Together, inspiring students to think, learn, achieve and care in a global community.

Shamrock Connection

BACK TO SCHOOL

2023-2024 Newsletter Volume 13, Issue 1

Berrien Springs Public Schools

New staff members are welcomed as they join the district as Shamrocks for 2023-2024 school year!

Schools is excited to announce the newest additions to our staff, further enriching our commitment to providing exceptional education and support for our students. Please welcome the following new administrators, teachers, and staff to Berrien Springs Public Schools. They are looking forward to meeting students, parents, and the community in the upcoming 2023-2024 school year.

Joshua Feldpausch is the Principal of Mars Elementary. Mr. Feldpausch is a versatile educator with a deep passion for both music and leadership. Holding a Bachelor's in Music Education from Grand Valley State University and a Master's in Educational Leadership from the University of Texas at Arlington, Mr. Feldpausch's educational journey

Berrien Springs Public has been marked by his commitment to personal growth and professional development. With a diverse career spanning roles such as a choir director, Youth and Music Director, Elementary Music Teacher, and Elementary Assistant Principal across various locations, he brings a wealth of experience to his new role as principal at Mars Elementary. Beyond his educational pursuits, Mr. Feldpausch enjoys playing musical instruments, sports, and spending time with his family. Mr. Feldpausch eagerly anticipates the opportunity to lead and learn alongside the Mars Elementary staff, students, and families, focusing on fostering student growth, creating a safe learning environment, and inspiring young scholars to impact the world around them positively.



Joshua Feldpausch

sistant Principal at Berrien Springs Middle School. Hailing from Chicago, Mrs. Wash's educational journey has been impactful. With degrees from Indiana University East, Indiana University South Bend, and Ball State University, she brings a solid academic back-Linda Wash is the As- ground to her role as assist-



ant principal at the middle school. Her teaching career began in Michigan City, Indiana, encompassing special education and adult education roles. Moving to Northern Indiana, Mrs. Wash continued her special education teaching while venturing into adminis-(Continued on Page 7)

By working together, our community has the power to make this year incredible for all students!

By Dr. Thomas Bruce Superintendent

Welcome, everyone, to the upcoming school year! Over the past 24 months, I have been transitioning into the role of superintendent, and I can tell you that I am excited to be here in Berrien Springs.

Throughout this leadership transition period, I have been deeply focused on maintaining consistency, sustainability, and growth. I want to assure you that our dedication to our three key strategies-Attendance, Achievement, and Engagement—remains steadfast for this year. I firmly believe that focus and intentionality are the driving forces behind

reaching our goals.

In the past 18 months, we have been reorganizing BSPS to better align with the needs of our on-campus buildings and our 26 learning centers across the state. This summer alone, BSPS has graduated almost 1,000 students on campus and across the state. Our rapid growth has prompted us to create new positions and fill existing positions. With the support of the Board of Education, we have added some high quality people to our organization. We are poised to do great things.

On campus, we have welcomed Jeff Yauchstetter as the Assistant Superintendent of Learning.



Dr. Tom Bruce

Innovation and Personalized Mr. Yauchstetter

will guide us in implementing our instructional model to remain at the forefront of effectiveness. Moreover, the Central Office continues to transition to better support learning and success here on campus. It is important to note, we are continuing to enhance our abilities in an effort to consistently improve student achievement on campus.

Our learning center programs continue to grow. In the wake of the pandemic, families are looking for alternative pathways to graduation. The Shamrock Way at BSPS will offer many pathways to success! On that note, our programs (Continued on Page 8)

