

September
2025

The
Eagle Examiner



Our mission is to inspire and guide each student to his or her maximum potential







BANK NOTE



Scott Gooding
Interim Treasurer

As we begin a new school year, the Big Walnut Local Schools Treasurer's Office extends a warm welcome back to our students, staff, families, and community. The start of a school year is always filled with excitement and new opportunities, and we are proud to support that work behind the scenes.

Our role is to ensure that every dollar entrusted to the district is managed responsibly and strategically. From developing the annual budget, to processing payroll and benefits, to making sure classrooms have the resources they need, we are committed to strong financial stewardship.

This year, we are especially focused on:

Transparency – Continuing to provide clear, accessible financial reports so our community understands where funds come from and how they are invested in students.

Sustainability – Planning carefully for the future so we can maintain high-quality programs while being mindful of long-term fiscal health.

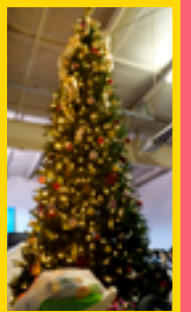
Support for Learning – Ensuring financial operations align with the district's mission of inspiring and guiding each student to reach their full potential.

We encourage families and community members to visit our website for financial updates, budget documents, and answers to frequently asked questions. As always, our office is here to help with any questions related to student fees, payroll, or district finances.

Thank you for your continued trust and partnership. Together, we can ensure that Big Walnut remains a district where students thrive and resources are used wisely. Here's to a successful and inspiring school year ahead!

Heads Up for the Holidays

It may feel early, but we're already preparing for our annual effort to support Big Walnut families in need this holiday season. Keep an eye out in October's Eagle Examiner for details on how you can help spread cheer and make a difference!



BWHS Theatre Kicks Off 2025–26 with a Full Season of Performances

The Big Walnut Theatre Department is back with another exciting year of performances that promise to showcase the incredible talents of our students. After a successful 2024–2025 season, the department is eager to bring audiences a new mix of music, drama, and comedy.

This year's season begins with a *Halloween Cabaret* on October 25–26, featuring student performances of numbers from shows like *The Addams Family*, *Hadestown*, *Chicago*, and more. The Saturday evening performance will run from 7–9 p.m., with a Sunday matinee at 2:00 p.m.

In December, the winter play *Class Action* will take the stage on December 12–13 at 7:00 p.m., offering audiences a thought-provoking and entertaining performance led by our student actors.



Finally, the season will close with the spring musical, *Rock of Ages: High School Edition*, a high-energy show packed with 80s rock favorites. Performances will run March 20–22, 2026, and are sure to be a highlight of the school year.

We invite our families and community members to mark their calendars and come support our talented cast and crew. Each performance is the result of countless hours of dedication from our students and staff, and we can't wait to share these productions with you!





AROUND THE DISTRICT



Alan Feeman
Food Services Supervisor

We're happy to announce that Big Walnut Local School District is offering Free and Reduced-Price Meal and Special Milk Programs for the 2025-2026 school year! These programs are here to help make sure all our students have access to healthy meals and milk, no matter their family's financial situation.

If your family meets certain income guidelines, your child could qualify for free or reduced-price meals and free milk. If you're already receiving SNAP or Ohio Works First benefits, you're automatically eligible, and foster children are also covered. Just fill out the application sent home with your child or pick one up from your school's office.

And don't worry—if things change for your family during the school year, you can always reapply.

Families who qualify for meal benefits might also be eligible for free health care coverage through Ohio's Healthy Start & Healthy Families programs. This includes doctor visits, dental, vision, and more!

Your application info is totally private and only used to figure out if you qualify. If you have any questions or need help with the process, Alan Feeman, our Food Service Supervisor, is just a phone call away at 740.965.8958

We're excited to offer these programs to help keep our students healthy and ready to learn!

Wings Take Off at BWHS

Lunchtime just got a little more exciting at Big Walnut High School! Students were treated to a brand-new menu item — boneless chicken wings. With flavor choices of Buffalo or Garlic Parmesan, it didn't take long to see that wings are already a crowd favorite in the cafeteria.

