



Ringgold School District

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2023 • 2024
Annual
Report

Letter from the Superintendent



This year's Annual Report theme is **"Ringgold Pride,"** highlighting the many ways in which our students and faculty connect with and represent the values of the Ringgold community. The District has made substantial improvements by bolstering curricula, as well as welcoming new District appointments to foster excellence and ensure that students advance through their educational journeys.

Ringgold Pride has permeated throughout our District this past year for many reasons, including the substantial reading improvements students have made, and the efforts that made this possible. **Pride** also shines through in the opportunities the arts provide our students to express themselves and explore their passions. Furthermore, we are **proud** to provide an update on our Strategic Improvement Plan, which includes Student Experience, Employee Experience, Family & Community Experience, and Organizational Excellence.

We are excited to reflect on the 2023-2024 school year with the Ringgold community and celebrate the many achievements of this past academic year.

Sincerely,

Randall Skrinjorich

Mr. Randall Skrinjorich
Superintendent of Ringgold
School District



POINTS OF PRIDE

Ringgold High School

- ◆ The College & Career Fair attracted representatives from approximately 80 local industries, employers, and educational and trade programs. Students benefited from exposure to various career paths.



- ◆ Students cut loose on March 7-9 at Ringgold High School's spring musical, **Footloose**. Four performances were the culmination of several months of hard work and dedication by the staff, cast, crew, and orchestra.



- ◆ The Lighthouse Team promoted leadership through its work to teach students about goal setting, drive, vision, planning, and the definition of success at Ringgold High School, while also collaborating with community organizations such as the Travis Manion Foundation.



POINTS OF PRIDE

Ringgold Middle School



- ◆ The middle school has adopted a teaming model, where students are divided into different houses to reinforce leadership skills and positive behavior. Students competed in the first ever **House Cup**, where the different houses competed against one another in a number of events.



- ◆ Ringgold Middle School hosted the first ever joint **Talent Show** for both elementary schools. The combined effort of the Talent Show is part of Ringgold's Strategic Plan of forming a Ringgold community across the District.



- ◆ The Harp & Guitar and Music & Choir programs at Ringgold Middle School provide opportunities for students to travel, be celebrated and recognized for their accomplishments, and push themselves to excel.

Ringgold Elementary School North



- ◆ **Leader in Me Portfolios** were created by students in third and fourth grade to show the various ways in which they demonstrate leadership skills. The portfolios were proudly displayed to parents during Ringgold Elementary School North's Remake Learning Day.

POINTS OF PRIDE

Ringgold Elementary School North (cont'd)

- ◆ Ringgold Elementary School North partnered with Ringgold High School students to celebrate **Read Across America** as part of the District's commitment to fostering students' appreciation of reading.



- ◆ **Glow Week** is a celebration that fuses art and sciences through project-based learning, and this year's theme was "Aliens." Students participated in cosmic bowling and created iridescent alien artwork.

Ringgold Elementary School South

- ◆ On **STEM Night**, students explored science, technology, engineering, and math with hands-on activities, including robot bowling, designing a Lego maze, drawing with 3D pens, and more.



- ◆ Ringgold Elementary School South hosted **Kindergarten Signing Day** for children starting in the fall. Students completed testing, participated in arts and crafts, and got to meet the Kindergarten teachers and future classmates while parents completed the registration process.



- ◆ **Remake Learning Career Day** provided students in second through fourth grade the opportunity to learn more about potential careers. Community members spoke with students about their chosen career field, and two students from Ringgold High School shared their knowledge and skills learned through the Mon Valley Career Technology Center's electrician program.



NEW DATA CITES IMPROVED STAKEHOLDER EXPERIENCE THROUGHOUT THE DISTRICT

The saying “Experience Matters” is taking on new meaning in Ringgold School District, and for a good reason. The District is making improvements to the experiences of its key stakeholders based on a series of recently conducted surveys.

An essential component of the District’s Strategic Improvement Plan are the employee, parent, and student experience surveys, administered through Studer Education since 2022. The data allows the District to gauge stakeholder perception and evaluate growth from years past, and this year’s evidence shows that Ringgold has stayed true to its promise of improving areas of weakness and creating a stronger, more positive culture.

The plan, which serves as a roadmap for the District, identifies four main pillars: Student Experience, Employee Experience, Family & Community Experience, and Organizational Excellence. Within each pillar, the District lists priority items and corresponding steps outlining strategies to ensure each area is addressed. The entire plan can be found on www.Ringgold.org.

The District administered surveys to parents and employees to collect feedback for 2023, and the data yielded positive results. Participants identified communication, discipline,

and culture as areas within the District that demonstrated significant improvement.

