January
2026

The Eagle Examiner

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

Message from the Superintendent

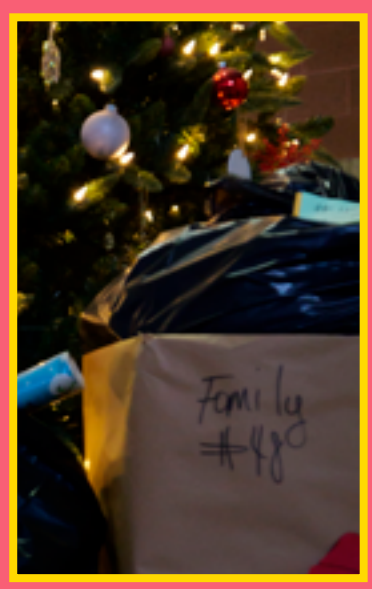
Ryan McLane

Happy New Year! I hope you all enjoyed the holiday season and had a chance to spend some time with your family and friends.

I wanted to update you on a few changes coming for the 2026-27 school year. The first involves kindergarten. In the past, school districts could choose between two dates (August 1st or September 30th) in which a student had to be 5 years old in order to register for kindergarten. Our date was August 1st. The legislation changed that to the first official day of school. For the 2026-27 school year, that will be August 20th, meaning if your child is 5 on or before that date, they are eligible for kindergarten. Registration will begin February 17th.

The second change involves the former intermediate building at 105 Baughman. If you have been near that location, you may have seen some work being done. The roof is currently being replaced, and the south wing will be remodeled to house the Early Learning Center, which is currently located at Harrison Street. We have been conducting a master facilities assessment of buildings in our district, and Harrison Street was expected to require approximately $10 million in repairs over the next five years. Given its size and other obstacles, it wasn't the best use of taxpayer dollars to keep it at Harrison Street.

Big Walnut Holiday Wish List



Together we brought Christmas Magic to 369 students (107 families) this year!

Over Christmas break I had the privilege of running into a couple of our families. They told stories of how excited their children were to receive that "special gift" they hoped for. That would not have happened otherwise. A personal, heart filled with joy, "thank you" to each and every one of you for your kindness and generosity.

I feel blessed to be the one in the middle, but without all of you, this program would not reach so many!!

- Linda Johnston Klamfoth

Big Walnut Staff Spotlight!

Ashley Nussen
General Rosecrans Elemementary

Ashley Nussen is a true asset to our school community and someone we are incredibly grateful to have on our team. She brings a positive attitude to everything she does and is always willing to jump in and help wherever she is needed. Ashley works tirelessly to support students, especially in building confidence and managing emotions, ensuring they feel safe, supported, and ready to learn. In addition to her work with students, she shines as a star member of our Fun Club, PBIS Eagle Bucks Program, and is the best dressed in our eagle costume for fun events. She is constantly bringing creative and fun ideas that lift staff morale and strengthen our school culture. Her dedication, warmth, and enthusiasm make a lasting impact on both students and staff every single day.

Ashley Nussen is the heartbeat of GRE. She radiates a warmth and positivity that students and staff alike cherish and rely on each day. Ashley pours her heart into every interaction and brings unwavering dedication to her work. Each morning, you'll find her in her familiar spot—same welcoming smile, arms ready for hugs, Kidz Bop playing in the background—creating a sense of consistency and joy that students can count on.

Welcome Our New Board of Education Members!

Hello, Big Walnut Family!

My name is Jessica Parent, and I am honored and humbled that you have chosen to put your trust in me as one of the newest members elected to the BW Board of Education. I'm ready to get to work serving all of you!

My family moved to Genoa Township in 2020 and our son (Sean, now a 5th grader at BWI) started kindergarten in the district that fall. I've wanted to live in the Big Walnut area since moving to Ohio 16 years ago, and love the community now that I'm here.

I have a BA in Philosophy from Hillsdale College, and took a hard pivot a few years back to become a software engineer. When I'm not building web applications, you can find me boxing at the gym, taking a walk through Char Mar, or hanging out with my son watching zero to hero anime sagas. My family also enjoys playing board games, escaping rooms and hanging out at the Star Lanes arcade together.

I care deeply about the future of public education in our state, but most especially right here in Big Walnut, where my son and the children of my friends, neighbors and fellow community members are receiving the building blocks for their futures. I want to help Big Walnut to remain a place where every child and staff member can feel the words "You Belong" every single day, and where all of our students know and feel they are safe and valued.

