# At BATAVIA LOMMUNICATOR

**BATAVIA CITY SCHOOLS** 

Volume XXIV • Issue II

WINTER 2020

### With New Funding, Many Pre-K Students Switch to Full-Day

and two half-day

Many of the District's pre-kindergarten students had the option to switch to a full-day program this January. Like the half-day program that has been offered for years, the program is State-funded with no cost to participating families. Students who will be eligible for the Universal Pre-kindergarten (UPK) Program in the fall of 2020 will likewise have the option of full-time or part-time.

Our district, along with only 25 others in the State, was awarded State funding to expand our existing pre-kindergarten program. Prior to applying to be considered for the funding, Dr. Molly Corey, the District's executive director of curriculum and instruction, surveyed parents of pre-kindergarten students who were enrolled and found that interest in a full-day option was very high, but not unanimous. With that parental directive in mind, she applied for the grant and secured funding for 72 full-time slots, or four full-time classes, while still allowing for the half-day option for the 40 remaining students. Three of the full-day classes



sessions are being housed at Jackson Primary, and one full-day class will be provided by one of the community UPK providers, Imagination Station. The UPK program offered at the YMCA will remain as a half-day option.

UPK provides an opportunity for four-year-old children, at no cost to their families, to be involved in developmentally appropriate educational classes that, following the regular school calendar, meet Monday through Friday during the school year.



SEE INSIDE FOR A LETTER FROM OUR NEW SUPERINTENDENT.





Batavia City School District 260 State Street, Batavia, New York 14020 phone (585) 343-2480 ext. 1000 • fax (585) 344-8204

A Letter From Our New Superintendent, Anibal Soler, Jr.

# Happy 2020, the Year of Vision!

I'd like to take this moment to express how excited and honored I am on becoming the twelfth superintendent of Batavia City Schools. The District is a bright spot in Genesee County and I am looking forward to building upon the work in the District and on being a part of a supportive and committed community.

A little historical information about me: prior to my arrival in Batavia, I was the Associate Superintendent of Strategic Alignment and Innovation in the Buffalo Public Schools. During my tenure there I helped lead a variety of divisions and initiatives. The initiative that I am most proud of was my work on Strong Community Schools, a school improvement strategy that makes a school the hub for the community and provides increased student support, enriched academics, and extended learning opportunities.



Prior to my role as associate superintendent, I was an elementary principal, high school principal, academy director, instructional technology teacher and art teacher in both the Buffalo and Rochester City School Districts. Each of these experiences has increased my leadership capacity. I am excited about bringing my variety of experiences and successes into my role as superintendent of schools in Batavia.

Moving forward, I want to stress three important aspects of the work ahead: relationships, rigor, and relevance.

**RELATIONSHIPS** - Building relationships is important and vital to our work and success as a district and community. Together we will need to work with each other in order to continue to pave the way to shared goals, cooperation, understanding, and continued district improvement.

**RIGOR** - Speaks to greater and higher expectations of ourselves and our students. Increased expectations will lead to greater achievements for increased numbers of students in our district.

**RELEVANCE** - Focuses on the connection with community, circumstances, interests, and hopes. As a district we will build connections for learning now as well as build bridges to our students' futures.

Lastly, I am a dedicated family man and husband. I have four amazing kids and a supportive wife.

I look forward to working with each of our stakeholders and with our community on building and growing on the successes in Batavia City Schools.

WE are Batavia!!!

Superintendent Soler

Anibal Soler Jr., Superintendent • email asoler@bataviacsd.org

## Prepare for the Annual District Vote and Elections

by Scott Rozanski, Business Administrator

The process for developing the 2020-2021 budget began in October 2019. At that time, the District started gathering requests from administrators, department chairs, directors, and building principals. These requests for equipment, supplies, and contractual and building needs required to continue the current programs were reviewed and prioritized. From these initial requests, an administrative preliminary budget for the 2020-2021 school year was prepared.

During this time, the District also advertised for interested community volunteers to serve as budget ambassadors. From those who applied, the Board of Education appointed ambassadors to meet during the winter months for three (3) two-hour sessions to review the administrative preliminary budget and proposals, and to submit their recommendations to the Board. The Board will continue reviewing input until April 14, 2020, when the 2020-2021 tentative budget is expected to be established.