Leadership Team



Members of the administrative team are Assistant Superintendent Jeff Yauchstetter, Curriculum Director Tracey Jaggi, Deaf & Hard of Hearing Coordinator Lorren Wiedemann, Special Education Director Mary Masciovecchio, Communications Director Gail Fox, Community Resource Officer Matt Oosterwal, Chief Financial Officer Kari Bennett, Mars Elementary Principal Josh Feldpausch, Director of Off-Site and Alternative Programs Mitch Cumings, and AAC Supervisor Dan Maxon; middle row: State and Federal Programs Director Amy Williams. Berrien Springs High School Principal Stacey DeMaio, Dean of Students at Mars Elementary DeAnne-Adele Sanchez, District Onboard Trainer Emma Haygood, Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent Jamie Spenner, Superintendent Dr. Tom Bruce, MŤŠS Specialist Patty VanAntwerp, Assistant Principal at Berrien Springs Middle School Linda Wash, Discovery Academy Director Valerie Carr, and Human Resources Director Jennifer Thies; and back row: Assistant Superintendent Steve Spenner, Curriculum Coordinator Faith Tom, Sylvester Elementary Principal Micah Lambert, Student Services & Title IX Coordinator Chelsea Pollyea, Athletic Director Joe Stephens, Berrien Springs Middle School PBIS Coordinator & District TCI Coordinator Luke Antvelink, Berrien Springs Middle School Principal Jake Skelly, Technology Director Tim Pirowski, Business Manager Ellen Hasse, Transportation Director John Legus, and Discovery Academy Director Bill Bergan. BSHS Assistant Principal Andi Lemon and Food Services Director Pam Evans are not pictured.

Board of Education

Board of Education to meet once a month

We are excited to announce some changes to our Board of Education meetings.

We are moving to a once-a-month board meeting this academic year. In

addition to the meeting schedule, we have also changed the start time of our meetings to 6:00 p.m.

> **Board** members

Members of the Berrien

Springs Board of Education Eric Stoub, Trustee. are Paul Toliver, President; Peg Bormann, Vice President; Pat DeLong, Secretary; Kim Keigley, Treasurer; Dr. Lee Davidson, Trustee; Michael Shembarger, Trustee; and

The monthly Board of Education meeting schedule is below. Thank you for your ongoing support and commitment to Berrien Springs Public Schools.

-2024 Board Meeting Schedule

ugust 10, 2023

Virtual Academy, 6:00 p.m.

September 14, 2023

Virtual Academy, 6:00 p.m.

October 12, 2023

Sylvester Elementary Media Center, 6:00 p.m.

November 9, 2023

Virtual Academy, 6:00 p.m.

December 14, 2023

Middle School Library, 6:00 p.m.

January 11, 2024

Virtual Academy, 6:00 p.m.

February 8, 2024

Mars Community Center, 6:00 p.m.

March 14, 2024

Virtual Academy, 6:00 p.m.

April 11, 2024

AAC Lobby, 6:00 p.m.

May 9, 2024

Virtual Academy, 6:00 p.m.

June 19, 2024

Board of Education Retreat at 8 a.m.; Budget Hearing at 2:00 p.m.; Board of Education Meeting at 2:30 p.m., Virtual Academy.





The Berrien Springs High School Choirs sang Johannes Brahm's "Schicksalslied" in German under the direction of Dr. Jeffrey Cobb.

BSHS Choirs proudly perform at the iconic Carnegie Hall in New York City

By Carrie VanDenburgh **BSHS High School** and Middle School **Choir Director**

The Berrien Springs High School choirs loaded up in front of the AAC on a chartered bus to drive to New York City for their performance in Carnegie Hall on Thursday, June 22, 2023. They arrived in New York around 9:30 p.m. to their hotel after a long day of travel and headed to their rooms so they could explore New York the next day.

Friday, June 23, in the morning the choirs had rehearsal at their hotel to practice with the other singers they would be singing with and to meet and practice with the conductors who would be leading them during their performance. Our choir members expressed how well prepared they felt in the rehearsal and felt confident singing out their music and being leaders. After our rehearsal our bus and tour guide picked us up to catch some lunch in Chinatown/Little Italy. The students broke out into groups and were able to experience

New York food and do a little shopping. We then traveled to Brooklyn to walk the famous Brooklyn Bridge and were able to capture some beautiful pictures. We then transferred to the 911 Memorial and World Trade Center and the students were able to remember and honor the people who were killed in the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. We then transferred to 5th Avenue and Rockefeller Center to do some shopping where FAO Schwarz, NBC studios, Radio City and many more are located. After a little shopping, we headed to dinner at the Stardust Cafe where we were entertained by the wait staff in the 1950's retro themed restaurant. After a long day of fun and adventure we headed back to the hotel for some rest.

