



Commitment to
Excellence

THE COMMUNICATOR

A Quarterly Publication of Blissfield Community Schools



Commitment to
Excellence

From the Superintendent



As citizen leaders, individual school board members face complex and demanding challenges. They are alternately described as having the most important volunteer jobs in the country and facing the toughest challenge in elected American government. Yet school board members are just ordinary citizens with extraordinary dedication to our nation's public schools. All Michigan citizens should recognize the vital contributions of these men and women and the crucial role they play in the education of our children.

Public education is the backbone of American society, and local school boards are deeply rooted in U.S. tradition. It's the foundation on which our democracy was built. Today local school boards continue to do the most important work of their communities—that of educating our youth.

Their job is to establish a vision for the education program, design a structure to achieve that vision, ensure schools are accountable to the community and strongly advocate for continuous improvement in student learning. The job of a school board member is tough, the hours long and the thanks few and far between. Too often we're quick to criticize school board members without really understanding the complex nature of their decisions. Now's the time to thank them for their untiring efforts.

School board members come from a variety of backgrounds, yet they share a common goal—helping students achieve in school and life. As a state, Michigan has faced many challenges, but the key to a brighter future is a strong public education system.

Too often we forget about the personal sacrifices school board members make. Board members contribute hundreds and hundreds of hours each year leading their districts. The time spent in board meetings represents just a small fraction of the hours school board members spend leading their districts. Collectively, they spend significant hours on professional development to keep abreast of the latest trends in educational leadership, are deeply involved in community activities, and spend many hours at extracurricular events. They continually advocate for the children of our state, taking passionate pleas to legislators, speaking out against budget cuts and pushing for smart reforms.

The month of January marks the annual observance of School Board Recognition Month. This is a time to show our appreciation and begin to better understand how local trustees work together to prepare today's students to be tomorrow's leaders. Please join me saluting the men and

women who provide grassroots governance of Blissfield Community Schools.

Sincerely,

Scott D. Moellenberndt

January is School Board Recognition Month



Noel Eisenmann
President
(6 years)



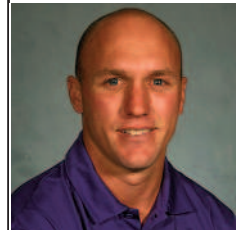
JoDee Friess
Vice President
(8 years)



Brian McEwan
Treasurer
(4 years)



Vicki Lombard
Secretary
(3 years)



Scott Abbott
Trustee
(2 years)



Bob Beckey
Trustee
(1 year)



Dave Brewer
Trustee
(1 year)

**Please join us in thanking our
school board members for their
dedicated service to Blissfield
Community Schools.**

VFW Patriot's Pen Competition

The VFW held its annual Patriot's Pen competition encouraging students to write an essay about "Being Proud of their Country." Brooke Pickles and Jacob Mason won the Post level competition with Erin Southward selected 1st runner-up, and Makayla Kaser 2nd runner-up.

Our Blissfield Middle School students were recognized by the VFW on Tuesday, December 13th. The students won Series EE U.S. Savings Bonds ranging from \$50.00 - \$100.00 and received framed certificates.

We wish our winners luck as they have their essays submitted to the next level of judging.



Makayla Kaser, Erin Southward, Jacob Mason, and Brooke Pickles represented Blissfield in this year's competition.

Energy Efficiency Pays

Blissfield Community Schools received a \$ 104,511.28 check from Consumers Energy for recent HVAC upgrades. In addition to the money received, it is estimated that the District will save between \$40,000 and \$67,000 on its annual energy consumption due to the upgraded energy efficient equipment installed throughout the school this year.



Teri VanSumeren, Manager of Energy Efficient Solutions and Donna Densmore, Account Manager for Consumer's Energy present a check to Operations Director, Tom Kasefang, Board of Education President, Noel Eisenmann, and Superintendent, Scott Moellenberndt at January's Board of Education Meeting.