The addition of wings is just one example of how our Food Services Department continues to keep things fresh and fun for students. From classic favorites to new options like this, their hard work ensures that our Eagles not only have healthy meals but also enjoy what's on their trays each day.

Judging by the smiles (and empty plates), wing day is sure to become a popular tradition at BWHS!



Chelsea Heban
General Rosecrans Elementary
Prairie Run Elementary

Big Walnut Staff Spotlight! Exceptional Eagle Award

Big Walnut Local Schools is proud to announce the inaugural *Exceptional Eagle Award*, a new recognition created to honor staff members who go above and beyond in their dedication to our students, families, and community.

At this year's Convocation, Chelsea Heban was surprised with the very first award in front of her colleagues—and even more special, she was surprised by her own family, who joined the celebration. The moment brought smiles, applause, and even a few happy tears as the entire Big Walnut staff gathered to kick off the new school year.

The Exceptional Eagle Award is designed to highlight the heart of our district: the people who quietly and consistently make a difference. Chelsea was chosen for her unwavering commitment to her students, her colleagues, and the Big Walnut community.

We look forward to honoring more "Exceptional Eagles" in the years to come, as we continue to celebrate the individuals who inspire and guide every day at Big Walnut.





AROUND THE DISTRICT

District Upgrades Enhance Safety, Accessibility, and Reliability

Big Walnut Local Schools made several important facility upgrades over the summer to improve safety, accessibility, and convenience for students, staff, and families.

Fresh Asphalt at Big Walnut Middle School

At Big Walnut Middle School, the drive up from S. Old 3C Road to the main doors and side doors was completely repaved. In addition, both the main staff parking lot and the secondary staff lot received new asphalt. These improvements not only give the school a refreshed look but also provide safer, smoother access for daily traffic.



Expanded Parking and Lighting at Souders

Hylen Souders Elementary saw the addition of a much-needed extra row of parking spaces in its lot, helping to ease congestion for our staff and visitors to the building. New lighting was also installed, improving visibility and security.



Backup Power at General Rosecrans

A powerful new generator at General Rosecrans Elementary is now capable of supporting the entire district during outages. This district-wide backup system will help reduce disruptions and keep operations running smoothly when power interruptions occur.



Playground Safety at Big Walnut Intermediate

Last year, Big Walnut Intermediate added a brand-new playground for students. This summer, a safety fence was installed around the play area to provide additional protection and peace of mind for families.

Safer Play Surface at Prairie Run

At Prairie Run Elementary, the playground surface was upgraded from mulch to a durable rubber surface. This new material offers improved cushioning and accessibility, making the playground safer and easier to maintain.

These upgrades reflect the district's continued commitment to providing safe, welcoming, and functional spaces for all students and staff.



BIG WALNUT
HIGH SCHOOL

BIG WALNUT
LOCAL SCHOOLS

Snack Shop

Open daily for 30 minutes after school

- Cold Subs
- Deli Wraps
- Chef Salads
- Seasoned Fries
- Boiled Eggs
- Yogurt Parfaits
- Snacks
- Cold Drinks



AROUND THE DISTRICT

MEET OUR NEW ADMINISTRATORS



Dr. Crystal Bragg
Assistant Principal
Big Walnut High School

Family: I was born in Wisconsin, but moved to Ohio at a young age and it has been home ever since. I have family all over Ohio--Lima, Cincinnati, Galion, and here in Sunbury. My husband, Scott, and I have an almost 4 year old daughter, Esme, and two teenage boys, Chance and Maleki (13 and 14). We recently bought our little piece of heaven up near Marengo --a log cabin and small 5 acre farm with 25 animals and growing. We breed golden retrievers and are planning to expand and begin breeding our mini highlands in the next year. We love spending time outdoors, the Buckeyes, Chiefs and being with our family and friends.

Hobbies: I love spending time with my kids and husband, porch nights, good coffee, writing, working outside on our land and with our animals, and running.