From that point on, through May 5, presentations may be requested by organizations for questions and answers about the proposed budget. Superintendent of Schools Anibal Soler will present the budget to any community group willing to host a presentation. By May 4, the formal document will be prepared, printed, and available for public review on the District website (www.bataviacsd.org), at all four schools, and at Richmond Memorial Library. On Tuesday, May 5, at 6 p.m. in the library at Batavia High School, the scheduled Board meeting will be devoted to presenting the budget to the public. Tuesday, May 19, 2020, is voting day, with polls open from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m.

## Two Board Seats

The May vote also will include a decision on two Board of Education seats, as the terms for Barbara Bowman and Tanni Bromley are ending. Both seats are for three-year terms that extend from July 1, 2020, to June 30, 2023.

Petitions for those interested in pursuing a Board seat will become available after the Board of Education meeting on the evening of March 10, 2020. They may be picked up at the District's Business Office, located in the District administrative wing of Batavia High School (260 State Street), on school days between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. The petitions must be returned to the Business Office by April 29, 2020, before 4 p.m.

### Election Districts Reminder

The Board of Education, in December 2013, approved changing the voting site of Election District #1 for any and all School District votes from John Kennedy Intermediate School to Robert Morris School. Election District #1 consists of all District residences north of Route 5. This applies to all residences in the City of Batavia, the Town of Batavia, and the Town of Stafford. Limited space at John Kennedy School and ample space availability at Robert Morris School was the primary reason for the change in location. There is no change in Election District #2 for the Batavia City School voting; those resident voters who live south of Route 5 will still vote at Batavia High School.

# Voter Registration

Those eligible to vote, but not registered, can do so in time for voting in the Board Election and Budget Vote. Voter registration will take place in the Business Office, located in the District's administrative wing of Batavia High School (260 State Street), on Wednesday, April 22, 2020, from 12 noon to 4 p.m.

# Absentee Ballots

Applications for absentee ballots for registered voters who will be unable to get to the polls on May 19, 2020, are also available in the administrative offices from the District Clerk. Those people who are already on the county list for absentee ballots will automatically receive their ballot in the mail. If requesting that the ballot be mailed to the voter, that application must be received by May 12, 2020, which is seven days prior to the vote. Otherwise, the application can be processed up until May 18, 2020, which is one day prior to the vote.

### Questions?

If you have any questions about the voting process, please call me at the District Business Office at 343-2480 x 1002, or email me at SRozanski@Bataviacsd.org.

# Published Book Includes BMS Students' Mini-sagas

Last spring, fifth graders in class with Mrs. Jessica Korelius, Ms. Cynthia Morgan, Mrs. Laura Kaczmarek, and Ms. Gabrielle Haibach concluded a survival-themed unit in English language arts by submitting short writing pieces to a contest sponsored by Young Writers USA. The contest called for mini-sagas of approximately 100 words about the world coming to an end. The group's collection was accepted for publication, and the much-anticipated softcover books arrived this month!

The student authors included Evan Kimball, Emmeline Bateman, Liam Jason Hare, Parris Martin, Jaden Tyndell, Leland James Duval, Isabella Hutchinson, McKenna Mazur, Tina Buchanan, Marley Yahis Santos, Landon Jeffrey Hamilton, Mikaylah Amy Sweet, Bob Parkhurst Jr., Nadia Ridley, Gavin P. Horseman, Gavin Donahue, and Aaron Hosek.



# School Cafeterias Serve Homegrown Taste

As part of the New York State Farm-to-School Program, our school cafeterias boast tasty local connections that support regional farmers. For example, the Upstate Niagara Cooperative, Inc., is behind the milk, string cheese, and yogurt served. In addition, we have been serving New York apples, tomatoes from Intergrow Greenhouses, Inc., in Albion, and potatoes, including locally grown McCain potatoes from My-T Acres farm for french fries.

The Farm-to-School Program is a health-friendly initiative that was created to connect schools with local farms and food producers to improve student health, strengthen agriculture in the community, promote regional food systems awareness, and encourage careers in the agriculture industry.

The District' Nutritional Services Department will continue to add more local options as they become available.



Locally grown McCain potatoes become french fries at BHS and BMS.