I could continue to say so many more things, but I'll wrap it up with another thank you! I hope to continue earning your confidence and living up to expectations. I'm looking forward to the future. Let's go, Eagles!

Hello Big Walnut community!

I'm Molly Snodgrass, and I'm thrilled to begin serving as a member of the Board of Education. My husband and I live in Harlem Township, and we're proud parents of two energetic boys (Jack, a 2nd-grader at Souders, and Dylan, in pre-K at the ELC). I'm passionate about public education, and excited to work alongside our administration and staff to make Big Walnut the very best it can be.

Professionally, I have a B.S. in Chemical Engineering and currently work at Abbott Nutrition in their supply-chain organization. When I'm not working, I enjoy audiobooks, "sad movies" (according to my husband!), Strange Planet comics, and building LEGO flower sets with my sons. I also love board games and spending time with my family and friends.

I look forward to connecting with families and working together with my fellow Board members to support the growth and success of our schools. Thank you for welcoming me—I'm excited for what's ahead!

Big Walnut Love Stories

Did your love story start right here in Big Walnut? Maybe you met your sweetheart as students walking the same hallways, or maybe you found love as coworkers serving Eagle Nation together. We want to hear from you.

We are collecting Big Walnut Love Stories from engaged and married couples who met through Big Walnut Schools. Tell us how and when you met, your favorite Big Walnut memories, and what life looks like for you now.

Please include a short, fun story along with a "then and now" photo of you and your partner.

Send your Big Walnut Love Story to SocialMedia@bwls.net and help us celebrate the relationships that started right here in Eagle Country.

Common ₵ent$

Scott Gooding
Interim Treasurer/CFO

Understanding Board of Education Organizational Meetings

Each January, Ohio school districts hold a Board of Education Organizational Meeting, a required public meeting held at the beginning of a Board member's term. This meeting formally organizes the Board for the year and ensures the district can legally conduct business. Its primary purposes are to establish leadership, set meeting logistics, and complete required statutory actions.

In accordance with Board Policy 0151 – Organizational Meeting and Ohio Revised Code 3313.14, the Board of Education must organize annually during the first fifteen (15) days of January. The meeting date is set by the Treasurer no later than December 31 of the preceding year. For the organizational meeting, the Board appoints a President Pro Tem to preside until officers are elected.

During the organizational meeting, the Board elects its officers for the calendar year. The Board also establishes its regular meeting schedule, designates official service providers, and takes other procedural actions necessary for the district's day-to-day operations. These steps ensure continuity, compliance with state law, and effective governance.

Organizational meetings are generally brief and focus on required administrative actions rather than extensive discussion or major policy decisions. Like all Board of Education meetings, organizational meetings are open to the public and reflect the district's commitment to transparency and accountability.

Community members are encouraged to attend and stay informed about the Board's work. Meeting notices and agendas are posted in advance on the district's website and at district offices, providing residents an opportunity to observe local governance in action and better understand how decisions are made on behalf of students and taxpayers.

Around the District

Congrats to all our All-Ohio Athletes!

Big Walnut High School 2027 Student Travel

Two international student trips are being planned for Summer 2027, giving students the chance to experience new cultures, history, and hands-on learning.

Each trip has its own interest meeting where families can learn about highlights, safety, and costs. Attending does not commit you to traveling.

Questions?

Iceland: Amy Eikenberry amyeikenberry@bwls.net

Japan: Gwen Hodges gwenhodges@bwls.net

Scan the QR code to RSVP.

Agricultural Science Program

Want to practice your cooking skills? - Get Cooking with Food Science!

In our Food and Culinary Science class, we focus on the technical skills used in food processing and preparation. This is a very active class where students spend their time in the lab kitchen. They aren't just following recipes; they are building a professional toolkit by running experiments, just like professional food scientists do. A huge bonus for this class is that students can earn CTAG college credit, which is a great way to jumpstart their career path while they're still in high school.

If your student likes to experiment, Applications of Food Science is another great pick for skill development. Like our other course, this one has plenty of hands-on cooking labs, but we take it a step further by letting students customize their own experiments to see how different ingredients work together. They also learn about the rules and regulations that keep our food supply safe, which is a major part of the industry. Whether they are in the classroom or on our FFA competition team, students are gaining "real-world" experience that prepares them for a wide variety of jobs in agriculture and science.

