

BUCKEYE BULLETIN

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SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE



Welcome back to a new school year at Buckeye Local Schools! The first days of school always bring energy and excitement as students and staff settle into routines and look forward to new opportunities.

This year is especially meaningful as we move forward with our self-funded facilities plan. After years of careful financial planning and listening to community input, we can now invest in safe, modern student spaces—without raising taxes. This milestone reflects our district's commitment to fiscal responsibility and our community's shared vision for the future.

This newsletter showcases the excitement across Buckeye this fall, from spirited athletic competitions and engaging school events to hands-on learning in the classroom. Students will continue strengthening math skills with Zearn, exploring interactive lessons on newly upgraded Clevertouch boards, and learning through the Kami digital educational tool.

With dedicated staff, supportive families, and a proud community, we are creating environments where students can grow, achieve, and thrive. I am confident this school year will be a strong one for Buckeye.

Together, we will continue to **Believe. Empower. Achieve.**

Go Bucks!

Jeffrey M. Stanton
Superintendent

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MASTER FACILITIES PLAN

At a special meeting on August 25, the Buckeye Local Schools Board of Education voted to approve a self-funded facility plan, made possible by years of responsible financial management.

The approved plan will renovate the current high school to serve as the district's new junior high and construct a new high school (grades 9-12) at the corner of Wolff and Columbia Roads. Alumni Stadium will remain at its current location, and the new facility will feature modern classrooms, updated academic spaces for arts, music, and a gymnasium for student and community use.

The plan's funding strategy relies on years of conservative financial management, including the growth of cash reserves, increased interest earnings, and the retirement of existing debt from the district's elementary school project.

The district will continue to share updates with the community as the project progresses.

Scan the QR code to learn more and view answers to frequently asked questions.



TREASURER'S MESSAGE

How Buckeye is Funding Our Facilities Plan

Mark Donnelly, Treasurer

Thanks to years of disciplined budgeting and steady cash reserve growth, Buckeye Local Schools can now move forward with a self-funded Master Facilities Plan to address aging facilities without the need for a bond issue.

After listening to community feedback, we adjusted the scope of the project, reducing the overall cost and focusing on the essentials. The new high school will have one gym, future-ready classrooms, and a smaller overall footprint. These changes lowered the total projected cost to approximately \$63 million.

Of that amount, \$32 million will come directly from our capital projects fund, built through years of careful financial planning. Another \$23 million will be financed through Certificates of Participation (COPs) Loans, repaid over 20 years from our Permanent Improvement Fund. The final \$8 million will be covered by existing

revenue streams such as earned interest and Nexus income.

This bold and creative approach allows us to meet urgent facility needs, create safe and modern learning environments, and honor our commitment to fiscal responsibility.

If you have questions, please reach out to me directly at mddonnelly@buckeyeschools.org.

WHY COULDN'T WE DO THIS BEFORE?

- Our savings from 2016 to 2022 were \$2.3M per year.
- Over 2023-2025, our savings more than doubled to \$4.9M per year.
- This dramatic increase over the last three years opened doors to other alternatives, especially when partnered with decreasing the design cost and increasing the COPs loan.

OPERATIONS UPDATE

John Justice, Director of Operations

Over the past several months, the district has made significant progress in maintaining and improving school facilities. Concrete and paving projects have improved traffic flow, advanced site accessibility, and enhanced campus safety. At Buckeye Elementary, new playground structures have been installed for our primary and preschool students, and upgraded geothermal pumps are now in place. Painting, drywall repairs, landscaping, and powerwashing across the district have also refreshed our buildings for the 2025-26 school year.

Looking ahead, the district will assess electrical systems, continue the LED lighting transition, and evaluate plumbing systems and fixtures. Phase three of the elementary roof replacement project is also upcoming. These improvements demonstrate our ongoing commitment to safe, modern and well-maintained learning environments. We look forward to sharing future updates as work continues.

TECHNOLOGY NEWS

New Clevertouch Boards Installed

As part of the technology plan, the Buckeye Technology Department completed an exciting upgrade at the elementary building by replacing the existing Clevertouch boards with upgraded Clevertouch Impact Max models.

