BOLIVAR-RICHBURG Central School

December 2021

BRCS Fall Festival

The BRCS Fall Festival was held at the Wolverine Environmental Education (WEE) Center on Saturday, September 25. At the festival we had local craft vendors, school classes and clubs selling food and baked goods, and games for younger students to try their luck and win some candy. The WEE Center had produce for sale—and the chickens were a big hit with everyone! For next year's festival, we hope to expand with more vendors and school activities.

Important Calendar Dates on Page 3

Message from the Superintendent

Dear Students, Parents, Faculty, Staff, and Members of the Bolivar-Richburg Community:

As I write this letter, I look out my window and see a beautiful fall day here at Bolivar-Richburg, but I know it's only a matter of a few weeks and winter will be upon us. The students, faculty, and staff have settled into the school year and the routines that come with every new school year. It's nice to see all of our students back in the building fulltime, but that is not without occasional COVID-related difficulties.

The health and safety of all of our students, faculty, and staff is always our number one priority. We are in communication with the Allegany County DOH daily, and we are following all the NYSED and NYS-DOH regulations and requirements. At times, this means we must send students home for possible contact with a positive COVID student or staff member. We know when this happens it places stress on all those involved, and we appreciate your ongoing understanding and support.

School Board Recognition

October was School Board recognition month, and I wanted to take this opportunity to thank our Board of Education for their dedication to our students here at Bolivar-Richburg Central School and our community. If you see any of our Board Members – Jude Auman, Erin Baldwin, Jarrod Bell, Michelle Clark, Kami Doane, Amanda McDonnell, and Michelle Robinson – please let them know how much you appreciate them and all their hard work.

Communication

We encourage you to be involved in your child's education and a big key to that success is communication. Good communication begins with talking directly to the person most closely related to the particular situation or concern. In many cases that would be with your child's teacher or building principal. I encourage you to follow the chain of command as you work towards your answers, but as always, my office door is open.

Another communication avenue includes School Messenger Calls for things like emergencies, important information or reminders, and of course "snow closures." Also, please check out our school website. It is full of great information and happenings here at Bolivar-Richburg Central School. I encourage you to check it out regularly at www.brcs.wnyric.org.

School Closures / Delays

Please remember with the change of weather and winter upon us comes the potential of school closings and delays. The procedures and closing information can be found in this newsletter for your review. Closings and delays will be announced on the various radio and television stations as well as through School Messenger, the district's notification system, and posted on our website. As always, our number one concern is student safety, and we will be working with several agencies to help us make a decision as quickly as possible.

Happy Holidays

The 2021-22 school year is well underway, and we look forward to another exciting year here at Bolivar-Richburg Central School. As always, I thank you for your support and invite you to call or visit my office anytime. My door is always open. Your input is important and together we can continue to provide the best education possible for our students here at Bolivar-Richburg Central School. I wish you and your family all the best as we enter the holiday season! Merry Christmas and may your New Year be filled with health and happiness!

Respectfully,

Michael A. Retzlaff

Superintendent of Schools
Bolivar-Richburg CSD

New Faculty / Staff

We're pleased to welcome a number of new employees to our district this year. We proudly welcome the following:

Alisha Hackett
Grade 3 Teacher

Andrea Harris
Music Teacher

Armenio Suzano
Orchestra Teacher

Caleigh Sisson
Bus Monitor

Carrie Hinz
School Nurse

Hadley Ferris
Grade 4 Teacher

Hannalee Pierce
Grade 3 Teacher

Jenna O'neil
Grade 2 Teacher

Jennifer Ordway
Grade 1 Teacher

Julie Ormsby
Grade 1 Teacher

Mason Kelley
Social Studies Teacher

Megan Duke
Elementary Principal

Patricia LeRoy
Special Ed. Teacher

Reston Pettit
P.E. Teacher

Sarah Gardner
Teacher Aide

Wendy Gilliland
H.S Office Secretary

Mark Your Calendar Important Dates

Parent/Teacher Conferences
November 22-23

Thanksgiving Recess
November 24-26

Christmas/New Year's Holiday Recess
December 23-31

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday
January 17

Mid-Winter Recess
February 21-25

Superintendent's Conference in the Afternoon - Students Dismissed Early
March 11

Spring Recess
April 11-15

Bolivar-Richburg Central School Emergency School Closing List

When it is necessary to delay school opening, close school, or dismiss early, the following TV and Radio Stations will be contacted.

Channel 2 TV	***WGRZ-TV Buffalo***
	AM Program
Channel 4 TV	***WIVB-TV Buffalo***
	AM Program
Channel 7 TV	***WKBW-TV Buffalo***
	AM Program
WJQZ, Wellsville	***103.5 FM Radio***
WLSV, Wellsville	***790 AM Radio***
WOEN, Olean	***1360 AM Radio***
WMXO, Olean	***101.5 FM Radio***
WHDL, Olean	***1450 AM Radio***
WPIG, Olean	***95.7 FM Radio***
WBEN, Buffalo	***930 AM Radio***

The District will also use the automated system (School Messenger) to inform families. Please contact the guidance office to update telephone numbers. Thank you.

September's Employee of the Month

BRCS celebrates an employee of the month. Faculty and staff nominate co-workers and Mr. Quartley chooses the recipient. For the month of September, one of our custodial staff, **Theresa Walsh**, was awarded this honor.

Congratulations to all of our recipients this month!

Fifth Grade Math Poem

Fifth grade math has been fun to do,
Decimal, +, -, x and : too.
Exponents and order of operations will be challenging you see,
Then onward to fractions,
What fun they will be!

Happy Holidays,
Mrs. Greene

Elementary News

We are several months into the 2021-22 school year and I can't believe how quickly the year is going. My start at BRES continues to be a warm and welcoming one! During the holiday season, we often reflect on all we are appreciative for, and I appreciate each and every one of you!

Thank you for your partnership in continuing to better BRES for our students and families. After being notified of concerns related to the drop off and pick up system on Richardson, a small committee of faculty/staff met to make changes to ensure that it was safe and efficient for our students and their families. As change can sometimes be difficult, I appreciate your willingness to support our initiative. I am very pleased with how much better the morning drop off seems to be going, and for that, I want to say thank you! Please keep the flow of traffic in the morning moving toward Griffith so that we don't have cars parking head on in the icy, wintery months.