So You Want to be a Zookeeper

A new school year begins with new 5th graders learning to be Zookeepers in our BELL (Blissfield Environmental Life Lab). A zookeeper's job is to feed, water and clean animals' cages or tanks. It is also their job to learn to handle our animals so they remain pleasant critters for all who wish to hold or touch them. The favorites of the BELL are the bearded dragons, snakes, geckos, and hamsters. There are a couple of animals that only a few students want to touch or hold. The rose-haired tarantulas and Madagascar hissing cockroaches are on the creepier side, but worth the reputation they bring to those who hold them. If you have a 5th grader at home, you are encouraged to ask them about their experiences in the BELL this year. Classes utilize the life lab to support their Life Science Learning.



Maddy Ward gives some love to Pancake Paul the Leopard Gecko and Chanse Reed shows off the Honduran Milk Snake.

National Honor Society News:

Pajama Rama sponsored by members of the National Honor Society and Link Crew raised \$825.14 for the Lenawee Community Foundation Fund for Homeless Education by allowing students who donated \$1 to wear their pajamas to school. All three buildings participated, with the Elementary School raising \$530.64, the Middle School raising \$143.25, and the High School \$164.45. This amount exceeded last year's total by nearly \$100.

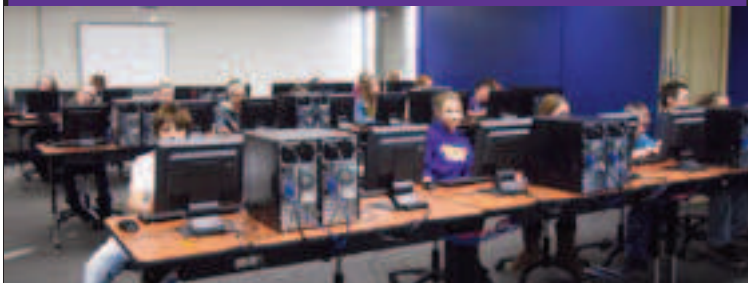
NHS is once again planning to host a Student vs. Staff basketball fundraiser this winter. Please contact Mrs. Breitner if you are interested in donating a basket for the silent auction. Last year this fundraiser generated over \$3000 for local and global causes, which we are hoping to exceed this year.



Blissfield students take an early lead in last year's staff vs. student basketball fundraiser, although the staff stormed from behind to win the game.

New Computer Labs Up and Running at BMS!

The Blissfield Middle School has been fortunate to receive two major grants within the last two years, allowing student computers to be upgraded. The first lab, which was constructed during the 2010-2011 school year, was funded through the Project Lead The Way curriculum grant. The new high powered student machines are equipped with the AutoDesk Inventor software, which allows students to create 3D images. The second lab was funded through the Innovative Secondary Schools Initiative Grant from the LISD for the 2011-2012 school year. This lab is a complete overhaul of a significantly outdated computer lab and is being used by students to create Photo Stories, presentations, conduct research and complete Criterion Writing essays. Students and staff have, and will continue to utilize these new facilities as technology continues to be an integral part of the education process at BMS.



This new lab was funded by an Innovative Secondary School Initiative Grant through the Lenawee Intermediate School District.



Project Lead the Way is a science, technology, engineering and mathematics lab used to create 3D models. This new curriculum was added to the middle school this year.

Sports Physicals

As the calendar flips from 2011 to 2012, it is time to begin anticipating sports physicals. For those whose insurance covers annual well checks/physicals, we would like to remind everyone that in order for a sport physical to apply for the upcoming 2012-13 school year, it must be given after April 15, 2012. If a student has a physical between now and April 15 to allow them to participate in a spring sport, they would need another physical before participating next school year. If at all possible, please delay on your physical until after April 15.

New Spirit Store

The Blissfield Athletic Department has partnered with the on-line spirit wear shop MyLocker to provide fans with an on-line shopping opportunity for Blissfield Spirit Wear. Please go to the school website: www.blissfieldschools.us and click on high school in the top line. Then click on Athletics in the left column followed by Spirit Items. This will bring you to a list of places where you can find spirit items either locally or on-line.

The on-line store, MyLocker will donate 12% of all sales back to the Blissfield Athletic Department. Find the Royals Shop logo to order on-line products. This store allows you to personalize and customize items with colors, numbers, names, and sports utilizing our Blissfield logo. It is fun to make your own spirit clothing and accessories.

