagine, there is much information that must be considered and that information continues to change rapidly. We pledge to work diligently to balance the guidance provided by Governor Pritzker, the DeWitt Piatt Bi-County Health Department, and the needs of our Blue Ridge students, families, and staff. We will seek your input during this process and keep you informed of our plans and our progress throughout the summer.

The recent events surrounding the murder of George Floyd have greatly impacted our nation. As a public school district, we are in a position in which we can make a positive impact by intentionally addressing issues of race, justice, and equity in our learning environments. May we continue to learn how to best support all underserved populations for the health and well-being of our local, national, and global society.

I welcome you to call, email, or stop by the district office to meet me and share any concerns you may have. I look forward to serving the Blue Ridge community in this new role and I am thankful for your support.

Respectfully,

Dr. Hillary Stanifer

## District News

### **Summer Choice Boards**

- To provide some engaging ways to keep our Pre-K through 6<sup>th</sup> grade students learning over the summer, our teachers have created summer choice boards for each of these grade levels. You can access the summer choice boards from the banner on our webpage. The boards contain different academic activities that students can complete over the summer. Our goal with the grade level choice board is to keep students connected to learning and exploration over the summer.

### **Re-Opening of Schools**

- A Re-Opening Schools Committee will be meeting throughout the summer to consider various plans for our return to school in the fall. If you would like to participate in the work, please contact the Unit Office at 309 928-9141. We will use our communication systems to keep the community informed of our progress.

**ISBE Re-Opening Guidance- June 4, 2020**

- As IL regions enter Phase 3, all schools must follow IDPH requirements, which:
  - Prohibit more than 10 individuals from gathering in one space;
  - Require social distancing policies; and,
  - Require use of appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).

Decisions around whether to conduct allowable activities during Phase 3 will remain at the discretion of local school boards and superintendents, in consultation with local public health departments.

**IHSA Guidance- June 6, 2020**

- Students are limited to 3 hours of participation per day.
- Maintain social distance by being 6 feet apart.
- Masks shall be worn when social distance cannot be maintained.
- Follow gathering guidelines of groups of 10 or less including the coach and medical personnel.
- Groups of 10 or less must be pre-determined.
- Once groups are determined, students may not switch from one group to another based upon sport. Students that participate in multiple sports for the year are encouraged to be grouped, for summer participation, in their fall sport.
- Interaction between groups shall be avoided.
- Sessions can only include weightlifting, running, and exercises designed to promote physical fitness.
- Sport-specific drills are not permitted, and sport-specific equipment may not be used.
- Implement diligent and effective cleaning and disinfecting of frequently touched objects and surfaces following the guidance of the CDC and IDPH.
- Coaches must maintain a daily record of what athletes are participating, when, symptoms they may present.
- Free weight exercises that require a spotter cannot be conducted while honoring social distancing norms. Safety measures in all forms must be strictly enforced in the weight room.
- Players shall bring their own water bottle, shoes, towels, and other personal equipment. The use of locker rooms, shared water coolers with cups, and water fountains will be prohibited during this stage.

**EPA Item – Transportation Center:**

- Earlier this spring, the EPA received a report regarding fuel spills around the fuel pump at the Transportation Center. Typically, the fuel spills have resulted from fuel nozzle failing to shut off. Drivers are required to stay with the bus while fueling, but have sometimes gotten distracted by other tasks, resulting in an overflow. They noted that none of the fuel spills were considered “reportable” but have asked that we excavate the soil and dispose of it in an authorized disposal site. This work has been completed and we have received word that we are in full compliance with the alleged violation. You may view the complete report here. <https://5il.co/h0xe>

## Partial List of Actions/ Information from the June 2020 School Board Meeting

- Prairie Farms will be our milk distributor for the 2020-2021 school year.
- Sam Barton was hired as the new BRIJHS head girls' track coach.
- Kolby Kramer was hired as summer technology help.
- The district will host a School Re-Opening Meeting for community members on June 30, 2020 at 6 pm. We will share our progress to date, discuss current guidelines, and listen to comments and concerns from the community. Watch for an invite with an RSVP through text message and our Facebook page so we can plan accordingly. You can also call the unit office at 309 928-9141 to reserve your spot at the meeting.

## News from Schneider School

- **Preschool For All Screenings** - Schneider Elementary will conduct free preschool screenings on July 28-31 for the 2020-2021 school year. The developmental screening is for children who are 3 or 4 years old at the time of the screening.
- **Summer Reading and Kindergarten Jumpstart** - Summer Reading and Kindergarten Jumpstart teams have been meeting throughout May and June. The teams have developed two different options for each of these programs depending on current ISBE guidance at the time of each program.
- **End of Year Awards** - We had several students that excelled throughout the 2020-2021 school year. Here is a list of recipients who were recognized for various accomplishments including the Citizenship Award, Perfect Attendance, and Physical Education Awards.