Important Reminders:

- November 22-23: Parent/Teacher Conferences
- November 22-26: No School, Thanksgiving Recess
- December 16: Holiday Concert, information will be sent out in December
- December 23-31: No School, Holiday Recess
- January 17: No School, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

As the holidays approach, I hope you find time to enjoy the season with loved ones. I wish you a healthy, safe, and joyous holiday!

Go Wolverines,

Mrs. Duke
Elementary Principal, BRES

Full Day Pre-K News

Miss Glover and Mrs. Mitchell

We had a great start to the school year in full day Pre-K! In September, we did a lot of name activities as well as getting-to-know-each-other activities. It was so much fun getting to know all the students. Our first reading unit was about the five senses and "all about me." The students learned about naming the five senses as well as the corresponding body part. The students had so much fun painting and creating life sized cut outs of themselves!

This month, we have been working on classic tales and fables. Some of the tales that we have read are *The Lion and the Mouse, The City Mouse and the Country Mouse, Goldilocks* and *the Three Bears, and The Gingerbread Man.* In the next couple of months, we will be working on families and communities.

We were able to have two awesome assemblies in October. The students saw Dave Ruch and were able to learn some new songs; they also saw the Science Wizard from America's Got Talent! It was such a great time! In math, we have been working on numbers 1-5, sorting objects by color, shape, size, and we have been identifying groups that are the same and different. Thank you, Officer McPherson, for coming in and talking to the students about Halloween Safety. Thank you for the glow sticks and trick-or-treat bags!

Half Day Pre-K News

Mrs. Johnson and Miss Julie

We have had a busy couple months in Pre-K! The students have been working very hard on their kindergarten readiness skills, adjusting to the classroom routines, learning how to work with a group of peers, and having TONS of fun!

The school year started out with an "All About Me" unit that allowed students to explore all of the things that make them unique, parts of the body, the 5 senses, fun stories and finger plays, and many silly songs that always brought out the giggles. In math, we've explored counting, patterning, matching, identifying more/less and similarities/differences.

October brought School Safety Week as well as Fire Prevention Week. Our Weekly Readers have helped us to identify actions to take in order to stay safe in our schools and in our homes. We practiced fire drills and talked about creating a meeting place for all family members to meet in case of a fire at home. October also brought on the start of our weekly visits to the Bolivar Free Library. Mrs. Fuller welcomes our class each week and shares many great books!

We ended the month of October with a week full of Halloween tricks and treats. Treats were exchanged and students were excited to share their plans for their evening of trick-or-treating. We are all looking forward to the upcoming months and the endless learning opportunities headed our way!

Half Day Pre-K New

Mrs. Johnson and Miss Julie

Our 3-year-old Pre-K classroom has been full of fun, adventure, and learning! We started right in with learning our classroom routine, practicing following directions, interacting with our peers in a kind manner, and learning how to use the many centers, toys, and manipulatives that are available to them in our classroom. The children have enjoyed stories, painting, dancing, singing songs, pretending in the house center, sliding, riding tricycles in the gym, and making new friends. We are looking forward to a great year!

Second Grade
Mrs. Livingston, Miss Gerard, and Mrs. O'Neil

We've had a busy start to second grade!

In reading, students have heard and learned about Fairy Tales, Tall Tales, Ancient Greek Civilizations, and Greek Myths. They have also read stories about a sneaky cat bandit, along with reading trickster tales and fables. Second graders have been busy learning many new phonics sounds and spellings, including oi, oy, ou, ow, oo, ar, er, or, and long and short vowels. They have been working on developing the skill of going back into the text to find their evidence for the answer. Students have been learning how to retell a story using a graphic organizer that identifies character, setting, beginning, middle, and end. Second graders have also learned how to determine the moral of a story. Lastly, they have been using the organizer "somebody, wanted, but, so, then" to help them retell a fiction story.

In math, students are working hard on developing their understanding of place value within 1000. They are learning to count within 1000 using a variety of strategies to skip count by 10s and 100s from any number. Students are learning that each digit in a 3-digit number represents the number of hundreds, tens, and ones. They are learning how to compare 3-digit numbers represented in all forms (number form, word form, expanded form, and unit form). Students are continually working on mastering their math facts with sums and differences within 20. Please work on math facts within 20 at home.

Students have been learning about how to write complete sentences, making sure to use capitals and punctuation. Second graders have been working on varying their sentences using different types of punctuation. They have also learned about using quotation marks in their writing. Second graders have also been learning about RADD when answering short response questions: R=restate the question, A=answer in a complete sentence, D=detail to support answer, D= detail to support answer.

Happy Birthday to all those students who celebrated a birthday in September, October, and November!

Third Grade
Mr. Butler, Mrs. Hackett, and Miss Pierce

Time is flying in the third-grade classrooms. In ELA, we have learned about the reading superheroes all over the world and the many obstacles they have overcome to gain the power of knowledge. Our unit in writing has just finished up. The students were extremely excited to share their spooky stories.

In math, we have started learning our multiplication facts, time telling, and how to weigh items. In the near future, we will be learning our multiplication facts up to 12, fractions, and area.

We are having fun still getting to know each other and participating in school spirit days. We look forward to the days ahead!!

Fourth Grade Science
Mrs. Bentley

Fourth grade has been pretty busy these last couple months. We have learned all about the geography of New York State and all of the things you can do here! We have been mapmakers, researchers, and so much more. We learned about the Erie Canal and its importance. We listened to the original song about the Erie Canal and then listened to Bruce Springsteen's version. The kids asked to listen to both over and over. If you get the time, you should listen to both versions too—I bet the kids will sing along! We were also lucky enough to have Mr. Dave Ruch, a performer out of Buffalo, come in and sing about the Erie Canal. He played the washboard, spoons, cow bones, and the kids' favorite...the banjo! More fun and learning is coming in fourth grade; stay tuned!

Fourth Grade Math
Miss Ferris

What a whirlwind the school year has already been! We have been busy in math class learning about place value, comparing and ordering numbers, rounding, word forms, multiplying by ten, and addition and subtraction! During the week before Halloween, we applied each of these skills through an activity that involved pumpkin carving. It was a blast! We have just begun learning about finding area and perimeter, and are about to move into multiplication and division. We have many exciting things planned; it is going to be a great year!