# At New, More Challenging, Competition Level, Winter Guard Places First

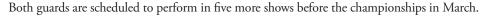


After the varsity winter guard team won first place for the A1 Class at the North East Color Guard Circuit Championships last spring, they were promoted to the next highest class – Scholastic A. Rising to the new challenge, their practices for the season began in October, with the members working hard for over 12 hours each week. When the group travelled to Orchard Park in January for their first competition of the year to compete against more than 20 teams, they found that their work paid off. There they were up against groups that have been competing at this level for years. At the end of the night, however, the team learned that they had placed first with a score of 59.75.

Winter guard performances consist of choreographed dance moves that typically incorporate flags or nonfunctioning rifles or sabres. The District's winter guard

coordinator is Jane Paladino. Our varsity winter guard's show this year is "As We Grow Together." The team consists of 13 girls in grades 7-12 who all have several years of experience. They are, as pictured, (on far left, back to front) Kurstin Smith, Jillian Peters, and Abby Frier; (on far right, back to front) Lucy Taggart, Freya Mellander, and Sophie Frier; (standing in middle, left to right) Prudence Favaloro, Alli Bisnet, Catherine Richardson, and Bridget Taggart; (and seated in middle, left to right) Stephanie Dibble, Nicole Belgin, and Margaret Richardson. The team's show designer and coach is Bridget Hogan and the equipment specialist and coach is Gena Rainforth.

Batavia also has a junior varsity team that competed in the Cadet Class at Orchard Park. Our junior varsity team consists of nine girls in grades 4-9. This year their show is "Kaleidoscope." The JV team show designer and coach is Lisa Taylor, its assistant coach is Erin Whipple and volunteer assistants are Mary Murphy and Liz Armijo.







# Students Express Appreciation for Veterans Through Operation Gratitude

District-wide, more than 1000 thank you cards and letters were written by students to military personnel this year, all because BHS enrichment teacher Lorrie Gammack was at the right place at the right time last year when she accompanied BHS students to volunteer at the Veterans Administration Medical Center in Batavia.

During their visit, one of the group's volunteer activities was writing letters to active duty military personnel to be included in kits distributed by Operation Gratitude – a non-profit which sends care packages to deployed military, veterans, new recruits, wounded warriors and their caregivers, and first responders. While students were writing notes, a veteran came into the lounge area and, discovering what they were doing, exclaimed that he remembered receiving his letters back when he was overseas, and how much they had meant to him.

"Seeing the impact it had on him made a big impact on me," Mrs. Gammack said. She returned to school and immediately received permission to run a District-wide campaign to support Operation Gratitude by having staff and students write thank you notes for inclusion in the care packages.

Not surprisingly, support was widespread. As each school was already accustomed to organizing appreciative activities for veterans,

this campaign, with its unified timeline and single activity, was similarly embraced. The result was a surge of gratitude that was nearly overwhelming. Mrs. Gammack, however, while kept quite busy collecting and sorting the good wishes, was thrilled with such an outpouring of appreciation.



# Three Student Fitness Stand-Outs in GCC Get Fit Challenge







Jonah Arroyo



**Dominic Darch** 

The Health and Physical Education department at Genesee Community College announced winners of this year's Play to Get Fit Challenge, and fifth grader Ryan Bigsby was the top overall participant, recording 11,122 minutes of physical activity outside of school. In addition to Ryan, the top three students from Batavia included fourth grader Jonah Arroyo with 5265 minutes, then third grader Dominic Darch with 4530 minutes.

The GCC Get Fit Challenge began in 2011 to motivate third-, fourth- and fifth-graders in the GLOW (Genesee, Livingston, Orleans and Wyoming counties) region to get more active. Every year, the program illustrates how many minutes young people spend engaged in physical activity outside of school in a manner the children can see and understand. Throughout the five-week program, participating students record their active minutes on a calendar log specially designed for the "Play to Get Fit" challenge.

Walking, biking, running, skating, swimming, playing a sport, playing tag, playing on a swing set and other active, creative games are all eligible for active "credit" minutes. Video fitness games utilizing Wii, Xbox Kinect or other similar gaming systems are not eligible.

# **Dreaded Word Was the Mystery Word**

A word that is dreaded by many western New Yorkers turned out to be the mystery word for second graders who were learning dictionary skills. School media specialist Katelin LaGreca revealed one letter at a time to the John Kennedy students from Ms. Emily Gonyeau's class. The students, searching and consulting their dictionaries, narrowed the possibilities down to the page, then column, until they were able to guess the word: blizzard.





