



SPRING 2024

# The ROAR Report

Your Quarterly Guide for Bearcat News and Updates

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## Dear Bearcat Family,

By Dr. Cassandra Johnson, Superintendent, Bedford City School District



Spring has sprung! So many amazing things have happened over the course of the 2023-2024 school year. As I conclude my second year as the Superintendent of the Bedford City School District, I am never surprised, but I continue to be honored and blessed to serve such amazing and dedicated staff, students, and community members. The ultimate goal is to support the needs of each scholar regardless of their identification, academic abilities, or economic status. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion is a must. As a result of your ongoing support, the district continues to thrive towards achieving excellence by addressing the needs of the whole child.

The goal of the Roar Report is to communicate the accomplishments of the entire learning community as well as share how each department in the Bedford City School District is progressing toward achieving the One Plan Goals of the district. This report will also keep the entire Bearcat community abreast of the progress of our new facilities plan, and assist to ensure the transparency of the district's fiscal responsibility. **Martin Luther King, Jr. stated that "The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. Intelligence plus character- that is the goal of true education."** The Roar report will hopefully assist to communicate how the Bedford City School District is continuing to ensure that the Bearcat brand is truly one of great character, and one that provides each scholar with an education that is inclusive of great Pride, Tradition, and Achievement!

Please be sure to nominate a classified, certificated, or administrative Bearcat employee that has gone above and beyond to ensure the success of all students (they exhibit Pride, Tradition, and Achievement) by going to: <https://goo.gl/forms/RZNI5y0HerL7sSYG2> to complete the online nomination form. Stellar Staff Employees will be selected each quarter. After nominations are renewed and selected, recipients will be recognized publicly at a board meeting.



Scan with your camera app to visit the Stellar Staff Nomination Form

**Tabby Armstrong**

Treasurer

**Treasurer's Tee-Off:  
From Par to Excellence**

Members of the Bedford City  
School District,

Spring is in the air, and it's not just nature that's hitting its stride. This April marks my one-year anniversary as Treasurer for Bedford City School District, coinciding with April Fools' Day—a day traditionally filled with light-hearted pranks and good humor. Yet, the progress we've made together is no joke. Our fiscal year has been marked by notable achievements, none more so than the passage of the bond in November 2023. This triumph reflects our community's unwavering commitment to education and the belief in the value it brings to our children's future. It is an achievement that speaks volumes of our communities.

During the Treasurer's Office FY24 Kickoff, we introduced the 'PAR' theme—derived from golf. It symbolizes our goal to achieve the district's mission and vision through **P**recision, **A**ccountability, and **R**eliability. In golf, PAR is the expected number of strokes it takes an expert golfer to complete a hole, accounting for the fairway, hazards, and putting greens. It's a standard of excellence that we, too, strive for in managing our district's finances.

In line with our theme, we've been "driving" forward, focusing on strategic investments that align with our district's long-term goals. With **Precision**, we are honing in on targeted financial planning. By implementing new software and updating our policies and procedures, we're ensuring that our budgets are precise and beneficial to all facets of the district's operations.

Our office is committed to being **Accountable** to you, the taxpayers. We are regularly reviewing our expenditures and sharing our financial position transparently, just as we would candidly disclose our strokes in a round of golf. Just as a golfer depends on their clubs, the district relies on our office for fiscal **Reliability**. We are strengthening our checks and balances, ensuring that every financial move is a step toward a more sustainable future.

As we continue to work on our swing and understanding the complexities of school funding and bond issues is crucial to our four communities. It's apparent from the questions we receive that there's a need for greater transparency and education on these matters. My office is dedicated to bridging this gap, providing detailed, understandable updates during board meetings, on our district website, and in conversations with community leaders.

**In Closing, I share a Fun Fact to Celebrate the 19th Hole.**

Did you know the first April Fools' Day was celebrated back in 1582, when the Gregorian calendar took effect, and the new year moved from April 1 to January 1? Those still celebrating the new year in April became the object of ridicule in jokes and hoaxes. Today, let's embrace this tradition with a smile and a reminder that together, we're building a legacy of excellence and innovation in the Bedford City School District.



Get the latest on school funding and bond updates at  
[bedford.k12.oh.us/departments/treasurer](https://bedford.k12.oh.us/departments/treasurer)

Mrs. Tabby Armstrong  
Treasurer, Bedford City School District



Scan with your camera app to visit  
[bedford.k12.oh.us/departments/treasurer](https://bedford.k12.oh.us/departments/treasurer).