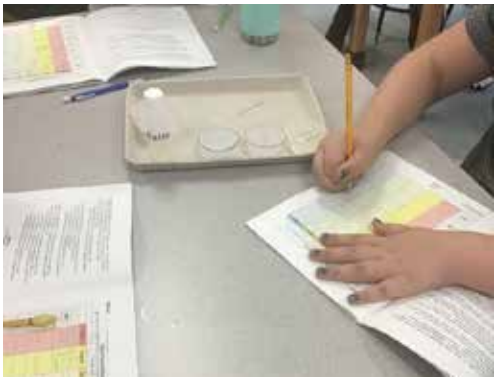
Fifth Grade ELA
Mrs. Smith

ELA class has been filled with lots of reading and writing! Our guided reading groups are running smoothly as we focus on fiction and nonfiction texts. We have been reading the novel Esperanza Rising by Pam Muñoz Ryan. Set in the early 1930s, twenty years after the Mexican Revolution and during the Great Depression, Esperanza Rising tells the story of a young Mexican girl's courage and resourcefulness when at the age of thirteen she finds herself living in a strange new world. Esperanza, whose name means "hope" in Spanish, must rise again into a resourceful and responsible young woman. My hope is that this novel teaches us the value of human rights, to persevere when faced with obstacles, and to treat others with dignity and respect!

Our "Wolverine PAWS" recipients certainly make us proud! Congratulations to Isabelle Morris and Jacob Skinner. Isabelle and Jake truly deserve this award!

PAWS

Fifth Grade
Mrs. Hillman



We have had a busy, productive, and fun start to this school year. In science, the 5th graders have been learning about matter with our science kit, "Chemistry in the Kitchen." We have conducted many exciting experiments to determine that matter is made up of particles too small to be seen, and to figure out if mixing two or more substances results in a new substance. Ask your child to share how science relates to cooking.

In social studies, we have been flying through our geography unit. We started by identifying the continents of the world and then the Western hemisphere. The students all worked hard to conduct research and present to the class information about a country in the Western Hemisphere. These projects turned out amazing! We are now beginning to label the 50 states, and will soon be exploring how geography affects the way that we live.

Congratulations to Madyson Bell and Nalani Dodson who were our PAW receipts for the months of September and October. Keep up the good work!

PAWS Awards

Students are working hard this year on showing good character! Students are recognized for their character during our monthly PAWS assemblies. PAWS stand for Patience, Awesome Attitude, Working together, and Staying Safe. Each month students will focus on a specific character trait. During the month of September, students worked on Respect! During the month of October, students focused on Responsibility! Students who are recipients of the PAWS award each month receive a certificate, get their picture taken with our Wolverine, and get a PAW with their picture on it hung in our PAW Den! Students and staff were able to come together outside for September's Paw assembly to celebrate our PAWS recipients! Even the littlest PAWS are fierce!

Mrs. Schryver, Elementary Counselor

BRCS Reading Challenge

The BRCS Reading Challenge has begun! From October to May, the Reading Department is encouraging students to read and log their minutes to reach their grade level goal. Students are to log their minutes on their calendars (grades Pre-K through 3) or in Microsoft Teams (grades 4 and 5). Every child that reaches their grade level goal will be allowed to choose a book from the Reading Challenge cart and will be entered into a drawing to win a gift basket or a gift card to a local establishment.

Elementary Reading Department

Elementary Physical Education

We are having a ball in Elementary Physical Education! Throughout the first marking period, students have been working on their catching, throwing, striking and volleying skills, along with kicking and dribbling. During each unit, students have refined their locomotor skills, worked on their cardiovascular and muscular endurance, as well as muscular strength and flexibility. These fitness components were also worked on during our scooters and parachute units. In the coming weeks, students will be practicing their dribbling skills with a basketball unit.

Students in grades K-3 recently participated in an "I Can Tie My Shoes" Challenge. So many students showed their PE teachers that they can independently tie their shoes! Congratulations to Mrs. O'Neil's class for being the first class to have every student successfully tie their shoes! Several students practiced so much they were able to tie their shoes with their eyes closed. Keep up the great work!

Bolivar-Richburg CSD- Capital Improvement Project 2021

Dear Students, Parents, Faculty, Staff, and members of the Bolivar-Richburg community,

As Superintendent, I have several responsibilities: 1) providing for the health and safety of students, faculty, and staff; 2) providing the best educational opportunities to our students while offering them a variety of curriculum programs, extracurricular activities, and interscholastic sports; 3) overseeing the daily operations of the District; 4) making sure we maintain a financially responsible budget; and 5) and ensuring the maintenance of our current buildings and transportation fleet of vehicles.

The District's buildings and athletic facilities are a long-term financial investment into our children's future, and the future of the community. That is why it is important for a school district to complete a Capital Improvement Project (CIP) every 3-5 years. Bolivar-Richburg completed their last CIP in 2018—so it's time for our next project.

The District will receive 95% building aid from New York State toward our next project, which means we would be responsible for only $.05 (five cents) on every dollar we invest. The Board of Education and Administration have budgeted conservatively and have annually placed funds into our Capital Project Reserve. This reserve acts as a savings account and can only be used for a capital project, and only with voter permission. We have enough in our current capital project reserve to assure that this new Capital Improvement Project will not increase your tax levy a single dime. At the end of the day, this means the proposed project would cost $0 to you the taxpayers.

It is my hope, and the hope of the Board of Education, that we can successfully get voter support to help us maintain our current capital investment in our buildings and athletic fields, while expanding our program offerings and STEAM education programs. Such an investment into our students' future will have a huge impact not only during their Bolivar-Richburg education years, but into their future life-long careers.

In summary, we will receive 95% in State-aid toward the capital project; the funds for the remaining 5% are already in our reserves, which will assure a 0% local tax impact. So I encourage you all to come out and vote on our Capital Improvement Project on December 8th from noon to 8:00 p.m. in the District BOE room. Thank you for your consideration. Go Wolverine Pride!

