

BELLEFONTE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT ISSUE NO. 43

RED RAIDER

m a g a z i n e



In This Issue

2019 Graduation
Project Lead the Way
Bellefonte eLearning Academy
Unified bocce

Bellefonte Area Board of School Directors

Jon Guizar, President
Robert Lumley-Sapanski, Vice President
Kristen Bruckner
Kimberly Hearn
Lorraine Mulfinger
Rodney Musser
Robert Pacella
Donna Smith
Jeff Steiner
Michelle Saylor, Superintendent
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Benner Elementary.....355-2812
Marion-Walker Elementary.....357-2425
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Discrimination Policy

The Bellefonte Area School District will not discriminate in its educational programs, activities or employment practices based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, religion, ancestry or any other legally protected classification. This policy is in accordance with state and federal laws, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act. Information relative to special accommodations, grievance procedure and designated responsible official for compliance with Title VI, Title IX and Section 504 may be obtained by contacting Superintendent Michelle Saylor at 355-4814, Ext. 3005.

Correction: "Refugee" author Alan Gratz's last name was misspelled in Issue No. 42 of Red Raider magazine.

Editor's note: Information in this edition of Red Raider magazine was made in the spring to accommodate the May deadline. Other school-related information after that can be found in the School News tab on the district's website, www.basd.net, and on its social media accounts. Two pages were made available after deadline by Spectrum Printing that allowed us to include information about 2019 graduation.

Meet new board member Donna Smith

Donna Smith has been a resident of Benner Township for 34 years, and said her two adult children are "proud and successful" graduates of Bellefonte Area School District. She filled a vacant seat on the school board in February and will fill the remainder of the term until December. She also ran in the primaries in May for a four-year term on the board.

She moved to the area in 1986 after graduating from Clarion University to teach English at Bellefonte Area Middle School, and retired following the 2017-18 school year after serving the district for 33 years. During her time at the district, Smith was involved with the softball and cross-country and track teams, and continues to support her former students in their extracurricular activities.

Smith said she has held the roles of parent, grandparent, teacher, tax payer and community member, "pledging to keep those roles in mind when making informed decisions," and added that giving back to the district and its families that she has grown to love is the primary reason for serving on the board.

In a question and answer she did with senior Tyler Muse, a writer for Red and White, the high school's student newspaper, Smith said, "I honestly love our community and the kids and teachers in the Bellefonte Area School District. After I decided to retire from teaching, I knew I needed to remain involved – school was my world for so long – but wondered how? When the opportunity to serve on our board became available due to an unexpected vacancy, I had my answer."



Other candidates who ran in the May primaries for Bellefonte Area school board



Mark
Badger



Julie
Fitzgerald



Kim
Hearn



Max
Kroell



Rob
Pacella



Bob
Lumley-Sapanski

Remembering our own

Bryan Fry

Feb. 18, 1967 – Nov. 21, 2018

He served the Bellefonte Area School District as a custodian from October 2013 to November 2018.

Joe Pletcher

Jan. 24, 1956 – July 2, 2018

He served Bellefonte Area School District as a custodian from November 2011 to March 2018.

Fry and Pletcher worked at Bellefonte Area Middle School.



Cheryl DeCusati: Jan. 13, 1958 – Jan. 3, 2019

At Bellefonte Area School District, Cheryl DeCusati was known as someone who positively affected the lives of students, colleagues and families – something that reached far beyond the classroom.

That's why the Marion Walker Parent Teacher Organization unanimously decided to rename the Marion-Walker PTO Excellence Award scholarship in DeCusati's memory. The longtime kindergarten teacher passed away in January after a courageous battle with cancer. She retired at the end of the 2017-18 school year after serving the district for 25 years.

The inaugural Cheryl DeCusati Memorial Scholarship will be annually given to two students who graduate from Bellefonte Area High School. Recipients of this award must have attended Marion-Walker Elementary School.

Class of 2019 recipients are Gretchen Little and Emily Pugh.

The MW PTO funds the scholarship through fundraising efforts and donations from its members.

"In some small way, we wanted to honor Cheryl's love of education and celebrate the excellence she brought to the students, the school and to the entire district," PTO President Amanda Grindley said, also elaborating that DeCusati demonstrated a lifetime of excellence that went beyond the classroom.

"She had such an impact, not just on her students, but on her colleagues and especially the families," Grindley added. "She became a part of everyone else's family. She went above and beyond, not just in the school, but by coming to her students' sporting events all the way through high school. She would say those are her boys out on the football field or those were her girls out on the basketball court. It wasn't just teaching them for a year and the kids moved on; she was part of their lives."

Several memorials have also been created at the school in memory of DeCusati, including the planting of an eastern redbud tree and the installation of a bench with a plaque near the playground. A mural was also painted for her in the kindergarten and first-grade hallway wing of the school.



Graphic provided by District Administration magazine and used with permission

TechXcellence

The deputy editor of District Administration magazine announced that Bellefonte Area School District was given a TechXcellence recognition that identifies schools and districts for outstanding technology programs. According to information from Deputy Editor Ray Bendici, the TechXcellence award was created by the magazine, and sponsored by HP and Intel.

An article in the magazine called, "Transforming PD (Professional Development) into Professional Learning," highlights the district's use of Chromebooks and other tech-related software used by students and staff, while educators take it among themselves to participate in small-group training to learn how to best use this technology. Bellefonte Area Middle School Principal Sommer Garman is quoted.

The article can be found, here:

www.nxtbook.com/pmg/DA/TechX_0618/index.php#/4

A graduation message

By Mike Fedisson, principal

In June, members of the Class of 2019 left us as the 135th graduating class at Bellefonte Area High School. Their high school careers have come and gone, perhaps more quickly than they or their families anticipated. Yet, while their time here may have seemed fleeting, they will leave an impact on our school for years to come.

Members of the Class of 2019 enjoyed time with friends and classmates, and have grown ready to take the next step in their journeys. Whether to continue school, join the workforce or serve our country, all of them leave with the knowledge and spirit to change the world.

We have seen this group of graduates help others and serve the community. Whether through being Big Brother and Sisters, visiting elementary schools and residents at Centre Crest, painting windows in downtown businesses or just acting as positive representatives of our school, they have exemplified our most cherished values.

The graduating class has also found success in the classroom by earning great academic accomplishments and honors. We wish the best to all the members of this year's graduating class. Spend time with family and friends; celebrate and reminisce of the wonderful times you experienced. We know you will do great things wherever you end up. Some of you will travel far and some will stay close to home, but you will all be forever linked to Bellefonte. You will take what you learned here, and like those before you, make meaningful contributions to the world.

On behalf of the members of the Bellefonte Area High School faculty and staff, congratulations to the Class of 2019!



Number of graduates 205

Valedictorian

Halle Mitchell

Grade percentage: 102.044

Princeton University

Salutatorian

Lizzie Giacobe

Grade percentage: 100.6655

Penn State University



To read more about graduation, see a photo gallery and view a video, visit this link: www.basd.net/Page/14450

A message from the grads



Max Kroell, Penn State, political science
"I'm really going to miss the people at Bellefonte, but I'm also excited to go on and come back and eventually serve Bellefonte at a greater capacity."



Jasmine Kozel, Penn State, cybersecurity
"Don't be scared to try new things because it goes by really really quickly and you don't want to look back not having done something."



Andrew Sharp, West Chester, secondary education
"I'd say my favorite is definitely four years playing on the soccer team and landing the first Division 6 championship for the soccer program at Bellefonte."



Abigail Tyson, Lock Haven, secondary education
"The teachers make such a gigantic impact and do it in a student's life just by accepting them in a class. It just changed my course in life completely."



Brandon Snook, Penn state, cybersecurity
"I'm happy to have finally graduated high school, but I'm definitely going to miss a lot of the memories I made and the atmosphere and the teachers."



Maddie Polkinghorn, Penn State, nutritional science
"Honestly you just got to send it. Whatever you're thinking of doing, you just got to go for it 100 percent and it will all work out."



AP District Honor Roll

Bellefonte Area School District was placed on the College Board's ninth annual Advanced Placement District Honor Roll for what they said is proven "significant gains in student access and success." The district is among 373 other school districts from North America who were honored.



According to a report from the College Board, the district was required to show an increase in the number of students participating in AP programs, while also increasing or maintaining the percentage of students earning AP exam scores of a 3 or higher. Reaching these goals, the report added, shows that this district is successfully identifying motivated and academically-prepared students who are ready for AP.

Bellefonte Area High School Principal Mike Fedisson said 186 students were enrolled in AP classes in the 2018-19 school year at the high school.

"Success in Advanced Placement is a combination of students' own motivation and the opportunities educators provide for them," Trevor Packer said in a prepared statement. He's the senior vice president of AP and instruction at the College Board. "I'm inspired by the teachers and administrators in this district who have worked to clear a path for more students of all backgrounds to earn college credit during high school."

To get the honor, districts must have followed these requirements

- Increase participation and/or access to AP by at least 4 percent in large districts, at least 6 percent in medium districts and at least 11 percent in small districts.
- Increase or maintain the percentage of American Indian/Alaska Native, Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino and Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander students taking exams and increased or maintained the percentage of American Indian/Alaska Native, Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino, and Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander students scoring 3 or higher on at least one AP Exam.
- Improve or maintain performance levels when comparing the 2018 percentage of students scoring a 3 or higher to the 2016 percentage unless the district has already attained a performance level at which more than 70 percent of its AP students earn a 3 or higher.

