



Hurricane Watch

A publication designed to share the excellent stories of the Brooklyn City Schools

Fall 2021

Tradition. Pride. Excellence.



**Superintendent & CEO
Dr. Theodore Caleris**

Dear Brooklyn City Schools Community,

The district was thrilled to welcome our students back in-person and on a full-time basis for the start of the 2021-22 school year! Grades 1-12 returned on Monday, August 30th, while our Kindergarten students began the year on Tuesday, August 31st. Students have been fully engaged in classroom learning and participating in the many athletic and co-curricular activities available. As we did last

year, the Brooklyn City Schools have continued to implement preventative measures to keep our school community safe and healthy in light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Our successful start this year is a credit to the collaboration and effective communication between the district and families. Thank you to our dedicated administrators, teachers, and staff for their efforts in making the start of the school year a success! Thank you also to our parents and guardians for your continued flexibility and support.

District Moving Forward with Capital Improvement Projects

To help ensure that the district's facilities are safe and provide our students excellent learning opportunities, the Brooklyn City Schools began implementing a detailed capital improvement plan in the summer of 2021. The scope of projects includes smaller scale improvements such as new signage and landscaping to larger upgrades including roof repairs, replacement of classroom furniture, and interior painting. In addition, the district is in the process of conducting a facility study to evaluate present facility conditions and future requirements. More information about the district's capital improvement projects is available in this issue of *The Hurricane Watch* newsletter.

Brooklyn City Schools Launches Strategic Planning Committee

On Tuesday, October 26, 2021, a committee composed of administrators, teachers, classified staff, parents, and community members initiated an important district strategic planning process. Over the next five months, the Strategic Planning Committee will collaborate to identify core values, new mission and vision statements, areas of focus, targeted goals, and action steps to accomplish each objective. The creation of a Strategic Plan will help to address the educational challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic and provide the Brooklyn City Schools a solid foundation to effectively prepare our students for the future. [Please visit the Strategic Planning page](https://www.brooklyn.k12.ny.us/strategic-planning) on the district website to learn more about this important initiative.

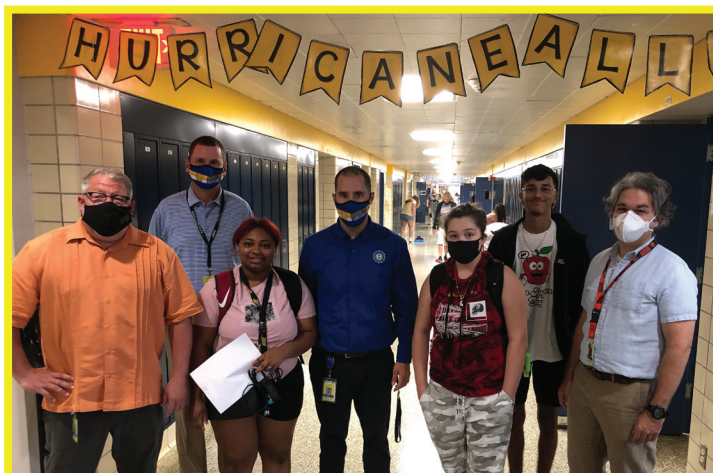
Financial Update, Highlights of Classroom Learning and More Inside!

This edition of *The Hurricane Watch* newsletter features several examples of the meaningful and engaging learning that is taking place within the Brooklyn City Schools. The Brooklyn community is also encouraged to review an important Financial Update from District Treasurer Colleen Aholt. For regular updates and news, please visit www.brooklyn.k12.ny.us. Thank you for reading and for your continued support of the Brooklyn City Schools.

GO HURRICANES!

Dr. Theodore Caleris

Superintendent & CEO



Brooklyn City Schools had a successful and energized start to the 2021-22 school year!





Capital Improvement Campaign Taking Place Across District



The newly renovated Community Room/ HS Room 173 is used by students enrolled in the Brooklyn Digital Learning Academy and hosts all BOE meetings.

As part of a strategic effort to ensure that facilities are properly maintained and upgraded, the Brooklyn City Schools are in the process of completing a wide range of capital improvement projects throughout the entire district campus. Work on the capital improvement plans began during the 2020-21 school year and include smaller-scale improvements such as new landscaping and building signage to larger projects including repaved lots, roof repairs, and more.

Brooklyn High School is a major focus of the capital improvements which includes new carpet in three classrooms, new picnic tables in the courtyard, and an ongoing painting rotation which will include all restrooms and doors. The cafeteria now features new tables and impressive column designs painted by students from the Murals course. Classroom furniture will be replaced in stages over the next several years. New seating and other renovations were completed in June 2021 in the Brooklyn Community Room/HS Room 173 which is utilized by students enrolled in the Brooklyn Digital Learning Academy and is the location for all Board of Education Meetings.