Michael Retzlaff
Superintendent of Schools

Important Dates

Public Hearing
November 30 at 6:00 p.m.
High School Auditorium

Capital Improvements Project Vote
December 8 from 12 Noon to 8:00 p.m.
Conference Room 113
Bolivar Building

Voter Qualifications

To be a qualified voter you must be:

- A citizen of the United States.
- At least 18 years of age.
- A resident of the Bolivar-Richburg Central School District for at least 30 days prior to the vote.

Project Costs and Tax Impact

Total proposed cost:
$15,375,600

Capital reserve from district:
$2,984,290

NO ANTICIPATED TAX IMPACT

Project Timeline

Phase 1	CONSTRUCTION SUMMER 2022
Phase 2	CONSTRUCTION SUMMER 2023/24

Project Scope List

Middle/High School Site Work

- Asphalt Replacement at Parking Areas
- Sidewalk/Fencing Upgrades
- Portable Soccer Dugouts
- Stadium Turf Replacement

Middle/High School

- STEAM Classroom/Greenhouse Addition
- New STEAM Classroom Furniture/ Equipment
- Masonry Repointing
- Roofing Upgrades
- Music/Band/Orchestra Suite Renovations
- Athletic Training Room Renovations
- Business Office/District Office Renovations
- Classroom Finishes
- Hallway Locker Replacement
- Secure Door Hardware for Program Spaces
- Auditorium Theatrical Lighting and Rigging Upgrades
- UV Replacements
- Concession Stand Renovations
- PE Storage Upgrades
- Kitchen Equipment Replacement
- Locker Room Renovations
- IT Room Relocation to 3rd Floor
- Home & Careers Classroom Renovations

- Toilet Partition Replacements
- Gym Backboard Replacement
- Upper Gym Air Conditioning
- Loading Dock Upgrades
- Art Suite Renovations
- New Sugar Shack at WEE Center

Bolivar Bus Garage

- Asphalt Paving Upgrades
- Window Upgrades
- Roofing Upgrades
- Exterior Door Replacement
- Lighting Upgrades
- Bus Wash Equipment Upgrades
- Ceiling Fan Upgrades
- Ice Guard Replacement
- New Bus Lift
- Trench Drain Upgrades

Baseball Grandstand

- Enclosing underside of structure at seating area
- Maintenance Area Roof Replacement
- STEAM Upgrades

Richburg Elementary Site

- Soccer Dugouts & Scoring Shack
- Soccer Field Seeding and Leveling
- Playground Surface Upgrades
- Softball Batting Cage Turf
- Softball Scoring Canopy
- Exterior Classroom Space

Richburg Elementary School

- Roofing Upgrades
- Classroom Finishes
- Classroom Storage Upgrades
- Secure Door Hardware
- Auditorium Theatrical Lighting and Rigging Upgrades
- UV Replacements
- Boiler Replacement
- Elevator Upgrades
- Toilet Room Renovations
- Multipurpose Room/STEAM Renovations
- Gym Backboard Replacement
- Locker Room Renovations
- Cafeteria Finish Upgrades
- Special Education Classroom Renovations
- Music/Band Suite Renovations
- Speech Classroom Renovations
- Sensory Path Corridor Upgrades
- Library Renovations

Richburg Bus Storage

- Maintenance Area Renovations (Relocation of Grounds Maintenance)
- Asphalt Pavement Upgrades
- Parking Lot Lighting Replacements

Richburg Athletic Storage (Concession Stand)

- Toilet Room Renovations
- Concession Storage Upgrades

Pre-K Building

- New Playground Fencing
- Playground Upgrades
- Toilet Room Upgrade

STEAM Learning at BRCS

By Patricia Eshelman

Throughout my career as a biology/living environment teacher, I have employed multiple techniques to deliver information, make real-world connections, and teach meaningful awareness of connections and characteristics of living things.

When given the opportunity to create a hands-on, agriculture-based class a few years ago, I was excited and nervous on several levels: 1) I would have to organize an entirely new class without a specific classroom structure; and 2) I would be using an outdoor facility (the WEE Center) which would make the class inherently different. In this new class, students were not only going to be working with their hands as well as their minds, but they would be engaging in larger projects without specific "start here" and "end now" points.

Having students build, troubleshoot, fail, reassess progress, and set their own goals is part of any education, but is fundamental in STEAM education. Larger, out-of-classroom projects allow students to develop leadership patterns, experiment with processes, and to make something that will last.

Giving teachers the place and materials to allow them to pursue a large project is a huge benefit of the proposed Jr./Sr. High STEAM addition. Staff will be able to create projects outside the normal scope of their class, and students can be actively involved with their education.

I am particularly excited about the greenhouse component of the proposed addition. In this new space I plan on doing vegetative propagation, seed starting, and experiments with plant nutrition. I would also like to incorporate winter vegetable growing for some access to fresh produce all year. Together with my students, we will learn how to program watering and ventilation systems, while handling any errors along the way. I hope to also use this space for finishing our maple syrup and for setting up soil filtration experiments.

The STEAM addition will give teachers from multiple subject areas a chance to step outside the walls of their classroom into a space that encourages creative thinking. I look forward to seeing how many ways it will be used!

Elementary STEAM

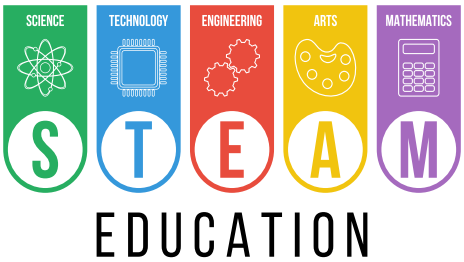
By Carol McClellan

I have been a teacher at Bolivar-Richburg since 2004 and have recently stepped out of the classroom into a new role as Elementary STEAM coordinator. In this position, I teach science and engineering classes to students in grades K-5. In grades K-3, I teach the state mandated science curriculum. In grades 4-5, I teach an enrichment class in which students choose what they want to explore and become exposed to Middle School science concepts. This prepares them well for their continuing education, and ultimately for a career after their schooling is completed.

