



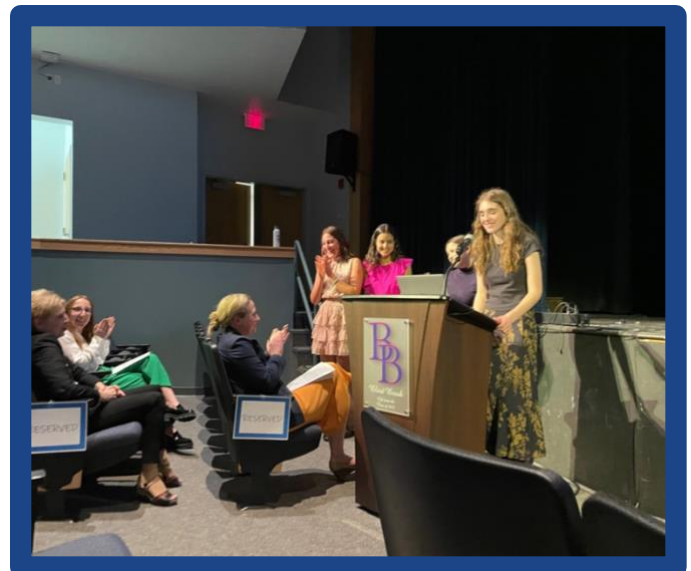
Blind Brook-Rye Union Free School District

A quarterly newsletter

Spring 2023

Science Symposium highlights students' incredible work

When classmates, friends and family gathered in the auditorium at Blind Brook High School on May 24 the only thing left to do for a few select senior members of the BBHS Science Research Program was to present their work and findings as part of the annual Science Symposium. Guests also had an opportunity to see the work of other students.



Click [HERE](#) to read more!

Community has opportunity to vote on new budget on June 20, 2023

Dear Members of the Blind Brook Community:

On May 16 2023, the Blind Brook School District held elections for two board seats and four propositions including our annual school budget. While the proposed school budget received 55% of the vote, it did not pass by the necessary 60% supermajority needed.

What happens next?

The Board of Education intends to propose a modified budget to be voted on by the community. In advance of that vote, the BOE will hold public meetings to discuss the budget and listen to concerns of community members. The times of these meetings will be determined shortly. We encourage all interested community members to attend these meetings.

When is the next vote?

The next vote will be on Tuesday, June 20. The only item on the ballot will be the proposed budget.

What happens if the June 20 budget doesn't pass?

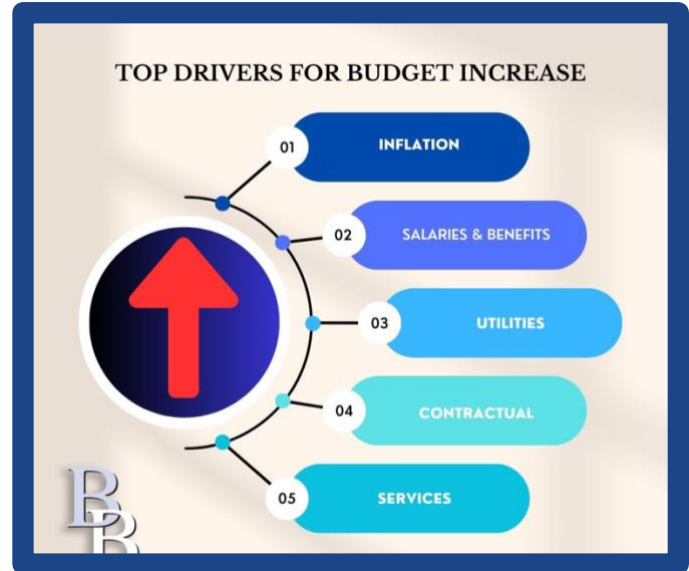
If the June 20 budget doesn't pass, the district will implement an austerity budget, with a 0% tax levy increase from last year. Under an austerity budget it would be necessary to consider reducing or eliminating certain expenses in order to ensure sufficient funding for costs which are necessary to operate the District.



What does an austerity budget look like?

In order to meet the needs of the District under an austerity budget, certain expenditures must be reduced or eliminated including those associated with:

- Interscholastic athletic teams
- Extracurricular activities
- Funding of a yearbook advisor
- After school clubs
- Optional instructional supplies for students
- Providing informational articles to the community
- Replacement of school buses
- Non-instructional staff members



The Board must also consider whether it would be necessary to reduce its teaching staff, counseling services and mental health support for students and eliminate technology upgrades, security enhancements and field trips.