# Students Create Taste Bud Tour of America



Eighth grade students in family and consumer science class with Mrs. Stacy Marzello, completed their Taste Bud Tour of America assignment. Working in small groups, the students researched a particular city, including a dish that originated in or was associated with the location. In addition to creating a tri-fold poster display of their findings, they made the famous food and invited BMS staff in to sample the culinary fare.

The selections varied throughout the day, but the recipes included Chicago's original chocolate fudge brownies, Houston's fajitas, New Orleans' beignets, Trenton's pork roll breakfast sandwich, Albuquerque's sopapillas, Chicago's Italian beef hoagie, Phoenix's cheese crisps served with fresh salsa and guacamole, Seattle's doughnuts with Starbucks coffee, Los Angeles' hot fudge sundaes, and St. Louis's toasted raviolis.

# BMS Students are Encouraged to Develop a Clear Vision for 2020

In time for the new year, BMS students were encouraged to attain clear - or "20/20" - vision about their goals. At one of their Circle Up sessions – class meetings that focus on character development - the theme was goal-setting. The session began with a video about having a purposeful vision for your future. (Here is a link to the video, titled, "Don't Waste 2020": https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QpEXD-mrEgk .) Then students were given a paper pair of eyeglasses to record at least one short-term or long-term goal on the lenses, add their initials, and decorate if desired. Teachers and students then had conversations where all were invited to share what they had written as their goal, what might prevent them from achieving their objectives, and brainstorm suggestions for steps that can be taken to ensure success.

The decorated paper glasses are being displayed in the cafeteria as a reminder to students about the objectives they have set. In addition, when they achieve one of the recorded targets, they can report that accomplishment during their lunch period to one of the supervising adults and receive a sticker to place on their paper glasses.



# Students Bring STEAM to Education Conference



Students from our District staffed a booth at the New York State School Boards Association 100th



Convention & Education Expo in Rochester to demonstrate the exciting things we are doing with STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, mathematics). Pictured here are students from John Kennedy Intermediate School.

# Cocoa and Cram - A Tool for Test Preparation



Leading up to midterms, BHS Link Crew members hosted Cocoa and Cram, where all freshmen - and only freshmen - were invited to join their Link Leaders for free Dunkin' Donuts cocoa and a "cram" session to prepare for their tests. Link Leaders set up different study stations in the cafeteria for each subject. Many teachers had provided study guides for the event as well as a bonus point for those test-takers who attended.

Link Crew is a national program adopted by BHS that enlists the help of select trained junior and senior student volunteers to welcome and motivate incoming freshman for a successful high school career. While there are a variety of Link Crew activities with freshmen during the course of the year, Cocoa and Cram is the only one in which the primary focus is on academics and prioritizing time for studying.

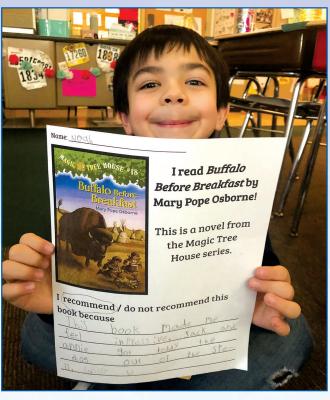
# Chapter Book Is a Hit

Although they were reading independently, all the second graders in Ms. Kate Egan's class completed the same chapter book, *Buffalo Before Breakfast*, by Mary Pope Osborne, and had a buffalo-themed class celebration to mark the occasion. For some students, it was their first independent reading of a chapter book in school. In addition to enjoying the story, students wrote out responses tied to comprehension strategies and they completed a short book review to say if and why they recommended or did not recommend the story.

While Ms. Egan had apparently chosen a "winner" because all of the students wrote positive reviews, she noted, "This book is often a second grade favorite since it ties into our westward expansion unit."

As part of the celebration, they enjoyed buffalo-shaped chocolates – but not before breakfast.





# Holidays Around the World











At Jackson Primary, first graders grabbed their passport and suitcase and visited five countries to learn about holiday traditions around the world. On the itinerary were Italy, Sweden, Mexico, France, Germany, and Israel. Students traveled to different classrooms for a lesson and at least one activity to help them find out more about different cultures and celebrations.