So far, we have been very busy! Kindergarten has studied plants and grown their own bean plants from seeds. First grade has been studying their ant farm and learning how animals work together. Second graders recently took home terrariums they made—complete with plant and animal life. Third graders studied and tracked caterpillars as they underwent metamorphosis. Fourth and fifth graders have studied the basics of chemistry and chemical reactions, and are now beginning an engineering project in which they will compete virtually with other local schools in the Dream It Do It 500, a rubber-band powered car race!

As much as possible, I am gearing science education towards hands-on work. Students learn, retain, and engage much more with actual objects in their hands and being outside seeing things in person. I much prefer doing things ourselves than watching other people do science on a screen!

Soon, Bolivar-Richburg will have the opportunity to fund a capital project that will allow for upgrades to our STEAM program at the elementary school. My plans for this program include field trips to STEAM-related career sites, designing and building an outdoor learning center, participating in the DEC's Trout in the Classroom program, and introducing students to agricultural concepts that they will see in the WEE center at the high school. Our district is behind neighboring districts in providing practical, hands-on STEAM education to its students. My goal is to change that—especially for our youngest learners. These children deserve the chance to be competitive in the job market and prepared for a successful career. Make sure you ask your child about what they are doing in the STEAM lab—your support goes a long way in promoting the success of your child!



Middle/High School News

It is hard to believe the holiday season is upon us already—it seems like we just opened the doors for the new school year. With the return to full in-person learning, it has been a busy start to the year. It has been great to see the return of sports and other extra-curricular activities for our students and families.

I hope everyone enjoys havig their Thanksgiving Holiday with family and friends. We are planning on have holiday concerts this year during the month of December and are looking at the following dates.

- **Wednesday, December 8, starting at 7:00 p.m.**
- **Tuesday, December 14, starting at 7:00 p.m**

More details regarding our concerts will be released in the following weeks, as we still need to evaluate the impact of COVID 19 on our procedures for student and audience safety.

Despite some of the ongoing hardships of this year, time continues to move on, and the joy of the holiday season is here. As we continue to try to get back to normal, I hope the holidays bring a chance for all our families to visit with loved ones and take a much-needed break from all the stress. As it has been for the last 6 years, it's my honor and pleasure to say, on behalf of the faculty and staff at Bolivar-Richburg Middle & High School, we wish everyone in our school community a happy and safe Holiday Season! And as always, "Go Wolverines!"

Mr. Quartley
Secondary Principal

September Students of the Month

The start of the 2021-2022 school year has been back to business for BRCS Middle and High School students. Each month, faculty and staff nominate students for Student of the Month based on:

- Grit/Perseverance: not giving up in the face of difficulty; a strong commitment to setting and achieving goals
- Academic performance: striving to earn the best grades and performance, class participation, completion of assignments (not necessarily the students with the highest grades in the class)
- Attendance and punctuality: attends school regularly and arrives at classes on time.
- Integrity, honesty, dependability, trustworthiness, respect, kind, team-oriented, and consideratew of others.

For the month of September, the following students were selected by the guidance and counseling staff: **Travis Bell, Jianna Scott, Natalie McDowell, Brena Walp, Delaney Loucks, and Jacoda Carpenter.**

How to Access the High School Guidance Web Page

Parents and students can access a large amount of information on the Guidance webpages.

1. Start at the BRCS home page: www.brcs.wnyric.org
2. Click on the pull-down menu at the top of the page titled "Departments"
3. Click on "Guidance"

To the left of the screen you will see links to the middle school as well as the high school guidance webpages. Topics on the high school guidance site include: scholarships, financial aid, summer school, regents examination schedules, recommended websites, graduation requirements, course descriptions, summer camps, info just for seniors, SAT, ACT and drivers' education information.

The direct link is: https://www.brcs.wnyric.org/domain/35

Schedule Updates

Schedules for grade 6-12 students have been finalized. The drop period is now over and students will remain in their current courses for the remainder of the year. The only drops that may be allowed will now require a parent/student/teacher discussion and must be approved by the building principal and teachers and may be denied.

BRCS Remind App Codes

With a smartphone using the web browser go to rmd.at/guidancebr. Then follow the instructions to sign up for and download the Remind mobile app. Mrs. Bean will be sending a lot of important information to high school parents and students via this app, such as field trip slips, reminders of college rep visits, deadlines, Pre-ACTS, military reps, booklets on financial aid, etc.

Remind also allows you to text Mrs. Bean back with any questions you may have.

Tips For Parents to Help Stay on Top of Your Child's Schooling

These basic tasks will assist you in staying current and up to date regarding your student's grades, attendance, homework assignments, deadlines, social-emotional state, and information sent out to students from teachers, counselors, and other staff.

- Utilize the parent portal **every day** to monitor your child's homework completion, attendance, and grades. The Guidance Office is glad to help set up accounts, reset passwords, etc. You can even add it as a mobile device phone app and it is then at your fingertips to check! You can email teachers directly through the portal.

- Ask your child to share with you their Microsoft Teams log in (username and password) so that you can view what assignments and messages they have inside of Teams. This is where teachers may link students' work electronically. Teams does not currently have a parent/guardian view-only option for their software platform.

- Make sure your child has turned on the notifications for every Microsoft Team they are a member of to receive immediate notification messages so that they are aware when staff are sending out not only assignments, but other important messages. IF NOTIFICATIONS ARE TURNED OFF, YOUR CHILD IS PROBABLY MISSING OUT ON A GREAT AMOUNT OF IMPORTANT AND HELPFUL INFORMATION.

- Monitor your child's use of Teams Chat feature to make sure they are utilizing it respectfully and responsibly.

- Contact your child's teachers and counselors if you need assistance.

- Help your child have a quiet, distraction-free learning space at home as much as it is possible.

- Assist your child in creating a school daily calendar with their paper planners or electronically in Teams

- "ROSES AND THORNS" DAILY CHECK IN: Every day, check in and ask your child how their day was. What was the "rose" or best part of the day? What was the low point, or "thorn," of their day? As counselors, we are currently flooded with students coming in needing to speak about stressors, anxiety, and depression this year. Family members taking some time each day to check in with their child about their day is a critical support that all students need. Do not assume that your child is coping well if they are quiet. Please talk openly and often about their school days.

PLEASE REACH OUT FOR SUPPORT IF YOUR CHILD IS STRUGGLING EMOTIONALLY OR ACADEMICALLY! WE REALIZE THESE ARE CHALLENGING TIMES AND WANT TO HELP IF WE CAN.