How can my voice be heard in this process?

Please attend one of our meetings. We would like to get community member feedback on the budget.

The Blind Brook Board of Education
Colin M. Byrne, Superintendent of Schools

Congratulations to Seniors Benjamin Messafi and Ciella Angel-Lalanne!



Seniors Benjamin Messafi and Ciella Angel-Lalanne were recently honored at the Carroll F. Johnson Scholastic Achievement Dinner held on May 24. Ciella was unable to attend, however, Benjamin was accompanied by Superintendent Colin Byrne and Board Member Scott Jaffee.

Seniors Benjamin Messafi and Ciella Angel-Lalanne were honored at the 2023 Carroll F. Johnson Scholastic Achievement Dinner at the Westchester Marriott on May 24. Benjamin was selected to represent Blind Brook High School based on his exceptional schoolwork and dedication to his studies.

Ben was joined by Superintendent Colin Byrne and Board of Education Member Scott Jaffee. Ciella Angel-Lalanne was also recognized but could not attend due to a prior commitment.

The event was sponsored by the Lower Hudson Council of School Superintendents.

"I am extremely proud of the students who were honored this year," Dr. Byrne said. "Both Ben and Ciella have done exceptional work at Blind Brook both in and out of the classroom. Ben did an outstanding job of representing Blind Brook. He is a gentleman and a scholar."

D.A.R.E. Graduation Celebrates 5th Grade Achievements at BMPRSS

A memorable day unfolded at the Bruno M. Ponterio Ridge Street School as students, faculty, family members and guests gathered in the cafeteria to commemorate the 5th grade D.A.R.E. graduation ceremony. The event, held on June 1, marked the culmination of a year-long Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) program and honored the achievements of the graduating class.



This year the ceremony held a special significance as it was announced that School Counselor Kathy Gerber, the D.A.R.E program coordinator, will be retiring after an incredible career spanning over thirty years. Ms. Gerber, a dedicated and passionate advocate of the D.A.R.E. initiative, introduced the program to the school when it first launched in 1993.



Click [HERE](#) to read more!

BBHS student photographers' work exhibited in special show

Among the photographs hanging on the walls at the Rye Arts Center were pieces by Advanced Placement 2D Art and Design students who won in the The Ground Glass 2nd Annual Student Photography Invitational hosted by the arts center. The Ground Glass, an independent association of area photographers, was founded in 1975.



On Thursday, May 18, several seniors and guests enjoyed an opening reception at the gallery, where student work will be on display through June 10 along with the work of Ground Glass members.

Click [HERE](#) to read more!

The early Bluebird gets the steps in during Walking Club

The early bird gets the worm, the saying goes, but the early Bluebirds at the Bruno M. Ponterio Ridge Street School get their daily steps in.

On Thursday mornings members of the Early Bird Walking Club, which number more than 100, arrive about a half hour before the start of school and they get moving.

Click [HERE](#) to read more!



BBMS Drama presented original work

There are a million stories to be told and members of Blind Brook Middle School Drama Club are ready to tell theirs.

In an extravaganza of original work, students wrote their own scripts, perfected their roles, scoured closets for costumes and props and are presented their work, “From the Page to the Stage” to the community, on May 26.

Click [HERE](#) to read more!



BBHS goes to Hollywood with First Annual Honors Shapers Oscars



It was a night of glitz and glamour at Blind Brook High School as it celebrated the First Annual Honors Shapers Oscars on April 19.

The red carpet was rolled out, popcorn popped, and several interested parties were dressed to the nines, all there to watch the premiere of three special films and wait and see who the recipients of the much-anticipated awards would be.

The evening was the culmination of a special project done by three classes of the Honors Shapers of the World course.

Click [HERE](#) to read more!

And the Oscar goes to . . .