# Kindergarteners Meet Many "Faces" of Gingerbread





The scent of gingerbread baking is a winter staple, as is the traditional folktale about the gingerbread man! In Mrs. Kristina Clark's class, kindergarteners went beyond the classic story and read about and compared a variety of versions about gingerbread characters. First they heard two authors' slightly different retellings of *The Gingerbread Man* – one by Jim Aylesworth and the other by Karen Schmidt. Then there was *The Gingerbread Girl*, by Lisa Campbell Ernst; *The Gingerbread Boy*, by Richard Egielski; *Gingerbread Baby*, by Jan Brett; *The Gingerbread Pirates*, by Kristin Kladstrup with pictures by Matt Tavares; and *The Ninjabread Man*, by C. J. Leigh with pictures by Chris Gall. Each day, the class discussed the similarities and differences between the books based on the repeated phrases as well as the characters and the endings.

After listening and talking about baked gingerbread treats all week, the kindergarteners had worked up an appetite for gingerbread cookies! Mrs. Clark, with help from other staff, placed clues around the building for the students to follow, ultimately leading them back to their very own room – and a delicious snack.

## **Principal Faces Interviewers**

Although secure in his role as principal of Batavia High School, Mr. Paul Kesler nonetheless recently had an early morning job interview

with students in Jeff Tress' English 12 class.



As part of a unit on careers, the students were learning about interviewing skills, so Mr. Tress invited Mr. Kesler into their classroom to portray an applicant for an entry-level position at a retail chain. In addition to asking Mr. Kesler typical questions about his experience, skills, strengths, and weaknesses, the student-interviewers critiqued his performance based on such things as his preparation and readiness for the interview, demeanor and poise, presentation of skills, delivery and language, and body language.

By taking part in this active observation of an interviewee through the eyes of an interviewer, students will be better able to prepare for their own interviews when applying for a job.

# Universal Pre-K Application Process and Kindergarten Registration Begin for 2020-2021

### Universal Pre-K 2020-2021 Applications Available

The District is pleased to offer the Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK) Program for students and will continue to operate the program in the 2020-2021 school year, pending New York State funding. UPK provides an opportunity for four-year-old children, at no cost to their families, to be involved in developmentally appropriate educational classes that, following the regular school calendar, meet Monday through Friday during the school year. Since its implementation, the District has provided a half-day program. As of December 2019, the District secured funding to expand its offering to include a full-day option as well.

Children who are residents of the District and who are four (4) years of age on or before December 1, 2020, are eligible to apply. Applications are available at the Instructional Services Office in the administrative wing of Batavia High School (260 State Street) on school days between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. They also can be downloaded from the District's website (www.bataviacsd.org) by using the pull-down menu at the top of the page labeled "Parents," and then clicking on the link for "Registering your child for school". The applications should be returned by May 1, 2020.

If you have questions about the UPK program, please call the Curriculum and Instruction Office at 585-343-2480 x 1003.

### Kindergarten Registration for 2020-2021

Kindergarten Registration for 2020-2021 begins March 1, 2020, and the Jackson Primary School staff looks forward to welcoming its new students!

Current UPK students will be provided with information for parents to complete for registration into kindergarten.

Children who will be five years old on or before December 1, 2020, are eligible, and parents/guardians are asked to register their eligible child(ren) by May 1, 2020, in order to ensure a screening appointment in late May and early June. A placement letter will be sent in August. Registration is at the Instructional Services Office, located in the administration wing of Batavia High School (260 State Street), on school days between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m.

# The following documents are required to complete the registration process:

### 1. PROOF OF RESIDENCY

Please provide **two** proofs of residency. We ask that you submit one item from Category 1 and one item from Category 2. (If no item from Category 1 is available, please provide at least two items from Category 2.)

### Category 1:

- Mortgage Statement
- School or Property Tax Receipt
- Lease Agreement
- Homeowner's/Renter's Insurance Policy
- Statement by a third-party landlord, owner, or tenant from whom you lease or with whom you share property within the District
- Other statement by a third party that establishes your physical presence in the District.