Empty Bowls project



When it comes to serving the community, students and staff do all they can. That's why art students at Bellefonte Area High School participated again in the Empty Bowls project and hosted its annual charity dinner to display their work, serve guests and help raise money for a good cause.

The event, held in the high school cafeteria, allowed patrons to get soup in a ceramic bowl made by students and staff. The dinner also included bread, dessert, a vegetarian option, beverages, live entertainment and raffles – and patrons got to keep the handmade bowl.

Art teacher Heather Fry said the mission was to raise money for anti-hunger initiatives through the YMCA of Centre County, such as the Backpack Weekend Food Program, which benefits students in the Bellefonte Area School District. Eligible students are able to take home a backpack full of food on the weekends during the school year. By Monday, they can return the book bag at their school for volunteers to fill up again later in the week. Bags are packed weekly throughout the school year by volunteers at Bellefonte Elementary School.

"It's about art and community coming together to benefit a greater good," Fry said.

In the past, the event has benefited the Centre County Women's Resource Center – now known as Centre Safe – and the food bank in Bellefonte. The campaign started in 2016 with the art club and 200 bowls. Now, about 300 bowls are created. The bowls, thrown and handmade by students and staff, are dishwasher-, food- and microwave-safe.

And while the mission is to help a community organization, the students and staff also have a goal to provide people with quality work that is skillfully made and aesthetically pleasing. Students and staff make bowls by throwing the clay on a wheel or hand-building them; bisque-firing; glazing it; and firing the bowls a second time for the finished product.

Mini-Thon

In Bellefonte Area High School's third mini-Thon event, more money was raised than the previous year to benefit the Four Diamonds fund that supports families affected by childhood cancer. It's an annual event hosted by the high school and organized by members of student council who aim to bring a fun event to the school, while helping give back to a good cause.

The event is modeled after Penn State's IFC/Panhellenic Dance Marathon, also known as Thon. It included dancing, games, live entertainment and more, with planning that started in the fall and ideas to include new activities, such as a corn hole tournament, for students who wanted to participate in the event, but didn't necessarily feel comfortable dancing.

"It was just one of those things you got a good feeling about and I think the passion still exists," said Class of 2019 graduate Max Kroell, who was head of finance for mini-Thon. "There is pride in knowing you're helping someone else out."

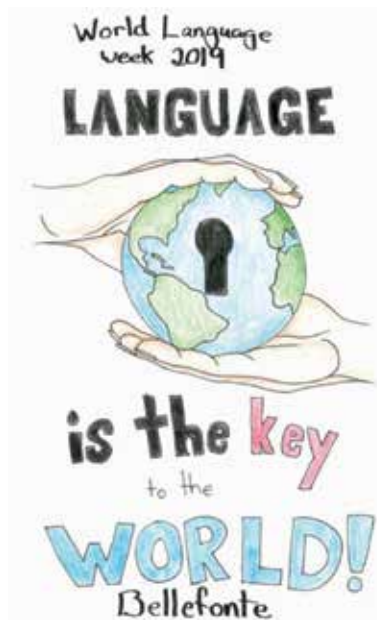
The mini-Thon event held the previous school year helped bring in about \$5,000. About \$5,445 was raised through the mini-Thon event held in March with even more donations coming in afterward, teacher and student council adviser Arianna Gouzouasis said.

Students said efforts to collect donations came in the form of "canning." Cans were dropped off at local businesses that collected donations throughout the year, along with other canning efforts made during Bellefonte Area athletic events.

Four students and recent graduates from Bellefonte Area High School discussed information about mini-Thon and what it takes to make a reality. Listen to the full podcast, here: www.basd.net/Page/14340



World Language Week



As they do every year, students and teachers in Bellefonte Area High School's world languages department celebrated World Language Week during the first full week of March, as part of a larger national observance to promote languages used around the world. It's a continuation of a celebration from the month of February that recognized Discover Languages Month.

According to Class of 2019 graduate Gretchen Little, the former student spokeswoman of Spanish Honor Society, morning announcements were used at the school to help spread the word about different languages. Each day, she said, a "fun fact" was included about languages such as Quechua, Papuan and Urdu.

This was the sixth year the high school celebrated the week, also known around the country as National Foreign Language Week. They also aim to promote the education of a new language that is not taught at the school.

And with a T-shirt design submitted by junior Kimberly Conway, her winning design depicted the theme, "Languages are the key to the world." French teacher Brittany McCamley said the department annually takes design submissions from language students. There were 11 submissions leading up to the March event. Dustin Waltz was the designer of the previous year's image that incorporated the theme, "Languages lead us on a path to understanding other cultures."

"While all the festivities are enjoyable for the students, the Spanish Honor Society loves any opportunity to spread world cultures to the school," Little said. "World Language Week is a great opportunity for the society to learn about new languages and cultures that are prevalent in the world."

One of the goals of Spanish Honor Society is, not only to promote the Spanish language, but also to appreciate other cultures and languages. The high school languages department also annually celebrates the national commemoration to better promote world languages.

According to the official AMG website, National Foreign Language Week was inaugurated in the spring of 1957 by Alpha Mu Gamma. In Pennsylvania, foreign languages are referred to as "world languages," therefore why Bellefonte Area High School celebrates what they call World Language Week.

When you walk into science teacher Jill Crisan's classroom at Bellefonte Area Middle School, there are more than just a bunch of students in class. There are also snakes and rats!

Seventh- and eighth-grade students who participate in Animal Club at the school have been taking care of the reptiles that were donated to Crisan. Those students, who aren't big fans of the snakes, instead help take care of – and learn more about – the two rats that were also donated to her class. If classwork is completed, then students in Crisan's other science classes are given what's called "animal time" on Fridays to interact with the snakes.

"They learn about proper handling and what to be aware of when handling them," Crisan said.

In total, there are six snakes – all constrictors. Though they have teeth, which help them grasp prey, they do not have fangs and are not venomous. Five are located on student lab tables and one is on a cart.

- Zippy is a California kingsnake at 5 feet 7 inches in length and 18 years old. He is black and white in color.
- Kevin is a Pueblan milk snake. He mimics a poisonous coral snake, which is venomous, by having the same three colors – red, black and yellow – but has different pattern combinations. Kevin is about 8 years old.
- Henry, the youngest snake at 2 years old, is a pastel jungle ball python. Crisan said, "what he lacks in length, he makes up in girth."
- Cob, estimated to be 18 or 19 years old, is a regular-pattern corn snake.
- Niblet is also a regular-pattern corn snake and is about 17 years old. Although he resembles Cob, he is darker in color. When he was a hatchling, his tail was stepped on, so it's much shorter than the others.
- Copper is an 8-to-10-year-old amelanistic albino corn snake that is missing the brown melanin in his color pattern, which gives him shades of orange. His eyes are also pink and orange in color, since he has no melanin to give him the normal eye color of brown.



Rodgers and Hammerstein's "Cinderella"

Students from the fine arts department at Bellefonte Area Middle School held a production of "Cinderella" – the Rodgers and Hammerstein version – with about 50 student performers and more than 25 students on the crew.

"I do a lot of research on different shows out there and see what best fits our students," music teacher and middle school drama adviser Jessica Cetnar said.

Auditions began in October and all who auditioned were accepted. Applications were also created for students who wanted to work behind the scenes. Students prepared three to four days a week leading up to the three-day show. Student and parent volunteers were also in charge of designing the set.

"I like to think we've become a family because we spend so much time together and bond over the show," Cetnar said. "It's great to have this opportunity for so many kids to get involved in this project."





Project Lead the Way

If you walk into Jordan Eccher's room at Bellefonte Area Middle School, it's set up a little differently than most other classrooms.

There are three different areas to support the multiple means of education in his classes. In one area is a computer lab; another is a wood shop; and there is also space for the graphics lab where Eccher said students make adhesive graphics for projects, as well as T-shirts. It's also used to explore zSpace, an augmented reality computer that allows students to interact with simulated objects in virtual-reality environments.

It's where the technology education teacher meets throughout the school year with sixth- through eighth-grade students for classes that introduces students to basic tech ed concepts used in business and computer science through collaboration, communication, evaluation, innovation and reflection.

He also teaches a class called Project Lead the Way that is nationally recognized in pre-kindergarten through 12th-grade to provide students with a rigorous and interactive classroom environment to help students develop in-demand knowledge and skills used in the real world. According to the campaign website, PLTW is a national nonprofit to promote STEM subjects – science, technology, engineering and math – while providing support for the teacher

or instructor with special curriculum and resources needed to execute a successful program.

It was brought to the school about seven years ago under a former superintendent and handed to Eccher when he started in 2016.

"We use engineering-based curriculum based on problem-solving and a lot of different Project Lead the Way curriculum, so they understand the concepts of what they're doing," Eccher said. "Basically, (they) have a problem, design a solution for the problem, test it and then evaluate it."

His seventh-grade class worked on a project to make a cube using a variety of wooden puzzle pieces. The students designed the model using SketchUp, a free 3D modeling software. They then used plastic pieces that fit together to test their design and then put it into the computer for 3D modeling before going to the wood lab to make the wooden cube pieces. Eccher gives the students a choice between black walnut, maple or cherry cubes, which mainly come from scrap pieces of wood.

