

# Hurricane Watch

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

Spring/Summer 2023

*Tradition. Pride. Excellence.*



**Superintendent  
Dr. Theodore Caleris**

Across our school community, there is an energy seeking opportunities for growth, innovation, and change. I want to take this opportunity to provide an update on our strategic plan, **Vision 2030**, and our progress towards achieving our annual goals.

The district has made significant strides in our commitment to providing students with a well-rounded education that prepares them for success in the 21st century. We have focused on developing and enhancing our STEM programs, gifted education, expanding our arts programming, providing students with community service opportunities, and developing targeted student plans in college and career exploration programming.

The next phase of our **Vision 2030** strategy will involve the development of our district master facility plan which will guide the renovation and maintenance of our school facilities over the next decade and beyond. We will be working closely with community stakeholders to ensure that our education and athletic facilities are safe, welcoming, and conducive to supporting our students and school community.

I want to thank everyone who has contributed to the success of our school district this year. **Vision 2030** will ensure that the district is working towards long-term successes that will make the Brooklyn City Schools a destination for staff, students, and families for many years to come!

Dr. Theodore Caleris  
Superintendent

## VISION

*Brooklyn City Schools will be the model of educational excellence and community connectivity through practical, diverse, and innovative approaches to learning.*

## MISSION STATEMENT

*To educate, inspire and foster pride, unity, and respect.*

## CORE BELIEFS

### Respect

*The Brooklyn City Schools will encourage a school environment where everyone's respective talents, skills and capabilities are affirmed and mutually accepted.*

### Character

*The Brooklyn City Schools will promote among its student body and staff an attitude of doing the right thing at the right time in how we behave, think, speak and interact with one another.*

### Excellence

*The Brooklyn City Schools will rigorously pursue the highest standards of quality in academic, co-curricular, social and emotional, and interpersonal endeavors, striving to be the very best we can.*

### Integrity

*The Brooklyn City Schools will demonstrate trust with the community and display a consistent and uncompromising adherence to strong moral and ethical principles and values.*

### Diversity

*The Brooklyn City Schools values diversity, equity and inclusion and will be accepting of all, regardless of race, gender, orientation, ethnicity or background.*

### Accountability

*The Brooklyn City Schools will promote personal responsibility and fulfilling one another's obligations with the highest standards of quality and excellence.*

## FIVE PILLARS

### Academic Achievement and Growth

*The Brooklyn City Schools will improve student academic achievement and growth over the next five years through the delivery of data-driven instruction and maintaining an open line of communication with students, parents, and staff.*

### Social and Emotional Wellness

*The Brooklyn City Schools will effectively promote awareness regarding mental health and wellness through proactive instructional and clinical programming.*

### Community Engagement and Communication

*The Brooklyn City Schools will increase two-way communication and develop school and community-based activities so that stakeholders, including the community-at-large, can engage and collaborate throughout the school year.*

### Career and College Readiness

*The Brooklyn City Schools will develop college and career readiness skills focused on preparing all students for post secondary success through purposeful instructional programming.*

### Finance and District Operations

*The Brooklyn City Schools will continue to enhance school district infrastructure and operations through an ongoing evaluation of district finances, and also engage the community (internal and external stakeholders) to increase awareness of district finances.*



# Class of 2023 SPOTLIGHT



## STUDENTS EARNING AN ASSOCIATE'S DEGREE

Adrianna Bartczak

Savanna Coyle

Sienna Jackson

Makenna Lottig

## TOP 10% OF CLASS OF 2023 (in alphabetical order)

Philip Bartelme-Loepp

Katrina Gasper

Logan Mulvey

Alyssa Todorovich

Brandi Betke

Raymal Glenn

Laura Nguyen

Emma Tran

Jineliz Claudio-Colon

Sienna Jackson

Hailey Noszek

Abigail Workman

Savanna Coyle

Alexis Jenkins

Christian Paulescu

Jenna Young

Melaine Fernandez

Makenna Lottig

Daniel Strimpel

## RECOGNIZING OUR RETIRING TEACHERS AND STAFF

Barb Kuharik  
Classroom Assistant  
Brooklyn High School

Maria Perusek  
School Psychologist  
Brooklyn School

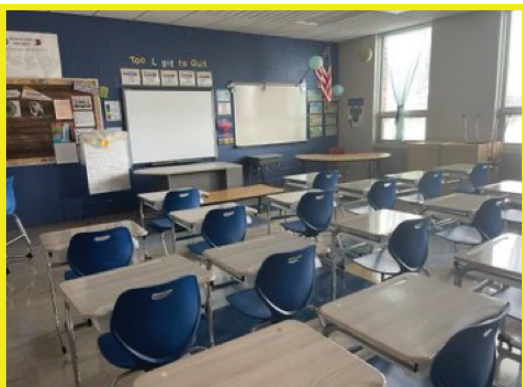
Luanne Francescangeli  
Third Grade Teacher  
Brooklyn School

