



The Creek

Indian Creek Local School District Newsletter

October 2024

Indian Creek, Buckeye Local to Play in Spooky Bowl

Indian Creek High School will host Buckeye Local for the Spooky Bowl unified football game on Oct. 31.

The event will be held at the Robert Kettlewell Memorial Stadium at 10 a.m. and will include a six-on-six game featuring teams with a mixture of general education students and those with intellectual disabilities. ICHS held its inaugural event last year against Steubenville with a Turkey Bowl in November and officials anticipated another fun matchup.

“We’ve been practicing since the second week of the school year and [BLHS Unified Sports Advisor Lindsay Orr] confirmed a few weeks ago,” said district coordinator Tom Mort. “This is to celebrate all our students and show them what is possible with inclusion and teamwork.”

Mort, who currently serves as an intervention specialist at Indian Creek Middle School, collaborated with Special Olympics Ohio Unified Champion Schools to develop unified sports within the district, plus he worked with other area schools to establish similar programs. He added that students have been positively impacted by the initiative, and not just those playing the game.

“This game is something that all students at ICHS look forward to, and we are actually bringing a bus load of sixth graders to the game and Indian Creek Middle School Principal Dr. Holly Minch-Hick is considering it a reward for the students who get to go. As for the participants, our special needs students love to be valued members of a team. Our team Leader, Sal Barcalow, has developed leadership skills that helped him be-



Indian Creek High School will host a Spooky Bowl Unified Sports football game against Buckeye Local on Oct. 31 at 10 a.m. at Robert Kettlewell Memorial Stadium. Students and the public may attend and cheer on teammates. Pictured, kneeling in front, is Brayden Stewart. Back: Taylor Borham, Nick Eddy, Sal Barcalow, Logan Westlake, David Howell and Caleb Mannion.

come a great teammate in baseball and a true leader. He has as much to do with the success of unified sports than anyone.”

Mort said it has also affected him in profound ways.

“This has been lifechanging for me as well. Seeing the joy on our kids’ faces when they ran out onto the field last year was something I’ll never forget.”

Since participating in Unified Champion Sports, the school has been involved in a

variety of events from basketball against the Jefferson County Sheriff’s Office to a track meet with Buckeye Local and Edison at Edison High School. Meanwhile, Indian Creek will face Steubenville again during the second-annual Turkey Bowl and more details will be forthcoming.

Students, parents and the public are invited to witness Spooky Bowl activities for free while WTOV-TV anchor/reporter Addison Albert will serve as honorary captain.

ICBOE Approves Agreements for Community Innovation Center

The next steps were formally taken with Indian Creek’s Community Innovation Center as school board officials approved agreements for the project during the Oct. 18 regular session.

During the meeting at Indian Creek Middle School in Mingo Junction, the board overwhelmingly approved resolutions with North Canton-based Sol-Harris/Day Architecture as the design professional and

Hammond Construction of Akron as construction manager. In addition, district Treasurer Denise Todoroff was given the green light to establish an account and appropriate more than \$6.5 million in grant funds to finance the project.

The district received an Appalachian Community Innovation Centers grant totaling \$6,515,272 to construct the one-story, 14,000-square-foot facility at the

entrance to the campus in Mingo for mental health, education and workforce development services. The grant program was established with the Ohio General Assembly and funded through the Ohio Facilities Construction Commission (OFCC) and Indian Creek is among 14 recipients sharing the estimated \$88 million windfall.

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ICHS Students Teach Younger Peers Social Skills

Indian Creek High School students are working with younger peers to help build social skills and develop leaders.

As part of the Leader In Me (LIM) initiative, four seniors are spending time at Indian Creek Middle School and working with a group of 20 fifth-through-eighth graders. They are meeting twice a week over the next three months and the curriculum may be extended throughout the remainder of the school year.

District Board-Certified Behavior Analyst Michelle Duprey-Anderson said the district has a variety of leadership and related initiatives and the social skills group was simply an extension of those endeavors. One is LIM, where the district joined forces with FranklinCovey Education of Salt Lake City, Utah, to utilize a school improvement model to treat the universal challenges of academics, culture and leadership. Lighthouse teams involving teachers and students were formed within schools to implement practices and enable students to be college-, career-, community- and life-ready. Through the social skills groups, the four teens work with middle schoolers to complete activities and help the underclassmen learn to communicate, and so far they have been seeing improvements.