ROYALS Shop
DESIGN YOUR GEAR FAST!
PERSONALIZE WITH YOUR NAME & NUMBER
Shop Now
MYLOCKER Custom Gear Store

College Goal Sunday FAFSA Assistance

Parents and students who are interested in getting help completing their FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid Forms) may attend a "College Goal Sunday" event at Siena Heights University on Sunday, February 12th from 2:00 -4:00 pm. The event will take place at Dominican Hall on the 3rd floor. Students and parents will be assisted with filling out their FAFSA forms. Please bring the following items with you to this meeting:

- Student's FAFSA PIN number (can be assigned by going to www.fafsa.edu.gov/ and clicking in the PIN site).
- Student's Social Security Number
- Parent/Guardian's Social Security Number
- Student's Driver's License
- Student's W-2 form or other records of money earned
- Student's 2011 Federal Income Tax Return
- Parent/Guardian's 2011 Federal Income Tax Return
- Spouse's 2011 Federal Income Tax Return (if filing separately)
- Student's untaxed income records
- Student's 2011 bank statements
- 2011 business and investment mortgage information, business and farm records, stock, bond, and other investments.

Veterans Honored

Blissfield Second Graders honored local veterans during Veteran's Day, on November 11th. This presentation to our heroes was in conjunction with the Social Studies civics curriculum highlighting the Core Democratic Values of Patriotism, Diversity, Common Good, and Liberty. The children were introduced to the importance our military plays in maintaining our American freedoms.



Vets: Don Marcus, Tony Guzman, Sam Pooley, Jim Brown, Donn Cranor, and Bob Knoblauch.

Juniors & Seniors Hear Top 10 Career Presentation

Blissfield High School Juniors and Seniors recently listened to Ms. Katie Scowden, from the ITT Technological Institute as she provided an interactive presentation on the top ten careers for the classes of 2012 and 2013. Ms. Scowden explored job growth and availability, salaries, and education as it relates to job readiness. Her presentation was timely as many seniors are currently making college and career choices while junior class members are beginning the scheduling process for next school year.

Scholarships

- Information about scholarships for seniors is kept on file in the CCC. Seniors are encouraged to check the file weekly. An electronic file is available on the BHS Website and all new scholarships are displayed on the flat screen monitor in the cafeteria daily. Three valuable websites for scholarship and school financing are: <http://www.michigan.gov/mistudentaid> (State of Michigan Paying for College webpage), <http://www.lisd.us/Scholarships/index.aspx> (Lenawee County Scholarships), and <http://www.collegeview.com>.

- Ms. Christine Scott presented to the BHS seniors on Monday January 9th regarding the Lenawee County Education Foundation Scholarships. This year all Lenawee County Education Foundation Scholarships, recommendations, and other pertinent information must be completed on-line. Ms. Scott instructed our seniors how to best use the new format.

- Ms. Lisa Hasselschwartz, from the University of Toledo, presented a financial aid workshop to BHS parents and students on Monday, January 9th at 7:00pm in the BHS Cafeteria. Ms. Hasselschwartz addressed financial aid and how to best complete the FASFA (Free Application for Federal Aid) form.

Michigan Merit Exam

The Michigan Merit Examination (MME) assesses students in grade 11 (and eligible students in grade 12) based on Michigan high school standards. It is administered each spring, and consists of three components:

- ACT Plus Writing® college entrance examination
- WorkKeys® job skills assessments in reading, mathematics, and "locating information"
- Michigan-developed assessments in mathematics, science, and social studies

The dates for this year's administration are March 6th – 8th, 2012. The ACT test provides a college reportable ACT score at no cost to the student. In addition, the WorkKeys® test is an opportunity for students to earn a National Career Readiness Certificate. All students are required to take this test during their junior year and a student may not take the MME more than once, pursuant to new Michigan law. If you have questions about the examination or your child's eligibility to test, please contact the Counseling Office.

As with every test, students should be sure to get a great night's rest and eat a good breakfast the week of MME testing!

Scheduling

BHS student scheduling for the 2012-13 school year will take place in late January and early February 2012. Student Request Forms (which must be signed by both the student and parent/guardian) will be processed and the electronic scheduler used to assign class periods. Students and parents are reminded to look closely at the Career Pathway and Course Description Handbook when filling out the Student Request Forms. Many careers and/or acceptance into a college or trade school are influenced significantly by the course work taken by the student.