Repair work has begun on the High School roof and will be completed

in sections throughout the current school year. Additional planned maintenance at the high school will address HVAC and masonry repairs. Several athletic facility upgrades have been completed, including, a refresh of the high school gym floor, the installation of a retractable batting cage in the Field House in April 2021, and the restoration of the Hurricane Practice Field next to Brooklyn Stadium.

An old fuel storage tank was removed from Brooklyn's bus garage while all district parking lots have been repaved. The Brooklyn City Schools are also in the process of undergoing a Facility Study conducted by GPD Group to assess additional facility needs. Altogether, the ongoing improvements and maintenance across the campus of the Brooklyn City Schools represents the district's commitment to providing a learning environment that is safe and gives students opportunities to succeed! Stay tuned for future updates from the Brooklyn City Schools.



In addition to new tables and freshly painted walls, the HS cafeteria features column murals created by students.



Brooklyn City Schools Pays Tribute to Former Coach Jerry Younger, Names Football Field in His Honor



During his tenure as Brooklyn's football coach, Jerry Younger led the Hurricanes to two undefeated seasons.

Brooklyn City Schools paid tribute to the late Jerry Younger, one of the most successful and beloved coaches in the history of the district in a Hurricane pride-filled ceremony on Friday, August 27, 2021, at Brooklyn Stadium. A crowd of approximately one hundred consisting of family members, former players and coaching colleagues gathered to celebrate the legacy of Mr. Younger through heartfelt remarks and the official commemoration of his memory with the naming of Coach Jerry Younger Field at Brooklyn Stadium. Mr. Younger's children attended the ceremony, including daughters Cindy Vild and Cheryl Williamson, and son, Victor Younger. Both Victor and Cheryl delivered poignant remarks on behalf of their father.

As head coach of the varsity football team from 1972-1990, Mr. Younger led the Hurricanes to over 100 victories, which included two undefeated seasons, as well as multiple conference and divisional championships. Mr. Younger was recognized for his outstanding coaching and leadership by being named Cuyahoga Conference Coach of the Year in 1974 and 1978, and Northeastern Ohio Coach of the Year in 1974, 1979, and 1980. Mr. Younger also coached track and served as a teacher

in the Brooklyn City Schools. In addition to his time at Brooklyn, Mr. Younger impacted the lives of students as a football coach and teacher in the Parma City Schools, held a coaching position for the Strongsville City Schools, and served as an instructor at Cuyahoga Community College.



**District Treasurer
Colleen Aholt**

The Brooklyn City Schools remains committed to exercising fiscal responsibility and is reflected in our continuing focus on identifying areas of cost savings and conscientious use of existing funding and resources. During Fiscal Year (FY) 2021, the district saved just over \$90,000 in health services by using the Wellness funds that were provided. The Brooklyn City Schools also received \$5,361,391.00 in COVID ESSER funds which were applied to address learning loss issues related to the pandemic, social and emotional learning needs, the purchase of new furniture for social distancing purposes, installation of new touchless water filling stations, and updated curriculum.

The annual 5-Year forecast is [now available for viewing on the Treasurer's page of the district website](#) and provides a detailed projection of the district's finances. The district is grateful to the Brooklyn community for its support through the passage of three renewal levies since 2018. The renewal levies require no new money and ensure financial sustainability over the next several years. Beginning in FY 2024, the district is expected to begin deficit spending if the expiring renewal levy is not passed. The community is a valued partner of the Brooklyn City Schools and your continued support is critical to providing students a high-quality education. Thank you for your consideration and have a wonderful holiday season.



Sophomores Represent Brooklyn at First Ring Student Leadership Institute

Congratulations to Brooklyn High School Sophomores Mayhem Crowley, Jackson Diller, Tyler Morgan, Santana Sammons, and Idajia Simpson, who were selected to represent the district at the 2021-22 session of the First Ring Student Leadership Institute. Each student was nominated to participate by their high school administrators and will have the opportunity to develop valuable leadership and collaboration skills while learning how to be agents of positive change in their community. BHS Intervention Specialist, Mrs. Julie McGarey will serve as the group's advisor. Sixteen districts which surround the Cleveland Metropolitan School District will participate in the Student Leadership Institute. Over the course of seven sessions each school team will meet during school hours to identify and research the nature, causes, and potential solutions to an issue of importance in their school or community.



First Ring Student Leaders with former Cleveland Cavalier and NBA Champion Jim Clemons.

