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BIG WALNUT LOCAL SCHOOLS

The Eagle Examiner



OCTOBER 2019

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



A MESSAGE FROM SUPERINTENDENT ANGIE HAMBERG



One big focus this fall is establishing new elementary attendance zones for next school year. As a reminder, Prairie Run Elementary (PRE), will open for the 2020-2021 school year. With the opening of PRE, Harrison Street Elementary will become a preschool center that will house all district preschool classes, and those current HSE K-4 students will be reassigned to another elementary. Students from other buildings may also need reassigned to balance building enrollment.

I am very grateful to our Elementary Redistricting Advisory Committee, which includes parents from each attendance zone, for helping us with this work. We have met with this committee and held a Community Redistricting Forum to seek input on the draft plan that was developed with Matt Cropper, a consultant with Cropper GIS. **You can view Matt's video, check out the redistricting criteria and maps, and complete a survey on our website through October 20.**

Once the survey data is compiled, we will meet with the advisory committee again to make any needed adjustments before we recommend a plan to the Board for approval. We plan to present to the Board of Education at the November 21 evening meeting, with a recommendation for plan approval at the December 12 evening meeting. We will most likely allow 4th graders to remain at current buildings (where applicable) if parents provide transportation. Families will have a window, approximately February 18-March 20, to inform us of their desire to stay at their current buildings. After requests are received, we will determine if there is room to accommodate 4th graders staying at current buildings.

We know that opening new buildings is exciting, but the associated changes can be tough on students and families. We will continue to keep you updated on the redistricting process as decisions are finalized. If you have any questions on redistricting, please send them to clairepaul@bwls.net.

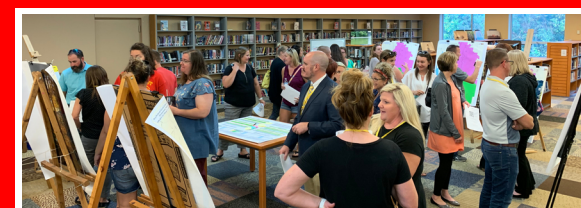


Redistricting Advisory Committee



Redistricting Community Forum

**IN CASE YOU MISSED IT:
GO TO OUR WEBSITE TO WATCH OUR
VIDEO AND COMPLETE THE SURVEY
BY OCTOBER 20.**



SEE PAGE 2 FOR AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE FROM OUR BOARD



Andy Wecker, Mindy Meyer, President Brad Schneider,
Doug Crowl, Vice President Liana Lee

At the October 10 meeting, our Board discussed the Galena/Blackhawk proposed development and its potential impacts to our District. We felt it was a good use of this space to discuss the role of school boards in the development that occurs in our community, as well as our current understanding of the potential impacts of the Blackhawk project.

To be direct: this Board is willing to support reasonable economic incentives that help diversify the tax base with commercial and industrial projects in the District so that the burden of funding our schools falls less on our residents. We are not interested in supporting any economic incentives that continue to push the local burden of funding schools solely onto our residents.

School districts do not court developers or seek residential, commercial, or industrial development projects.

Many types of developers seek local governments and their zoning boards and encourage them to approve the developers' projects.

Developers often seek financial support from local governments to "incentivize" their development. The current trend is attracting

projects that add more residents without increasing the percentage of commercial or industrial tax base.

Zoning boards have a series of laws that are designed to shape the type of development that is built in a particular part of your village or township. Most of these laws limit what developers can do. Developers pay for many impact studies like environmental, trees, water, sewer, traffic, and police/fire. They have to prove that their proposed project fits the zoning standards in these key areas.

A "School Impact Study" is a unicorn. You will never find in a list of zoning requirements for a developer to design their project to minimize impact on a school district. There is no legal requirement for your village or township to make a decision that accounts for the impact of a project onto the school system.

This is particularly problematic for the District when a village or township considers property-tax based financing mechanisms to help fund development projects.

School districts cannot create tools like a Community Reinvestment Act (CRA), a New Community Authority (NCA), or Tax Increment Financing (TIF) to deal with the impact of development.