Plan and Explore

More than ever before, it is important that all students have the skills needed to be successful in college and the workplace. Becoming college-ready does not happen overnight; students develop these skills by taking rigorous courses in high school. Plan and Explore are assessments that help 9th and 10th graders build high school course plans that will prepare them for college and work, and introduce them to career options that are relevant to them. In addition, students will receive feedback on their academic preparedness as compared to the college readiness benchmarks that have been established by the ACT Organization.

Blissfield High School will administer Plan to all 10th graders and Explore to all 9th graders on Tuesday, March 6, 2012.

Website Update

By visiting our website, www.blissfieldschools.us, you can access many of your students' accounts including Meal Magic, AlertNow, and Lunch Deposit. You can also visit district, building, and teacher pages. Please check regularly for updates.

“Beauty and the Beast” Comes to Blissfield High School

It is with deepest pride and greatest pleasure that we, The Blissfield Community Schools Department of Fine Arts, invite you to attend the Blissfield High School Production of our 2012 Spring Musical...



Thursday, March 22nd at 7:00 p.m., Friday, March 23rd at 7:00 p.m. and Saturday, March 24th at 3:00p.m. and 7:00 p.m.

Reserved Seating Strongly Recommended! Call Jolene Witt at (517) 486-4420, ext. 226 after February 27th.

Voices for Change



Voices for change is a group of middle school students recommended by teachers. They focus on ways to help make their school and community a better and more positive place. This year the youth summit was held on November 8th at MIS. Approximately 100 students from Lenawee County participated. During the day, they participated in team building activities, learned about their personalities through a program called "Real Colors," and listened to a presentation from the president of MIS who spoke to the students about reaching for their goals and dreams. He later allowed the students to walk on the raceway, and even allowed the school bus to take a lap around the track!



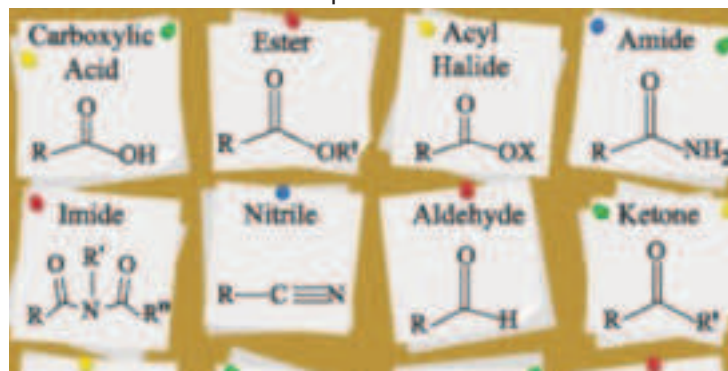
Mr. Hollandsworth Honored

The Lenawee Intermediate School District recently named Mark Hollandsworth, Instrumental Music Teacher at Blissfield Community Schools, as Educator of the Week. Under the direction of Mr. Hollandsworth, Blissfield's band has consistently received Division 1 ratings at both marching band festivals and solo and ensemble competitions. Since Mr. Hollandsworth joined the staff four years ago, the Blissfield band has continued to grow in numbers as more students choose to participate in the program. This past year a color guard was added to the marching band. An annual collage concert was also added to the band's events schedule and is one of the highlights of the band season, delighting the senses of all who attend. This year's concert will be held on May 16th. Congratulations to Mr. Hollandsworth upon receiving this honor.



iPod Touches in the Classroom

High school special education students have begun using iPods purchased through a grant from the Blissfield Foundation for Educational Excellence. Two iPods contain applications to help with various classroom assignments such as a periodic table, scientific calculator, a flashcard app, dictionary, and map quiz programs just to name a few. The iPod touch is easy to use and provides instant information through their WiFi connection to the Internet. Students in Mrs. Miller-Ayers classroom seem better motivated to complete their homework with the help of the iPod.



This Old Gingerbread House

Students from Mrs. Porter and Miss Shearer's class performed a musical for family members, staff, and even some high school students about what happens when the woodland animals start eating Hansel and Gretel's house.

Special thanks to Mrs. Linn as she took time out of her busy schedule 3-4 times a week over two months to visit the elementary school and work with the students. Each student had a part to play as they learned lines, music, and movements for the musical.