“As part of the Leader in Me, we decided to use older peers for social skills groups to facilitate the groups and help motivate them to participate,” she said. “I think the high school kids will be better equipped to help them navigate the nuances and communicate more. I proposed this to [district Director of Special Education] John Rocchi and [Superintendent] Dr. T.C. Chappear enthusiastically supported it.”

Duprey-Anderson said ICHS school counselor Lynda Linhart approached the Future Teachers of America and LIM core groups seeking assistance and seniors Briggs Taylor, Luciana Pietro, Taylor See and Emma Doerr stepped up to the plate. Duprey-Anderson trained them in September and they implement lessons when they meet with the middle schoolers each week.

The seniors underwent intensive coaching with direct training the first week and Duprey-Anderson gave them an overview of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) topics needed for successful implementation of the social skills group, such as direct teaching, modeling, role play, feedback loop, use of reinforcement, data collection systems and the basic foundations of the Accept Identify Move (AIM) curriculum, among others. She then modeled the implementation for the facilitators during the first and second week, then the facilitators began implementation lessons during the second week with her supervision, feedback and support. During the third week, Duprey-Anderson and ICMS school counselor David Kemp offered intermittent support to ensure it runs smoothly. Additionally, the middle schoolers were referred by administrators, teachers and school counselors plus school-wide data collection systems.

Lessons are taken from the AIM curriculum, which teaches skills needed to identify what the person cares about and then moves toward those values, even when they experience challenges; the Skillstreaming curriculum that teaches specific social skills directly, then models them and provides opportunities for the student to practice the skills and receive feedback; and direct teaching and experiential learning opportunities during each session.

The student facilitators meet twice a week with a total of four



Four Indian Creek High School seniors are working with a group of 20 students in grades 5-8 at Indian Creek Middle School to help build social skills. District Board-Certified Behavior Analyst Michelle Duprey-Anderson trained the teens and they are now facilitating a 12-week curriculum which may extend throughout the school year. Pictured are, from left, Taylor See, Luciana Pietro, Emma Doerr, Briggs Taylor and Duprey-Anderson.

groups, plus they spend time in the cafeteria during the lunch periods where they interact with students and provide peer modeling and positive attention. They also collect data and utilize reinforcement systems to facilitate and monitor student progress.

“They help the kids navigate the complexities of social life and peer dynamics,” she noted. “The students are much more receptive and responsive to the teen-agers.”

While the curriculum is set to run over a 12-week period, there is a possibility that it will extend through the end of the school year. Duprey-Anderson said it also impacts the facilitators themselves.

“These are high school kids who are going to be teachers and leaders, and they are also learning a skill set. They are doing things they might not have access to such as an introduction to behavioral services. It’s a cool experience both ways and they are learning from each other.”

The young facilitators also shared their feelings about taking part in the initiative.

“It’s nice to be able to work with all the kids and see them grow and evolve with all we’re helping them with,” said Briggs Taylor. “I figured the social skills we’re teaching them will help me in my future even if I don’t become a teacher. When you’re a kid, you see where you are going in the future. They see that social skills are crucial to development.”

“I think it can be very beneficial in the long run [for me and the kids],” added Luciana Pietro.

“It’s a privilege to be even a small part of these children’s change,” commented Taylor See. “It’s changed my perspective.”

“I’ve wanted to be a teacher, but being in these groups made me understand why I want to do that,” said Emma Doerr, who said she was interested in working at the middle-school level. “I definitely want to be a teacher.”

“They help the kids navigate the complexities of social life and peer dynamics. The students are much more receptive and responsive to the teen-agers.”

**-Michelle Duprey-Anderson
District Board-Certified Behavior Analyst**

Indian Creek Middle School Sets Club Day Activities

Indian Creek Middle School is inviting students to sharpen their leadership skills by signing up for organizations and learning to give back.

As part of the school's ongoing involvement with the Leader in Me Program, ICMS will conduct its first Club Day on Nov. 1 beginning at 8 a.m. Students will take part in a special two-hour event and meet representatives, learn about the various organizations available and sign up for those that suit them.