Work Experience: I started my teaching career in Beaufort, SC in 2005 teaching High School English and coaching girls soccer, swim team, and track. From 2008-2021, through a myriad of life events and changes, I have served as a teacher, Principal, and Assistant Principal for the Department of Defense in Ft. Campbell, KY, a couple different charter schools in the Columbus area, online schools, and even served as an Associate Campus Director for Ohio Media School. The past four years, I served as an Assistant Principal at Linden-McKinley STEM Academy with Columbus City Schools.

What does Inspire And Guide mean to you? My passion is bringing out the best in everyone and helping students find their purpose and live it fully, so to me, this means I lead by example... My words, actions, and behaviors should inspire others to be their best and find joy in the process. Mistakes are opportunities for growth if we say so. It is my responsibility as an educational leader to guide students and staff to be in ownership of who they are and how they show up for themselves and the world around them. It is an honor and a privilege that I do not take for granted.



Glenn Welker
Director of Technology
Big Walnut Local Schools

What does Inspire And Guide mean to you? My professional experience reinforced the idea of our schools being a place for human development and that resonates deeply with me. This philosophy drives my commitment to support our students as they develop into capable, confident and contributing members of society.



Matt Cleland
Transportation
Supervisor
Big Walnut Local Schools

Family: I grew up in Mansfield, but currently reside in Ashley with my wife Brianna (Our new GRE-PRE librarian aide). We have two kids, Andrew (14) and Brookelynn (12).

Hobbies: We like spending our family time outdoors in the summer. Hiking, kayaking, bonfires, and gardening. We enjoy playing board games in the winter months. Always have the Buckeyes turned on.

Work Experience: I entered the US Air Force right out of High School. I served 6 years as an Aircraft Maintenance Technician. I became a Dedicated Crew Chief, traveling anywhere in the world my jet needed to go. My career highlight was riding in a 2 seater F16 Fighting Falcon. After my 6 years of service, I transitioned to business management with Fedex Ground in Columbus. Starting as a contractor, I purchased the rights to a zip code and began a small delivery business. Over the course of 18 years, the business grew to include package delivery vans to tractor-trailers across many zip codes and state-to-state linehaul. The never-ending demand eventually made me choose my family over the business. Now, I am excited and privileged to begin serving our students and community. As well as becoming a better husband and father.

What does Inspire And Guide mean to you? I want our transportation department to be the first smiling faces students see each morning when they are picked up. As professional drivers, we set the example for safe habits on the road. Always wearing seat belts and never using a phone while driving.



Family: I live in Sunbury with my wife Debra who is a teacher in Olentangy Local Schools. We have two children, Jameson and Hatteras. Rounding out our family is our dog Hazel and cat Stella.

Work Experience: I have spent the last 14 years in Granville Schools as their technology director. Before finding my passion in education I worked as a software developer, graphic artist and animator.

Hobbies: I enjoy spending time outside doing anything active. I cherish family time creating new experiences and memories. Gardening and working with plants is a favorite pastime. Reading remains a cornerstone of my personal development and leisure.



AROUND THE DISTRICT

Eagles Abroad! BWMS Travelers Explore London & Paris

Thirty-four Big Walnut middle school students, parents, and teachers recently embarked on an unforgettable journey to London and Paris. In London, they were captivated by the hit musical *Wicked* in the West End and explored centuries of history at the Tower of London. Crossing into France, the group embraced Parisian culture with a hands-on French cooking class, admired the grandeur of the Palace of Versailles, and took in breathtaking views from the iconic Eiffel Tower. This enriching trip blended education, culture, and fun—creating memories to last a lifetime.

Interested in Traveling in 2027?

We're inviting families of current 4th–6th graders to an informational Travel Night about our next tours to Costa Rica and Italy.

Date & Time: Wednesday, September 17, 7:00 PM

Location: BWI Media Center

How to RSVP: Scan or click the QR code to learn more and sign up!

Questions?

Contact [Amy Eikenberry](#) or [Gwen Hodges](#).





