

November
2023

The
Eagle Examiner



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



WELCOME TO THE SECOND QUARTER





MESSAGE from the SUPERINTENDENT

VETERANS DAY EVENTS AROUND THE DISTRICT

Big Walnut High School **Friday, November 10th**

Big Walnut High School has invited select members from the American Legion, VFW, and all current students who have family serving. Veterans will enjoy a celebration in the high school.

Big Walnut Middle School **Friday, November 10th**

Veterans and their family are welcome at the middle school auditorium for a breakfast served by the Big Walnut Middle School Staff.

Big Walnut Intermediate School **Friday, November 10th**

We are welcoming Veterans and their families into Big Walnut Intermediate cafeteria for cookies and drinks. Students who have a veteran family member attending will attend with his/her veteran. We will livestream the program so the rest of the student body can watch the program from his/her classroom.

Big Walnut Elementary School **Thursday, November 9th**

We will honor our Veterans with a performance including the Pledge of Allegiance led by select kindergarteners, "The Meaning of the Flag" led by select first graders, "Poppy Poem" led by select second graders, "Who is a Veteran" led by select third graders, musical numbers by our fourth grade class and will feature "Retirement of Colors and Taps" from American Legion Post 457.

General Rosecrans Elementary School **Friday, November 10th**

We are welcoming in military family members of students to have them listen to some beautiful poems read by a few students and enjoy our 4th graders singing some favorite patriotic songs. Weather permitting, current members of the Sunbury VFW and Sunbury Eagles will perform a 21 gun salute as a finale to the program.

Hylen Souders Elementary School **Thursday, November 9th**

The students and staff at Hylen Souders would like to honor our veterans at our annual Veterans Day assembly. Parents & relatives of our students who have served in the Armed Forces are invited to attend this program.

Prairie Run Elementary School **Friday, November 10th**

We are holding a special Veterans Day Program on Friday to honor those who have served their country. Students and staff will share poems and readings for our veterans.

When I was a young kid, I had a classmate and our fathers taught together at a high school about 30 minutes away from where we lived. Whenever we had a day off of school, each one of us would beg our dads to allow us to go to school with them and hang out for the day. Looking back on it, I question why I wanted to hang out at a school on a day I didn't have school. As an interesting side note, my friend is currently a superintendent at a large school district outside of Pittsburgh. I guess education was in our blood.



Ryan McLane

Over the years, on those long car rides, whether we were riding with his dad or mine, the radio was on and inevitably a man named Paul Harvey would come on the air. He was a master storyteller. Those tales contained many interesting details, took twists and turns, and by the end, he would reveal the story was about a famous person that we all knew. He closed each story with "and now you know the rest of the story."

I rarely ask people for anything, but I am going to make an ask here and it is not for me. It is for our staff. We have seen an uptick in negative social media posts about staff members and have received far too many emails telling us how we got something wrong. I'll be honest, it is taking a toll on our staff. No one likes getting bad news. But let's face it, even fewer like getting blasted for their perceived job performance.

When I was a new principal, I often would make the mistake of picking up the phone, and telling the person on the other end what their child did wrong and what the consequence was. Those phone calls rarely went well. But something changed over the years when I changed my approach. Instead, I would call and say, "Hey I need your help. Johnny made a poor choice today and I know that's not who he is, and there will be a consequence, but I need your help. What can we do to make sure he's not going to get in this situation again?" Those situations typically went much better in large part because I changed my tone.

As the superintendent, I know you are trying your best. And I hope you know we really are trying to work together to make sure we are doing whatever we can to give your child the best chance to reach his or her maximum potential. And it works much better when we aren't pointing fingers but rather working on solutions. Again, I know we can get better on our end.

Our staff is trying their best. Are mistakes made? Absolutely. They happen all of the time. More often than not, they are not intentional. And we work to fix them. Some of it you see and some of it you don't, but we are working every day to improve as a district.

So what is the ask? Pause before you hit send on that email to a teacher or principal. Resist the temptation to fire off the angry post on social media about the bus driver who missed your kid's stop. Instead, I ask that you make a phone call, or at the very least phrase the email asking "what can we do to fix this?" Many of our staff members are mothers and fathers, they are someone's son or daughter. Again I just ask that you seek to understand.

As Paul would say, now you know the rest of the story.

Ryan McLane



BANK'S NOTE



Darren Jenkins
Treasurer

House Bill 920 and its Impact on Ohio Schools

With all the discussion surrounding HB 920 and the 20-mill floor I thought the following information may be helpful. Have you ever wondered why it seems that some of the school districts in the state are asking their communities for additional money, or why districts return to their communities about every two or three years with a levy request?