"They get the best of all the steps, and it's graded heavily on the dimensions and drawings, so they know what they are doing when they recreate their pieces from the actual wooden cubes," Eccher said. "They take sketches and use dimensions to make the project that leads them into the next project, which is to design their own woodshop project."

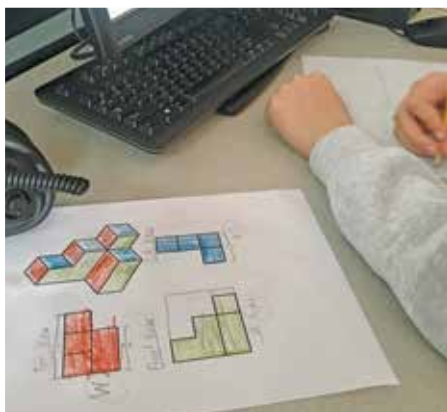


Their next project required students to make any kind of design they wanted as long as it was a wooden amplifier-type creation that they could place a mobile device in to amplify sound. It was done using general size limitation, front-view sketches with full dimensions, and the chance to use the bandsaw, drill press and sanding machines.

"The kids use everything they have learned and apply it to this project," Eccher said. "This is a very broad project, but it gives them the opportunity to take a lot of pride in their project because they made it how they wanted."

In the past, students have made models shaped like a fish, dog bone and concaved faces; and others with Lexan plastic and Plexiglas tops so the inside pieces – such as volume control, epoxy inlays with beads and glow in the dark pigments – were visible.

Eccher's other tech ed classes are similar in that they're based on problem-solving and creativity. He said he starts sixth-grade students with a predesign project and progress from there to give students the chance to create something functional. By the time students reach eighth grade, they can choose special classes like electives. Eccher's yearlong engineering class is project-based that allows students to learn the basics of lamination, while using as many technical skills as possible.



Youth Author Annie Cernuska



Bellefonte Area Middle School student Annie Cernuska left off her first-published book with a cliffhanger just in case she gets the opportunity to write and publish a sequel that follows the story of "The Hunter Voyage." Ideally, the now seventh-grade student said she hopes it turns into a trilogy.

The 12-year-old had the chance last summer to write "The Hunter Voyage," classified in the science fiction genre for kids ages 8 to 15. It came after an event she capitalized on during the 2017-18 school year as a fifth-grade student at Marion-Walker Elementary School.

Author Stephen Kozan visited students at Marion-Walker where he spoke about what it's like being a writer, and further explained his journey to create his own publishing company after being turned down by others. That's when he also presented the Flash Fiction contest that allows students to submit work to Kozan with the potential of being professionally published.

Annie entered the competition, and her passage and idea was named a finalist by Kozan, and later turned into a book printed by a branch of Kozan's Harrisburg-based publishing company, ReadyAimWrite. Throughout that summer, she worked with an editor and illustrator, and the

book was printed in early December.

ReadyAimWrite Kids, Kozan said, is a branch of his publishing company that publishes books written "by kids, for kids."

Calling the process "a lot of work," Annie said her parents Erin and Matt Cernuska – both teachers in the Bellefonte Area School District – helped her most along the way. She also said her younger sister, Aalyn, helped create the image that was later illustrated by a professional for the book's cover.

"At the beginning, it was coming to me naturally, and then it got kind of harder to think of ideas and elaborate on the book," she said. "It's been a fun experience, but you can't expect it all to come naturally, so when you get down to it, you need to think instead of write. It sometimes helps to get out and take a break. We went to Yellowstone, Grand Teton and Glacier (national parks) where I could let my brain take a rest and then come back at it with ideas."

The book follows the Hunter family in attempt to find a missing family member, while navigating through – and fighting for survival – in an uncharted and unfamiliar area. With characters inspired by family members, Annie said the rest of the book's plot came on a whim.

"I guess I just thought and wrote about what was special to me and what I recognized, and the rest was just an idea I had," she said.

In December after her book was published, she held a book tour at schools within the district where she interacted with other students, answered questions and read passages from her book. She also held a book-signing event at the high school library.



"Annie's great. She's someone who is very motivated. When she decides on a goal, she is ready to tackle that and doesn't really require that much support. With projects like this, it's really about her persistence. She's a hard worker, so she didn't let writing be something that was a downer for her summer; she was kind of excited about it." – **Erin Cernuska**



Annie was also featured in the media including ABC23, WATM-TV, WJAC, WTAJ-TV, Centre County Gazette, Lock Haven Express, statecollege.com, and the Success Starts Here website through the Pennsylvania School Board Association. Those features can be found, here: www.basd.net/Page/14179

"The Hunter Voyage" synopsis

**Provided by ReadyAimWrite Publishing*

All they heard was a loud scream, and she was gone! Can you imagine what it would be like to be kidnaped...by wild animals? Meet the Hunters, an amazing family of five. They love each other and their community, and they are known throughout their small town for being a kind, helpful family. Everyone loves the Hunters because they are always willing to lend their neighbors a hand.

But when the middle child, Mae, gets kidnaped, the Hunter children end up in an interesting situation. One might call it...unbelievable. And the whole family is forced to make a terrible choice that could change everything – forever. When the Hunters find themselves in a strange new land with limited resources, they are faced with their biggest challenge yet. Will they remain hopeful and learn to work together so they can survive?



Meet the author

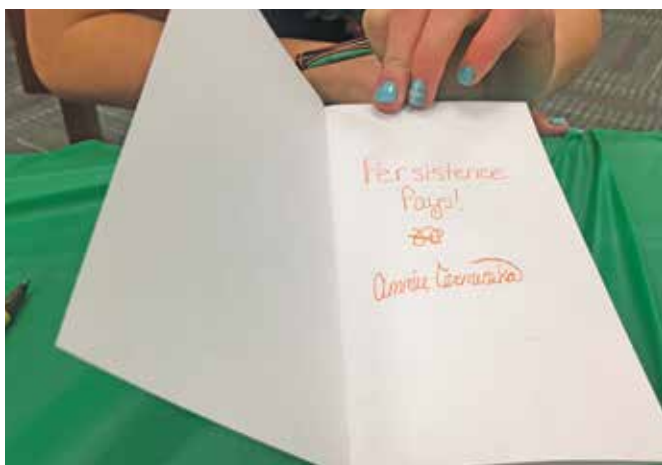
Bellefonte Area Middle School student Annie Cernuska is the author of the book, "The Hunter Voyage," a 75-page chapter book geared toward kids ages 8 to 15 and published by ReadyAimWrite Kids publishing company in Harrisburg.

She noticed at a young age that writing was something she excelled in, calling it "natural" for her to do. When author and publisher Stephen Kozan visited Marion-Walker Elementary School in the 2017-18 school year – while Annie was a fifth-grade student – she got just the push she needed to enhance her writing.

"The day he visited, I remember really taking in all that he said and wanted to come to the Family Reading Night that was planned that evening," Annie said. "That's when he introduced the Flash Fiction story contest. I thought it was a great idea and started writing my flash-fiction."

Flash Fiction, according to Kozan, is a contest for students to write a one-page fictional story. He selects finalists among hundreds of submissions, which the students must then write a 150-word synopsis for. One finalist from each school he presents the competition at is chosen as the winner, which Annie was named that year.

"I anxiously waited to hear back from Stephen Kozan, and finally heard that I was chosen to have my story idea developed into a published book," Annie said. "This experience has since drawn me closer to my love of writing."



You may find out more about Annie's journey with writing through links on the district's website that also highlight her book tour and book-singing events; a Q&A with the publisher; a photo gallery; and more. It can be found, here: www.basd.net/Page/14174. You can also purchase her book, here: <https://ivisityourschool.com/ready-aim-write-kids/>

Hour of Code



Julie Henry is the elementary business and technology coach for Bellefonte Area School District. Each year, she holds what's called Hour of Code activities for students in kindergarten through fifth-grade to celebrate Computer Science Week.

Question: Why participate in Hour of Code?

Answer: Hour of Code is (held) to celebrate Computer Science Week, and to get kids interested in coding and computer programming, and to introduce them to other computer possibilities that are out there, as far as programming and technology.

**A computer programmer is someone who develops computer software and creates code for technology applications and operating systems designed to successfully function.*

Q: What does Hour of Code entail?

A: Code.org is the website that sponsors Hour of Code and they provide a lot of (online coding) activities for kids to do. They have a great range of activities for kindergarten all the way up through high school, so it makes it real user friendly for those kindergarten students (who) may not be able to read quite yet and give them arrows and pictures (to help in coding tasks).

**Code.org is a website that encourages students to learn computer science through a variety of digital games. The website includes coding lessons that correlate with class curriculum.*

Q: Why is this important for kids to learn?

A: This is important because it helps students develop their problem solving skills, it lets them be creative and, as we all know, there is a lot of jobs now that didn't exist years ago. These students are going to go into fields where they're going to need computer science (skills) and they're going to need to know a little background of coding and how to work through issues they might encounter with technology. This gives them the background on problem solving and being creative that they can use to solve those problems they may encounter in their future jobs.



To see the video and hear what some students had to say about Hour of Code activities, visit this link: www.basd.net/Page/13985

CATArt

If you ask elementary school students from Bellefonte Area School District where they'd like to go on a CATA bus, they might tell you anywhere from outer space, to Europe, to the southwest desert.

Centre Area Transportation Authority asked just that and allowed students from across Centre County to depict their favorite destination in a drawing. Some of those were selected to be posted on the side of a CATA bus, including five district students. That bus went on tour in May to showcase the work.