Local government village and township leaders are asked by developers to use these tools to divert tax funds from other resources like schools, the library, the county board of developmental disabilities, and the fire department. In most cases, these additional fees and diverted tax dollars serve as

reimbursements to private developers who build infrastructure and products.

As of this writing, Champion has provided a proposal asking Galena to implement a CRA and a TIF, and give Galena's share of the NCA millage to Champion instead.

As a Board, we are left to do what we are doing right now with the Blackhawk development. We scratch and claw to obtain information. We receive some data from Galena. We hear some information from the developer. We use other public records and our own resources to try to guess the impact of the development based on the data available to us.

Based on the data available as of October 10, and after one 45-minute meeting with a legal representative of Champion on October 4, we believe the Blackhawk development could place an operational burden on the District at the equivalent of 2-3 mills of tax dollars upon full build-out. Those estimates come with a host of assumptions and use of trend data to best estimate how a proposed project impacts the District. But it is the best data we have. There are no unicorns.

If the proposed Blackhawk development comes to fruition, the District will have to decide how it can absorb the cost of this development, or ask all of the residents of the District to provide more revenue to cover the costs of this development. This dynamic is not unique to the Blackhawk project.

CONNECTIONS TO THE PAST

Artifacts and Stories from the Red Edwards' Big Walnut Museum



In honor of homecoming, we are sharing pictures of vintage Sunbury and Galena letter jackets. We are going to press right before homecoming, but look forward to sharing pictures next month!

HOMETOWN HEROES



The Big Walnut Purple Star Committee was honored to host and recognize our military-connected families during the varsity football game on September 20. Our district has nearly 50 students who have family members currently serving in the military. The goal of the event was to thank those families for their service and sacrifice. We also wanted to give families an opportunity to meet each other. Families were admitted to the game free, and dinner was provided. Every building in the district has a Purple Star Committee member (pictured below) that connects with our military-connected students and families.



2020 VISION

ONE MORE YEAR UNTIL OUR VISION BECOMES OUR CULTURE

Big Walnut Elementary (BWE) students were challenged to light up the world with kindness-- one classroom at a time. Students are raising funds for *Kids Inspiring Kindness Campaign* (KIKC), which will provide grants to be awarded to classrooms that will use that money to perform acts of kindness in our community. These can include volunteering at a food pantry, crafting with nursing home residents, creating "birthday bags" for those who may not otherwise have the means to celebrate; the possibilities are limitless!

We launched this project by giving students an opportunity to design a shirt for the *Kids Inspiring Kindness Campaign*. Our KIKC committee (comprised of BWE staff members and parents) picked the finalists. All students voted, and the winning design will be available for purchase. Proceeds from the sales will fund classroom grants aimed at spreading kindness in the community.

This project provides students with an engaging way to practice 21st century skills as they collaborate on their projects, communicate their ideas as part of the grant process, and find creative ways to spread kindness throughout the community.

Third grader Alivia Boggs watched as Harry the Eagle walked into the classroom wearing her winning design

"Throw kindness like confetti!"



Personalize



Engage



Grow



CHECK OUT THE PROGRESS ON OUR NEW BUILDINGS



3.7.18

Gilbane



9.20.19

Gilbane

LOVE YOUR LIBRARY



Chauncey Montgomery
Director/ Fiscal Officer



Visit us today!

There are many different reasons why people love their Community Library. A parent delights in watching her child develop early literacy skills at storytime. A student appreciates the wide variety of resources available to help him with a school project. A teacher supplements her unit with a themed collection of books pulled by librarians. A college student discovers articles through our databases and finds a quiet place to study on a Saturday morning. An avid reader gets access to new bestsellers and the convenience of ebooks. A family enjoys access to free movies on a Saturday night or a mobile hotspot for vacation.

Although patrons have diverse reasons for loving the library as a whole, the Big Walnut community members love their library because it is the primary information and community center. The Community Library enriches the lives of individuals by providing a welcoming place for all to pursue knowledge and cultivate interests.