***Congratulations and Best Wishes on Your Retirement!***





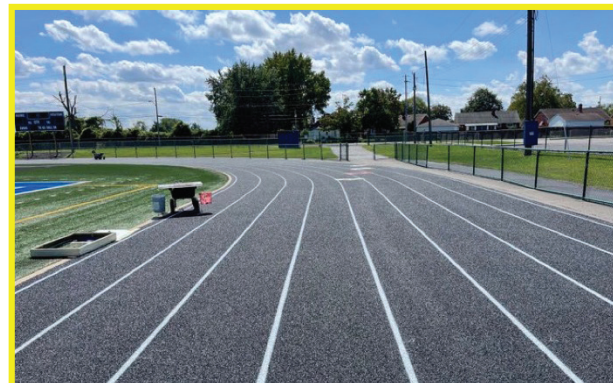
## District Continues Strategic Focus on Facility Improvements



*New classroom furniture at Brooklyn School and High School are part of the district's ongoing initiative to enhance school facilities and infrastructure.*

The Brooklyn City Schools are committed to providing students with a learning environment that is safe and gives them the best opportunities to succeed. Since March of 2020, the district has invested over \$2.1 million into the upgrade and maintenance of district facilities and infrastructure. These targeted capital expenditures, paid with both local and grant funds, are also an extension of the district's Strategic Plan which specifically seeks to continue to enhance school district infrastructure and operations through a continuous evaluation of district finances.

The district will continue to engage with a Master Facility Plan with AVG from which the district will be considering future renovation and refurbishment improvements to the campus and surrounding facilities. All future project considerations will align



*Upgrades to athletic facilities include the resurfacing of the athletic track at Brooklyn Stadium.*

with the district's Strategic Plan. By investing in district infrastructure and operations, the Brooklyn City Schools will positively impact current and future generations of students, and continue a legacy of Tradition, Pride, and Excellence.



## District Financial Update

As a demonstration of the district's commitment to fiscal responsibility, the Brooklyn City Schools has achieved cost savings in several concrete ways. Office workflows have been adjusted to efficiently bring the Education Management Information System (EMIS) position into the district while grant funding has been reevaluated to optimize financial spending. Additionally, position vacancies have been evaluated for streamlining opportunities while still maintaining current district operations.

In May 2023, the Brooklyn City Schools released an updated Five-Year Forecast Financial Report. The primary purpose of the document is to engage the Board of Education and community in the long-range planning and discussions of financial issues facing the district. The current report shows that the district has a positive cash balance throughout the financial forecast. To view the entire Five-Year Financial Forecast, please visit [www.brooklyn.k12.oh.us](http://www.brooklyn.k12.oh.us), and select the Treasurer page located under the Departments heading. Thank you for your continued support of the Brooklyn City Schools.



## Robert T. Schirhart to Become Next Treasurer of the Brooklyn City Schools



**Robert Schirhart**  
District  
Treasurer

The Brooklyn City Schools Board of Education recently and unanimously voted to appoint Robert T. Schirhart, M.B.A., to become the next Treasurer of our district, effective August 1st, 2023. Mr. Schirhart comes to the Brooklyn City Schools most recently from the Elyria Public Library, where he spent the last 4 years as its Chief Financial Officer. Prior to that, he served as Assistant Director of Finance at the Weatherhead School of Management at Case Western Reserve University.

"Throughout the search process, the Board's goal was to find someone with experience to replace our outgoing Treasurer," said Superintendent Dr. Ted Caleris. "Rob is not only highly qualified for this position, but he has the practical knowledge to bring instant stability to the Treasurer's Office, and brings a wealth of experience in finance and accounting from the public sector."

Mr. Schirhart holds a Master's in Business Administration (M.B.A.) from Baldwin-Wallace College along with a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration from there as well. He has a Treasurer's License and Business Manager's License from the State of Ohio as well, in addition to a variety of memberships to local and regional boards and councils.

"I am confident that he will continue to move the district forward for our students and school community," continued Superintendent Dr. Caleris. "I am looking forward to welcoming Rob to our Hurricane Family this coming school year!"

On behalf of everyone in the Brooklyn City Schools community, please join the district in welcoming Mr. Robert T. Schirhart as our new Treasurer. Go Hurricanes!