Best Supporting Actor: Tyler Oppenheimer as Don Creon, Ignition

Best Supporting Actress: Hannah Knee, Ryan Levkoff and Alexis Maxon, Chorus, Red & Lavender

Bests Costumes: Jayce Brossman, Daniella Brunetti and Lexi Denn, Medea in Salem

Best Cinematography: Dylan Erenfryd and Natalie Steinberg, Ignition

Best Editing: Dylan Erenfryd, Editor, Ignition

Best Actor: James Gallagher, Medeo, Red & Lavender

Best Actress: Alyssa Artabane, Medea, Medea in Salem

Best Adapted Screenplay: Dylan Erenfryd, Thomas Wemm and Drew Freedman, Ignition

Best Director: Dylan Erenfryd and Natalie Steinberg, Ignition

Best Picture: Ignition, Producer Anna Baker-Butler

Natural world celebrated in cross-class exercises for Arbor Day



Blind Brook High School English teacher Julie Kenyon and high school science teacher Julie Hensley collaborated for an environment-focused lesson. They organized a day for juniors and seniors at the high school to work with BBMS sixth graders to celebrate the natural environment, specifically the trees growing on campus.

Click [HERE](#) to read more!

BBHS “Something Rotten” nominated for 12 Metro Awards!



Congratulations to Blind Brook High School Drama for their amazing Metropolitan High School Theatre Awards nominations! The school's "Something Rotten," which ran in March, has been nominated for record 12 awards!

It is the first time in school history that the musical has been nominated for Outstanding Overall Production. The cast will be performing at the June 12th ceremony, which will take place at the Tarrytown Music Hall in Tarrytown. The

ceremony will be live-streamed and hosted by actors Kerry Butler and David Josefsberg, from Broadway's "Beetlejuice."

They are joined by 56 schools up for nominations from Westchester, Rockland, Bergen and Putnam counties.

Here is the list of the nominations:

- Outstanding Overall Production
- Outstanding Direction - Christina Colangelo
- Outstanding Music Direction - Jessica Cerasoli
- Outstanding Choreography - Lauren Guivas
- Outstanding Scenic Design - Zach Dore
- Outstanding Lighting Design - Zach Dore
- Outstanding Chorus
- Outstanding Featured Performer - Abby Meron - The Minstrel
- Outstanding Dance Performance by a Female-Identifying Performer - Cassidy Wohl
- Outstanding Performance in a Supporting Female-Identified Role - Chloe Beal - Portia
- Outstanding Student Critic - Thomas Wemm
- Outstanding Technical Achievement - Julian Silva

ATHLETICS

Student-athletes look ahead with spring signing event

Blind Brook High School seniors Halle Greaige, John “JP” D’Inverno and Corey Piller have a few things in common: they are graduating next month, they all played sports, and they would love to have their families come watch their games next year as they begin their collegiate athletic careers.

April 25 was a big day for the three student athletes who gathered for a celebratory signing event for their respective schools. Family, friends, and teammates gathered in the BBHS library for the big reveal.



Click [HERE](#) to read more!



Congratulations to Boys Varsity Lacrosse! Their post-season ended with a 15-4 loss to Bronxville. However, they won their first playoff win in school history on Saturday, May 20! We can't wait to see what next season brings!

Boys Varsity Baseball had a season to remember! They were named League Champs and fought a good fight before ending their season with a semifinal loss to Croton-Harmon.

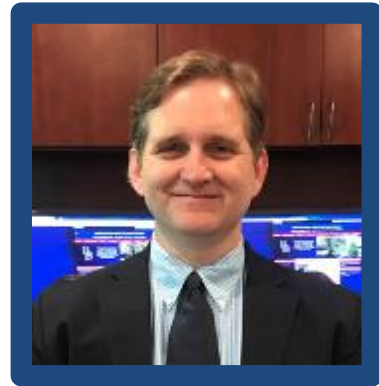


Congratulations to the Varsity Girls Lacrosse team, they were named League Champs!



A Message from the Superintendent

On June 20, 2023, the community will have an opportunity to vote on a new budget for the 2023-2024 school year. The Board of Education and I have been diligently working to develop a fiscally responsible budget that meets district needs and one in which the community can support. We hope in the coming weeks you will continue to engage with us, ask questions, review budget material and vote!



It is hard to believe that June is upon us, and it will not be long before we send the Class of 2023 off to their next chapter. I am looking forward to celebrating their success with them at commencement on June 21. I also look forward to recognizing our younger students and celebrating them as they too make a change to new schools with moving up ceremonies for our fifth and eighth graders. It is an exciting time of year!