The new boards feature 75-inch screens and offer improved touch responsiveness and brighter displays. Updated software tools allow teachers to deliver enhanced interactive lessons that promote collaboration and critical thinking for real world applications.



CURRICULUM UPDATE

The curriculum department is excited to share updates on our initiatives for the 2025–26 school year. Building on last year’s successes, we are introducing new programs designed to challenge and support our students in engaging and meaningful ways.

This marks the second year of Zearn math implementation for grades 4-8. Zearn’s personalized approach allows students to strengthen their mathematical foundation. Additionally, the new Spanish curriculum will provide junior high and high school students with a deeper understanding of the language through an emphasis on real-world communication and collaboration. Buckeye continues to remain committed to the science of reading initiative with all teachers and administrators successfully completing training through the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce. To strengthen this commitment further, elementary teachers will continue to focus on LETRS training for enhanced literacy instruction. Districtwide, we will continue to empower students to take ownership of their learning through academic goal setting.

We are confident these initiatives will provide our students with the skills and knowledge they need to thrive at Buckeye Local Schools. We look forward to a successful and productive year of learning and growth.



Intermediate teachers prepare for another year of Zearn math.

STUDENT SERVICES UPDATE

The Student Services Department is thrilled to announce new initiatives and continued programs designed to support student learning and growth across the district. To enhance our digital learning environment, we are implementing the Kami program, a digital pen and paper tool that allows students and teachers to interact with documents using text-to-speech and voice typing features.

With Buckeye’s continued commitment to the science of reading, we have had another teacher complete the Wilson Reading program. With her added training, Julie Shrader will continue to support students with learning challenges while strengthening their reading and literacy skills.

Additionally, we’re kicking off the new school year with a Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) refresher for all staff. This training reinforces our district’s commitment to using PBIS to create a safe, positive, and predictable learning environment for all students. Finally, we will continue to use the SameGoal platform to manage special education and other student support programs, streamlining the process for IEPs and 504 plans and ensuring all students receive the specific support and accommodations they need to succeed.

TRANSPORTATION NEWS



This year, parents can use the Stopfinder app to access real-time bus route information for their children. The app provides easy, convenient updates and lets families view all transportation details in one place, keeping them informed every step of the way.

Any family who has not received an email invitation to activate their Stopfinder account should contact the transportation department at 330-722-8257, ext. 1019.

Getting set up on Stopfinder is easy—scan the QR code to learn how.



RECESS GETS A REFRESH WITH NEW PLAYGROUNDS

Students are enjoying two brand-new playgrounds on the elementary campus. The updated equipment includes climbing structures, slides, swings, and more, giving students safe and fun spaces to play.

Recess remains a favorite time of day, with students taking part in activities like kickball, basketball, gaga ball, and exploring the new playgrounds. The additions have brought energy and excitement to recess, offering more opportunities for students to stay active and connect with friends.



"Growing Together" AT BUCKEYE INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

Buckeye Intermediate School's theme for the school year, "Growing Together," is about ensuring every student meets and exceeds their individual goals. Students have already taken their baseline assessments in NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), which will help them set personal goals for the upcoming winter and spring assessments. Lastly, new tables in the science rooms continue to promote critical thinking, culture and collaboration.



OPEN HOUSE

Our recent Elementary Open House brought families together for an evening of fun, food, and community. The school was decorated with festive balloon displays, and guests enjoyed a variety of food truck favorites. It was a great opportunity for families to connect and celebrate the start of a new school year.



LEARNING ACROSS THE USA

Mrs. Garbutt's 5th-grade class is working on group presentations in social studies class. Each group is researching a specific United States region and will present what they have learned. The project allows students to practice research, collaboration, and presentation skills.



JUNIOR HIGH *Highlights*



ELA STUDENTS STEP INTO LEARNING

Dr. Crabtree's and Mrs. Albrecht's classes are starting the year by setting goals, creating a book recommendation wall, and picking words to incorporate in their vocabulary. Students also created personalized Crocs, which are displayed on the room's door.