2025

BWHS PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10TH

If you are interested in registering for high school conferences, please utilize our online scheduling [link](#), which will be accessible starting Monday, September 1st. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the high school main office.

Additionally, we will hold a Senior Meeting for families from 6:00 to 7:00 PM in the Academic Commons. We encourage you to join our counselors for important information regarding your senior student.



We Are HIRING

Full-Time Positions:

- Bus Drivers
- Custodians
- Mechanic

Substitute Positions:

- Bus Drivers
- Custodians
- Food Service

Apply Now

Visit:

bwls.net/EmploymentOpportunities.aspx



**BIG WALNUT
LOCAL SCHOOLS**



AGRICULTURAL SCIENCE PROGRAM

Welcome to the 2025-2026 school year! We look forward to celebrating another successful year in our Agricultural Science program! It's with great pride that we share some exciting updates about our students' achievements and upcoming opportunities.



We are thrilled to announce that more than two dozen students in our Agricultural Science program successfully completed work-based learning programs this past year! These hands-on experiences have provided our students with real-world application of agricultural concepts, professional networking opportunities, career exploration in various agricultural fields, development of workplace skills and professionalism, and enhanced college and career readiness.



One area where students participate in work-based learning is by exhibiting at local fairs. Their hard work was on full display at the recent Hartford Fair, demonstrating the skills and knowledge they've gained through working with animals. From livestock competitions to agricultural displays, our participants represented the Big Walnut community with excellence and dedication. Their hard work throughout the year was evident in their confident presentations and the quality of their projects. The fair provided an invaluable real-world learning experience, allowing students to apply classroom knowledge, develop professional communication skills, and connect with industry professionals. We're incredibly proud of how our students conducted themselves and the positive feedback we received from community members.



As we look forward to the upcoming Delaware County Fair, we're excited to build upon our Hartford Fair success. We encourage all families to support our students by attending the Delaware County Fair and cheering on our participants.

We're always seeking new partnerships with local businesses and organizations to expand our work-based learning opportunities. If you're interested in partnering with our program or know someone who might be, please don't hesitate to reach out. The success of our students is made possible through the collaboration between our supportive families and engaged community partners.

Thank you for your continued support of our Agricultural Science program. Here's to another successful fair season and continued growth in agricultural education!



Student Spotlight - Jasmine Bah



Jasmine Bah is this month's Student Spotlight. Jasmine has been a member of the Big Walnut - DACC Agricultural Science Program since her sophomore year of high school.

Jasmine's favorite part about agricultural science classes is the environment it creates. She loves working with the teachers and students during class time, as they create a welcoming and accepting environment to learn.



Jasmine's favorite activity since joining has been taking field trips to different facilities, namely the Wendy's Corporate Headquarters in Dublin, Ohio. Learning more about how companies work to make and advertise food products is something she is very interested in.

Jasmine Bah
Senior, Big Walnut High School



HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS



Brian Shelton
Big Walnut High School
Athletic Director

Big Walnut High School Athletics is preparing for another exciting year of athletic competition. The school's esteemed athletic programs, known for their excellence and commitment to student development and success, play a crucial role in the overall educational experience. Over 60% of our student body participates in athletics, and our student-athletes excel not only in competition but also in the classroom, maintaining an impressive cumulative GPA of 3.2.

The 2025–26 school year follows another historic campaign for Big Walnut Athletics. In 2024–25, we proudly earned the Ralph Young Award as the top school in the OCC Capital Division for

the 5th time in the past 6 years. Our programs also captured seven OCC Championships, five District Championships, two Regional

Championships, and two State Final Four appearances. These achievements reflect the dedication of our athletes, coaches, and community. With the momentum built, I am confident that 2025–26 will be an even stronger year for Golden Eagle Athletics.

At the same time, we continue to navigate rising costs. In recent years, official fees have increased by over 30% and now account for nearly one-third of our athletic budget. The price of essential equipment, from game balls to basic gear, has also risen significantly. While a few of our 32 athletic programs and 52 individual teams generate revenue through gate receipts and participation fees, those funds are used to support other teams that are not self-sustaining.