## Riley Wilson Finishes First in Statewide Business Professionals of America Competition



*Class of 2023 graduate Riley Wilson earned a first-place finish in the financial management category at the BPA state competition.*

Congratulations to Brooklyn High School Class of 2023 graduate Riley Wilson on earning a first-place finish in the financial management category at the Business Professionals of America (BPA) state competition! The event took place on March 20, 2023, and featured over 2,500 students from across the State of Ohio competing virtually and in Columbus. Riley was part of a select group of twenty Polaris Career Center students to advance to the national competition in April of 2023 in Anaheim, California. BPA is a leading Career-Technical Student Organization for students pursuing careers in business, finance, marketing, and information technology fields. Congratulations, Riley and best wishes for continued success in your future plans!



## Calissa Schillinger Named Power of the Pen State Qualifier



*Calissa joined nearly five-hundred other qualifying student-writers at the State Tournament which took place May 18th - 19th at Ashland University.*

Brooklyn City Schools are proud to recognize Calissa Schillinger for being named a Power of the Pen State Qualifier! A seventh-grade student at Brooklyn School, Calissa joined nearly five-hundred other qualifying student-writers at the State Tournament which took place May 18th - 19th at Ashland University. The Power of the Pen competition is an interscholastic creative writing program for Middle Schools and features three extemporaneous rounds of writing during which students are asked to write a response to an open-ended prompt. Brooklyn City Schools has competed in the Power of the Pen competition for over eight years and participating students are advised by Brooklyn School Gifted Intervention Specialist (Grades 3-7), Kathleen Mack. Congratulations once again to Calissa Schillinger on qualifying for the Power of the Pen State Competition!



## Hurricanes Shine in Track Competition

The Brooklyn Hurricanes featured several standout performances during the 2023 district, regional, and state track competitions. Chavon Holton placed sixth in the 300-meter hurdles at the regional finals, which was preceded by an impressive second place finish in the same event at the Division II district track meet. Defending Division II high jump state champion Jenna Young once again qualified for the State Track Meet and capped a remarkable high school athletic career as a two-time All-Ohioan. Congratulations to Chavon Holton and Jenna Young on their successful seasons!



*Defending Division II high jump state champion Jenna Young once again qualified for this year's State Track Meet.*



*Chavon Holton placed sixth in the 300-meter hurdles at the Division II regional finals.*





## District Expands STEM and Career Exploration Opportunities



While working in the Innovation Center's makerspace, 4th graders learned the basics of coding and working with Finch robots.

Students then applied their knowledge by creating their own Macy's Day parade route based on the biography, "Balloons on Broadway".

As part of a district-wide effort to provide students with the skills and knowledge necessary for success in today's workforce, the Brooklyn City Schools are proud to announce several ongoing and forthcoming initiatives. Introduced during the 2022-23 school year, the Innovation Center is located in the Brooklyn School Media Center and provides students in grades K-7 expanded opportunities to engage in creative, STEM-based learning experiences. The Innovation Center features a makerspace area that includes an exciting assortment of learning stations for students, including 3-D printers, a Cricut smart cutting machine, Mosaic 3-D art boards, and Snap Circuit Stations which allow students to build simple electronic circuits. Students also have access to Finch Robots which provide diverse learning activities based on the needs of students at all experience levels while encouraging inquiry, problem-solving, creativity, and critical thinking skills. The Innovation Center also includes an Animation Station where students can create and edit stop-motion videos, as well as a collection of household materials for hands-on building including pipe cleaners, yarn, clay, and various plastic gears and more!

The district is also preparing to launch two new initiatives for Middle School students at the start of the 2023-24 school year. The Career Explorations Program will provide students in grades 4-7 the opportunity to explore a variety of different career opportunities. As a result, students will have a clearer understanding of the educational and career paths they wish to pursue once they transition to High School. Through the Project Lead the Way (PLTW) Launch class, students in grades 4-6 will utilize engineering based technology and increase the amount of exposure to important STEM-based skills.



## Brooklyn Artists Recognized at State and Regional Exhibitions

### Brooklyn City Schools

*"All Students Empowered for Successful Futures"*



Brooklyn student artists from Brooklyn School and High School were recognized for their impressive artwork.

Brooklyn student-artists had the distinct honor of having their creative work displayed at The King Arts Complex in Columbus, Ohio in March of 2023 as part of the annual Youth Art Month celebration. Brooklyn School's Alianys Sanchez Rivera (grade 5) and Calissa Schillinger (grade 7) were represented in the Youth Art Month Exhibit, while Kenyaliz Lugo Camacho (grade 5) and Layla Burnette (grade 7) had artwork displayed in the Young People's Art Exhibition.