The play was awesome. Kudos to Mrs. Linn and her helpers that helped build the set, run the music, and assisted with the show. Thanks also to Mr. Johnson for allowing the multiage class to again utilize the high school in order to perform. We could not have done any of it without you.

Our students continue to demonstrate their love for music and theater under the direction of both Mr. Barrus and Mrs. Linn. Thanks for bringing our students to life on the stage.



Hansel was played by Luke Nofzinger and Gretel was played by Sydney Ricker.



Mrs. Wanice Linn accompanies the students of Mrs. Shearer and Mrs. Porter's class as they sing.

Reminder to all parents:

Applications for free and reduced price meals are available throughout the school year at any of our school offices or online at www.lunchapplication.com.

Blissfield Bowling Club

This winter marks the beginning of a new team at Blissfield High School. The Blissfield Bowling Club made its debut Thursday, January 5 when they competed against Onsted in the first ever varsity bowling match for the Royals. The club is coached by David Southwell and Chuck Campbell and the team bowls at Rich Lanes. To date, the bowlers have competed against Onsted, Sand Creek and Madison schools with more matches to come throughout the winter season.



J.C. Clark prepares to take his turn during the Bowling Club's first home match at Rich Lanes.

Emergency Closings and Delays

If the school must be closed or the opening delayed because of inclement weather or other conditions, the school will notify you via AlertNow Alert System and also on the following radio and television stations:

WABJ - 1490 AM Radio
WQTE - 95.3 FM Radio
WLEN - 103.9 FM Radio

WTVG - 13 ABC Television
WTOL - 11 CBS Television

Blissfield High School Graduates Loan Program

Blissfield High School Graduates have available a unique student loan program (Bachmayer & Flora Ellis Fund).

The criteria for the 0% A.P.R. loan are as follows:

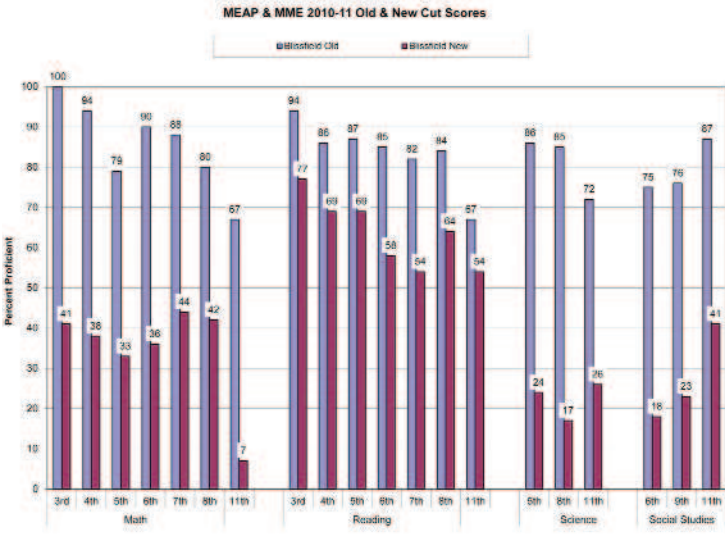
1. Your child must graduate from Blissfield Community Schools.
2. Continued advances of \$2000 per college semester will continue as long as your child maintains a minimum grade point average of C or above.
3. 12 credit hours or more must be maintained to receive continued advances.
4. 0% A.P.R. up to 5 years from the time the loan was taken out.

*Other rules may apply and can be discussed with our friendly staff in the Blissfield Community Schools Administrative Offices (517) 486-2205.

New State Cut Scores

The State of Michigan is looking to improve its student college readiness scores (a benchmark score achieved on the ACT Exam that indicates an incoming college freshmen's chances of achieving a B or higher in the corresponding credit bearing college course) by increasing the cut scores which are used to determine proficiency on the state given MEAP and MME exams.