Big Walnut Athletics remains committed to keeping events affordable for families. Season pass rates have remained unchanged for several years, and single-game ticket prices for the 2025–26 season are \$8 for adults and \$5 for students, with both cash and online purchase options available. Recently, the Big Walnut Board of Education removed the pay-to-participate fees to even further support our families. Season passes can be purchased online at this link: <https://tinyurl.com/BWLSTickets>



Big Walnut Boosters



Big Walnut Athletics

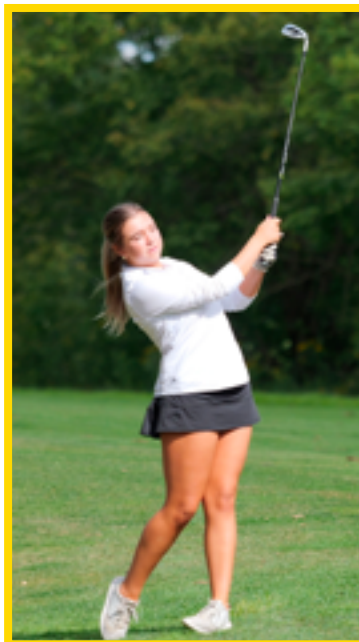
The Big Walnut Athletic Booster Club continues to play a vital role in bridging the financial gap. Through tireless fundraising, sponsorships, and partnerships, the Booster Club provides essential support for equipment, uniforms, team functions, travel expenses, and other critical needs. Their generosity ensures our athletes have every opportunity to succeed.

I am deeply grateful for the Booster Club's unwavering efforts: "Our athletes are at the heart of our school spirit and community pride. The generosity and commitment of our Booster Club members are invaluable in maintaining the quality and accessibility of our athletic programs."

The funds raised by the Booster Club directly benefit our sports teams, enabling them to focus on training, competition, and personal growth. Coaches and staff see firsthand the positive impact of these resources—fostering teamwork, discipline, and leadership skills that extend far beyond the playing field.

It is essential to remember that the true winners of our programs are our student-athletes, who dedicate countless hours of hard work and preparation during the offseason, and our coaches, who invest tremendous time and energy—often for a fraction of the cost—to provide a positive and meaningful high school athletic experience. Their combined efforts build the foundation for success, both on the playing field and in life.

Thank you for your continued support of Big Walnut Athletics. Together, we will make 2025–26 another year to remember.





HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS



Marching Band



Freshman Cheer



JV Cheer



Varsity Cheer



Boys Cross Country



Girls Cross Country



Freshman Football



JV and Varsity Football



JV Boys Golf



Varsity Boys Golf



HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS



JV Girls Golf



Varsity Girls Golf



JV Girls Soccer



Varsity Girls Soccer



JV and Varsity Boys Soccer



JV Gold Girls Volleyball



JV Red Girls Volleyball



Varsity Girls Volleyball



JV Girls Tennis



Varsity Girls Tennis



BIG WALNUT ATHLETIC BOOSTERS

We Are Winning Together.

At Big Walnut, athletics are more than just games, matches, and meets. They are a tremendous source of pride, spirit, and connection for our students, families, friends, and community at large. The Big Walnut Athletic Boosters (BWAB) is committed to ensuring every student-athlete, coach, and team has the support they need to succeed, both on and off the field.

Our Mission

BWAB's mission is simple: to enhance the athletic experience for all Big Walnut student-athletes, families, and fans. Through concessions, fundraising, volunteer support, and community engagement, we strive to provide the additional resources needed to help maintain facilities, purchase equipment, and create opportunities that benefit every sport.

Why Your Support Matters

When you come out to a high school or middle school athletic event, cheer from the stands, and proudly wear your Big Walnut gear, you're doing more than showing school spirit — you're strengthening the foundation of our high school and middle school athletic programs. Attendance at events helps energize our student-athletes, brings us together, and tells our student-athletes that their hard work matters.