On Saturday, June 24, we headed to Central Park for a walking tour through the park. We passed by Strawberry Fields which is a tribute to The Beatles rock musician John Lennon and ended up by Bethesda Fountain where many famous movies have

been filmed. We then broke out into groups to explore the park on our own. We then transferred to the Empire State Building where we went up to the 86th floor observatory where we were able to capture beautiful pictures of the city. After lunch we headed back to the hotel for our second rehearsal to prepare for our performance the next day. After rehearsal we went to Times Square and ate at Hard Rock Cafe and then walked to the New Amsterdam Theatre, the oldest operating theatre on Broadway, where we experienced the Broadway show Aladdin where we were all blown away by the amazing voices and theatrical performance.

Our last day in New York was our performance day in Carnegie Hall. Carnegie Hall is perhaps the best-known and most iconic places to perform in the United States. We were personally invited to perform in Carnegie Hall by one of the conductors, Dr. Jeffrey Cobb, who heard us and was one of our judges at State Choir Festival. This is quite an honor

and we were up to the task to perform in such a prestigious place. On Sunday, June 25 in the morning we had our dress rehearsal in Carnegie Hall and as we were on stage for our dress rehearsal we were able to take pictures and selfies of ourselves on the stage. During our dress rehearsal, I was brought to tears after we ran through our first piece as I looked around at my students and saw their smiling faces and how proud they seemed to be standing and singing on this famous stage. After our dress rehearsal we got some lunch near Carnegie Hall and then waited in our rehearsal room until it was time for our performance. We were the second choir to perform in the concert and we sang Johannes Brahm's "Schicksalslied" (Song of Destiny) all in German and under the direction of Dr. Jeffrey Cobb. This piece is based on the poetry of German poet Friedrich Hölderlin and, in the words of one critic, portrays "the brush between spiritually blinded, self-doomed mortals and the

(Continued on Page 4)



Senior class members of the band are Kameron Autry, Aiden Geates, Zachary Bennett, Zack Hance, Catherine Craig, AJ Martinek, Nik Boelcke, Mylia Mensah, Tre'sean Broyles, Jamir Flie, Jade Rogers, Noah Duffy, William Bravo, Liam Meredith, and Jonathan Orlando.

Berrien Springs High School Marching Band to present "Stranger Things" for 2023 show

By Kelly Rosselit BSHS Band Director

The Shamrock Marching Band had a successful beginning to their 2023 season! The 100-member marching band spent a week in August learning and preparing their 2023 show "Stranger Things." Songs include "Should I Stay or Should I Go?" by The Clash, "Running Up That Hill" by Kate Bush, and "Master of Puppets" by Metallica.

Students were taught by college staff from CMU and WMU (including three alumni) to get the music on the field with movements. The

students worked hard and got their pieces on the field during camp. The week was interspersed with games and team-building activities, including a tallest spaghetti tower competition (won by the trombones/tubas) and an egg toss. We also had a visit from the Berrien Springs-Oronoko Fire Department to hose the students down after a long, hot day of rehearsal. The week was capped with an outstanding performance to a large crowd of family, friends, and community members on August 4th.