During the first session on October 29th at Cleveland State University, First Ring student leaders worked on team-building skills and had the opportunity to meet former Cleveland Cavalier and ten-time NBA Champion, Jim Clemons. Mr. Clemons delivered an inspiring message about teamwork and how "your attitude determines your altitude" in life. The First Ring Student Leadership Institute will hold a culminating event in May 2022, as each school's team will present their findings and proposed solutions before an audience featuring First Ring Superintendents, High School Principals, and fellow peers.



District Shows Support for Local Safety Forces with Community Hike & Bike



Brooklyn's safety forces joined Brooklyn students on a beautiful early fall day for the annual Community Hike & Bike event.

In a strong display of community pride, Brooklyn showed their support for local safety forces by participating in a Community Hike & Bike on Wednesday morning, October 13, 2021. As part of the event's theme of Let's Bike It/Hike It with a Hero, participating students were encouraged to wear red, white, and blue apparel and meet at one of three community locations, including Marquardt Park, Brooklyn Fire Department, and Brock Park. Students, family members, and district staff were joined by members from the Brooklyn Fire and Police Departments as they walked or biked from each meeting point to school. The Community Hike & Bike was part of the annual celebration of Walk to School Day sponsored by the Ohio Department of Transportation's Safe Routes to School program. For each day of the week-long celebration, students were encouraged to walk or bike to school and participate in a variety of themed activities. The Brooklyn City Schools thanks the Brooklyn Fire and Police Departments for their participation and continued support of the district. Thank you to all participating students for their support of our local safety forces and school spirit!



Students and City Council Members Participate in Marquardt Park Clean Up



BHS students worked alongside Brooklyn City Council Members Andy Celcherts and Meg Ryan Shockey to help clean up trash throughout Marquardt Park.

Brooklyn High School students from Mrs. Campbell's and Mrs. McGarey's Daily Living and Employability classes teamed up with Brooklyn City Council members Andy Celcherts and Meg Ryan Shockey to clean up Marquardt Park on Thursday, November 11, 2021. During the service project, students worked alongside teachers, council members, and Officer Dan Meadows to pick up garbage throughout the park, including on the walking trails and nearby areas, playground, pavilion, and soccer fields. Both students and staff look forward to future opportunities to work alongside city officials to help keep Brooklyn beautiful! The Brooklyn City Schools would like to thank the members of the Brooklyn City Council for their participation and efforts in organizing this wonderful service opportunity!



Brooklyn Teacher Suzy Marquis Receives NOACC Bright Star Award

Congratulations to Brooklyn City Schools teacher Suzy Marquis who was recently honored with the Northeast Ohio Area Chambers of Commerce (NOACC) Bright Star Award for her dedicated efforts on behalf of the community. In partnership with the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce, Mrs. Marquis played a key role in starting the Brooklyn Cares program to assist families in-need. Brooklyn Cares helps local families through several key initiatives including Adopt-a-Bookbag which provides backpacks filled with donated school supplies. During the holiday season, the Adopt-a-Family program helps make the wishes of families come true through the delivery of donated gifts, personal care products, and food items.

Mrs. Marquis credits the teamwork and collaboration of everyone involved to support Brooklyn Cares and cites the holiday season as a wonderful opportunity to promote the importance of volunteerism in our communities. An employee of the Brooklyn City Schools and Education Service Center of Cuyahoga County, Mrs. Marquis has been with the district for the past twenty-six years as an Intervention Specialist. The Brooklyn City Schools proudly congratulates Suzy Marquis on receiving the NOACC Bright Star Award and praises her dedication on behalf of our students and the greater community!



Suzy Marquis was recognized for her community outreach efforts on behalf of Brooklyn Cares.



5th Graders Engage in Hands-On Lab Activities

In Mrs. Ann Marie Yarman's 5th grade science classroom, students not only learn about various ecosystems, but can explore them with engaging and hands-on lab activities. During a recent lab, students learned about vermicomposting and how easily Red Wiggler worms consume lunch waste such as bread crusts, apple cores, banana peels, and other fruits and vegetables. Thanks to a recent grant from Donors Choose, a public charity that connects donors to public school classroom project requests, Mrs. Yarman was able to develop a worm composting bin in her classroom. As part of the 5th grade science content area standards, students discovered that worms are decomposers and play a vital role in food webs. Students also learned that less than one-third of the estimated organic food waste produced in the United States is composted, and how worms can reduce organic waste by converting it into "castings" which make rich soil for growing plants. In the spring, Mrs. Yarman and her students hope to add the "castings" to soil and grow vegetables and plants to take home! Thank you to Mrs. Yarman for providing our students with creative and real-world learning opportunities.



Thanks to grant funding, Mrs. Yarman was able to develop a worm composting bin in her classroom for students to explore scientific concepts in exciting and tangible ways!