Leading up to these end-of-year events, we have maintained a full schedule of activities this spring. Our BBHS Drama Club has been nominated for a record 12 Metro Awards, the BBMS Drama Club outdid themselves with their original work in “From the Page to the Stage,” and our Bluebirds did themselves proud during their trip to the Destination Imagination Global Finals in Kansas City! We certainly have much to be proud of when it comes to the work of our students and the teachers and parents who support them.

I look forward to the remaining few weeks of school, which I know will be just as busy and satisfying!

Dr. Colin Byrne
Superintendent of Schools

Artist in Residence shares talent, motivates students to their own creativity

The quest for letters by students at the Bruno M. Ponterio Ridge Street School was actually part of a special school-wide project at the school, one facilitated by local pop artist and author Michael Albert, who was participating in a week-long Artist in Residence program.

Click [HERE](#) to read more!



Twelve Blind Brook High School WESEF 2023 Award Winners

More than 550 students from 40 Westchester and Putnam County high schools showcased their graduate-level science research projects in a competitive venue at the 22nd Annual Regeneration – Westchester Science and Engineering Fair (WESEF) at Somers High School on March 18th. Student work was recognized at the awards ceremony on Thursday evening, March 23rd.

Click [HERE](#) to read more!



The following is a list of the BBHS Award Winners:

INNOVATIONS IN BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES RESEARCH AWARD

Awarded to innovative projects in Biochemistry, Cell and Molecular Biology, Medicine and Health, Microbiology, Computational Biology/Bioinformatics and Neuroscience

Zaara Suhail: The Spatial and Temporal Distribution of Axonal mRNA involved in Recovery after CNS Injury. *Neuroscience.*

EXCELLENCE IN MEDICAL RESEARCH AWARD

Awarded to the Top Medicine & Health, Biochemistry, Cell and Molecular Biology, Microbiology, and Neuroscience Research Projects.

Austin Lu: Computational Toxicology and Molecular Docking Reveal Novel Targets of Acetochlor in Zebrafish. *Computational Bioinformatics*

Nicole Maxon: Does the presence of an IUD impact ovarian response and oocyte yield in women undergoing planned oocyte cryopreservation? *Medicine & Health*

Ava Shaw: The Accuracy of a Wearable Temperature Sensor in Comparison to Rectal Thermometry Surrounding Exercise in the Heat at a Road Race. *Medicine & Health*

BEST IN CATEGORY AWARDS

4th Place in Category Awards – Westchester Academy of Medicine

Fiona Chen: Targeting Inflammation and Synaptic Malfunction for the Treatment of Alzheimer's Disease. *Neuroscience*.

Melina Kohilakis: Does Sexual Selection Influence the Ornamentation of Hemipenes in Heterodon Snakes? *Animal Science*.

Rose Penan: Compulsive Exercise and the Relationship Between Disordered Eating and Depressive Symptoms. *Behavioral Science*.

HONORABLE MENTION

Awarded to projects that exemplify mastery in research.

Ciella Angel-Lalanne: Calculating PRS Using a Bayesian Regression Model on the BioMe Cohort. *Computational Bioinformatics*

Kunjai Kothari: Public Awareness of a Vision-Threatening Toxicity: Infodemiology in Pentosan Polysulfate Maculopathy. *Medicine & Health*

Joaquin Otero: The Impact of the Development of Flight on Bat Genomes. *Computational Bioinformatics*

Simryn Sharma: The effects of COVID-19 on behaviors and emotional wellbeing in an adolescent obese population enrolled in an outpatient weight management program. *Behavioral Sciences*

Bridget Zelin: Reporting Racial and Ethnic Bias in PubMed Case Reports. *Computational Bioinformatics*

Congressman Bowman's visit provides him with first-hand knowledge of district

Continuing his ongoing tour of Westchester schools, U.S. Rep. Jamaal Bowman made a stop at Blind Brook Middle/High School on May 2nd and was treated to a tour provided by middle and high school students.



Click [HERE](#) to read more!

A little something for our furry friends from RSS

As a member of the Bruno M. Ponterio Ridge Street School Student Council, Vanessa P. was inspired to make a suggestion for the organization's community service project. She suggested a collection for Paws Crossed Animal Shelter. Her idea was accepted, and the school collected items for the animals in the shelter's care—pet beds, food, leashes and more!



Click [HERE](#) to read more!

The verdict is in: BBHS Mock Trial Team are winners

The Blind Brook High School Mock Trial team made their case and came away winners of the Westchester County Championship!