The Marching Band will

Carnegie Hall performance

(Continued from Page 3)

Elysian spirits." We then performed Jake Runestad's "Into the Light" under the direction of Dr. Erin Plisco. This song was written to commemorate the Reformation and the text used was from various famous figures such as Ghandi, Helen Keller, Martin Luther King Jr., Frederick Douglass and, of course, Martin Luther. This piece of work urges us to look past fear and move forward through love. We performed these pieces with the New England Symphonic Ensemble. After our performance we took a dinner cruise on the Hudson River where we saw stunning views of Manhattan from the water and got close to the Statue of Liberty for some picture opportunities. We then headed back to the hotel to change out of our performance attire and then do some last minute shopping and exploring in Times Square before heading home the next day.

We want to thank our community for helping make this amazing and once in a lifetime opportunity happen for our students. This is something that I will always cherish experiencing with my students and I know they will also remember for years to come.

perform at all football games and the Lakeshore Marching Invitational on October 7th. They will host the 2023 MSBOA Marching Band Festival at Sylvester Stadium on October 10th. The band is under the direction of Kelly Rosselit and Adam Emeigh. Drum Majors are seniors Kameron Autry and Jonathan Orlando and junior Esmé James. The band is led by fifteen seniors and one early/middle college super senior.

GO SHAMROCKS!



Shamrock Athletics



GO SHAMROCKS! The Shamrocks kick off their season against Hackett Catholic Prep on Thursday, August 24, at 7 p.m. at Sylvester Stadium. The next home game is August 31, against Paw Paw. Seniors representing the Shamrocks on the gridiron include Jaydion Thomas, Nevan Lowery, Dylan Russell, Dominic Denkins, and Tyler Dowell; and back row: Clay Thibault, Tivadar Tasi, Owen Kerlikowske, Coach Ben Iliff, Charlie Ewalt, and Kyler Constable.

Rocks Back in Action!

By Joe Stephens Athletic Director

If you have been around our campus this summer, you wouldn't be able to help but notice the work that our athletes have been putting in to prepare for their 2023 fall seasons!

High school teams began their official practices on August 7th, and they are looking forward to their first incompetitions. terscholastic Our football, volleyball, and boys tennis teams are all under new leadership this fall as Ben Iliff, Natalie Siebenmark, and Brian Shembarger take the helms of those respective programs. All of those are faces that have been around Berrien Springs Public Schools in recent years and we look forward to seeing the mark that they will leave on our programs. We are very excited to be competing at girls' golf for the first time in school history this fall. The Lady Shamrock golfers will be led by Coach Linda Bergan.

The defending regional champion boys tennis team is hosting some great competition at the Rick Fedoruk Invitational on Friday, August, 26 beginning at 9 a.m.

JV and Varsity Volleyball is hosting the first Shamrock Invitational in the AAC on Saturday, Oct. 7, beginning at 9 a.m. The athletic department will need many volunteers to host 16 teams on four nets in the AAC. If you are interested in being involved in a great day please reach out to the athletic director, Joe (Continued on Page 7)



Trip to Washington, D.C. brought classroom lessons to life for BSMS eighth graders

By John Hannon BSMS 8th Grade History Teacher and Kim Kubatzke, former BSMS 8th Integrated Studies Teacher

Early on the day after school let out in June, 29 students, and five parents and teachers left Berrien Springs for three busy days in Washington DC and nearby Virginia. The trip had been planned since last year, and students were able to see many of the places and things they had learned about in class.

The Canadian wildfires made for a hazy first day in Washington, but it did not diminish anyone's enthusiasm. Visiting the American History Museum, students saw the original Star Spangled Banner from Fort McHenry in the War of 1812. This was something they studied during the past year, so it really brought classroom lessons to life. As students visited the various exhibits, they could be heard calling out people and events they remembered from school. A visit to the Capitol was the highlight of the first day. Our guide showed us the statues of Gerald Ford and Lewis Cass that Michigan has on display in the Capitol, as well as the office of the Speaker of the House.