Email address: ccbean@bolivarrichburg.org
Guidance Office: 585-928-2985

New York State Academic Excellence Scholarship Winners

NYS Academic Excellence Scholarship winners (left to right): Jessica Majot, Raina Bowen, Elizabeth Shingler

Scholarship Presentations

At 10:15 a.m. on December 2, Bruce Campbell from the Allegany County Area Foundation will be here in the Lecture Hall to present on the ACAF Scholarship application process. Mrs. Bean will follow up with a lesson on how to search for scholarships then as well.

JANUARY REGENTS EXAMS SCHEDULED

January Regents exams may be given throughout the state on January 25-28, 2022. Students must see Mrs. Crandall-Bean at once to be sure that their name is placed on the test roster. Students may retake a regents examination either to earn a passing score or to try and improve scores on previously taken regents exams. There is no charge for a student to re-take a regents exam in January. Please note that New York State regulations do not allow students to be admitted to a morning exam after 10:00 a.m. or to an afternoon exam after 2:00 p.m. In addition, no student may leave an exam before those same times. This regulation is in place to prevent students from sharing information about an exam.

PowerSchool Parent Portal

Parents of 6-12th grade students who have not yet set up a PowerSchool parent portal account or need assistance resetting your current accounts, please feel free to contact your child's counselor at 928-2915 (Mrs. Swartwout grades 6-9) or 928-2985 (Mrs. Crandall-Bean, grades 10-12) to obtain directions along with your child's portal codes. The portal allows you to view on-line, 24-7, your child's current grades, attendance, and lunch account balances. Parents have the ability to add all of their students on to one single portal account. Students are all given their own student account when they begin grade 6 and are encouraged to self-monitor their own academic progress. Our goal this year is to have 100% of our 6-12 students and parents using portal accounts. We hope you will take advantage of this great tool that can be very helpful to stay up to date on grades, attendance, and homework assignments.

There is also a PowerSchool phone app that parents and students can use. The free app can be obtained through the App Store or the Google Play store. The BRCS school code is CRKT. Many students and parents use the portal phone app to stay on top of their academic information, as it is a wonderful communication tool!

Yearbook News

The Claw staff is working hard to produce a sensational 2022 Bolivar-Richburg yearbook. This year our yearbook will include grades 6 through 12. We are happy to be back in school "Together as One." Seniors have been reminded that senior pictures, baby/toddler, and additional choice pictures as well as quotes, activities, and future plans are due no later than November 19, 2021. It is important that we adhere to these deadlines in order to complete the yearbook on time. Due to the unpredictable nature of the COVID-19 situation, we have moved the dates up for the required items from our seniors. Also, parent ad letters will be mailed out the week of November 8. These ads will be due by January 15, 2022. As always, we thank our families and our local businesses for their support. Your ads help us to continue to maintain yearbook prices and help make it affordable for all our students. Remember to purchase your yearbook through JostensYearbooks.com or see Ms. Schena or Mrs. Donahue – 585-928-2561, ext. 4314 or 4222. The price of the yearbook is $55.00. Personalization is also available for an additional cost.

1st Annual "SNACKS AND APPS DAY" For Seniors

On October 1, interested seniors attended the 1st annual "Snacks and Apps" Day in the lecture hall. A Marine recruiter presented on military enlistment. Susan Day from the Allegany County Employment and Training Center in Belmont presented on resume tips and finding jobs, and college representative Le'Anna Sosnowski-Miller presented on how to apply to college. Students were treated to snacks while they worked on college applications, started their financial aid apps, worked on resumes, wrote college essays, and explored college websites.

Seniors Jianna Scott and Kaitlyn Graves, and classmates working on college applications, financial aid, typing college essays, resumes, and completing job and college searches.

1st Annual BRCS "Snacks and Apps Day" on October 1st: JCC College Admissions representative Le'Anna Sosnoski-Miller presenting to BR seniors about the college application process.

Earth Science Class

The bulk of quarter 1 included topics such as the nature of science, Earth's position in space, finding locations on Earth, and topography. We've also been working on test-taking strategies. We will soon start topics including minerals, Earth's interior, volcanoes, igneous rocks, and earthquakes.

A reminder to parents/guardians that this is a Regents course. Students will need to complete 1,200 minutes of successful lab time to be eligible to take the Regents in June. Ms. Renyck acknowledges that the transition from middle school to high school is difficult, and we have the added burden of transitioning from a hybrid schedule back to what might feel like a more demanding workload of five in-school days per week. Collectively, we have a lot of catching up to do. Please do not hesitate to contact me with your concerns as they arise.

Earth science students enjoy class outside comparing the Bolivar topographic map to the corresponding landforms near the school.

Websites for College and Career Exploration

Need help exploring colleges? Do you need to find out more about the financial aid process, look into finding a career, or learn about touring a college virtually on-line? Here are a few fantastic websites that will help both students and parents:

www.mappingyourfuture.org
www.hesc.com
www.nymentor.edu
www.studentaid.ed.gov
www.knowhow2go.org
www.careercruising.com
www.finaid.com

We also will be utilizing a new K-12 guidance software system called Xello to work on college and career planning.

Ecology Club

Ecology Club has enjoyed two events so far this fall. In September, we hiked at Pfeiffer Nature Center after school on a beautiful day. A great time was had by everyone as we explored a diverse array of fungi and even saw a few Eastern Red-Spotted newts. In October, we barely beat the rain and planted some bushes and trees along the creek beside the WEE Center. Our next outing hangs in the balance as we wait for local Covid numbers to drop. Stay tuned.

Jamie Werner and Star Kisel get ready to plant a tree.

Chess Club

Chess Club members have met three times so far this school year. Ms. Renyck failed to meet the deadline for the last newsletter of the 2020-2021 school year. Therefore, an overdue belated congratulations goes to Sam Martin for winning the most matches last year. We are always happy to accommodate new members. Please see Ms. Renyck for more information if interested in joining the club.

Caleb Greeson and Ella Smith enjoy a good match.

Anthony Densmore challenges Sam Martin.

Phone Number or Address Changes?