The outcome of the student experience survey, conducted in mid-March, reinforced the favorable responses from the parent and employee experience survey. The data revealed that students feel safe at their schools, believe rules are consistently enforced, find the schools’ principals to be good leaders, and have opportunities to succeed at school. Furthermore, students feel that the teachers recognize their achievements, ask them how they learn best, and challenge them academically.

“We are pleased to see that the stakeholder survey responses show that we are achieving our commitment to creating a culture that fosters excellence. Our dedicated team of educators, administrators, and staff work tirelessly to stay on track with our Strategic Improvement Plan. As we continue to follow this roadmap, our collective efforts will lead to greater opportunities for all members of the Ringgold community,” said Superintendent Mr. Randall Skrinjorich.

NOTABLE IMPROVED AREAS

| Area | 2023 vs. 2024 Survey (Mean Score) |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| I see progress being made to create a culture of success for employees across the organization and for those we serve. | ↑ |
| I feel that organization-level resources are allocated to maximize effectiveness across the organization. | ↑ |
| I believe my child has every opportunity to be successful at this school. | ↑ |
| I regularly receive feedback from school staff on how well my child is learning. | ↑ |
| I believe school rules are consistently enforced. | ↑ |
| I regularly receive feedback from my teachers about my academic progress. | ↑ |



Employee



Parent



Student

DISTRICT-WIDE FOCUS ON READING STRENGTHENS ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE



While school districts throughout the country continue to struggle with pandemic-related learning gaps, the District has taken proactive steps to combat challenges with innovative learning practices, and progress is shining through.

To support this effort, former middle school Principal, Mr. Timothy McKay, returned to the District as the Administrative Instructional Coach at the beginning of the school year. The role promotes high quality instruction at both elementary schools to ensure that students are achieving academic benchmark goals.

The collaborative position has proven to be a success, as students are advancing through more complex assignments, such as Text-Dependent Analysis (TDA). TDAs, a three-part prompt requiring students to demonstrate reading, writing, and language skills, make up approximately 25% of the English Language Arts section of the PSSA.

“TDAs require students to use critical thinking as they read a passage, look at open-ended responses, and find evidence within the text to support their claim, and that’s a lot for a third or fourth grader to do,” said Mr. McKay. “We have created a unified environment where teachers can help students make sense of what they are processing and how to critically evaluate the information they are processing, while identifying important context clues.”

To ensure that all students are making headway on their educational journeys as well, reading intervention takes place at each grade level. The District utilizes small group intervention in grades K-6 each day, tailored to the identified strengths and areas of need for a given student.

For grades 7-12, reading intervention happens within the classroom time, with lesson plans guided by skill deficiency trends observed in beginning, middle, and end of the year assessment data.

CHESS PROJECT HELPS PROMOTE POSITIVE BEHAVIOR



Mr. Joseph Pleva showing Ringgold High School students the chess sets manufactured in the Wood Shop and STEM Lab.

An innovative faculty-led project taking place at both the high school and middle school has proven to be an excellent way to support students experiencing an emotional crisis and promote positive behavior. The Chess Project has led to a reduction in criminal offenses, a decreased need for de-escalations, and an improvement in several students’ well-being.

The project originated at the middle school, when a faculty member had the idea to use chess as a way to help a child suffering an emotional crisis. The behavioral impact with one of her students led Mrs. Tracy Tatar, Special Education Teacher at Ringgold Middle School, to see the benefits of incorporating it into one of her classes. She found that playing chess eased the transition for students with anxiety disorders and improved behaviors for students with emotional disturbance.

When it proved to be successful, chess became a staple at the middle school, with students playing against themselves and

Ringgold Police Officers in the cafeteria during lunch. It was then that Mr. Joseph Pleva and Mr. Dave Gilpin, both teachers at Ringgold High School, came up with the idea to manufacture chess sets for the students. The boards were customized and created in the high school’s Wood Shop and STEM Lab.

The cognitive benefits of learning chess, positive socialization, and coping skills when faced with negative outcomes are having a more profound positive impact on more of the students than expected.

The Ringgold School District Police Administration and the Principals would like to recognize the following individuals for their contributions to this project:

- Teacher Mr. Joseph Pleva - RHS
- Teacher Mr. Dave Gilpin - RHS
- Teacher Mrs. Tracy Tatar - RMS
- Administrative Assistant Ms. Nina Grimm - RMS
- School Police Officer Mr. Jeff Orgrodowski - RMS



RINGGOLD LOOKS TO REVAMP FACILITIES

Ringgold is committed to providing an exceptional education and creating an environment that fosters growth. School facilities play a critical role in the education process, which is why a proposed plan to update facilities across the District was recently unveiled. The District's devotion to ensuring that all its facilities are top-notch and up-to-date has been demonstrated time and time again, with recent updates to the high school art wing and natatorium, administrative offices, and more.