The 8th-grade students in all ELA classes chose their Confetti Project books last week. They are busy reading so they can schedule meetings to discuss their books with adults in the building.

Hands-On Learning IN 8TH-GRADE SCIENCE

Mrs. Penrose's 8th-grade science students are already hard at work this school year, engaging in hands-on lessons that bring science concepts to life. From interactive experiments to group investigations, students are exploring key topics in creative and meaningful ways.

This early focus on active learning encourages curiosity, critical thinking, and collaboration among students. Mrs. Penrose, thank you for creating a classroom environment where science is exciting and accessible for every learner.



LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION!

The Buckeye Junior High Student News Crew is off to an outstanding start this school year, producing weekly video announcements for our school community. Our talented students take on every aspect of the production process—interviewing, filming, editing, and broadcasting their final product.

These student-led productions come together each week, showcasing creativity, collaboration, and communication. Thank you to our families and staff for supporting these young journalists as they bring Buckeye news to life.

AP SCHOLARS

Buckeye High School students were recognized for their outstanding academic achievement at the September 9th Board of Education meeting. To be recognized as an AP Scholar, a student must receive scores of 3 or higher on three or more AP Exams taken throughout their high school career. We're so proud of your hard work and dedication!



FRESHMAN MENTORS *Welcome the Class of 2029*



On Tuesday, August 13, Buckeye High School hosted its annual freshman orientation, welcoming the class of 2029 to campus. The event, sponsored by the school's freshman mentors leadership group, provided an exciting introduction to high school.

Incoming ninth graders were greeted by upperclassmen. Students had the opportunity to meet teachers, locate their classrooms, and learn about the wide range of extracurricular opportunities available at Buckeye High School.

The freshman mentors played a key role in organizing and leading the day, ensuring that new students felt comfortable and confident with their transition. Orientation concluded with a pep rally, highlighting Buckeye pride and setting the tone for a successful year ahead.

BUCKEYE HIGH SCHOOL KICKS OFF THE 2025-26 SCHOOL YEAR WITH WELCOME BACK ASSEMBLY

The first day of the 2025–26 school year began with Buckeye High School's Third Annual Welcome Back Student Assembly. This year's assembly opened with a students-versus-staff dodgeball game. In a close match, Mrs. Inman and Mr. Hassinger secured victory for the staff team.

The day also focused on preparing students for a successful year ahead. Junior and senior class meetings were held to share important start-of-year information, including key dates, graduation requirements, and student opportunities.

Buckeye High School is proud to continue this tradition of blending school pride with student success.



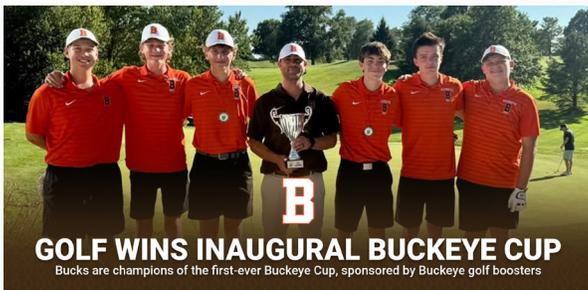
FEATURED NEW CLASS OFFERING

Once Upon a Crime (OUAC) is a new, co-taught course at the high school. It combines science and history to examine criminal investigation and infamous cases from multiple perspectives. Students explore the historical context of crime through the lenses of psychology and sociology while also applying scientific methods such as forensic analysis and criminology to better understand evidence and motives. This interdisciplinary approach helps upperclassmen think critically, connect subjects, and tackle real-world problems. So far, OUAC has been especially impactful in fostering deep discussions, collaboration, and a strong sense of curiosity among students preparing for college and future careers.

WELCOME BACK TO AN EXCITING SCHOOL YEAR *at Buckeye High School!*

As we embark on the 2025-26 school year, Buckeye Athletics is proud to highlight the achievements of our student athletes. Senior Blake Bartos has earned national recognition by securing the No. 12 spot in the 138-pound weight class in the latest High School On Sports Illustrated Wrestling Rankings. This accomplishment highlights Bartos's dedication and skill, placing him among the nation's top wrestlers as the season begins.