According to information from CATA, the transportation service conducted the contest in the fall, open to students in kindergarten through fifth-grade. There were 610 submissions.

For more information and photos, visit this link: www.basd.net/Page/14400



Winners from BASD

- Celia Hunter: Second-grade, Benner Elementary
- Ella Johnsonbaugh: Third-grade, Benner Elementary
- Elliana Miller: Fifth-grade, Bellefonte Elementary
- Lexie Whitehill: Third-grade, Bellefonte Elementary
- Sam Pollick: Kindergarten, Marion-Walker Elementary



Adopt-a-Class

Students in Bree Fogleman's first-grade class at Bellefonte Elementary School got a surprise one morning after their classmate Macie Fisher was the winner of \$1,000 worth of school supply donations for her classroom. It

was all thanks to a contest won in her name through J.B. Hunt Transport Services.

According to Foster Cook, a representative of the company, Macie's grandfather Elwood McClintic entered the contest, called Adopt-A-Class, for his granddaughter.

"Every year we have a contest for our drivers in which they can nominate their children's classrooms for a donation of school supplies," Cook said.

Fogelman said she was alerted about the winnings and brainstormed with her students to provide a list of school supplies they needed most. The supplies were delivered in a J.B. Hunt truck and unwrapped by the students. They also received an Adopt-A-Class T-shirt and a pizza party.

Math 24

Just because students from Bellefonte Area School District don't participate in the annual 24 Challenge until the spring, doesn't mean it doesn't take most of the school year to prepare. Students competed at the district math tournament held at Bellefonte Area Middle School. They were eligible to compete at the district level based on results from building tournaments held at each of the district elementary and middle schools. The 24 Challenge is based on the 24 Game that challenges students to create the number 24 by using a series of given numbers.

Elementary math coach Stephanie Culley said each school annually handles practices differently, but they all start in the fall. Students at Marion-Walker Elementary School generally practiced in the morning before school started; students from Bellefonte Elementary School practiced four days in a weekly cycle during lunch. They, like those at Marion-Walker, practiced with the guidance of Pat Zimmerman. There were 30 students from Pleasant Gap Elementary School who participated in two groups of 15. They practiced every other week during lunch, under direction of a parent volunteer.

And those at Benner Elementary School also prepared with fourth- and fifth-grade advisers during free time during the school day.

During the 2017-18 school year, math training that also started in the fall paid off for several students who placed in the finals and semifinals of the regional 24 Challenge held at Lock Haven University-Clearfield campus. Each building with student participants held its own building-level tournament. The top eight students from fourth- through sixth-grades qualified for a district tournament at the middle school. From there 35 students then qualified for the regional tournament.

Winners of the 2019 district tournament

Fourth grade

First place: Brent Ohmit
Second place: Kayla Leddy
Third place: Althea Helms

Sixth grade

First place: Christian Reigh
Second place: Paige Thomas
Third place: Alexis Fravel

Fifth grade

First place: Grant Adams
Second place: Taylor Gutierrez
Third place: Landon Bassett

Seventh grade

First place: Braden Bickle
Second place: Braedyn Kormanik
Third place: Ethan Tomasacci

Jump Rope for Heart

John Servant has hopes that enough money will someday be raised to bring more awareness and research about heart diseases. That's why he worked so hard helping fundraise for the American Heart Association.

It came when he was a second-grade student at Pleasant Gap Elementary School participating in Jump Rope for Heart with health and physical education teacher Eric Cyone. That year, his teacher also agreed to dye his hair blue if his class raised the most money for the campaign. And they did!

The annual event aims to promote a healthy wellbeing, while benefiting the AHA. The 2018-19 school year was the 11th time the district has participated in the event, and raised more than \$8,000 with efforts from students at Benner and Pleasant Gap elementary schools. Both schools combined have raised nearly \$90,000 for the American Heart Association since the schools started hosting the event.

"These funds support vital heart and stroke research, as well as educational programs," Cyone said. "Because of the kids' hard work in raising that amount, each school will receive a certificate toward the purchase of new physical education equipment."

John, a soon-to-be middle school student, said he raised about \$500 in the first year he participated. It came with help from family and friends. As a fifth-grader, he raised more than \$1,200, putting his total contributions among the top four amounts raised in school history.

"It's good to know you're helping (fund) for research so people know what to do to keep their hearts healthy," John said. "I don't want more people to suffer from it."

John said his primary inspiration comes from a long family history of heart disease.

"It runs in my family and I had the opportunity to do it because I don't want other people to lose their life or a family member from it," he said.



To learn more about the district's efforts with the Jump Rope for Heart initiative, visit this link: www.basd.net/Page/14151



Joey Swentosky is only heading into fifth-grade, and he knew at an even younger age that he wanted to be someone who helps put a positive spark in the lives of others. That's why the Benner Elementary School student has been holding annual collection drives to benefit the FaithCentre food bank in downtown Bellefonte.

He calls his efforts the "Ready, Set, Give" campaign.

In third grade, he set a goal to collect 100 pounds of food. During the 2018-19 school

Ready, Set, Give

year when he was in fourth-grade, Joey hoped to exceed that, which, by the holiday break he collected 104 pounds. He also held another drive in April with the goal to collect 300 pounds of items to help offset the lull in donations during that time of year. During that week, he collected 707 pounds of food that was delivered to the food bank on May 2.

"I like helping other people out because everyone deserves to have a really nice life," he said. "Some people have it more than others and if somebody doesn't have that, they should, so you just need to donate so they can have a nice life and it will make the world a better place."

Joey's inspiration to help others came when he was a second-grade student in Nicole Harris' class participating in the Jump Rope for Heart event.

Joey said he then went to his mother Becky Swentosky with some ideas on how to give back to the community and decided to support the food bank, along with collect toys for those served by the Children's

Hospital of Philadelphia. It also opened itself up to a learning lesson about thanks and giving, as he held the drive in November during Thanksgiving time.

All donations were then delivered to the food bank just before Thanksgiving, and learned that they're most in need of items such as pasta, cereal, canned food and peanut butter.

"The people there are so nice - like the nicest people in the world - and are so thankful," Joey said. "That's why I'm so inspired by them because they take the time to work there when they don't even need to, and it's nice to know a lot of my hard work is paying off to help them."

Joey holds the collect drive at Benner Elementary and travels his neighborhood on bike working with neighbors to collect goods. Several Bellefonte businesses also acted as drop-off locations during the spring collection drive.

To listen to a clip of Joey talk about his giving project, follow this link: www.basd.net/

Page/13985

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Read Across America

Students from Bellefonte Area School District celebrated a week dedicated to the author known as Dr. Seuss – Read Across America. With a goal to promote the love of literacy, while honoring the late longtime children's author, students collected points for all the books they read – many including books by Dr. Seuss. They also participated in a variety of activities throughout the week that came with theme days and read-aloud sessions with guests.

At Bellefonte Elementary School, student athletes from Penn State visited classrooms to read books to students in kindergarten through fifth-grade. When tennis player Olivia Rohrbacher walked into Amy Wilson's second-grade class, students were in awe, as they were with the other college athletes who visited the class.

She enthusiastically read the Dr. Seuss story "Gertrude McFuzz" and then participated in a questions and answer session with the students who asked her everything from what her favorite color and prehistoric animal is, to what her favorite book is. Rohrbacher was among several Penn State athletes at the school involved in soccer, field hockey, lacrosse, tennis, gymnastics and more. They

even signed a poster that said, "We are, Penn State."

Benner Elementary School also held a similar event, but with student athletes from Bellefonte Area High School. Coach Mike Maney brought his wrestling team to visit the school and read to students. Bellefonte Elementary ended the week with an assembly to announce the number of points the school collected in total for all students who logged in time to read – 4,496, which exceed the goal by nearly 2,000 points. The assembly also included a pep rally-style event with members of the high school's marching band, cheer squad and baton team.

To continue with Read Across America celebrations the week after, students at Marion-Walker Elementary School had visits from authors, including Kathy Miller, and had a read-along event with Andy the Armadillo from Texas Roadhouse.

Read Across America is an annual national reading campaign created by the National Education Association to promote reading and to celebrate the life of Dr. Seuss.



Bluebird nesting boxes

For about 20 years, Matt Burrows has brought a project to his class that has the potential to positively affect the habitat of bluebirds, while allowing students to get hands-on experience with making something using tools such as a hammer, nails, drill and screws.

The activity this spring was no different.

Fourth-grade students in Burrows and fellow fourth-grade teacher Stephanie Mason's classes at Marion-Walker Elementary School paired up with community and family volunteers who helped build bluebird nesting boxes. The kits were donated by the Pennsylvania Game Commission.

"They make a huge difference," Burrows said.

He found inspiration to annually bring the project to his class after seeing his brother Wesley Burrows, a former teacher at Liberty-Curtin Elementary School, participate in it with his class. Matt Burrows then picked it up when he began teaching at Benner Elementary School and brought it with him when he transferred to Marion-Walker.



Once completed, students were encouraged to place the nesting boxes outside at their home. If that wasn't possible, they were asked to take it to a neighbor or friend who could use it.

Nesting boxes provide birds with a safe and secure location to lay eggs.