Christine Febes
Agricultural Sciences Instructor

Congratulations, Parliamentary Procedure Team!

Students participated in the Novice Parliamentary Procedure Career Development Event. This event is designed to test student's knowledge of Robert's Rules of Order and running an effective business meeting. Members worked together to complete an assigned agenda by moving motions, debating, and thinking critically about the situations presented on the assigned agenda. The Novice team advanced through the sub-district and district levels to earn a spot in their state events, hosted in December at the Delaware Area Career Center.

We would like to extend a huge congratulations to the middle and high school students on our team in the Novice division (grades 7-9) - Ella Altizer, Claire Anderson, Austin Paige Furan, Kensley Fox, Landen Legg, Olivia Poffenbaugh, Ben Reckner, Paashv Soni, and Liv Wytzka. This team placed first in the preliminary round and earned first place in the state finals! These students will compete and represent the state of Ohio at the 99th National FFA Convention & Expo in October 2026.

Congratulations to these hard working students! Special thanks to Mr. Jeffrey Stimmell for his coaching and advising!

Student Spotlight - Tyler Irwin

This month's student spotlight is Tyler Irwin. Tyler is a senior and second-year member in the agricultural science program. Tyler took Introduction to Veterinary Science as a junior and is currently taking Business Management. Tyler really enjoys taking the agricultural science classes as they provide him with skills he needs for his future career. Tyler's favorite part of the program is taking on challenges and competing in the Career Development Events. Tyler is currently competing in the Food Science & Technology CDE and conducting an Agriscience Fair Project on food spoilage. After graduation, Tyler plans to attend The Ohio State University to major in Animal Sciences as he prepares for a career in veterinary medicine.

Tyler Irwin
Senior, Big Walnut High School

Did you know Big Walnut's Agricultural Science students explore food science, biotechnology, animal science, and business, all while gaining hands-on experience and earning state and national recognition?

Middle School Sports

2026 is here and we couldn't be more excited about the happenings around BWMS athletics! The winter season got off to a fast start for all of our teams and things have only continued into the new year. If you have not yet gotten the chance to watch our teams yet, don't wait much longer as the season will conclude in about a month's time. These coaches and student-athletes are very impressive.

Current records and highlights by each squad up to this date:

Joe Rucker
Big Walnut Middle School
Athletic Director

7th Grade Girls Basketball currently stands with a record of 8-2. These girls get after it on the defensive end and never back down from a physical style of game.

8th Grade Girls Basketball have an undefeated 10-0 record. This team plays unselfish ball and gets up and down the floor faster than most.

7th Grade Boys Basketball has a record of 8-2. This group has a ton of talent that really enjoys competing against anyone that steps on the floor.

8th Grade Boys Basketball has a record of 9-1. These boys have different players step up each night and embrace a very disciplined style of play.

Girls Wrestling is continuing the growth from their inaugural season last year. They have 14 wrestlers this season (our most ever) and have competed admirably in several invitationals.

Boys Wrestling is firing on all cylinders. They finished 1st in the 4th Annual BWMS WinterSlam on January 3rd. They also brought home a 1st place finish at the New Albany Invitational before break and are undefeated in duals.

The **Cheer squads** have brought the energy and spirit at every event they have attended. And the **Competition Cheer** team competed brilliantly this past weekend in Marysville, earning 1st place!

Our club teams have been busy as well. The **Indoor Track** team have their first competition of the season on January 24th at Mount Vernon. The **Diving** have their final meet of the year with the championship occuring on January 13th at CSG.

One thing I would like to highlight as I reflect on all that has transpired during the winter season is just how lucky we are at BWMS with the amount of community/parent support we benefit from. Whether it's the dozens of people who spend hours working our Eagle Invite in the fall or WinterSlam in the winter, to concessions, scorebooks, clock, team meals, etc...we could not do things without you. So to everyone who has volunteered in some capacity thus far, THANK YOU very much and know that you are appreciated. #werbwms

Spring sports will be getting started near the end of February or early March. Look for information to be coming out soon in regards to tryouts and 1st practices as well as preseason activities.

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!!!