"We will have an arena-style signup and the students spend the first hour to see what clubs they could sign up for, then they will have three choices," said Principal Dr. Holly Minch-Hick. "During the second hour, they will break out into groups. The kids can do something meaningful and create a product or do community service."

There is a vast selection of organizations

for students to choose from such as Media Production, Student Ambassadors, Sunshine Club, Career Club, Necessities Club, Chess Club, Science Club, IC Marketing Business Club, Technology Assistants, Future Educators, Academic Leaders Club, Multicultural Club, 7 Habits Club, Drama Club, Art Club, Choir Club and Food Cart Club.

Dr. Minch-Hick said the school's building leadership team (BLT) created ideas which were inspired by the Leader in Me initiative to help improve academics, culture and leadership. The Utah-based program is being implemented in all four schools within the Indian Creek Local School District over four years and the middle and high school have since established what are known as Lighthouse Teams with students and educators to promote their goals.

"The Leader in Me brings out leadership

qualities in all of the students. Last year, we talked about bringing out those leadership qualities in our 520 students and I went to a program and learned about Club Days," she continued. "Every month we are going to run on a two-hour Club Day schedule to meet with the clubs."

The Leader in Me aims to create a high-trust environment in schools, build student achievement and improve learning with practices based on educator Stephen Covey's book, "The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People." Among them are proactive and setting goals to embracing teamwork and taking care of one's physical, mental and emotional well-being. Many schools that have utilized the concept have shown increased test scores and positive behaviors, among other improvements.

Dr. Minch-Hick said two more activities will be set on Nov. 26 and Dec. 20 prior to the holiday breaks.

CENTER

(Continued from Front)

The district is collaborating with Trinity Health System, the Jefferson County Community Action Council and the Jefferson County Educational Service Center's Quest Center to provide resources for the community and work should get underway this spring.

Superintendent Dr. T.C. Chappellear said the process is continuing through the design phase and stakeholders were providing input into the look of the space to best suit their needs.

"We've had meetings with the partners from Trinity, Jefferson County CAC and the ESC which were facilitated by Sol/Harris-Day," he added. "These were preliminary meetings, but we'll continue with the design phase and eventually [the architects] will have their renderings."

The Community Innovation Center will house a walk-in health clinic and may also accommodate a day treatment program for students in grades K-8 while JCESC's Quest Center will serve students from Jefferson and Harrison counties and JCCAC will provide an Ohio Means Jobs access point with resume assistance, life skills training and other resources for adults and dislocated workers.

Dr. Chappellear said groundbreaking should occur around June with the center to be up and running during the summer of 2026.

In other matters, district Food Service Director Nicole Marshall said more students were taking advantage of school meals and numbers showed that 50,084

meals were served between August and September, compared to 42,553 meals at the same time last year. Marshall said that was an increase of 7,531 meals and it could be attributed to various reasons, such as the district's involvement in the free and reduced lunch program to the many food options students are receiving.

"I feel the participation has been fantastic and the kids are excited, and I have more teacher participation," she added. "I'm trying to listen to what the kids have to say and we do a six-week menu cycle and get input for meals. I want to try to expand their palates and try something they may not get the opportunity to try at home."

She noted that pork chops, specialty pizzas and theme days such as Taco Tuesdays and Pasta Thursdays were offered and she also speaks to students and parents through YACPAC (youth and parent advisory committees) meetings, which will be brought back to try and critique foods to obtain input and encourage parent involvement.

Among other action, the board:

--Heard from ICMS Principal Dr. Holly Minch-Hick about activities in her building, including Sycamore Stars and STEM afterschool programs, a visit from Jefferson County Joint Vocational School Career Workforce Specialist Carina Aulicino addressing students and an eighth-grade visit planned to the Cardinal power plant.