Aliyah Sanders (grade 3), Ty'Asiah Shadwick (grade 5), Brandon Ban (grade 6), and Jackie Rodriguez (grade 7) had artwork selected for display at the 2023 Northeast Ohio Art Education Association Youth Art Month (YAM) Regional Exhibition. Ty'Asiah claimed first place in the Elementary division, while Jackie Rodriguez won second place and Brandon Ban was awarded third place in the Middle School division.

Brooklyn High School students were also honored at the Regional Exhibition. Ninth graders Ankita Monger (Honorable Mention), and Elaina Rivera (Curator's Choice) won two of the three special "Best of Show" awards handed out during the ceremony. The Brooklyn City Schools congratulate our student-artists for their outstanding work and accomplishments!

## NEW STAFF MEMBERS SPOTLIGHT

Karen Gallagher	Brooklyn School	Counselor (gr. 4-7)
Abbegael David	High School	8th Grade Math
Carrie Musci	Brooklyn School	3rd Grade
Lana Ullemeyer	Brooklyn School	5th Grade Intervention Specialist
John Grigson	Brooklyn School	7th Grade ELA
Kayla Armario	District	School Psychologist
Simone Williams	District	School Psychologist
Sara Moskalski	Brooklyn School	Classroom Assistant - PK
Melissa Bundy	Brooklyn School	Classroom Assistant - PK
Milagros Santana	Brooklyn School	Classroom Assistant - (4-7 RR)
Sue Koziol	Brooklyn High School	Classroom Assistant - HS
Elizabeth Dieckhoner	District	Cleaner



**Marcello DeAngelis**  
Brooklyn School  
Asst. Principal (PK-7)



**Katie Harkelroad**  
High School  
Asst. Principal (8-12)



## Brooklyn Career Connections Academy Helps Students Develop Career Pathways



*Class of 2023 members enrolled in the BCCA volunteered at the district's First Annual College and Career Resource Fair.*

Launched at the beginning of 2023, the Brooklyn Career Connections Academy (BCCA) is designed to help qualifying seniors develop their post-secondary goals and achieve their career aspirations through real-world work experiences and academic development.

Supriya Culliton, Coordinator of Student Support Programs, oversees the career connections component of the program which provides work-based learning opportunities. *"The goal of this program is to help students develop their post-secondary plans and assist them in making those goals a reality. Students will be provided with opportunities to complete a 12-point credentialing, earn the Ohio Means Jobs Readiness Seal, and complete all graduation requirements. In addition, the district will partner with the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce and local agencies to connect students with real-life internship or shadowing experiences based on their career interests."*

The academic development component of the BCCA is overseen by Matthew Larson, Brooklyn High School Assistant Principal. To ensure that students possess a broad range of work skills necessary for success after graduation, students will complete the National Retail Federation's Rise Up program, and earn the Ohio Means Jobs Readiness Seal by demonstrating proficiency in fourteen specific professional skill sets. Students will also earn a 12-point credentialing in the basics of Customer Service.

*"Every single one of our graduating seniors has goals for what they want to accomplish in their lives after high school,"* shared Mr. Larson. *"The BCCA is designed to assist our students in earning their diplomas and developing clear pathways to reaching post-secondary success. Our academy students will leave our program with a fully developed career portfolio, and the foundational knowledge needed to establish and grow their professional network through real work experiences."*

Class of 2023 members enrolled in the BCCA attended a career exploration fair on the Tri-C Metro Campus and volunteered at the district's First Annual College and Career Resource Fair. The BCCA reflects the district's commitment to providing academic options for all students through innovative programming that creates pathways to successful futures.



## Arts and Innovation Academy Provides Expanded Gifted Education



*Gifted Intervention Specialist Kathleen Mack has watched high-ability students grow through innovative and challenging programming provided through the Arts and Innovation Academy.*

As a district, the Brooklyn City Schools strives to ensure that students of all ability levels are provided a high-quality educational experience. Recognizing that academically and creatively talented students have unique learning needs and abilities, the district officially launched the Brooklyn Arts and Innovation Academy at the start of the 2022-2023 school year.

Through this new and ongoing instructional initiative, gifted students are provided educational services and support appropriate to their grade level. Gifted elementary students receive differentiated instruction designed to meet their individual learning needs and are also intentionally placed in classrooms with peers of all ability levels for differentiated instruction in the areas of math and language arts. To ensure students have appropriate academic rigor, opportunities for enrichment and talent development are made available, as well as grade and/or subject acceleration, and early entrance to kindergarten when appropriate.