### Dr. JaTina Threat

#### Executive Director of School and Community Relations

The Bedford City Schools Department of School and Community Relations aims to cultivate positive connections, alliances, and efficient communication channels between the school district and a variety of stakeholders, such as students, parents, staff, community members, and local organizations. Throughout the past year, our department has forged partnerships with notable entities like the Cleveland Browns, The Cleveland Foodbank, Bedford Rotary Club and the Educational Equity Group.



Our department oversees five key areas: Career Technical Education, Communication, Registration and Enrollment, Social Emotional Learning (SEL), and Student Attendance and Welfare. Noteworthy achievements this academic year include our collaboration with the Cleveland Browns Stay In The Game initiative, which focuses on improving student attendance. Since joining forces with the Cleveland Browns and participating in their Stay In The Game program, BCSD has consistently maintained an attendance rate above 90%. Additionally, we have made significant strides in fully integrating career technical education into the curriculum at both middle and high school levels.

The district is dedicated to organizing family engagement events that bring together parents, students, stakeholders, and district employees for educational and enjoyable experiences. Examples of these events include the district's annual Autumn Fest, SEL Day, Juneteenth Celebration, Cavs Family Night, Civic Engagement Night, and CTE Nights during Career Technical Education month. Additionally, we involve our senior citizens' community in events like the Senior Prom, Valentines Dance, and Jazz Brunch.

Our primary aim is to keep students, parents, staff, and stakeholders informed about the exciting advancements and accomplishments within the Bedford City School District. Keep an eye out as our district advances, and you witness the groundbreaking of our new buildings.

### Samuel Vawters

#### Executive Director of Human Capital, Equity & Inclusion

As a graduate of the Bedford City School District, it is an honor and privilege to serve as the Executive Director of Human Capital, Equity and Inclusion. In our department we have two main areas of focus. The first area of focus is to hire, recruit and retain the highest qualified, diverse, positive-minded candidates to fill our open positions (administrative, certificated, exempt, & classified) at 100% districtwide, in order to positively impact student achievement in math and reading leading to an increased graduation rate.



Our second area of focus is highlighted in the acronym **ACHIEVE**. **ACHIEVE** stands for: Acknowledge, Culture, History, Inclusive, Equity, Value, Everyone. We are committed to **ACHIEVE** the diverse needs of our students and staff, placing an emphasis on equity for our educational community. The decision making process along with our assistance and interventions will be reflective of research-based strategies and best practices, which align to the district's practices with regard to diversity, equity and inclusion.

In the office of Human Capital, Equity and Inclusion, we have action steps that we have been implementing this year. We effectively utilize our equity and inclusion team members for the welfare of our students. We are implementing the foundation of the **ACHIEVE** principles to enrich our inclusive views and enabling everyone to **ACHIEVE** to their highest potential. We have implemented and utilized the MTSS(multi-tiered support system) process, and continue to train all BCSD employees in Crisis Prevention Intervention known as CPI.

As a department and a district, we embrace the importance of learning and understand that students have multiple learning styles. We have the courage to push beyond what is comfortable. We also believe everyone has a story - learn theirs and share yours and we will strive to create spaces where there is unity and belonging for all, and we believe we are all in this together.

## Tad Ellsworth

### Executive Director of Operations

Since joining the amazing team at the Bedford City School District in May 2022, my number one priority has been to improve the conditions in which our students learn every day. Our oldest school building was built when Theodore Roosevelt was President and our youngest was built during the Lyndon B. Johnson administration. It was obvious to me on my very first day that these aging facilities cannot meet the needs of 21st century students and must be replaced, in their entirety, as soon as possible.

The first step to this process was to restart the Master Facilities Planning Committee that was stalled during the pandemic. We hired a new architect, GPD Group, and worked with community and staff to develop a plan that will meet the needs of both the students of today and the next fifty years. The Board of Education voted to put the plan on the ballot in the form of a \$161 million bond issue, and with an amazing show of community support, we passed it on the very first try.

Over the past few months, we have kicked off the design process and have begun selection of our Construction Manager and we look forward to breaking ground on our new Middle School and PreK-2 buildings in the spring of 2025, with both buildings opening in 2027. Our new high school is slated to begin construction in the spring of 2026, opening in 2028. Our third through fifth grade students will be relocated to a renovated Heskett building until we receive our state share of construction dollars (almost \$33 million), which will fund the construction of a new 3rd-5th grade building.

This exciting process will transform the Bedford City School District community, providing state of the art educational facilities that meet modern standards of security, indoor air quality, technology and accessibility.