High School Sports

Boys Varsity Basketball

Girls Varsity Basketball

Boys JV-A Basketball

Girls JV Basketball

Boys JV-B Basketball

Gymnastics

Varsity Cheer

JV Cheer

High School Sports

Boys Varsity Bowling

Girls Varsity Bowling

Boys Swim & Dive

Girls Swim & Dive

Boys Wrestling

Girls Wrestling

Senior Nights!

Join us as we celebrate our seniors and cheer them on in their final home competitions as Big Walnut High School athletes!

Girls Bowling
January 16th
vs. Worthington Kilbourne
at Columbus Square Bowling Palace

Wrestling
February 5th
vs. Dublin Scioto

Swimming and Diving
February 6th
vs. St. Francis DeSales
at Jefferson Country Club

Girls Basketball
February 13th
vs. Dublin Scioto

Boys Basketball
February 17th
vs. Westland

Cheerleading
February 17th
Boys Basketball vs. Westland

Big Walnut High School

Office: 740.965.3766
Fax: 740.965.1954
Guidance: 740.965.2243

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Sunbury, OH
43074

Big Walnut Middle School

555 S Old 3C Hwy
Sunbury, OH
43074

Office: 740.965.3006
Fax: 740.965.6471

Big Walnut Intermediate School

Office: 740.965.7800
Fax: 740.965.7801

777 Cheshire Rd
Sunbury, OH
43074

Big Walnut Elementary

940 S Old 3C Hwy
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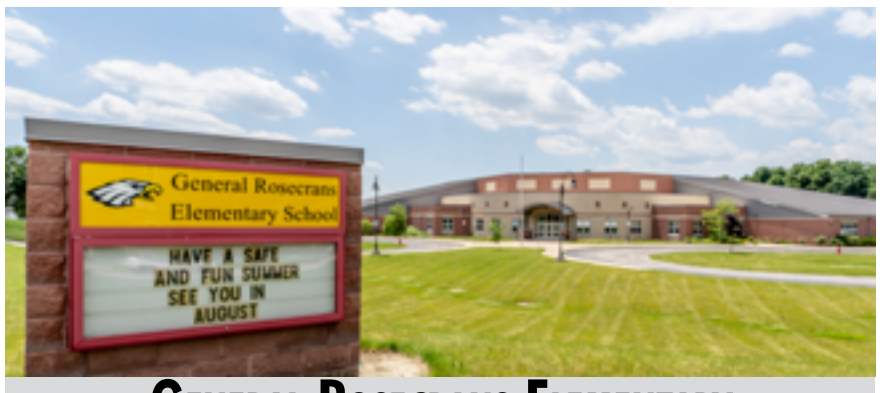
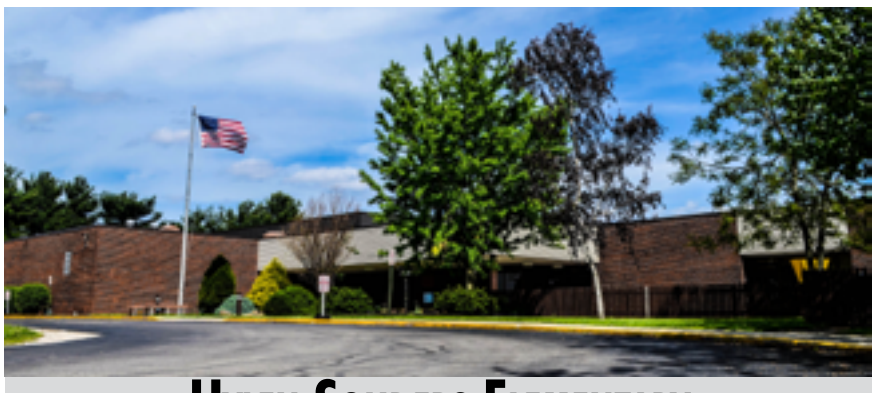
Office: 740.965.3902
Fax: 740.965.3168



General Rosecrans Elementary

Office: 740.965.8900
Fax: 740.965.8993

301 S Miller Dr
Sunbury, OH
43074



Hylen Souders Elementary

4121 Miller Paul Rd
Galena, OH
43021

Office: 740.965.3200
Fax: 740.965.3986

Prairie Run Elementary

Office: 740.965.7850
Fax: 740.965.7851

701 N Miller Dr
Sunbury, OH
43074

Early Learning Center at Harrison Street

70 Harrison St
Sunbury, OH
43074

Office: 740.965.7862