The answer has to do with an Ohio law passed in 1976. It is called House Bill 920 (H.B. 920). This law has forced most school districts to ask their local residents for more funds about every three years. The following information will help you understand the basics of school funding in Ohio, the negative impact that H.B. 920 has had on Ohio schools, and why H.B. 920 forces school districts to be on the ballot so often.

The major source of income for most Ohio school districts is a tax on property located within the school district. The local property tax is levied in "mills." A mill is one thousandth of a dollar. According to the Ohio constitution, all local governments combined can levy only 10 mills without a vote of the people. These are called "inside mills" because they are inside the 10 mill limitation.

A local school district typically receives 4.5 of these 10 inside mills. Big Walnut receives 4.6 of the 10 inside mills and other local governments, including Delaware County schools, receive the rest.

Any mills in excess of 10 have to be approved by the voters. These are called "voted mills." Voted mills are the major source of income for most school districts, but H.B. 920 freezes a school district's income on voted mills. This freeze on school income started in 1976, so the income our school district receives from each levy voted since 1976 was frozen the moment the levy passed. Even when home values increase, a school district's revenue remains the same because of H.B. 920. No revenue increase is permitted for schools, except a one-time increase for new construction, and a small amount of revenue growth on inside mills. For school districts, simply keeping up with day-to-day cost increases is impossible under H.B. 920 and the main reason for their return to taxpayers for additional revenue every few years.

One major factor that makes the impact of H.B. 920 devastating for our schools is "inflation." Every three years the value of taxable property in the school district is determined by the county auditor. If inflation has caused the value of the property to increase, the auditor cuts the school tax rate so schools do not receive more money.

This is called the "effective tax rate." As inflation drives up the value of property, H.B. 920 prevents schools from collecting more money. Unfortunately, inflation drives up school costs, but H.B. 920 prevents school districts from adjusting their budgets to meet those increases, leaving them in a tough spot.

Allowances for inflation are recognized in other areas of government, but not in education. Government entities funded by the income tax receive more dollars to operate as incomes increase. Government entities funded by the sales tax receive more dollars to operate as the cost of items sold increases. The city charter property tax millage is not affected by H.B. 920. Schools are the only governmental entities who do not receive an inflationary increase. With their income on voted mills frozen, where can school districts turn to cover the rising cost of inflation? Local schools must come to the local taxpayers for additional operating funds.

HB 920-An Example

No matter where you live in Ohio, regardless of whether or not you have children or whether or not they attend public schools, you will be asked to vote periodically on a local school levy. You might as well understand why that is. House Bill 920, the Ohio law that determines how public schools are funded, is complex and confusing. But it has a significant impact on all public schools.

H.B. 920 was passed in 1976, during a period of unprecedented inflation. Home values were soaring every year, sometimes by double-digit percentages, and property taxes were growing at the same alarming rate. The State Legislature attempted to lessen the burden on homeowners by freezing the dollar amount paid to school districts and libraries at the 1976 level. Not at the rate or percentage, but at the actual dollar amount.

To better understand the ramifications, let's break this down with numbers. Imagine you own a \$100,000 house and you are paying 10 mills. The millage would be \$35 per \$100,000 in valuation multiplied by 10 mills for a total of \$350/year. After three years, the value of your house is reevaluated and determined to be \$120,000. The amount received by the school must remain the same as prescribed by HB 920. Due to this, the millage amount will be adjusted by the county auditor to 8.33 mills from 10 mills. This is determined by taking \$120,000 times .00035 which equals \$42/mill and dividing \$350 by that number.

Now imagine that this goes on for 10 or 20 years. After a while, your house has increased in value up to \$250,000 and your local schools are still generating the same \$350/year, even though it is now only four mills, which is 40% of the original passage.

Cities however are primarily funded by income taxes. As you make more, so do they. This allows them to stay off of the ballot for sometimes decades at a time without asking for a tax increase. Meanwhile, everything from teacher salaries to textbooks to fuel for school buses has gone up in cost over that twenty-year period, but schools are not receiving a single dollar more in tax revenue. And no matter how conservative or efficient districts are with taxpayer money, they simply cannot keep up with those day-to-day cost increases without asking for additional revenue from a levy.





FFA STUDENTS PLACE TOP 10 NATIONALLY



Paris A., Aidan C., Maddy J., & Gracie Y.
Food Science & Technology CDE Team



Savannah D.
Floriculture Team

The Big Walnut High School FFA chapter is celebrating some major successes on the national stage! The Food Science & Technology CDE team took a remarkable second place in the country, and juniors Paris A. and Gracie Y. also earned top ten individual honors. And that's not all - the Floriculture team brought home a gold rating, and sophomore Savannah D. was recognized as one of the Top 10 individuals overall! A huge congratulations to all these talented students for making our community proud and showing the world what the Big Walnut Agricultural and Science Program is all about.