Please contact the Guidance Office at 585-928-2986 if you or your children have phone number, e-mail address, emergency number, or address changes that need to be made in our PowerSchool student information computer system. Thank you for helping us keep our information as up to date as possible.

"DAR" Daughters of the American Revolution Award Winner

Jessica Majot was selected by the BRCS faculty and her senior classmates for the "DAR" Daughters of the American Revolution Award for best exemplifying the following qualities in her school, home, and community.

Dependability:	**truthfulness, honesty, punctuality**
Service:	**cooperation, helpfulness, responsibility**
Leadership:	**personality, self-control, initiative**
Patriotism:	**unselfishness, loyalty to American ideals**

We are so very proud of Jessica for the role model, top student, friend, musician, athlete, and classmate she is! Local political representatives will honor her this spring at a DAR ceremony.

BRCS Senior DAR Award winner Jessica Majot

ACCA College Fair for Juniors and Seniors

This year we were able to hold our annual ACCA College Fair at Houghton College on September 27 where BR Juniors and Seniors were able to speak with around 55 college representatives.

The Guidance Office is hosting many individual college reps. in person in our office and some also virtually this fall. The list is available in Teams and Remind for students and parents and is also shared during morning announcements. Mrs. Crandall-Bean is glad to help students with college exploration applications and setting up in-person and virtual visits.

Allegany County Counselors' Association College Fair at Houghton College on September 27th

Alfred State Campus Visit For Juniors and Seniors

On October 7, twenty-three juniors and seniors visited Alfred State College. They sat through an admissions overview providing them basic college search information, toured campus, and ate lunch in the leadership building. Several students spent the day on the Wellsville campus shadowing in classrooms of interests, such as carpentry and heavy equipment operations. Alfred State offers numerous degrees and programs and is close enough for our B-R students to commute to, and to obtain a quality education at an affordable price.

Pre PSAT, ACT, and SAT Testing

We will be offering the Pre ACT practice exam for interested sophomores and juniors on December 22 at 8:00 a.m. We have 35 tests available and there is no cost. Students must sign up in the Guidance Office.

College-bound juniors are encouraged to consider taking the SAT or the ACT in the spring and seniors are encouraged to take one of these exams this fall. Many counselors feel the ACT is a fairer exam for many students as it is based on student achievement. Colleges accept ACT scores equal to SAT scores. Registration documents for both tests are available in the Guidance Office and on the Guidance website to assist students with the on-line registration process. Registering on-line is relatively simple and will allow students to receive their test scores quickly.

Test optional – What does that mean? Due to COVID's indoor large group gathering restrictions, many SAT and ACT exams were cancelled or limited in test seats. As a result, 84% of colleges have gone "test-optional," meaning the SAT or ACT is not required for college applications to their institutions. Many colleges may remain test optional in the future after COVID restrictions are lightened. However, to be safe it does not hurt to take at least one SAT or ACT exam in case it is needed in the future for college acceptance and scholarship competitions.

Seniors Make Future Plans

I will soon meet with all seniors individually to review transcripts, determine what specific courses and regents exams are still needed to be passed for graduation, discuss post-high school plans, and map out the tasks they need to complete for their career plans. Each student will be given an individualized folder of tasks to complete for their specific post-secondary career, military, or college plan. Students who are interested in college may have been given handouts about selecting and applying to colleges. **It is highly recommended that seniors try to complete their college application(s) by the end of Thanksgiving recess**. Please note: some programs may require students to apply earlier to ensure that their program of choice is not filled to capacity. **Watch all application deadlines!** Students are welcome to have their applications proofread in the Guidance Office prior to submitting them.

Since most students are now applying on-line, it is vitally important that they let me or my secretary know each time they apply so that we mail or upload the student's official transcript. Colleges require an official transcript of high school grades and will not process a student's college application until they have received one.

Any parent who wishes more information about the college selection process or financial aid can call Mrs. Crandall-Bean at 928-2985 or send an email to ccbean@bolivarrichburg.org. The "Senior Fall To-Do List," "Basics of Financial Aid," and "Scholarship Searches" presentations can be found electronically on the high school guidance website and will be pushed out to students in grades 11 & 12 in Microsoft Teams and on the Remind app.

Important Financial Aid Information

In the past, the FAFSA application portal (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) has opened on January 1. This portal is how students qualify for free federal grant money and for federal student loans at low interest rates. **The FAFSA portal now opens earlier on October 1 each year. This allows families a greater amount of time to be wise consumers regarding college costs and reviewing financial aid award letters before making a college commitment by the May 1 national commitment date.**

Financial aid is very detail-oriented so if you have questions, do not hesitate to call the Guidance Office or any college financial aid office for assistance.

Two of the best resources for parents to find more information on this process are at the Higher Education Services Corporation (HESC) website:

www.hesc.org and at www.finaid.org

These two sites are loaded with information for parents and are two of the very best and easiest to navigate. Further, these sites are not just for parents of seniors but also for parents of any students who are considering college.

Lastly, parents (or students) should not feel the need to pay for help with financial aid forms or for scholarship searches. Often times the services that advertise to help you with these are frauds or, at the very least, a rip-off. They often promise students thousands of dollars in financial aid. The rule of thumb, "If you have to pay, stay away!" We have provided the best free resources on our scholarship webpage for you to utilize. If you have very complicated finances, you may want your personal financial planner to assist with the financial aid process. But those are not typical instances for most people.

Also, do not forget to complete the NYS TAP (Tuition Assistance Program) Grant financial aid application online. The portal to apply is now open at https://www.hesc.ny.gov/pay-for-college/apply-for-financial-aid/apply-for-aid-start-here.html. TAP money is available for eligible New York State residents who plan to attend college within New York State.

The New York State Excelsior Grant is on hold at this time due to a lack of funding for it at the state government level.

On October 27, Mrs. Bean presented a detailed lesson on financial aid to all seniors in Economics class. This lesson is available on the guidance webpage, in Microsoft Teams, and in the Remind app for parents and seniors to reference.

Parents - Beware of Scholarship and Financial Aid "Scams"

In years past several students and parents have called about information they have received in the mail or phone calls they have received regarding college scholarships and financial aid. Usually the sales pitch starts something like this, "Do you know that over two million dollars in college scholarships went unclaimed last year? We can guarantee you a scholarship for college!" Often times the e-mails or envelope and the letters look like they have been sent from an official agency with words like "national," "exclusive," and "education" in their title. I say, buyer beware!