The state Game Commission suggests not painting the box. If an individual wants to make it unique, then the state Game Commission suggests painting it in light colors that doesn't absorb the heat as much as dark colors. It's also suggested to place the nesting box facing south to limit it from weather impacts.

Proposed elementary building project

During a series of listening meetings in the winter and spring, the public was invited to hear and provide feedback about a proposed project to revamp elementary schools at Bellefonte Area School District.

It comes with multiple options that members of the district and school board are looking into while considering safety, equity, transportation time, and creating community and best instructional practices, according to board member Kristen Bruckner.

Using a base estimate of \$30 million, district Director of Fiscal Affairs Ken Bean said the project will hopefully be completed within five years and is working to minimize the potential tax increase.

"The board looked at financing – what we can do to not raise taxes (for this project)," he said. "We had our financial advisers go through and determine what we can do with an estimate of \$30 (million) to \$35 million, and refund our tax and bond issues (over 20 years) and come up with a level tax millage with no tax increase."

The decision to create a proposed elementary school building plan came several years ago. Bean said the board hired Crabtree, Rohrbaugh and Associates to conduct a facility cost index study primarily for elementary school buildings within the district that determined how much it would approximately cost to build new or renovate existing facilities.

The study also provided a numerical status of each building that showed how much of its useful life has been used. The higher the number, Bean said, the worse the structure is: Bellefonte Elementary School, 99; Benner Elementary, 89; Pleasant Gap, 83; Marion-Walker, 32.

In October of 2011, the board also approved the \$4.5 million purchase of 107.57 acres of land behind the high school, with the intent of constructing a new elementary building.

Members of the district and school board are in the process of narrowing down to one of 13 architect firms. This, Bean said, "will help the district make a decision on what we want to do."

Options

- Rebuild Bellefonte Elementary School
- Combine Bellefonte and Benner elementary schools
- Combine Bellefonte, Benner and Pleasant Gap elementary schools
- Combine of all four elementary schools

**Bean said there also may be an option to build new and renovate other schools*

Unified bocce

Bellefonte Area High School can add one more sport to its winter athletic events – bocce. Bellefonte is among three school districts in Centre County to partner with the state Special Olympics organization to offer a unified PIAA-sponsored competitive sporting activity for students, which include those from the high school's life skills program, known as the athletes, and a group of regular-education students who act as partners. Bald Eagle Area High School has two teams; State College Area High School has one.

Under direction of head coach Tammie Burnaford, the district's assistant superintendent; and assistant coaches Michelle Simpson, district human resources director; and teacher Kevin Hilsey, the bocce team was comprised of student-athletes Kevin Doyle, Rheya Lott, Adam Marchini and Jadon Rieck, and student partners Addy Manning, Kasie Miller, Olivia Reiter and Leigha Schrader. Evan McMullen assisted Principal Mike Fedisson in officiating the home meets.

"It's a fun opportunity and a great time," Schrader said. "As a partner, we teach the athletes about the game and understanding of the rules and bring a lot of encouragement."

Schrader, who most closely worked with Doyle, was among a handful of students on the high school's safety committee selected to be a part of the team. More were interested, but policy prohibited students involved in winter athletics to be a part of the bocce program because it's during the same season.

Burnaford said the district was contacted last year by Mike Bovino of Special Olympics PA to establish a bocce team at Bellefonte Area School District.

"I really felt like we needed to do this for so many different reasons," Burnaford said.



To learn more about the mission of unified sports, watch this video: www.youtube.com/watch?v=VlZgPIWuc4U

National School Breakfast Week

Bellefonte Area School District annually celebrates National School Breakfast Week by promoting delicious and nutritious breakfast options at district schools.

They included a daily featured breakfast choice with a side of fruit, 100 percent fruit juice and/or milk. Other featured menu options included mini cinnamon buns and pancakes, pancake and sausage on a stick, yogurt with Scooby grahams and a breakfast ring.

Activities were also offered to students based on the theme, "Start your engines."

According to Food Service Director Laura Frye, on average, about 400 Bellefonte Area students per day eat breakfast at school.

"School breakfast programs support busy families by making it convenient for students to eat breakfast at school," she said.

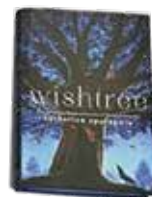
And for her efforts to make sure students have a quality meal in the morning, Frye was inducted in the Breakfast Hero Hall of Fame through the No Kid Hungry campaign.

"We are excited to recognize (Frye) for the important work (she) does every day to ensure students in your community have access to the school breakfast program," said Eleni Towns, senior field manager for the No Kid Hungry campaign.

The national initiative works with its partners across the nation and commonwealth of Pennsylvania to encourage student access to healthy meals to start the school day.

The district's food service department offers the public the option to help fund student meals. It's an initiative encouraged during the holidays, but also one that lasts throughout the year. Any community member who has an interest in supporting student meal accounts can contact (814) 355-4814. The department has a specific procedure to make sure contributions go to students who need it the most. An online donation process through PayPal can be found toward the bottom of the district website, **www.basd.net**.

One Book, One Bellefonte



The fifth annual One Book, One Bellefonte event was such a hit that the Bellefonte Reads committee needed to make a second order of 176 books for local families who attended the event just as books ran out. The annual book distribution night was held to help connect the community through a series of books that correlated with an inclusivity theme. In total, 693 books were distributed to families – nearly 200 more than the number of books given out at the previous year's event.

That was followed by Community Literacy Night – the literacy celebration following the kickoff, included books selected by a committee that oversees Bellefonte Reads. The featured book was "Refugee" by Alan Gratz, and was accompanied by companion books with similar messages. The other books were "Wishtree," by Katherine Applegate; "Her Right Foot," by Dave Eggers; "Strictly No Elephants," by Lisa Mantchev; and "We Are All Dots," by Giancarlo Macri. Book distribution night also included literacy activities that coincided with the books.

"One of the things we loved was hearing kids and parents talk about books," committee co-chairwoman and elementary literacy coach Nicole Kohlhepp said. "We want to keep that conversation and excitement going about books."

According to Bellefonte Reads founder, secondary literacy coach and committee co-chairwoman Jackie Wynkoop, research shows that the more children read, the more successful they will be. It also strongly supports the importance of book ownership.

"I think that other than providing your child with love and food and shelter and clothing, reading books with them and stressing the importance of reading at an early age is one of the most important things a parent can do for their child," Wynkoop said. "They can read books in school and go to the library, but it really makes a difference when there are actual books in the home."

Community Literacy Night also included a Scholastic Book Fair and a book swap. Blue White Photo Booths also offered what they called a "shelfie" station where guests could take a photo with their favorite book and turn the photo strip into a bookmark.

These events would not be possible without the help of sponsors and volunteers. A list of benefactors can be found, here: **<https://sites.google.com/a/basd.net/bellefonte-reads/benefactors?authuser=0>**. More coverage of Bellefonte Reads and events can be found in this link: **www.basd.net/Page/14355**

Employee Spotlight randomly features faculty and staff from the Bellefonte Area School District. Organized by district public relations specialist Brit Milazzo, in partnership with the human resources department, the goal is to promote the people who make the district what it is. Each season, an employee from the district's administration, professional staff and support staff are randomly chosen for the feature.

You may find these features, here: www.basd.net/Page/14058

Shannon Albert: School counselor, Benner Elementary School

Shannon Albert calls herself an "odd duck" in Centre County. After all, she's one of few who didn't study at Penn State, but rather received her undergraduate degree in psychology from the University of Pittsburgh and has a master's degree from Duquesne University.

But it wasn't long after graduation that she moved to Lion Country for her first fulltime job at the Bellefonte Area School District – first working at the high school – and showing her Pittsburgh pride by hanging the flags from the schools she calls her alma maters. And if you walk into the counselors' office, you can bet they're still hanging.

The longtime school counselor first started at the district in 2008 and transferred to Benner Elementary School about eight years ago, filling an opening after another counselor retired. Now, she's bringing her experience as a professional and mother to a role she calls "rewarding."

"There's something special about the connection with the kids," Albert said. "I really get to know them on a different level and see them grow up. Sometimes you see them more than their families do."

Albert's role as a school counselor is one that allows her to work with students on skills beyond academics and athletics.

"My job is unique," she said. "I don't have to teach them academics, I can teach them social and problem-solving skills and get into the emotional and developmental (aspect). I make sure kids have a good time and feel great while they're here and that's kind of awesome, because I get to make kids smile every day."

The Bradford native is a mother of three who said she loves Disney. It started several years ago after she and her husband took their first trip together as a couple to Disney World. Now, they make it an annual family vacation.



Duffy Besch: Principal, Pleasant Gap Elementary School

Since at least the 1970s, a member of the Besch family has been a teacher and/or administrator at Bellefonte Area School District. Duffy Besch is one of them – and the Pleasant Gap Elementary School principal said getting into education was one of the best decisions he ever made.

"I got into education because it was kind of the family business – I married an educator and my parents were both educators," he said. "I had a science degree I wasn't using and I wanted job stability. I thought, 'I knew I like to work with kids, so I'll enjoy teaching.'"

Calling the classroom setting "trial by fire" during his first year teaching at a school in Maryland, Besch said it only took three days to realize education was his calling.

"I'd say that pretty much since my first week, this is what I was meant to be doing the rest of my life," he said. "I've had jobs where I didn't want to go to work, and I swore I would never put myself in that position again."