BIG WALNUT HIGH SCHOOL THEATRE PRESENTS

A NOVEMBER DOUBLE FEATURE

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 9 7:00PM

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 11 2:00PM

Suite SURRENDER

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 10 7:00PM

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 12 2:00PM

Clue ON STAGE

\$10/STUDENTS & SENIORS
\$12 ADULTS

Save \$2 off each ticket when you purchase a ticket to both productions!

DOUBLE FEATURE

SCAN HERE OR VISIT WWW.SHOWTIX4U.COM AND SEARCH "BIG WALNUT HIGH SCHOOL" FOR TICKETS!





STUDENT SERVICES

Supporting Our Students: Reading Instruction and Intervention Services Aligned with Ohio's Dyslexia Law

As October has come to a close, we want to reflect upon Dyslexia Awareness Month by sharing with you our commitment to providing high-quality reading instruction and intervention services in alignment with Ohio's Dyslexia Law. Our goal is to ensure that every student receives the support they need to become proficient readers, and we recognize that early identification and intervention for students with dyslexia is crucial.

The Ohio Dyslexia Law, also known as House Bill 436, was signed into law in 2020. It requires all Ohio public schools to implement screening and intervention procedures to support students with characteristics of dyslexia. Dyslexia is a specific learning disability that affects a person's ability to read, write, and spell. With this legislation in place, our school is dedicated to providing a robust framework for early detection and intervention to help students with dyslexia succeed.

Here are some of the key aspects of how we are meeting the requirements of Ohio's Dyslexia Law:

- 1. **Universal Screening:**** Big Walnut conducts universal screenings to identify students who may be at risk for dyslexia. These screenings are administered to all students, which allows us to detect potential reading difficulties at an early stage.
- 2. **Individualized Support:**** If a student is identified as at risk for dyslexia or other reading difficulties, we provide individualized support and intervention services tailored to their specific needs. Our trained professionals work closely with these students to address their unique challenges and help them develop strong reading skills.
- 3. **Structured Literacy Instruction:**** We have incorporated structured literacy instruction into our curriculum. Structured literacy is a research-based approach that focuses on teaching the relationships between sounds and letters systematically. This method has been proven to be highly effective in helping all students, particularly those with dyslexia, improve their reading skills.
- 4. **Curricular Materials Aligned with the Science of Reading:**** Big Walnut incorporates instruction using materials that are aligned with providing evidence-based practices. Some of these materials include:
[Foundations](#) - a proven Tier 1 and Tier 2 curriculum for reading, spelling, and handwriting
[Heggerty](#) - a supplemental phonemic awareness program aligned for PreK through 2nd grade
[Lets Play Learn](#) - Tier 1 Orton-Gillingham-based program for PreK
[Sunday System 1 & 2](#) - a Tier 2/Tier 3 Orton-Gillingham-based intervention program that has replaced the use of Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI) in the district
[Geodes](#) - a brand new set of decodable readers for grades 1-2. These are high-interest books that allow students to build knowledge and tap into their curiosity as they develop their basic reading skills.
- 5. **Teacher Training:**** Our educators receive ongoing professional development and training to better understand dyslexia, its characteristics, and effective instructional strategies. This ensures that our teachers are well-equipped to support students with dyslexia in their classrooms.
- 6. **Progress Monitoring:**** We closely monitor the progress of students receiving intervention services and make necessary adjustments to their instruction as needed. This continuous monitoring helps us ensure that our students are making meaningful strides in their reading skills.
- 7. **Access to Assistive Technology:**** We provide access to assistive technology and resources that can assist students with dyslexia in their reading and writing. These tools can make a significant difference in their ability to access and engage with the curriculum.



Ross Linscott
Director of Student Services



Our commitment to aligning with Ohio's Dyslexia Law and providing effective reading instruction and intervention services is part of our broader dedication to the academic success and well-being of all our students. Every child can learn and achieve, and it is our responsibility to ensure that they have the support they need to overcome challenges and excel in their education.

If you have any questions about our reading instruction and intervention services or would like more information about how we support students with dyslexia, please feel free to reach out to our staff. We are here to work together to inspire and guide all of our students.





BIG WALNUT LOCAL SCHOOLS & GUIDE

WE'RE HIRING

BUS DRIVERS
CUSTODIANS
FOOD SERVICE WORKERS
SUBSTITUTES (ALL AREAS)
TEACHING ASSISTANTS

Apply Now!







SPORTS

The 2023 fall athletics season has concluded at BWMS and it was filled with numerous amazing individual and team performances. All of our teams faced challenges, but each was able to overcome the adversity and thrive against some of the best MS competition in all of Ohio. Kudos to our coaches and players for all of their time, energy and commitment to excellence, both on and off the competitive arena. For write-ups and highlights from the season, please check out our athletic website at bigwalnutathletics.net and scroll back through the articles to read up on our outstanding student-athletes.