Our varsity golf team made history by winning the inaugural Buckeye Cup, a milestone achievement for the program.



GOLF WINS INAUGURAL BUCKEYE CUP

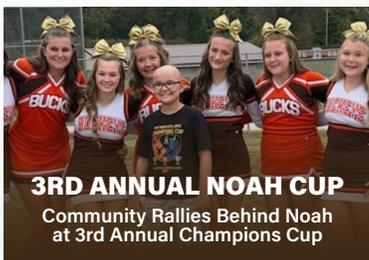
Bucks are champions of the first-ever Buckeye Cup, sponsored by Buckeye golf boosters

Our cross-country teams have provided remarkable performances. At the 5th Annual Buckeye Invitational, the boys' team achieved a 1-2 finish, with Pshonyak and Salazar leading the way, while the girls placed 4th, led by Sophia Regiec. These results reflect the hard work and commitment of our runners.

In football, senior quarterback Turner Dolata has been recognized as "A Student

Above," exemplifying the dedication and excellence we strive for in our athletes.

The 3rd Annual Noah Kotlarek Champions Cup was held on Saturday, September 13. We thank all who attended this impactful event.

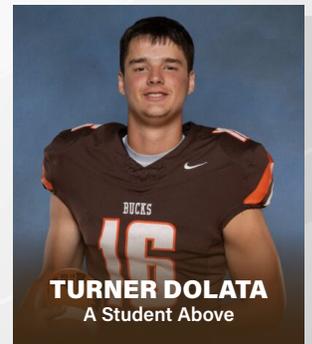


3RD ANNUAL NOAH CUP

Community Rallies Behind Noah at 3rd Annual Champions Cup



BLAKE BARTOS
Nationally Ranked Wrestler



TURNER DOLATA
A Student Above

CELEBRATING FALL SPORTS *at Buckeye Junior High!*

Buckeye Junior High's fall sports season is off to a great start, inspiring Buckeye pride. Our student athletes continue to demonstrate their dedication and preparation as they compete for top positions within the Great Lakes Conference.

It is encouraging to witness the sportsmanship and mutual support our students show for one another, both on and off the field. Thank you to our families and community members for cheering on our athletes and helping make this season successful. Your continued support is essential to building school spirit and creating memorable experiences for our students. Go Bucks!

We encourage everyone to come out and support our teams as they continue to embody the spirit of Buckeye Athletics.

For more updates, schedules, and ways to get involved, visit buckeyeathletics.org

John Myers
Athletic Director





Buckeye Local School District
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Medina OH 44256

Important Dates

OCTOBER

- 17 End of Grading Period
- 16 Fall Conferences - All Schools
- 23 Fall Conferences - Elementary

NOVEMBER

- 6 Fall Conferences - Elementary
- 12 Early Release
- 18 Board of Education Meeting
- 26-28 Thanksgiving Break (No School)

DECEMBER

- 9 Board of Education Meeting
- 18 End of Grading Period
- 19 Teacher Work Day (No School)
- 12/22-1/4 Winter Break (No School)

Visit buckeyeschools.org to read more building highlights and district news.



School Report Cards

On September 15, the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce released the 2025 School Report Cards. Buckeye Local Schools earned an overall rating of 4 stars out of 5, indicating that the district exceeds state standards.

The district received 5 stars in Graduation, signifying that Buckeye significantly exceeds state standards in graduation rates. Buckeye also earned 4 stars in Gap Closing and Achievement, exceeding state standards on state tests and ensuring success across student groups.

The district's Progress score was lower than anticipated even though more Buckeye students demonstrated academic growth last year than in recent years. Early Literacy also remains an area of focus. To strengthen this commitment, the district plans to improve access to preschool while continuing to provide high quality instruction.

At the building level, Buckeye High School earned 4.5 stars, Buckeye Junior High School and Buckeye Intermediate School each earned 4 stars, and Buckeye Primary School earned 4.5 stars.

While Buckeye has shown consistent achievement and growth, we will continue to strive for future growth in all measures.



OVERALL RATING



Exceeds State Standards

BELIEVE • EMPOWER • ACHIEVE