The 2019-20 school year marks Besch's 20th year as an educator, including more than 15 years at Bellefonte Area School District – the same place he graduated from in 1990. The Shippensburg University graduate – and former college football player – has since been a science teacher at Bellefonte Area High School, along with being the vice principal there and at Bellefonte and Marion-Walker elementary schools. About three years ago, he became principal at Pleasant Gap.

"I view my job now as a way to educate kids differently than I did in the classroom – it's often working with students on social and behavioral (skills), and I view my job as staying out the way of teachers, and making

sure they have the resources they need to help a student succeed," Besch said. "If I can do that, then I'm happy, and can honestly say that every adult in this building is doing great things for the kids."

Besch, was born and raised in Bellefonte, and is married to high school math teacher Sue Besch. They have three children – Cati, a Bellefonte Area Class of 2019 graduate; JD, a junior; and Colby, a seventh-grader.



DISTRICT HAPPENINGS

Deborah Lightner: Personal care aide, Bellefonte Area Middle School



Deborah Lightner loves her job. She calls it finding her “niche” in life.

The personal care aide at Bellefonte Area Middle School works primarily with one student, following him through school since he was in fifth-grade at Bellefonte Elementary. In her role, Lightner said she works with the student to help improve his academic skills and gain more independence.

“It makes me feel good that I’m doing something that helps these kids along,” she said. “I’ve seen them grow and going from not being so independent to finding independence. It’s really rewarding.”

Lightner started as a long-term substitute in 2011 for the Bellefonte Area School District. By 2014, she filled a fulltime position with the autistic support program, working with a student to help him with day-to-day activities while in school. This came after working for 30 years at Weis Markets in State College.

“It was a big change, but I should have come to the school district a long time ago because I really enjoy it,” Lightner said. “It doesn’t feel like work. I found my niche.”

Lightner is a graduate of the Bald Eagle Area School District and now lives in Pleasant Gap. She said she enjoys spending time with her daughter and granddaughter and going on spontaneous road trips with her husband on their trike motorcycle. They have gone as far as Missouri and South Carolina.

Judy Davidson: Cafeteria worker, Bellefonte Area Middle School

Judy Davidson calls herself a “fixtured” at Bellefonte Area Middle School. After all, the longtime cafeteria worker has been with the district since 1991 – working all, but one year at BAMS, and was a substitute for two years before that.

And she attributes the best part about her job as being able to watch the students grow from what she said are shy sixth-grade students who turn into confident eighth-graders, and work alongside a group of women who she also said are “great.”

Davidson has held just about every position in the cafeteria from acting as the clerk, to cooking, washing the dishes, setting up the counters, serving students and more. In that time, she’s also seen some changes – though few and far between.

“The registers – that’s the biggest difference,” she said with a laugh. “When I started here, they used to have the real old registers where you had to add everything in your head. We got new ones about 15 years ago and it does everything for you.”

But as far as the kitchen goes, not much has changed in 28 years, she said. The staff still makes homemade meals. The most popular lunches, Davidson added, are the ones with mashed potatoes and gravy.

When Davidson isn’t working, she said she enjoys spending time with family and camping most weekends of the year at Gray Squirrel Campground in Beavertown.



Kevin Harman: Physics teacher, Bellefonte Area High School



Faith, family, physics. Those are just a few things Kevin Harman is passionate about.

The physics teacher at Bellefonte Area High School has been in education for about 20 years – and all of it at Bellefonte Area School District teaching physics. He’s also been the department chairman and school’s technology coordinator for about 15 years, and is heading into his 10th season as the golf coach.

“One of the great parts is I get a split day working with kids in a subject matter I really enjoy, and also getting to do other things by helping teachers and working with more kids beyond the physics students,” Harman said. “It broadens who I get to impact throughout the day and allows me to do one of my other passions, which is technology. Physics and technology are both about problem solving, and that’s something I enjoy.”

Harman, an Allentown area native, is also a husband and father of two. Coming from a family of Nittany Lions, Harman also has two degrees from Penn State – a bachelor’s degree in physics education and a master’s degree in instructional systems.

But it’s time spent in the class that he says is most rewarding.

“Teaching is a joy of mine,” he said. “I teach a very challenging subject, but what I get out of that is see kids open up and grow in ways they didn’t know they could. That’s what sparks me to go out and do what I do in the subject matter I enjoy, but it’s secondary to seeing the kids grow.”

Outside of school, Harman and his family are invested in their church, Watermarke Church. Harman is also part of the worship band, playing drums and bass guitar.

Mindfulness

Sometimes, when you put yourself first, you're able to better help others.

That's the idea behind the mindfulness movement at Bellefonte Area School District. It encourages mindfulness practices with faculty and staff that have the potential to positively affect the rest of the student body.

According to Jon Kabat-Zinn, the creator of the Stress Reduction Clinic and the Center for Mindfulness in Medicine, Health Care and Society at the University of Massachusetts Medical School, mindfulness is, "paying attention in a particular way, on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally." This definition has been used as a foundation of mindfulness-based intervention programs in a variety of occupational settings, including school systems.

The mindfulness movement at the district is spearheaded by high school English teacher Kevin Briggs and Marion-Walker Elementary School Principal Karen Krisch, who work together to organize mindfulness trainings for employees who are interested in using the method to reduce stress, so they are then less likely to become overwhelmed with the stresses of their jobs. It's an important initiative, Briggs said, as more than 40 percent of teachers choose to leave the profession, citing stress and burnout.

"There are hundreds, if not thousands, of ways to practice," Briggs said. "Some purists would even say there are an infinite amount of ways because every moment we are alive is an opportunity to practice."

Briggs, who is writing a doctoral dissertation exploring teachers' experiences with self-compassion as a result of taking a mindfulness-based intervention program, said the district offers a handful of mindfulness trainings, which he added are non-secular and designed with all faculty and staff in mind. They include:

- Monthly Mindfulness training
- Mindfulness Workshops on Professional Learning days
- Additional trainings organized and offered by teachers in the district

The monthly mindfulness trainings are organized by Briggs and Krisch, and are designed to educate teachers about basic mindfulness practices, while also offering them a place to practice.

The mindfulness workshops on Professional Learning days are more intensive, covering everything from basic mindfulness techniques to neuroplasticity to methods of cultivating gratitude.

"The better we are for ourselves, the better we are for the kids," Briggs said.

Question and answer with Kevin Briggs

Question: Tell me the goal about mindfulness practices in education.

Answer: Mindfulness practices are gaining more and more popularity in school districts because they're showing to be beneficial for students and teachers. It started with initiatives to bring mindfulness practices to students in order to lower their stress and feel more comfortable in school. Studies show that students have positive results in academics, and socially and emotionally from mindfulness practices. The problem was who was teaching the kids the mindfulness practices, because it was kind of like school districts were buying canned curriculum and giving them to teachers and saying, 'teach these kids to meditate.' But teachers didn't have their own practices. The trend isn't swinging toward teachers, it's adding teachers into the mix. There are a lot of different benefits, and one of them is that they can affectively teach the kids because they're practicing themselves and have an understanding of the skills. Teaching is a really stressful profession and there's a lot of burnout in teaching, so the other one is so we can work to mitigate their stress and it's essentially a vital part of a wellness program.

Q: How do you hope these initiatives grow at the district?

A: I think it should continue to be a regular part of what we're doing. I think we should continue to have the afterschool sessions and I think for the professional learning days there should be sessions all day long on it. I think it's that important. I think it's difficult in education to always do what the research says is the best thing to do because we only have so much time and so much money and there are different initiatives we're going after, but all the research says the healthier the employees are, the better off it's going to be.

Q: How did you become a part of this?

A: I came at it through a spiritual angle, so that all started back when I was in college, and really read about it and researched it on my own for about 10 years before I started practicing. From there I just sort of continued with it and it kind of grew and grew. When I came back to the district as a teacher, because I used to be an administrator for the district, I had really dove into my practice and came back with a personal initiative to be practicing mindfulness to mitigate my own stress and then I just realized the people that had an interest in it, and we have dozens of teachers in the district who attend these sessions. Personally, I practice it every day. Professionally, it's one of the things I care the most about, along with the kids, but I care just as much about helping people learn and understand mindfulness practices.



**Kevin Briggs contributed to this article*

Listen to the district's April podcast to learn more about mindfulness initiatives at Bellefonte Area School District. Kevin Briggs speaks in depth with the district's public relations specialist. It can be found in this link: www.basd.net/Page/14324

Bellefonte eLearning Academy

Bellefonte Area School District offers cyber education for its students who may feel this form of alternative learning is a good fit for them. Different than cyber charter schools, BeLA – Bellefonte eLearning Academy, started in 2009 – means a student who goes through the virtual program is still a student of BASD and may participate in other Bellefonte Area-offered classes, clubs, athletics, fine arts and extracurricular activities provided by the district. He or she may also attend Central Pennsylvania Institute of Science and Technology. Additionally, upon graduation, the student will receive a Bellefonte Area diploma.



To see the full Q&A, visit this link: www.basd.net/Page/13918

Question and answer with Cyber Education Coordinator Rebecca Leitzell

Question: What is BeLA?

Answer: It stands for Bellefonte eLearning Academy. It's our cyber education program available for students in grades 3 through 12, and gives them an opportunity to have a different learning environment from the traditional brick and mortar setting. We are (also) currently looking at options in hopes to accommodate grades K-2 in the very near future.

Q: Who is BeLA for?