Get Involved

BWAB is looking for passionate parents and community members to help carry on this tradition of support. We currently have multiple open board positions and welcome anyone interested in making a difference. Joining the board is a rewarding way to stay engaged, give back, and ensure that our athletic programs grow stronger and stronger, year after year.



Join Us Today!

Whether you're a lifelong Golden Eagle, a new parent in the district, or simply a fan of Big Walnut athletics, your involvement makes a difference. Learn more and get connected at bwathleticboosters.com.

We are one team.

We are making a difference.

We are stronger together.



Big Walnut Boosters





MIDDLE SCHOOL SPORTS

The 2025-26 sports season is underway and we couldn't be more excited here at Big Walnut Middle School. This fall has started off a little differently than in the past as the weather has been somewhat tame when it comes to the heat. Despite the cooler than normal temperatures, our teams have started off the year on fire and are headed for some amazing achievements. I, like I'm sure many of you out there are, can't wait to see what unfolds over the course of the fall season until things wrap up in early October.

The following are the fantastic coaches who will be leading each team:

7th Grade Football is led by Adam McCardle who is in his 1st season at BWMS. He also works in the building as an Intervention Specialist.



8th Grade Football has Jacob Houston leading the way who is back for his 2nd season. He also works as an Intervention Specialist at BWMS.

7th Grade Volleyball welcomes back a familiar face in Kassie Bowmar. This is Kassie's 1st season as coach.

8th Grade Boys is led by Tim Kafka. Tim is now in his 4th season as coach of the 8th grade squad.

Girls Tennis once again has Kim White running the show. Kim is also a PE teacher at BWMS.

Boys/Girls Cross Country welcomes back Jen White for her 7th season as the head coach.

Boys Golf has Kyle Baker back for his 2nd year at the helm. Kyle moved from an Intervention Specialist to a PE teacher this year at BWMS.

Girls Golf is led by 1st year coach Victoria Keller. Victoria also works in the building as an Intervention Specialist.

7th Grade Cheer has Brianna Lawless back for her 2nd season. Brianna (Bri) is a Science teacher at BWMS.

8th Grade Cheer is led by Kaylee Demidovich. Kaylee is now in her 3rd year as a Cheer coach at BWMS.



Joe Rucker
Big Walnut Middle School
Athletic Director



Big Walnut Athletics

Be on the lookout for a series of podcasts we are hosting this year where our middle school athletic department will be interviewing all of the coaches listed above. This will give you the opportunity to learn more about our coaches and the teams they are leading. You can find these podcasts on our [BWMS Homepage](#). Look for the icon on the left side of the page that reads, "[BWMS Talk School Podcast](#)".

As always, if you have questions, feel free to call BWMS at 740.965.3006. The best MS athletic secretary in the business, Stephanie Kreager, or myself will be happy to assist you.

GO EAGLES!!!





MIDDLE SCHOOL SPORTS



Boys Cross Country



Girls Cross Country



Boys Golf



Girls Golf



7th Grade Football



8th Grade Football



7th Grade Girls Volleyball



8th Grade Girls Volleyball



7th Grade Cheer



8th Grade Cheer



Girls Tennis



BIG WALNUT HIGH SCHOOL



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Fax: 740.965.1954 Sunbury, OH
Guidance: 740.965.2243 43074



BIG WALNUT MIDDLE SCHOOL



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43074



BIG WALNUT INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL



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43074



BIG WALNUT ELEMENTARY



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Sunbury, OH Fax: 740.965.3168
43074



GENERAL ROSECRANS ELEMENTARY



Office: 740.965.8900 301 S Miller Dr
Fax: 740.965.8993 Sunbury, OH
43074



HYLEN SOUDERS ELEMENTARY



4121 Miller Paul Rd Office: 740.965.3200
Galena, OH Fax: 740.965.3986
43021



PRAIRIE RUN ELEMENTARY



Office: 740.965.7850 701 N Miller Dr
Fax: 740.965.7851 Sunbury, OH
43074



EARLY LEARNING CENTER AT HARRISON STREET



70 Harrison St Office: 740.965.7862
Sunbury, OH
43074