With global competition continuing to escalate for projected future jobs, the State of Michigan, as well as the United States of America, is raising the bar on job readiness and employment skills when students graduate from college. A big factor in raising the expectations includes, hoisting the cut scores (minimum score needed for a student to be classified as proficient) for several of the standardized tests given by the State of Michigan, including the MEAP and MME tests. The graph below shows the percentage of students who were proficient using the old cut scores on the MEAP and MME tests, as well as the percentage of students who would have been proficient had the new cut scores been in place for these same tests. As depicted by the graph, students and schools can expect to see lower percentages of students achieving proficient levels in each of the core subject areas, while schools and students adjust to the changes in expectations.



Debate Season 2011

The 2011 Blissfield High School Debate team (pictured below) placed 3rd out of 20 teams in the Lenawee County Debate Tournament consisting of the following resolution: the United States Federal Government should substantially increase its exploration and or development of space beyond the Earth's mesosphere. Congratulations from Coach Pooley.



Night Without a Home

In October, Blissfield Elementary School students once again participated in the Lenawee County Mission's "One Night Without A Home" project. Our students designed "homeless boxes" that were then used for an over-night fundraiser. Members of the community slept in these boxes overnight to raise awareness about homelessness.



"Beverly Hillbillies" a Great Success

Audience members were roaring with laughter as Blissfield High School students performed in this fall's performance of "The Beverly Hillbillies." Mr. Ricker directed this standing room only retelling of Jed and the rest of the Clampett family striking it rich and moving to Beverly Hills.



Jed and the Clampetts debate selling their land and moving to California.

Scheduling

BHS and BMS eighth grade students are in the process of requesting classes and scheduling for the Lenawee Tech Center for the 2011-2012 school year. The preliminary scheduling sheets, which must garner a parent or guardian signature, are due to the CCC at the beginning of February. Tech Center applications will be due shortly thereafter. Thanks to the staff, students and families for putting in the time to select courses that will best meet students' needs.

Adopt a Family Program

For the past two years, the 2nd grade and multiage age class have adopted kids for Christmas. This year was no exception. Students collected gifts to help support 14 other children have their best Christmas ever. Each received at least two new outfits, socks, underwear, hats, mittens and 6-8 new toys.

The shopping was completed by the 2nd grade teachers at Kohl's with some clearance toys already being purchased and stored for next year.

Each student then helped wrap presents and package them for delivery!

Thank you to the parents and other family members who supported this endeavor and helped to make it a success!



Maddie Bauman, Madison Stubli, Alexandra Roberts, and Jacob Reed proudly display the gifts they donated to families in need.

Blissfield Community Schools District Calendar of Upcoming Events

Feb 3	Coming Home
Feb 4	HS District Solo & Ensemble
Feb 8	Student Count Day
Feb 11	District Wrestling Tournament
Feb 20	No School - Professional Development
Feb 20	Board of Education Meeting
Feb 23	Pre Festival Band Concert
Feb 24	Progress Reports Distributed
Mar 5-9	ES Book Fair
Mar 6	MME Testing Begins
Mar 12	Winter Athletic Awards Night
Mar 12-14	Fifth Grade Camp
Mar 13	Kindergarten Round-Up
Mar 16-17	District Band Festival
Mar 19	Board of Education Meeting
Mar 22-24	High School Musical
Mar 23	3rd Quarter Marking Period Concludes
Mar 24	State Solo and Ensemble
Mar 30	Report Cards Distributed
Apr 2-6	Spring Recess
Apr 9	School Resumes
Apr 16	Board of Education Meeting
Apr 19	No School
	K-12 Parent/Teacher Conferences
Apr 20	No School - Good Friday

Facility Upgrades

Finishing touches are underway on the districts new HVAC systems. The Elementary building had a new high efficiency boiler installed over the summer while the middle and high school underwent major renovations. Included in the middle school project was a complete overhaul of the existing heating system with the addition of a high efficient boiler and air conditioning. High efficient lighting and new dropped ceilings were also installed. At the High school, asbestos abatement was carried out prior to the demolition of the 50 year old steam heating system. New classroom ventilators, along with the high efficient boilers were installed. Variable frequency drives(VFD) were installed rather than less efficient motors for the system's pumps. Renovations to the high school gym included new high impact tectum ceiling panels, high efficient lighting with occupancy sensors, two rooftop heating units and new ductwork. Improvements to the building envelope including new windows and additional insulation at the high school were completed as well. It is estimated that the District's energy savings from these recent improvements will be in the neighborhood of \$ 67,000 annually.



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