A: It's not for one particular type of student. Students do it for many reasons. A person that's successful in online learning is a learner that is self-motivated and self-driven and willing to be a self-starter and do things on their own. They have the opportunity to work ahead and excel and take additional classes. But it's also very difficult for some students to have motivation when they don't have a teacher standing before you saying, 'OK, get to work, focus.' Some students will start and then say, 'this isn't for me,' and will return to the high school. Again, it's not for everyone, and you have students who go back and forth.

Q: What's the enrollment eligibility?

A: We do have strict requirements for the kids. They need to make sure in order to stay in the program, they maintain (at least) 70 percent in all classes, meet weekly requirements for hours and make sure they're staying on pace. If we see any of those things falling apart, they get a warning, so I will give them one week. If they don't get themselves back on pace, then they won't be allowed to continue in the program.

Q: What's a day-in-the-life like of a student in BeLA?

A: It's very different for each student. I have some students who are up every morning. I try to tell kids that it's best to have a schedule and treat it like it's regular school. We recommend one hour per class a day. So the typical high school student will have seven classes, so that's seven hours per day or 35 hours a week.

Q: What are the benefits to participating in BeLA?

A: One of the benefits to online learning in itself is the flexibility. The benefit of staying in the district, for our program, is you're still a Bellefonte student, so you're going to graduate with your class. If you want, you can still attend prom, dances, field trips and can participate in clubs and other extracurricular (school) activities. You also receive a Bellefonte diploma and have the chance to come in and work with an actual physical teacher one-on-one if they need to, instead of having to do everything virtually.

Q: What are the curriculum requirements?

A: The requirements are going to be identical to what we require in the brick and mortar setting in Bellefonte. Students will have all the same courses and we're working on making it a program taught by our teachers. Right now, it's a very rigorous curriculum. We currently use Odysseyware Academy for the majority of our classes. We went with Odysseyware curriculum because of the rigor and integrity of the courses. We felt that was most aligned to what we have here in the district. They provide virtual office hours online, and one thing that is different with BeLA than other cyber programs is kids have the opportunity to come in here to the district to get additional help to work one-on-one with a real person.

Dave Schaub Family Jumping Pits

If there's a name synonymous with athletics in Bellefonte, it's Dave Schaub.

That's why his family donated \$10,000 to the capital campaign at Bellefonte Area School District to put toward naming rights in his honor for the jumping pits at Rogers Stadium – something his four daughters said was a special place since he once coached them in the jumping events while they were student-athletes on the track and field team at Bellefonte Area High School.

Accompanied by members of his family, the donation was presented to the Bellefonte Area school board at a meeting.

Schaub moved to Bellefonte after graduating from Rider University in 1973. A lover of football, basketball and track and field – and just about all other sports – he coached a plethora of sports for nearly five decades at the middle and high school levels, including boys and girls basketball, football, golf and track and field.

During his time, he also coached Jeremy Herbstritt and Jonas Panik. Herbstritt, a Class of 1998 graduate, was a victim of the Virginia Tech shooting in April 2007; Panik, a Class of 1993 graduate and U.S. Navy lieutenant, lost his life on Sept. 11, 2001 in the terrorist attack on the Pentagon. Both were members of the track and field team at Bellefonte Area High School. The track at Rogers Stadium was recently named in their memories, thanks to a \$250,000 combined donation from the Jeremy Herbstritt Foundation and Reliance Bank.

Though retired, Schaub still spent the past two years volunteering as a coach for the jumpers on the track and field team under direction of head coach Seth Miller. He also is a coach, adviser and spectator at the athletic events of his 12 grandchildren, which include basketball, golf, wrestling, football, soccer, lacrosse, baseball, gymnastics, cross country, field hockey and track and field.



Schaub's biography can be found on the Bellefonte Area track and field website: www.basd.net/Page/937

In a message from Schaub's daughters, a portion of it said: "My sisters and I grew up loving our hometown and high school. The gym and the fields weren't only our dad's second home, but ours, as well. A date for my mom and dad included a Friday night game or even an end-of-season banquet. When we learned of the opportunity to give back to the community, my mom and my sisters and I all knew we wanted our dad's name to be a part of the new facility. After all, he spent 42 years total coaching at Rogers Stadium."

Those 42 years included 25 years coaching football and 17 years coaching track and field

School board, superintendent donate to capital campaign

At Bellefonte Area School District's board meeting on March 12, a check was presented for the capital campaign on behalf of the nine-member school board and Superintendent Michelle Saylor. It was part of a combined donation to show their commitment to the effort in raising money for the campaign that will partially fund Rogers Stadium renovations and construction, without using taxpayer dollars to do so.

"In order to maintain the momentum we have and illustrate the board's commitment to what we're doing, the board collectively agreed to come together to do a combined donation," board member Jeff Steiner said. Together, they donated \$1,000.

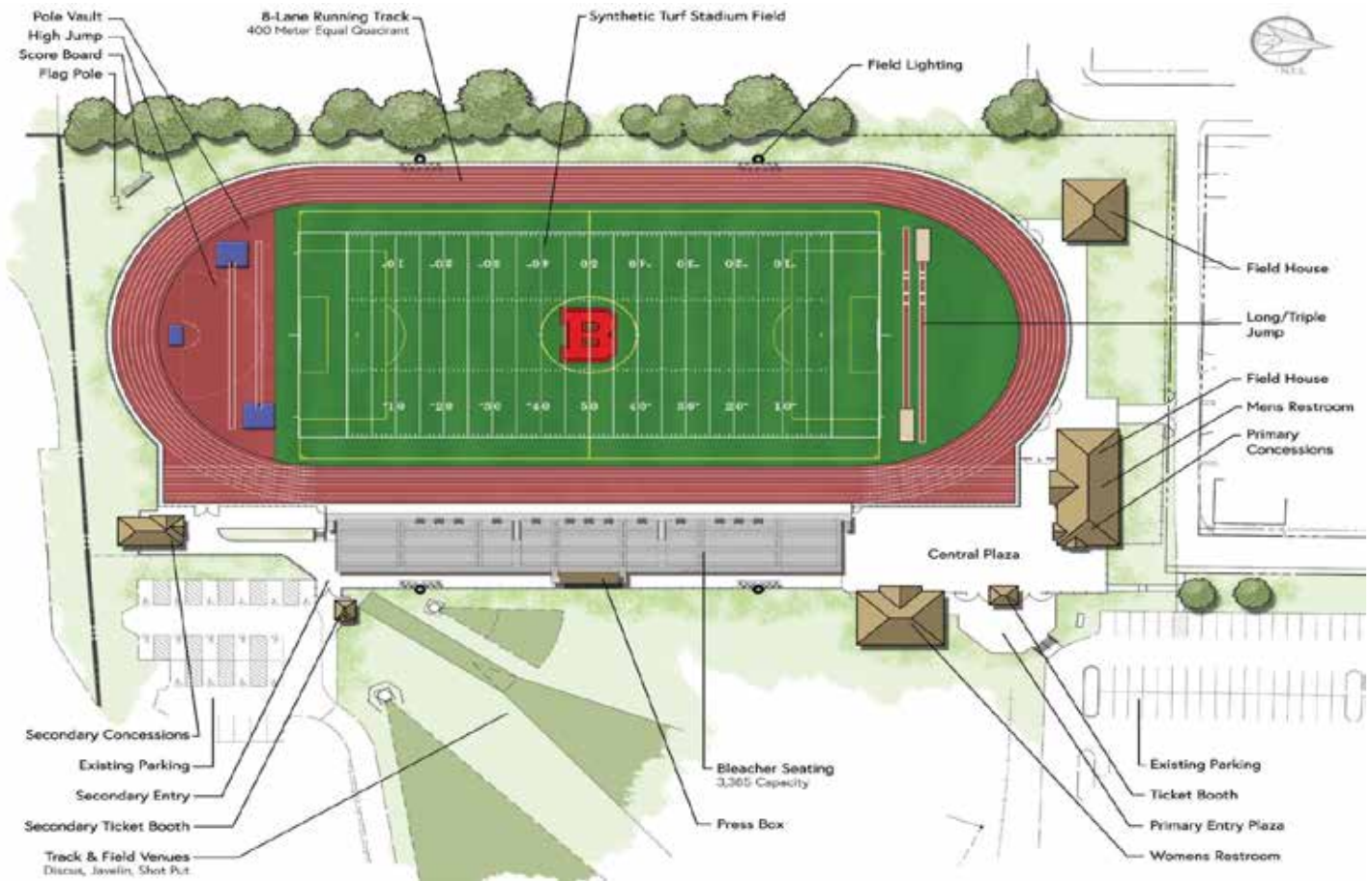
The about \$7.5 million project is being funded by two state grants and funds available in district reserves. That leaves the district about \$1.1 million short, allowing a capital campaign to be established to help raise the remainder of that money to complete the final phase of the project.

Bob Lumley-Sapanski, board vice president and chairman of the Capital Campaign Committee, said they have gained about \$440,000 in pledges, with about half of that in the capital campaign bank.

To learn more about the Rogers Stadium project, visit this link: www.basd.net/rogersstadium

To make a donation, visit this link: www.basd.net/Page/14094

ROGERS STADIUM CAPITAL CAMPAIGN



Bellefonte has a rich history and strong community pride. Our goal is to continue to instill this sense of honor and accomplishment in all students as they spend their important K-12 years in our schools. The BASD Board of Directors has embarked on a journey to attain excellence in academics, the arts and athletics by providing innovative opportunities for student success.