"We evaluated the District as a whole, and put together a list of items that we believe need to be addressed within the near future," said Mr. Bill Hoffman, Director of Buildings and Grounds for the Ringgold School District.

The suggested plan encompasses a comprehensive list of updates to schools and facilities across the District. Among the notable revisions in the plan are the proposals for Ringgold High School, which would mark phase three of the school's refurbishment plan. Improvements would be made to the first and second-floor classrooms and to the science labs, including the purchase of new science equipment.

To continue providing top-tier athletic facilities, another suggested improvement was the rehabilitation of Joe Montana Stadium. This would involve the incorporation of LED lighting, replacing the bleachers, renovating the locker rooms beneath the bleachers, upgrading the concession stand and restrooms, among other additions.

Another noteworthy suggestion includes the rehabilitation of aging roofs and floors, and renovating restrooms, concession stands, locker rooms, bleachers, doors, and hardware throughout the District.

"A lot of money has been invested and continues to be invested in our facilities to ensure that we are meeting our goal of providing a quality learning environment for our students and staff. The proposed updates included in this plan allow the District as a whole to continue achieving that goal," said Mr. Hoffman.

CONGRATULATIONS TO VALEDICTORIAN AND SALUTATORIAN FOR CLASS OF 2024

Ringgold High School is proud to recognize the announcement of the Class of 2024's valedictorian and salutatorian. These students have earned this distinguished designation by displaying a steadfast commitment and devoting countless hours toward their academic success throughout their time at Ringgold High School.

Bridget Hilty is the Class of 2024's valedictorian. Hilty has earned the highest honor roll distinction each quarter since she was a freshman and was named the top female math and science student for the entire school. Hilty is nationally recognized by the College Board for her performance in the classroom and outstanding college-level achievements on multiple AP exams. She is the recipient of the STEM award from the Challenge Program Inc., an award for students at the top of their class in math, science, or engineering. Hilty accepted a scholarship to Penn State University's Schreyer Honors College and will study biomedical engineering in the fall.

Gionni Traeger is the Class of 2024's salutatorian. Traeger is a nationally recognized College Board scholar for his devotion within the classroom and his stellar performance on multiple AP exams. Traeger is also a PIAA All-State Honorable Mention for swimming. He will be attending the University of Miami in the fall to study finance.

"Congratulations to the Class of 2024's valedictorian and salutatorian for their exceptional achievements and incredible dedication throughout their time at Ringgold High School," said Ringgold High School Principal Dr. Greg Saraceni.



(From L to R) Bridget Hilty & Gionni Traeger

END OF THE YEAR CELEBRATIONS



Ringgold Elementary School North's PTA rewarded students and staff with ice cream for raising \$2500 toward local tornado relief efforts.



Middle school students and faculty surprised and honored Mrs. Melanie Sandrock at her final concert before retiring after 49 years with the District.



Both elementary schools hosted a senior walk through for the Class of 2024.



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Congratulations Class of 2024!

The Class of 2024 boasts **207** of graduates, over **\$2,200,000** in scholarships and awards, and exciting plans to continue on to college, the military and the workforce.

We wish all our graduates success and joy on their journeys ahead!



Ringgold High School Graduate to Compete at SkillsUSA National Championship



William Stewart (third from the left) after winning the SkillsUSA district-level competition in December 2023.

As most high school graduates are winding down and preparing to enjoy a relaxing summer, there is one student from Ringgold High School who is gearing up, William Stewart. He has accomplished something that no other student has in school history; he is the reigning SkillsUSA Electrical Construction Wiring State Champion. He is currently preparing to compete at the SkillsUSA National Competition later this month.

SkillsUSA is the largest career and technical student organization in the nation. Competitions are held at the District, state, and national level. Electrical Construction Wiring Competitors are required to complete a written test of questions formulated from the latest edition of the National Electric Code (NEC), a practical conduit bending exercise, and hands-on installation of a conduit system, cabling system, and wiring devices. Working from drawings and specification sheets, competitors are required to install an electrical system common in most residential and light commercial projects. Judging is based on general workmanship, accuracy of layout and installation, and adherence to the current NEC and standard industry safe practices.

Stewart is a third-year electrical student at Mon Valley Career and Technology Center (CTC) where he crafted his skills and knowledge to excel in the field. Stewart took first place at district-level competition in December, held at Mon Valley CTC. Next, he traveled with a team of his fellow district winners to Hershey, PA, for state-level competition, where he competed against students from 80 career and technology centers and once again took first place. Stewart's next stop will be Atlanta, Ga., where he will compete against students across the country at the SkillsUSA National Competition.