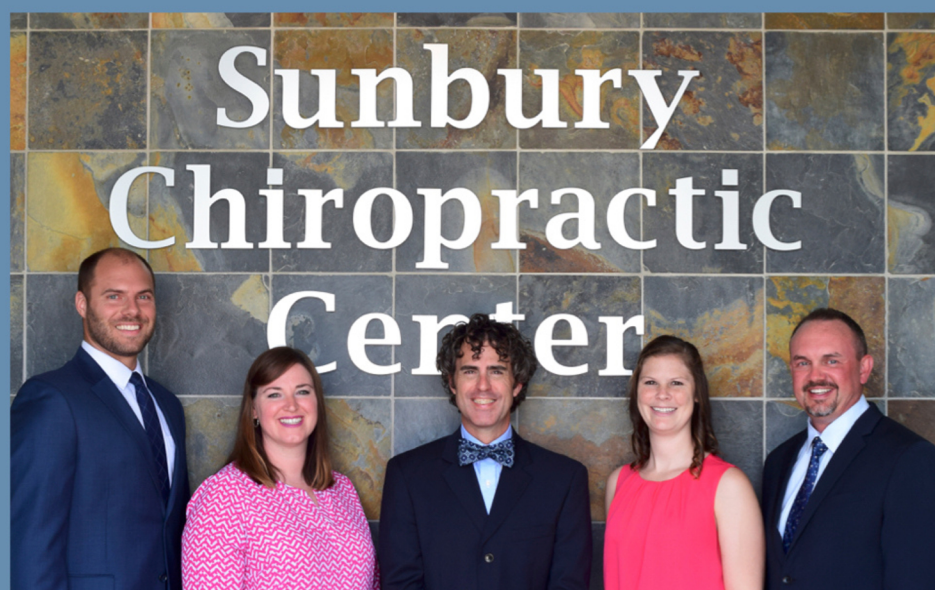
The library could not have the impact we do without the local support of a 1 mill operating levy, which accounts for 51% of our funding. The Community Library is seeking to renew that local support. On the November 5 ballot, voters will have an opportunity to renew the levy for another five years. Taxes will NOT increase, yet the levy will supply the library with the resources to continue the great programs and services enjoyed by the community.

For more information about the renewal levy, you can contact me at chauncey@yourcl.org or visit <https://levy.yourcl.org>.



Community Library
Serving the Big Walnut Area

*This space was paid for by the
Community Library.*



Our team of skilled and respected chiropractors — Dr. Aaron Erndt, Dr. Gabe Mendenhall, Dr. Jeff Willoughby, Dr. Amanda Golden, and Dr. A. Renee Allen — look forward to helping you on your path to wellness using natural healing techniques. Our office, founded by Dr. Tom Erndt, has been active in the Sunbury, Ohio community for over 35 years. We effectively utilize state-of-the-art chiropractic techniques and rehabilitative treatments to restore proper spinal function and maximize the body's natural healing ability. We offer: Wellness Chiropractic Care, Family Practice, Personal Injury, Worker's Compensation, Massage Therapy, Sports Physicals, Nutrition Consultation, Orthotics, and more. Please contact us Monday through Saturday at 740-965-4301 to set up an appointment and learn how chiropractic care can help you!

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www.sunburychiropractic.com



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FOCUS ON MENTAL HEALTH



Mark Cooper
Assistant Superintendent



Laura Lawrence
Director of Student Services

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, up to 20% of kids show signs or symptoms of a mental health disorder. For Big Walnut, that percentage would equate to 800 students. Mental health concerns are evident across our society today. It is not a surprise that our District Safety Committee (comprised of local first responders, community members, and district staff) has highlighted increasing mental health support as a priority.

We are fortunate to have amazing counselors who provide daily support to our students in grades 5-12. Additionally, over the last few years, Big Walnut has partnered with Syntero and Ohio Guidestone to provide support for our students at all building levels. These certified counselors take time to get to know

our students, parents, and staff and work closely with students through classroom presentations, small groups, and one-on-one settings.

With recent news that Ohio is providing additional funds to schools for the next two years to specifically focus on student well-being, Big Walnut has hired a full-time mental health specialist, Justin Plummer. He will work directly with staff and students to problem-solve through life situations and be a vital part of our district team in responding to any type of emergency we may experience. We have also utilized these wellness funds to hire an additional nurse for the district to serve the growing student population and needs.