The second day started with visiting the Franklin D. Roosevelt, Martin Luther King, Jr., and World War II Memorials before we headed to the White House. While waiting to enter the White House, a presidential motorcade left the grounds right in front of where our group was standing. Once in the White House students saw all the official portraits of the presidents including one they had studied in class, the famous Gilbert Stuart of Washington, saved by Dolley Madison,



BSMS eighth grade students learned about the early history of the railroad at the American History Museum.

during the burning of Washington. A visit to the National Archives gave students and chaperones a look at our founding documents, Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights, as well as an early copy of the English Magna Carta, all of which had been studied this year in class. The greatest thrill for the teachers was when two of our students politely explained the documents to some other visitors. A visit to the National Museum of African American History and Culture only served to whet appetites for a return visit as the six floors were packed with both historic and modern artifacts and exhibits. The day ended with a trip to the Korean War, Vietnam War, and Lincoln Memorials. Students were able to find several Berrien Springs names on the Vietnam wall, bringing the war closer to home for them.

The last day started with a trip to George Washington's home, Mount Vernon. There students were able to gain an appreciation of life for both the owners and the enslaved on America's best known plantation. In the afternoon, our group toured Arlington



BSMS student Briella Streelman admires a statue of Eleanor Roosevelt at the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial.

National Cemetery and witnessed the impressive changing of the guard at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldiers. A visit to the Air Force Memorial allowed a great vantage point to see the Pentagon and understand the events of 9/11. Before leaving for the airport and home, students had a chance to visit the Natural

History Museum.

Arriving back in Berrien Springs early Sunday morning concluded a non-stop three-day adventure in our nation's capital providing students with reinforcement for lessons from earlier classes and setting the stage for high school history and government classes.

2023-2024 Integrated Pest Management program outlined

Berrien Springs Public Schools has adopted an Integrated Pest Management program. Inherent with this are Berrien Springs Public Schools' efforts to reduce pesticide use as much as possible. While it may occasionally be necessary to apply a pesticide, this program does not rely on routine pesticide applications to resolve problems. We use various techniques such as habitat alteration, sanitation, mechanical means, exclusion, etc., to prevent pests from becoming a problem.

Non-emergency notification

As required by Michigan Law, you will receive advanced

notice of non-emergency application of a pesticide (insecticide, fungicide, or herbicide), other than bait or gel formulation, which is made to the school, school grounds, or buildings. This advance notice of a pesticide application will be given 48-hours before the application by the following two methods:

- 1. Posting at the primary entrances to your child's school. The entrances that will be posted are the main entrance at each building where you would enter to go to the Principals office.
- 2. Posting in the common area located by the main office of the school.

Please note that notification is not given for use of sanitizers, germicides, disinfectants or anti-microbial cleaners. In certain emergencies, such as an infestation of stinging insects, pesticides may be applied without prior notice to prevent injury to students, but you will be promptly notified following any such application, via the two posting methods identified above.

Record review

You may review our Integrated Pest Management program and records of any pesticide application upon request by contacting Ron Bartz, Maintenance and Grounds Coordinator, 269-473-0681

or at rbartz@homeoftheshamrocks.org.

Parents or guardians of children attending the school are also entitled to receive the advance notice of a pesticide application, other than a bait or gel formulation, by first class United States mail postmarked at least three days before the application, if they so request. If you would like to be notified by mail, please contact the Operations Office at 269-473-0681. Please leave your name, mailing address and what school(s) your child or children attend and they will put your name on the advance notification by US Mail list.

No significant findings of asbestos in school buildings

In compliance with the 1989 US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA), we have routinely performed six month periodic surveillance of each of our school buildings for asbestos-containing building materials. The records and the asbestos management plans are on file in each school and

the administrative office.

Villa Environmental Consultants, Inc., which is licensed by the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth and the EPA, has been performing the inspections of all asbestos containing building materials as per the AHERA law. The last six month periodic inspection was in June of 2023 and the last three-year

inspection was conducted in July of 2022.

There were no significant findings during the most recent periodic surveillance or the re-inspection for the district. The asbestos materials in this district are currently in good condition and we will continue to manage them in place, as recommended by our accredited asbestos man-

agement planner. We are not planning asbestos removal during this fiscal year.