Quite often the scholarships and the financial aid assistance these companies offer as part of their service are routinely available for **free** right here at school or on many websites. Furthermore, no one can promise you a scholarship because a legitimate scholarship is always competitive. Lastly, most financial aid that students receive for college will be generated from the FAFSA form or directly from the student's college.

My advice to parents is to exercise caution and call me before signing on to one of these "financial aid" businesses. A call or search online to the Better Business Bureau (703-276-0100) or the Attorney General (through the Consumer Protection Board, 1-800-697-1220) is another way to verify a company's reputation. More than likely, high schools and colleges can do just as much for you as one of these companies—the only difference is that we don't charge a thing. We in the Guidance Office can provide you with excellent resources for doing high quality scholarship searches and have an abundance of information linked on the Guidance website on the scholarship page.

ASVAB CEP Career Exploration Program for Juniors

On Wednesday, December 1, interested juniors and seniors can take the ASVAB exam at 11:45 a.m. in the Lecture Hall. The ASVAB exam will allow students to learn more about their academic strengths and weaknesses and how their aptitudes can affect their future career paths. The ASVAB can also be used as an entrance exam for enlisting in the military.

On Thursday, December 9, all interested students will participate in a career exploration lesson. The ASVAB presenter will interpret test results for students. Students will also complete the FYI (Find Your Interests) career interest inventory. This an excellent career exploration program, and is free to schools. We give the ASVAB on school laptops, which allows students to proceed with testing at their own pace and be dismissed as soon as they are done testing. **STUDENTS CAN SIGN UP FOR ASVAB ELECTRONICALLY OR IN PERSON IN THE GUIDANCE OFFICE BY NOVEMBER 19**.

Parents of juniors, please be aware that the ASVAB test results will be released at the end of the school year to military recruiters. If you do NOT want your child's scores released to the military, please notify the Guidance Office by November 19. Please realize that the primary purpose of this program is for juniors to explore future career paths. This program's intention is not to lead students in any way, shape, or form toward a military career. The ASVAB scores, however, are active scores for students wishing to enlist in the future. If you have questions regarding this program, please do not hesitate to contact Mrs. Bean at 928-2985. A letter will be mailed home soon regarding the ASVAB.

BRCS Musical Notes

Have you ever tasted a particular dish at a restaurant that was so good you could barely wait to share that with your friends?

How about a particular medicine that felt miraculous and brought you back to perfect health and free of pain? Did you feel like sharing that with your friends as soon as you could?

Well... here is some wonderful news about our Music department: Mrs. Crane, Ms. Harris, and I are working diligently to spread the good news that "music has the power to make our students more focused, more diligent and more successful in their future careers!"

That's right! Research after research confirms that music cannot make people "smarter" but it does foster the development of neural pathways that can greatly aid in the overall learning process in all areas of learning!

So, as you think about courses that can help your children do better in school and do better in life as a whole, consider encouraging your child to join one of our wonderful ensembles at Bolivar-Richburg: BRCS Choir, BRCS Band or BRCS Orchestra.

Here are seven compelling reasons*:

1. **Musical training helps develop language and reasoning:** students who have early musical training will develop the areas of the brain related to language and reasoning. The left side is better developed with music, and songs can imprint information on young minds.

2. **A mastery of memorization:** Even when performing with sheet music, student musicians are constantly using their memory to perform. The skill of memorization can serve well in education and beyond!

3. **Students learn to improve their work:** Learning music promotes craftsmanship, and students learn to want to create good work instead of mediocre work. This desire can be applied to all subjects of study.

4. **Increased coordination:** Students who practice with musical instruments can improve their hand-eye coordination. Just like playing sports, students can develop motor skills when playing music.

5. **A sense of achievement:** Learning to play/sing pieces of music can be a challenging, but very achievable goal. Students who master even the smallest goal in music will be able to feel much pride for their achievements!

6. **Success in society:** Music is the fabric of our society, and music can shape abilities and character. Students in band, orchestra, or choir are less likely to abuse substances over their lifetime. Musical education can greatly contribute to children's intellectual development as well.

7. **Great Role Models:** Our team of music teachers at BRCS is one of the best in the business. Not only are the three of us highly qualified and talented (check out our new Music website for more info on that!) but we truly care for our students and their development as individual students and as human beings as a whole. Our students' success is our success!

If you would like to consider including Music in your child's future, please reach out to us. We would be thrilled to speak with you and introduce your children to the wonders of Music!

Cheers,

Mr. Suzano
Orchestra Director

* Items 1 through 6 based on an article from the National Association for Music Education: "Important Benefits of Music in Our Schools" (https://nafme.org/important-benefits-of-music-in-our-schools)

HOLIDAY CONCERT

MS/HS Holiday Concert (Orchestra, Band & Choir)

Wednesday, December 8 at 7:00 p.m.

Learn More about Music Opportunities at Bolivar-Richburg:

www.brcs.wnyric.org/music

Bolivar-Richburg Central School
100 School Street
Bolivar, NY 14715

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Mary Snyder, Assistant Principal
Sarah Cartmill, Director of Curriculum
Kristin Woodhead, School Business Administrator

Current Resident

or Local Postal Patron

Winter Bus Stop Safety

It's that time of year again! With the approach of winter, we encourage parents to talk to their children about bus stop safety.

Danger Zone: This is that 15-foot area that surrounds the entire bus. Always try to keep 15 feet between you and the bus.

Pick-up procedures:

- Be out 10 minutes before pick-up time.
- Running to the bus is extremely dangerous.
- Dress for the weather.
- Only approach the bus after is comes to a complete stop. Remember – 15 feet!
- Use handrails, as steps can be slippery.

Drop off procedures:

- No loose articles, drawstrings, papers, etc.
- Stay behind the white line until the door is open.
- Immediately proceed 15 feet from the bus. This is not the time to check the mail or grab the trash cans.

Crossing Procedures. Know the signs!

Stop and Wait.

Make eye contact.

Only cross when given the sign.

Danger! Go back quickly.

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