Click [HERE](#) to read more!



Westchester County Executive George Latimer and Vice Chair of the Westchester County Board of Legislators Nancy Barr recently visited Blind Brook High School to congratulate the BBHS Mock Trial Team for winning the Westchester County Mock Trial tournament.

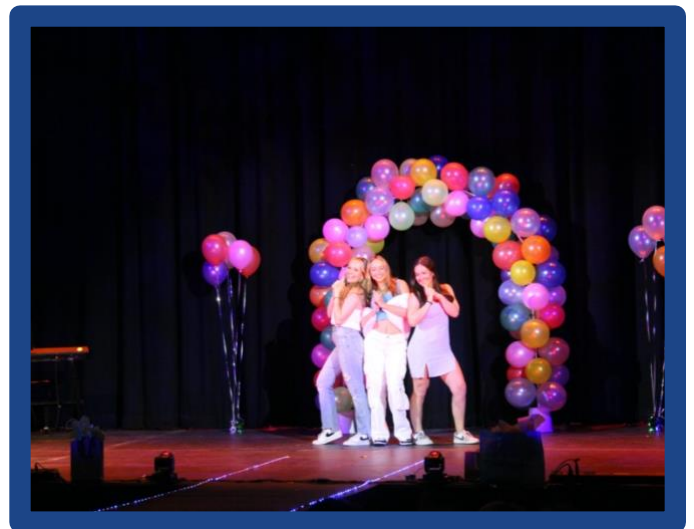
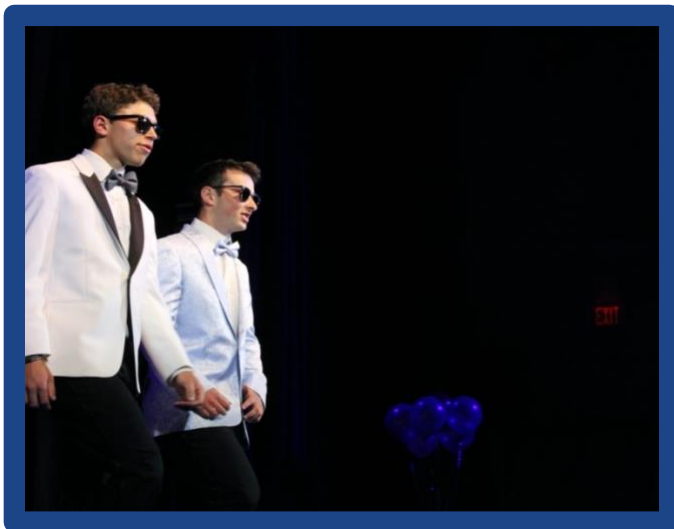
Blind Brook Beat: A look at recent activities



There's a new tree in town! Harkness Park, located right next door to Blind Brook Middle/High School has a new permanent resident: A Shag Bark Hickory. Its arrival, and planting, was thanks in part to the high school's Roots & Shoots Club and the Village.



There was a lot of buzz at BBMS as 'Bee' winners advance! Sixth grader Hayden G. was named 6th in the Regional Championship at the Conn. Winter National Science Bee, advancing to the nationals in June and the international competition in the summer. He is joined by classmates Aiden L. and James V. James came in 2nd place in the regional National History Bee and was a finalist in the regional National Geography Bee. Aiden was a finalist in the regional National History Bee and the National Science Bee.



The Blind Brook High School Senate 9th Annual Senior Fashion Show was a hit! The event, held on April 28, raised more than \$3,000 for the Sharing Shelf, a local clothing bank for children and teens in Westchester.



The Bluebirds from BLMRSS had a blast at the 2023 Destination Imagination Global Finals in Kansas City, MO with four teams from Blind Brook representing Team New York - one elementary team, two middle school teams, and one high school team!



Second graders at BLMRSS celebrated AAPI Heritage month with a special presentation and project about Thailand. They created their own Hanuman masks!

UPCOMING EVENTS

Juneteenth, June 19, Schools Closed, District Offices are open to receive Absentee Ballot Applications

Budget Vote, June 20, BLMRSS Old Gym, 7 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Moving Up Ceremonies and Graduations

June 21, 2023

BLMRSS Moving Up Ceremony, 11 a.m.

BBMS Moving Up Ceremony, 2 p.m.

BBHS Graduation, 5:30 p.m.

Last Day of School, June 23