Kathleen Mack, Gifted Intervention Specialist for grades 3-7, has witnessed firsthand the positive impact of the targeted focus on gifted learning. *"Under Dr. Caleris' leadership, the high-ability students have flourished. Through our innovative and challenging programming, I have watched our students grow and surpass even their own expectations. The Brooklyn Arts and Innovation Academy is twenty-first century learning*

*at its finest. I am proud to be a part of a district that recognizes the need to differentiate for all of our students."*

Brooklyn Middle and High School students have access to a wide offering of honors and Advanced Placement courses which provide increased rigor and exploration of the content area. College Credit Plus courses enable students to earn college credit while taking classes on our high school campus. Eligible students can also be promoted through grade and/or subject acceleration, as well as early graduation.

The Brooklyn Arts and Innovation Academy will also provide students expanded opportunities in the areas of performing arts, visual art, music, writing, and student-internships. For more information, please visit [www.brooklyn.k12.oh.us](http://www.brooklyn.k12.oh.us).



## Robotics Team Delivers Strong Performance at Polaris Competition



(Left to right) 8th graders Gio Garst, Ryan Howard, and Dennis Harte celebrate their first place finish in the Mad Grab event at the Polaris Palooza Robotics Competition.

The 8th Grade Robotics Team had an excellent showing at the 2023 Polaris Palooza Robotics Competition held at Strongsville Middle School on Thursday, March 16th. Brooklyn students competed against almost 100 other students from other Polaris affiliated schools. This year's competition featured two main events for students to demonstrate their skills, knowledge, and teamwork. During the Mad Grab event, students constructed a remote controlled robot that was capable of scooping up balls of different sizes and placing them in containers. The second event, Dragster, required participants to build a car that moved on a course while being measured for distance and accuracy.

Results from each event, including student names, are listed below. Congratulations to the 8th Grade Robotics Team for their proud performance, hard work, and success at this year's Polaris Palooza Robotics Competition!

### MAD GRAB EVENT

Place, Robot Name: Team Members

**1st Place, Grim Grab:** Dennis Harte, Gio Garst, Ryan Howard

**3rd Place, The Gripper:** Eddie Colon, Austin Adkins, Donovan Johnson

**6th Place, Zimbabwe:** Aiden Villani, Jayden Torres, Johnny Patta

**14th Place, Kie:** Ariana Taylor, Kadance Szmahlo, Avalinh Yun

### DRAGSTER EVENT

Place, Robot Name: Team Members

**5th Place, Barbie:** Ariana Taylor, Kadance Szmahlo, Avalinh Yun

**10th Place, Martha Stewart:** Eddie Colon, Austin Adkins, Donovan Johnson

**11th Place, Kerchow:** Dennis Harte, Gio Garst, Ryan Howard

**13th Place, Sleepy Car:** Aiden Villani, Jayden Torres, Johnny Patta

## Celebration of the 2022-23 School Year

Congratulations to our students, teachers, staff, and families for a successful 2022-23 school year. Thank you for your continued support and have a safe and enjoyable summer!





Brooklyn City School District  
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## Brooklyn City Schools Board of Education Members

**Rocky Neale** - *President*  
**Bonnie Bartczak** - *Vice President*  
**Rick Cyngier** - *Member*  
**Kelli Krall** - *Member*  
**Rob Slattery** - *Member*

## Have a Question about the Brooklyn City Schools?



Contact Dr. Caleris at  
[askdrcaleris@bcshurricanes.org](mailto:askdrcaleris@bcshurricanes.org)



## Welcome Back to School 2023 Hurricane Community Rally





**Thursday, August 17th, 5:00 PM at  
Brooklyn Stadium**



-  **5:00 PM** - Student-led parade featuring the BHS Marching Band and Various Student Groups and Teams (parade route starts at the High School)
  -  **5:30 PM** - Program begins at Brooklyn Stadium and will feature food and refreshments, student group performances, kindergarten parade, and more!
- Join Us for a Celebration of Hurricane Pride!**



## Upcoming Events in the Brooklyn City Schools

-  **Welcome Back to School Community Rally**  
**Thursday, August 17th**  
**5:00 PM at Brooklyn Stadium**
-  **Student Orientation (Principal will send out schedule)**  
**Monday, August 21st**
-  **First Day of School, PK-12**  
**Tuesday, August 22nd**
-  **Fall Parent/Teacher Conferences**  
**Thursday, October 12th**