Inspection results on file

The results of the re-inspection are on file in the management plan manual in the school administrative offices. The public is welcome to view these during normal school hours Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m

New staff members are welcomed for the 2023-24 year

(Continued from Page 1)

tration, excelling as a Dean of Students and Assistant Principal at Clay High School in South Bend, IN. Her ability to establish meaningful connections with students, families, and the community was evident throughout her career. Beyond her professional commitments, Mrs. Wash finds joy in sports, family time, and the tranquility of rural life.

Other new hires are Jeff Yauchstetter, Assistant Superintendent for Innovation and Personalized Learning; Andi Lemon, Assistant Principal of Berrien Springs High School; Pete Anderson, Berrien Springs High School PBIS and CTE Director; Lyle Andrew, high school science teacher; Kristen Coffin, Sylvester Elementary Special Education teacher; Kristin

Dockerty, school counselor; Whitney Emeigh, MS Integrated Studies Teacher; Kyle Garland, Transportation Department dispatcher; Sheri Herter, Mars LRE Paraprofessional; Shelly Howell, high school EL Paraprofessional; Ben Illiff, high school Physical Education teacher; Brittney Johnson, Speech & Language pathologist; Garrett Jones, middle school

EL Paraprofessional; Lucas Manyard, middle school Math Interventionist teacher; Kesia Osei, Mars Elementary LRE Aide; Kyle Rago, middle school LRE Paraprofessional; Michael Riess, 7th Grade ELA; Rita Seay, Title One Parochial teacher; Carolyn St John, Virtual Speech & Language pathologist; Patty VanAntwerp, MTSS Specialist

Non-Discrimination & EEO Policy

Berrien Springs Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including sexual orientation and transgender identity), disability, age, height, weight, marital or family status, religion, military status, ancestry, genetic information or any other legally protected category, (collectively, "Protected Classes"), in its programs and activities, including employment opportunities.

Rocks Back in Action!

(Continued from Page 5)

Stephens at <u>jstephens@home-</u>oftheshamrocks.org.

Homecoming is scheduled for Friday, September 29th, against Buchanan. Game time is 7 p.m. Watch for information about homecoming festivities in the coming weeks.

MHSAA District Volleyball will be in the AAC the first week of November.

We are looking forward to another great fall season of Berrien Springs athletics.

Go Shamrocks!



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Superintendent's Corner



By working together, our community has the power to make this year incredible for all students!

(Continued from Page 1) are tried and true environments where students' needs are met with wrap-around services. This summer alone, our learning centers graduated over 840 students. With the knowledge and experience

we have in this space over the

last 12+ years, the success of

these programs will remain strong.

With the growth of our district, we have invested financial and people resources to renovate, remodel, and build new spaces for our students and staff in order to provide a world-class educational experience. We will be wrap-

ping up numerous construction projects in August and throughout the school year. Our connection to our community is paramount. We appreciate your patience as we complete these projects. We believe the finished products will bring great pride to our community.

In education, I want to share that I stand by two principles:

1. We are a Learning Organization, continuously learning and improving our practices to do better. Our focus is nurturing humans, and we must embody flexibility, adaptability, and the capacity to embrace change. Your insights and recommendations via surveys or family engagement nights are important to us.

2. We Must Collaborate. Collaboration is paramount—learning is social, and there-

fore teaching must be too. Our strength lies in our collective efforts as we learn, reflect, and set goals together.

I invite you to join me on this learning journey as I am committed to continuous growth and reflection. Together, we can achieve great things.

In closing, I look forward to an outstanding year with our BSPS team of high-performing professionals. We stand on the brink of extraordinary achievements, and by keeping our *Vision*, *Mission*, and *Goals* at the forefront, we will continue to be leaders in educational practices here and across the state.

Welcome to a new school year and enjoy the rest of your summer.

Remember, our community has the power to make this year incredible for all of our students.

Together, We Can!

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