--Heard from Indian Creek Education Association President Joe Hammack reported

that it was a good start to the year and building representatives have been established while officials noted the first labor meeting was also held;

--Accepted the resignation of Indian Creek High School art teacher Lucinda Phillippi, who will retire June 30 after 38 years of service. Dr. Chappellear congratulated and thanked her for her dedication;

--Hired Miranda Bednarek as cook/cashier at Cross Creek Elementary;

--Accepted the resignation of Kim Mark as district representative to the Jefferson County Joint Vocational School Board of Education and will appoint her replacement at a later date;

--Congratulated the junior and senior high football and volleyball teams as well as the cross country team for their great season;

--Learned from Assistant Superintendent John Belt that the Lester Carney Track at the Robert Kettlewell Memorial Stadium would be closed one day for striping while the school buses' MARCS radios that were used for safety had outlasted their usefulness and need replaced by next summer. He was seeking grant funds to finance the upgrade;

--Heard from Dr. Chappellear that the new Creek Squad student IT program was getting underway and members were assisting with Chromebook repairs and other tech help at district buildings. He said it was a great start to the school year with plenty happening at Indian Creek schools;

--Set the next meeting for Nov. 21 at 6 p.m. at ICMS.



First responders from the Mingo Junction Police and Fire Departments and Jefferson County Sheriff's Office met with Hills Elementary School students, where they shared lunch with small groups of first-through-fourth-graders and also met with kindergarteners to foster relationships. Pictured are, front from left, JCSO Capt. Tommy Koehnlein, Deputy Zac Thompson, Mingo Fire Lt. Andrew Westover and Mingo Police Chief Willie McKenzie III. Back: Deputy Corey Virtue, Deputy Michael Hyde, firefighter Mary Beadnell, Deputy Doug Viola and Officer Blake Malone.

Hills Elementary Makes Connections with First Responders

Local first responders made a visit to Hills Elementary School on Oct. 2 where they had a chance to interact with the students.

Nine representatives from the Mingo Junction Police and Fire Departments and the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office shared lunch with groups of pupils from grades 1-4 and also spoke with kindergarteners during the stop and Principal Erin Alloggia said it will be part of a monthly event.

"They got to meet with small groups of children and it supports some positive community interaction," Alloggia said.

"There were six kids from each grade and they also visited the kindergarten class."

The deputies, police officers and firefighter/EMS members dined with the older students and made some meaningful connections along the way.

"It fosters positive relationships with our first responders," Alloggia noted, saying it had been done in the past and was being brought back. "I thought it was important to get the community back into the building because without the community, we're not going to survive, and we need to keep the focus on our kids."

Mingo Police Chief Willie McKenzie III

said he looked forward to the activity, as did the other emergency officials.

"I think it's a blessing to come here and interact with the kids and be a good example for them," Chief McKenzie commented. "We show and tell them they can be anything they want to be when they grow up."

"I'm always excited for the Indian Creek administration to collaborate with us for a great cause to inspire the children of the future."

The next event is set for Nov. 13 at 11 a.m. and will continue each month except December.

Cross Creek Gearing up for Leader in Me Kickoff Nov. 1

Cross Creek Elementary is kicking off its Leader in Me initiative beginning Nov. 1 to build academics, leadership and culture among the young students.

Principal Dan Hartman said administrators and teachers have undergone training for the program and plan to enact goals for self-improvement throughout the year. Leader in Me is a Utah-based program being implemented within the district's schools over a four-year period and involves students and teachers in a bid to create a high-trust environment in schools, build student achievement and improve learning. The practices are based on educator Stephen Covey's book, "The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People," and range from being proactive and setting goals to taking care of one's physical, mental and emotional well-being.

"It's going to be a celebration of the things we're doing. We're delving fully into the Leader in Me program with leadership roles

and important goals. We'll have an assembly to review the seven habits and recognize our efforts to this point in school."

CCE officials plan to target goals such as academics, particularly in reading and math; focusing on what is important; creating a leadership environment; putting first things first; and thinking win-win.

"We're going to use the acronym 'GRIT' as our Leader In Me mantra and build that internal grit that a lot of kids are coming to us without," Hartman added, saying the acronym stood for "Growth through Resilience requires Initiative and Tenacity."

Indian Creek High School and Indian Creek Middle School have established programs and created Lighthouse Teams with educators and students while CCE and Hills teachers have held trainings with consultants at their buildings. Hartman said plans are to create similar teams at his school, which includes about 495 students in grades PreK-4.