## Kenya Harrington

### Executive Director of Academic Achievement

The Office of Academic Achievement works to ensure the district's goals are met. We strive to support the work at the district and building levels through the Ohio Improvement Process. The work of school improvement is centered on the development, implementation and monitoring of the Three-Year Plans. We find by collaborating with the schools and supporting their specific strategies we can address gaps in learning. Therefore, a focus is placed on the performance of students, especially subgroups to gain insight on achievement gaps. As a result, we can be intentional on what we provide to continue moving the district ahead academically. Thus, in overseeing the development of the curriculum and instruction for Bedford City Schools we aim to support our teachers within their growth and development. Additionally, we seek to promote an attainable curriculum that is not only challenging but equitable.

Within the area of Federal Programs there is oversight for the Title I program. As well there is the management of Title 1D, Title I Non-Competitive, Title II and Title IV funds. Collaborative efforts between the Office of Academic Achievement and Title I funded buildings ensure that the federal funds that the buildings receive are used appropriately to support the needs of the buildings and students. These are highlighted by the usage funds for staffing, student supports, professional development opportunities, parent/family engagement and obtaining supplies/materials.

In understanding the importance placed on the district to show improvement there is also a recognition of the needs of our younger students. Therefore, our preschool programs have been instrumental in not only welcoming our PreK students into the school environment but also preparing them. Likewise, our Gifted Program continues to identify, guide and support our students performing at high levels. The efforts of our instructional coaches in the areas of data, literacy and mathematics allow for our administrators, teachers and staff to be exposed to training that informs and prepares them. Equally important, it allows for collegiality, which allows for learning to be the centerpiece of the district.





## J.C. Commander

### Athletics Director

Interscholastic athletics are an important part of the overall educational experience for a large contingent of our students here in B.C.S.D.



The athletic department staff includes Mrs. Heather Layton, athletic secretary, Mr. Dan Brinson II, assistant athletic director, and Mr. J.C. Commander, athletic director. Both Mr. Layton and Mr. Commander are in year one of their respective tenures in their roles while Mr. Brinson is in his second year of his position.

There have been some outstanding accomplishments by both our athletic teams as well as individual performances so far this season. Junior football player, J.J. Hudson, was named the Most Valuable Player of the Lake Erie League this past fall while senior volleyball player, India Woodson, was named 1st Team of the conference as well.

The winter saw our B.H.S. Boys Bowling Team advance to districts for the first time in school history while junior, Trinity Pollard, placed fourth in the triple jump at the O.A.T.C.C. State Championship!

As we enter spring athletics, our baseball, softball, and track & field programs are poised for big seasons while both boys volleyball and girls flag football (both in their second years as programs) look to build on their successes from last season as well.

Please follow the athletic department via social media on Instagram: @bhsbearcats\_athletics, Twitter: @bhsbearcatsport, and our athletic website: <https://bhsathletics.org/#riseofthebearcats>



Scan with your camera app to visit  
<https://bhsathletics.org/>

## Jamie C. Cole

### Communications Coordinator



I am Jamie C. Cole, the new communications coordinator for The Bedford City School District. I come to this role with 20 years of experience as an educator, creative writer, creative thinker and a Bearcat. Being an English teacher in this district for two decades while coaching Power of the Pen, being the editor of the Middle School Newspaper, advising Drama Club, Bowling Club, Student Council and being a member of both The Dale D. Heskett and Black History celebration committees have given me the opportunity to work hard for the district as I celebrate the district!

Currently, I am the creator and editor of the bi-monthly district newsletter, The Pawprint and the quarterly newsletter, The ROAR Report. In both publications, I look forward to sharing the wonderful things that occur in The Bedford City School District with transparency and integrity. Honor and excitement will come from my heart through my pen as I communicate the hard work of our students, teachers, staff, families and stakeholders in the Bedford City School District. We have one of the most important jobs in society.....educating and supporting the youth, and I am pleased to do it in this new role.

### Listed below are some important Bearcat dates:

- **April 8** - We are closed. Enjoy the once in a century Solar Eclipse
- **April 24** - Career Technical Exploration Banquet
- **May 10** - Bedford High School's Senior Prom
- **May 17** - Heskett Middle School's Farewell Dance
- **May 18** - Kindergarten Sneaker Ball - Register your child for kindergarten by May 10, and your child will be able to attend this wonderful and cute event.
- **May 28** - Commencement (Rain Day- May 29 & June 3)
- **June 3** - Last Day of School for Students





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## Board of Education

Eva Boyington, President

Sharyn Macklin, Vice President

Anthony Akins

Danielle Turner Birch

Angelic Carter



If you are looking for employment, visit these websites:



Bedford City School  
District



City of Bedford



City of Bedford  
Heights



Oakwood Village



Walton Hills