It is our goal to meet the individual needs of our students and help them work through any issues they may be facing in life. Please feel free to reach out to a staff member if you have a child who could use some extra support.

September's STUDENT & ARTIST OF THE MONTH



Student of the Month: Ava Oakes,
from Hylen Souders Elementary School, is
pictured with her family
and Board member Andy Wecker



Student of the Month: Regan Holmes,
from Big Walnut Middle School, is
pictured with her family
and Board member Mindy Meyer



Artist of the Month: Rachel Chalfant,
from Hylen Souders Elementary School, is
pictured with her family and Board
member Andy Wecker



Artist of the Month: Nate Snead,
from Big Walnut Middle School, is
pictured with his family and Board
member Mindy Meyer

LEVY RENEWAL IS CRUCIAL FOR DISTRICT OPERATIONS



Jeremy Buskirk
Treasurer

The Board of Education will vote in October to begin the process of placing our current substitute levy on the ballot for the March 2020 election. The original five-year emergency levy was approved by the community in November 2010 for 7.5 mills and was renewed for an additional five years in May 2015 at a lower rate of 6.9 mills as a “substitute” levy. This form of levy, given its name because it substitutes a current levy, is

beneficial for Big Walnut because it provides some revenue growth from newly constructed property in our District, whereas an emergency levy does not provide the same revenue growth potential. Now, four years later, this funding source currently has a collection rate of 5.45 mills and plays an integral part in maintaining our current model of education.

Over the last few years, we have battled rising health insurance rates, annual inflation for goods and services, increasing costs to support more students with special needs (physical, social, and

emotional), and steady student enrollment growth. To combat these challenges, we continually look for areas to make adjustments and stretch our resources. These can be simple things like “price shopping” for supplies, negotiating new contracts, and evaluating and consolidating classroom software. Although these practices can save thousands to tens of thousands of dollars, they do not drastically help rising costs.

The more challenging steps we have taken to fight our projected rising costs are consolidating half-day kindergarten, instead of offering this option at every building, and centralizing our preschool program at the current Harrison Street Elementary School. In addition, we often have to make concessions in hiring and staffing by not filling every position due to budget constraints. These are hard decisions requiring much planning and consideration but are intended to help us use our resources in an efficient manner. Based on our current projections for revenues and expenditures, a renewed substitute levy is very important for the future of our District, though we will continue to face hard decisions in regards to the most efficient use of resources.

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Forman
REALTORS

INCLUSION IN OUR COMMUNITY



Hope Welch
Intervention Specialist at
Big Walnut High School

Our high school Specialized Learning Center (SLC) works with students with disabilities to prepare them for life after high school. Our goal is to help these students become as independent as possible so they can live meaningful and productive lives in our community.

As an intervention specialist, I work closely with community businesses to provide all of my students with work-based learning activities to prepare them for employment. Many people identified with disabilities don't get a chance at gainful employment in our community simply because they haven't had enough experience earlier in life. If their disabilities are noticeable at first glance, they are often believed to be unable to do many jobs.

This experience teaches them quality and quantity of work, persistence and perseverance with a task, and appropriate social behaviors and etiquette in the world of work. I couldn't be more grateful for the many community partners that help provide opportunities for our students to complete tasks in and out of our classroom.

The upperclassmen travel with a job coach to job sites within the community three afternoons per week to experience work with an actual employer. They rotate among the following work sites: Sunbury Garden Center, Arrow Industries, Big Walnut Grill, Community Library, Industrial Services, Subway, and Washington's Do It Best Hardware. All of the students experience completing real-life jobs in the classroom from the following community partners: Sunbury Cleaners, Faeth & Mitchell Dentistry, SourcePoint, Arrow Industries, Bob Evans, Cook's Balloonery, and Architectural busSTRUT.

We are proud of our students as they work

toward greater independence and are thankful for the support of our community.

If your community business is interested in working with our students, please contact me at hopewelch@bwls.net.



Benji Hobbs and Parker Thode improving their independent working skills





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Delaware-Morrow Mental Health & Recovery Services Board

Supporting Wellness. Building Hope. Transforming Lives.