As we move into the winter season, I want to take time to list all of the sports (with coaches) we offer:



- 7th Boys Basketball - Tyler Beam
- 8th Boys Basketball - Eric Myers
- 7th Girls Basketball - Danielle Horsley
- 8th Girls Basketball - Nicole Huffman
- Boys Wrestling - RJ Martin and Ryan Coletta
- Girls Wrestling - Jack Reall
- 7th Cheer - Kaylee Yarnell
- 8th Cheer - Kristen Carty
- Diving (club team) - Jen White
- Indoor Track (club team) - Dave Ishler



Joe Rucker
Big Walnut Middle School
Athletic Director

I want to take a moment to highlight one person in particular who helps make BWMS athletics, and really BWMS as a whole, very special. That person is Koby Donohue. Not only does she coach girls lacrosse, but she runs our concession stands, works as a site manager for MS events and is a leader when it comes to promoting our student-athletes. If you know Koby, and I'm sure many of you do, you realize just how special of a person she is and exactly how much she means to the Big Walnut community. Thank you Koby for all you do!



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!!!



EAGLE MADNESS



MONDAY, DECEMBER 4TH
6:00 PM
BWHS GYMNASIUM

MEET THE WINTER SPORTS TEAMS' GAMES ACTIVITIES
CONCESSIONS PIZZA RAFFLE ITEMS BW SPIRIT ITEMS

SPONSORED BY THE EAGLE MADNESS SPIRIT COMMITTEE





SPORTS



The 2023 JV football team had a fantastic season. The team finished the season 9-1 despite facing a lot of adversity. There was a core group of players, but week to week there were several roster changes and different players stepped up each week to provide the toughness and character that our program is built on. Every Saturday morning, the team rose to the challenge of getting up early after long Friday nights and being scout players all week and went on to play extremely hard for their teammates.

The 2023 Freshmen football team shared the same success as our JV squad. Freshmen finished an undefeated 10-0 season. This means that both our JV and Freshmen teams finished as OCC Champs.

There is no doubt that this group of players will contribute to the varsity team in the future and will help ensure that the Big Walnut Football program is in good shape moving forward.



2023 was an up and down year for the Varsity football team. After starting the first half of the season 1-4, the Eagles finished strong in the second half, winning four of five to finish at .500. This included a huge shutout win in week 10 at previously undefeated Canal Winchester to earn our spot in the playoffs.

In the playoffs, your Eagles continued their success, winning easily on the road in the first round against a tough Northland team. Round two saw the boys hit the road again, traveling up to Lake High School. The game finished in regulation with a 0-0 tie. Before long, it was in TRIPLE OVERTIME. This is where Big Walnut's season would finish, with a 20-21 loss.

After the roller coaster season and the successes of our JV and Freshmen teams, the future for Big Walnut football looks to be extremely bright moving forward!

Congratulations on a great season! Only 268 more days until August!



Garrett Stover
Big Walnut High School
Football

We are excited to announce that senior Garrett Stover has been selected to the 2024 All-American high school football team. It's a great privilege to have such a talented and exceptional person like Garrett at Big Walnut High School. He is a generational player with elite football skills.

Garrett will participate in the All-American Bowl on January 6, 2024, at the Alamodome in San Antonio, Texas.

Senior Emil Stanford competed at the state's highest level, the Division 1 State Championship. In a field of over 180 qualified competitors, Emil finished 92nd!

Out of thousands of boys cross country athletes around the state of Ohio, this makes Emil in the top 100.

Congratulations on a successful career, and good luck in college!



Emil Stanford
Big Walnut High School
Boys Cross Country

For the second time in as many years, Coach Kathe Theisen has been named the OCC Capital Division Coach of the Year.

The Lady Eagles earned back-to-back OCC championships this season with their impressive 12-4-1 regular season record. This record earned the team a 13 seed in the OHSA State Tournament, advancing to the third round after two shutout victories.

Congrats Coach and Team!



Kathe Theisen
Big Walnut High School
Girls Soccer Coach





BIG WALNUT HIGH SCHOOL



Office: 740.965.3766 713 N Miller Dr
Fax: 740.965.1954 Sunbury, OH
Guidance: 740.965.2243 43074



BIG WALNUT MIDDLE SCHOOL



555 S Old 3C Hwy Office: 740.965.3006
Sunbury, OH Fax: 740.965.6471
43074



BIG WALNUT INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL



Office: 740.965.7800 777 Cheshire Rd
Fax: 740.965.7801 Sunbury, OH
43074



BIG WALNUT ELEMENTARY



940 S Old 3C Hwy Office: 740.965.3902
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