### Category 2:

- Pay Stub
- Income Tax Form
- Utility or other bills; preferably electric, water, cable, landline telephone, or gas bill
- Voter Registration document
- Membership documents which are based upon residency (such as library cards with addresses)
- Official driver's license, learner's permit, non-driver identification, vehicle insurance
- State or other government-issued identification
- Documents issued by federal, state, or local agencies (such as local social service agency, federal Office of Refugee Resettlement)
- Evidence of custody of the child, including but not limited to judicial custody orders or guardianship papers

#### 2. CHILD'S BIRTH CERTIFICATE

3. CHILD'S IMMUNIZATION RECORDS FROM DOCTOR

4. CHILD'S MOST RECENT PHYSICAL FROM DOCTOR

If you have questions, please call the Instructional Services Office at 343-2480 x1010.

Please note: Parents of all new students to the District must also register their child(ren) at the Instructional Services Office with the same documentation.



# Senior Amanda Montemarano Wins Art Award

Amanda Montemarano, a senior in Mrs. Mandi Antonucci's Advanced Placement (AP) art class, won the Graphic Design Award for Excellence in Creativity in the Start Here Exhibition at Rochester Institute of Technology. Her piece was a graphite and gold leaf drawing entitled "Good and Evil". Start Here is a regional





exhibition for middle and high school students, showcasing the best student artwork in the Rochester/Finger Lakes Region.

Says Mrs. Antonucci, "It is considered an honor for a student to be selected for the show, and an outstanding achievement to receive and award."



#### www.bataviacsd.org



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### The City School District of Batavia

- Jackson Primary School
- John Kennedy Intermediate School
- Batavia Middle School
- · Batavia High School

#### Superintendent

Anibal Soler Jr.

BOE Members	with terms ending in:
Barbara Bowman	2020
Tanni Bromley	2020
Patrick Burk, President	2021
Zachary Korzelius	2021
Shawna Murphy	2021
Pete Cecere, Vice President	
John Marucci	2022

#### District Administrative Offices

260 State St., Batavia, NY

(585) 343-2480

Hours: M-F 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

### District Newsletter Editor

• Kathie Scott

#### ANYTIME.



# You're Invited . . .

Here are community-oriented highlights from our calendar. All activities, sporting events, and updates can be found on the District website (www.bataviacsd.org).

### March 2020

 $3\mbox{-}30\mbox{.....}$  K-12 Art Show @ Richmond Library on Ross Street

6-7 ...... BHS Drama Club Performance, 45 Plays for 45 Presidents, 7pm

8...... BHS Drama Club Performance, 45 Plays for 45 Presidents, 2pm

10 ....... Board of Education Meeting @ BHS/BOE Conference Room, 6:30pm

13 ....... K-12 Art Show Artist Reception and Presentation of Awards @ Richmond Library, 5:30-7:30

18 ...... BMS Drama Club Performance, Beauty and the Beast, 6pm

19 ...... BCSD "Music In Our Schools Month" Concert @ BHS, 7pm

24 ...... Board of Education Meeting @ BHS/BOE Conference Room, 6:30pm

27 ...... Mr. Batavia Contest @ BHS, 7:00pm

28 ...... JAX Breakfast With The Easter Bunny, Settler's Family Restaurant (353 West Main Street), 8am-11am

### **April 2020**

14 ...... Board of Education Meeting @ BHS/BOE Conference Room, 6:30pm

30 ...... BHS Jazz Cabaret @ BHS Gym, 6:30pm

### May 2020

5...... Board of Education Meeting/Budget Hearing @ BHS Library, 6 pm

6...... BHS Band/Jazz Band and BMS Band/Jazz Band @ BHS, 7pm

7...... JK Third Grade Chorus @ BMS, 6:30pm

13 ....... JK Beginning/Intermediate Orchestras and Beginning Band @ BHS, 7pm

14 ...... BHS Chorale/Treble Choir/Rock Bands @ BHS, 7pm

19 ...... District Budget Vote and Board of Education Elections @ BHS & RM, 7am – 9pm

...... JAX Art Show and Concert, 4-8pm

Grades 5-12 String Orchestra Concert @ BHS, 7pm

25 ...... BCSD Ensembles in Memorial Day Parade

26 ....... BCSD Musicians of Note Celebration, 5:30pm dinner; 6:45pm performance

28 ...... BMS Grades 5-6 Band and Chorus Concert @ BHS, 7pm