### **Citizenship Awards**

Olivia Jones  
Jordynn Wilson

### **Perfect Attendance**

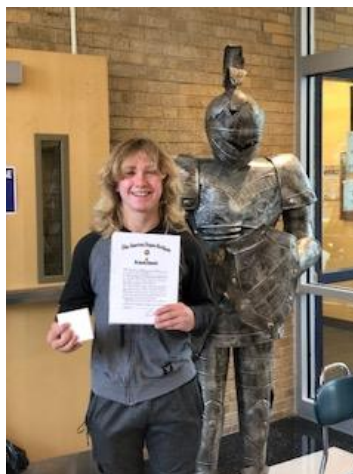
Trevor Clark  
Roslyn Freden

### **PE Awards**

Leadership Award: Ella Yeadon  
Fitness Award: Preston Norris  
Attitude Award: Raphael Fernandez  
Sportsmanship Award: Emma Drinkwater  
Heart Hero Award: Bentley Choate

## News from Blue Ridge Intermediate & Junior High

- BRIJHS staff finished their SEL work with Abby Lyons from the ROE.
- The building is in full summer mode with cleaning and painting.
- Congratulations to 5<sup>th</sup> grader Rylan Umstadd for raising the most money from BRIJHS for the Knight Walk!
- To 8<sup>th</sup> graders Addison Warsaw and Ty Meeker for winning the American Legion Awards.



## News from Blue Ridge High School

- The selection process for the upcoming Summer Bridge Program is taking place. Specific plans for the Summer Bridge Program will depend upon what phase Illinois is in with the re-opening process. A decision will be made on July 9<sup>th</sup>.
- Many of our BRHS Ag students are taking part in the Virtual Illinois State FFA Convention over the next few weeks.
- The following sports will be having summer conditioning workouts following the June 6 announcement from IHSA: Football, Cheer, Volleyball, Golf, Soccer, and Girls Basketball.

# Curriculum Update

Blue Ridge is eagerly anticipating working with Paige Trimble in her new role as Curriculum Coordinator. While Paige officially begins her role on July 1, she has already been busy with all things curriculum. Welcome to your new role, Paige!

- ELA-
- K-12 ELA teachers were provided with a menu of comprehensive balanced literacy learning modules created by Raquel Eshleman, ROE ELA Coach. Each of the modules are two hours in length and teachers can choose which modules would be most beneficial for their personal learning goals as they prepare for instruction in the fall.
  - Many new Fountas & Pinnell literacy materials have been purchased for grades K-8 over the spring months. Training specific to these new materials is now available to teachers in a digital format.
  - An ELA Task Force has been developed and will begin meeting this school year to develop K-12 aligned curricular documents and discuss instructional practices within and between grade levels.

- MATH-
- 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grade math teachers have participated in virtual coaching sessions with Janet Moore, ROE17 Math Coach.
  - 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grade math teachers have attended math curriculum building sessions at ROE17. This experience will provide them with grade level colleagues within the region with whom they can collaborate on an ongoing basis.
  - Erin Kennell and Marcus Minter will be attending a virtual Phase 1 training this summer for the College Prep Mathematics (CPM) curriculum.

- OTHER-
- Summer Knights-staff and families will be invited weekly, through a text reminder, to participate by posting a picture to our Facebook page that relates to the weekly theme. Join the fun and stay connected all summer long! Additionally, there will be a 'Show your Blue Ridge Spirit' Facebook post each Friday. Post your picture in the comments! #br\_u\_knighted
  - Summer Choice Boards- Our Pre-K through 6<sup>th</sup> grade teachers have created summer choice boards that are posted on our webpage. When you need some fresh and fun learning ideas, please visit the respective grade level board and enjoy!



## Educational Technology

- One summer goal related to educational technology is streamlining communication platforms among buildings. Staff completed a survey prior to the end of the school year that will be analyzed by administrators. Building level decisions will be made in order for parents to have one platform they will use to check communication from teachers per building. Training will be offered to those buildings to make sure teachers are familiar with the platform that is chosen.

### Technology Items

- Collected and assessed district technology assets including chromebooks and jetpacks
- Initial Data Privacy Committee Meeting
- Chromebook Repairs & Disassembly for parts
- Website updates for Summer Choice Boards & Cognia Recognition
- Website updates for new staff & staff leaving
- Outdoor camera installed
- Cell Booster for High School interior offices installed
- Planning/Design for summer projects
- Pricing equipment for CARES grant
- Notified staff that Bring Your Own Device will no longer be supported due to security of the network

### Upcoming

- Exiting Students from Student Management System
- Student Course Assignments with Final Grades Uploaded to the State
- Submitting out of district student information to the state
- Submitting Gifted & Accelerated students to the state
- Installation of two additional door fob locations: main gym entrance at HS and rear intermediate gym door at Mansfield
- Preparing Host server for Mansfield campus to allow for virtual servers like the system in use now on FC campus
- Two Used servers to be installed for the purpose of replacing the two physical labs in the high school with Remote Desktop capable labs that could be used both on premises and remotely. This is a very big project requiring a phased installation plan. This project in some form will take most of the next two months to complete.
- Wireless segmentation and the creation of a guest network
  - Move all current wireless devices to new network configuration
  - Move all chromebooks to new configuration
- 10 Camera installations at the JH including interior and exterior cameras
- Replace BYOD used by staff with District owned hardware.
- Ordering Chromebooks for Next Fall, Checkin, Setup and Configuration



## ***Create a great summer!***

Remember to join us in staying connected by posting your weekly Summer Knights photos to our Facebook page and returning on Fridays to post your Blue Ridge spirit photos!

[#br\\_u\\_knighted](#)