# Byron Area Schools

## State of the District
## December 2024

Dear Byron Area Schools Parents and Community,

As we approach the end of 2024, I wanted to take a moment to share some exciting updates and accomplishments at Byron Area Schools. These milestones align with the Strategic Plan that was approved by the board last May, after the tireless efforts of all those that participated in developing the plan. Together, we have made significant strides in ensuring the safety, success, and growth of our students, staff, and facilities. I am proud of all the work that has been done and grateful for the continued support from our families and community. Below are some key highlights.

### Completed Construction Projects

First, let me update you on the various construction and facility improvements we've completed recently, all of which are aimed at enhancing the safety, functionality, and overall experience for our students, staff, and visitors. These projects include:

- The reconfiguration of the elementary parking area, which now provides better traffic flow and increased safety for drop-offs and pickups.
- A newly designed basketball court area, complete with updated fencing and a safety gate, creating a safer and more functional space for recreation.
- New fencing around the bus garage area and regrading work to improve the area's safety and usability.
- New paint and refinish of the gym floors at both elementary and high school gymnasiums.
- Roof repairs to the concession stand, ensuring it remains a reliable and functional space for school events.
- Finally, the installation of new water heaters at the high school to enhance efficiency and provide consistent hot water for our students and staff.

### Safety Initiatives

In addition to these physical improvements, we are committed to fostering a safe environment for everyone. That's why we've introduced the ALICE (Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate) training program for our staff. ALICE is a proactive, comprehensive approach to school safety, approved by both the Department of Education and Homeland Security. Our staff has begun training, and in the new year, we will introduce these important safety strategies to our students. This ongoing initiative will ensure we're better prepared to respond in any situation, providing a safer and more efficient way to protect our school community.

### Ongoing Curriculum Evaluation

Academically, we continue to refine and enhance our curriculum to ensure all students have access to engaging and rigorous learning opportunities. I'm excited to report on some important updates:

- This year, we've introduced a new K-5 mathematics curriculum, marking the first time in nearly a decade that our elementary students will be working within the same cohesive math curriculum across grade levels. This consistency will provide a stronger foundation for our students' learning.
- We're also piloting a new K-5 English Language Arts curriculum, which we aim to adopt starting next year. This curriculum is designed to foster stronger literacy skills and make learning more engaging for our students.
- In addition, we've launched a new virtual program, laying the groundwork to expand our online learning opportunities over the next few years, providing more flexibility for our students and families.

## New Staff Hires

Our progress also includes the addition of new, highly qualified staff members who are bringing their expertise and passion to our already dedicated and hardworking team. These new staff members will help us continue to provide excellent education and support for all our students.

## Looking Ahead

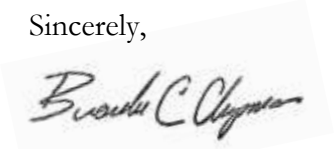
Looking ahead, we are actively using the Strategic Plan that was approved last May to guide our next steps. This plan will help us continue to focus on necessary facility upgrades and classroom improvements. Some of the upcoming initiatives we're exploring include:

- The installation of keyless entry systems to enhance security across our buildings.
- The addition of smart technology in classrooms to further enrich the learning environment.
- Improvements to our athletic facilities to better support both our student-athletes and our community.
- Continued partnerships with local organizations and businesses to strengthen our ties within the community and create more opportunities for our students.

In closing, I want to express my deepest appreciation for the continued support from our entire school community. Together, we are building a brighter future for our students, and I'm excited for what lies ahead. Thank you for your dedication, your involvement, and your commitment to making our school the best it can be.

Together, we will continue to grow, improve, and provide an exceptional education for every student.

Sincerely,



Brandon Chapman
Superintendent
Byron Area Schools