We have joined in their quest for excellence by offering our support for an important district priority: renovations to Rogers Stadium and our outdoor field and track facilities. This project will benefit not only our sports teams, but also marching band, physical education students, youth sports groups and community residents.

Together, we can make these facilities reflect the level of dedication, respect and effort we expect from our students, and the pride we feel in our community. Please join us in giving your enthusiastic support for this exciting project!

COMMITMENTS TO THE CAMPAIGN CAN BE MADE IN THE FOLLOWING WAYS:

- ✓ A one-time gift or a pledge payable over five years, beginning with an installment payment made within 3 months of your commitment.
- ✓ Gift and payments on pledges are payable by check or money order to Bellefonte Area School District.
- ✓ Payments on pledges can be made on an annual, bi-annual, quarterly or monthly basis.

Consider making your contribution in memory or honor of a favorite coach, fellow teammate, friend, or family member. All gifts to Bellefonte Area School District are tax deductible.



Pride, Tradition, Excellence:

A COMMUNITY CAMPAIGN

Giving Levels

Red and White Society

\$250,000 plus

Letterman's Circle

\$100,000 - \$249,999

Varsity Circle

\$50,000 - \$99,999

Loyalty Club

\$25,000 - \$49,999

All Star

\$20,000 - \$24,999

Platinum

\$10,000 - \$19,999

Gold

\$5,000 - \$9,999

Silver

\$2,500 - \$4,999

Bronze

\$1,000 - \$2,499

Friends

Below \$1,000

All donors that give \$1,000 or more over the five year pledge period will be recognized at the stadium as a supporter of the project, unless you elect for your gift to be anonymous.

For further information please contact Campaign committee member Bellefonte Area School District at 814-355-4814.

PLEDGE AGREEMENT

I, _____, accept the invitation from Bellefonte Area School District to join in support of the capital campaign, and hereby pledge and agree to contribute in the sum of \$ _____.

My gift shall be paid in the following manner (please check one):

- ☐ One time donation
- ☐ Donation over 5 years

Donation Schedule

- ☐ Quarterly (Jan/Apr/July/Oct) — all months apply
- ☐ Semi-Annually (o Jan/July) or (o Apr/Oct) — choose two
- ☐ Annually (o Jan o Apr o July o Oct) — choose one month to receive invoice
- ☐ Other — Payment & schedule: _____

Invoice starting month/year _____ / _____ Today's date _____
(Jan/Apr/July/Oct)

Name _____ Date _____
Print

Preferred Address _____

This is my ☐ Home ☐ Work

Preferred Phone _____

Preferred Email _____ This is my
☐ Home ☐ Office ☐ Mobile

Signature _____

Checks can be made payable to the Bellefonte Area School District and mailed along with a completed copy of this form to:

318 North Allegheny Street
Bellefonte, PA 16823

Bellefonte Area School District
318 North Allegheny Street, Bellefonte, PA 16823
814-355-4814 | basd.net

Special Olympics Geri Ryan Track Meet

Students at schools within the Bellefonte Area School District participated at the Special Olympics of Centre County Geri Ryan Track Meet, held at the Penn State multi-sport complex. This was the 27th annual event.

Staff and student coaches worked with the participants throughout the year to prepare for events such as the 25-, 50-, 100- and 200-meter runs and walks. Other events included the standing long jump and softball throw. Each student could be a part of three events. Class of 2019 graduate, Micah Heckathorn, had the privilege of carrying the torch for the opening ceremony. To see more information about Bellefonte Area students participating in Special Olympics events, visit this link: www.basd.net/Page/14376



Swimming standout



Zoey Cole was named a 2019 NISCA Academic All-American high school swimmer. This is a designation by the National Interscholastic Swimming Coaches Association, which honors 2 percent of more than 300,000

high school swimmers, divers and water polo participants from across the country. Cole ended the Bellefonte Area swim season with two first-place finishes in the district championship tournament in the 200- and 500-yard freestyle races – breaking the high school record in both. She also earned All-State honorable mention at the PIAA state swim meet.

Softball: District 6 champs

With a 2-0 win against Tyrone, the softball team from Bellefonte Area High School captured the District 6 Class 4A championship – the 21st time in school history. They played at Mount Aloysius College. The team included three athletes named to the district All-Star team: Hanna Lauck, Lexi Rogers and Mal Smith.



Wrestling donations



The Bellefonte Wrestling Association made a \$1,000 donation to the capital campaign at Bellefonte Area School District for athletic improvement projects including Rogers Stadium. A presentation was held during the match against Clearfield, on what was deemed Hall of Fame night. Bellefonte defeated Clearfield, 41-25. Kyle Myers also recorded his 100th win.

National Signing Day



On National Signing Day, six Bellefonte Area High School students signed their letters of intent committing to play a sport in college. A video and photo gallery can be found in this link: www.basd.net/Page/14281

- Noah Badger: Football, Lock Haven University. Intends to study health and physical education.
- Cati Besch: Soccer, Juniata College. Will study bioinformatics. The goalie was a second-team Mountain League All-Star.
- Rees Kelley: Lacrosse, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, N.Y. Aspires to study mechanical engineering.
- Chris Persiko: Football, Millersville University. Plans to major in criminology. Persiko holds all Bellefonte Area High School kicking records.
- Caleb Rocky: Football, Bloomsburg University. He intends to major in criminal justice.
- Cameron Stephens: Football, Wilkes University.

Lacrosse: Inaugural season



In its inaugural season at Bellefonte Area School District, the girls' varsity lacrosse team ended with a 6-7 record. The boys' team ended the season with a 5-9 record. Both were club programs in the past.

Baseball: District 6 champs



Bellefonte Area baseball took the District 6 Class 4A championship for the second year in a row after a 1-0 win against Somerset. They played at PNG Field in Altoona. With a slide into first base, Bobby Marsh had the game's lone RBI that resulted in a run scored for the Red Raiders. Pitcher Ashton Wetzler had a complete-game shutout. The team also had three first-team Mountain League All-Star players. Read more about them, here: www.basd.net/Page/14429

Teacher Appreciation Night



The girls' basketball team at Bellefonte Area High School held its annual Teacher Appreciation Night. Members of the team walked out before the game with their favorite teacher. Honored this season were 15 teachers: Kelly Bucha, Matthew Burrows, Josh Diehl, Nicole Eckley, Chris Friedhoff, Jennifer Kerr, Christine Morris, Ganieyou Salamy, Donna Smith, Victoria Smith, Jennifer Walter, Jonathan Virgilio, Shawna Weaver, Andrew Weigold and Renee Whyte.

State Champions: Marjorette squad

The majorette squad at Bellefonte Area High School was named state champions at the National Baton Twirling Association's state tournament. They brought home the title in the halftime category for the third consecutive year. The team is led by Coach Arimani Davy. Team members are: Alexa Bressler, Olivia Fisher, Lizzie Giacobe, Nattie Giacobe, Megan Hamaty, Kara Mellott, Addie Overdurf, Karlie Pletcher, Lissi Pryzbys, Victoria Royer and Emma Shawley.



Athletic director



Deb Moore has been name athletic director at Bellefonte Area School District. The position was approved at a board meeting in March. She has been with the district for more than 20 years – serving as assistant athletic director and physical education teacher at Bellefonte Area High School. Moore fills the position after former Athletic Director Jimmy Soltis stepped down in December after more than a year on the job.

Track and field records



The indoor track and field team at Bellefonte Area High School had more than 20 student-athletes compete – setting numerous records, according to Coach Seth Miller.

- Moryelle Fernandez set three individual records and was part of the 4x200-meter relay team, along with Austin Craig, AJ Hovis and Logan VonGunden who had a record of 1:43.55. Individual records included a 7.17-second 60-meter race; 45'1.5" triple jump; and 22'6.5 long jump. He also competed in the indoor track and field state championship tournament.
- Chelsea Robson also set two individual records – a 31'3.25" triple jump and 14'11.5" long jump.
- On the pole vault, Hannah McKeague set an individual record of 46'4.5" and;
- Max Kroell set a 46'4.5" shot-put record.

The outdoor track and field team included more than 80 team members. Highlights include a boys and girls Mountain League record of 6-1, each. Other season highlights can be found, here: www.basd.net/Page/934

DISTRICT CALENDAR 2019-20

Bellefonte Area School District

2019-2020 School Calendar

July 2019						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

End of MP 1 Oct. 29

October 2019						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

End of MP 2 Jan. 22

January 2020						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

End of MP 3 April 2

April 2020						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		



First and Last Day of School



Professional learning Day (No School for Students)



Act 80 Day (No School for Students)



Clerical Day (No School for Students)



School Closed/Holiday (No School for Students)



Vacation/Weather Makeup Day

August 2019						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

September 2019						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

November 2019						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

December 2019						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

February 2020						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29

March 2020						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

May 2020						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

June 2020						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

Tentative Graduation Date: June 8, 2020
Tentative Senior Awards Night: June 5, 2020

Parent/Teacher Conferences: November 15, 2019

Snow days will be made up in the following order: April 13, March 12, February 14, March 13, 2020

Staff Trade Day: June 11, 2020
New Teacher Induction: August 7, 8, 9, 2019



Bellefonte

Area School District

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For more information, contact the district at (814) 355-4814

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