

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

Shamrock Connection

BACK TO SCHOOL

2020-2021 Newsletter Volume 10, Issue 1

Berrien Springs Public Schools

Welcome back to school!

**By David Eichberg
Superintendent**

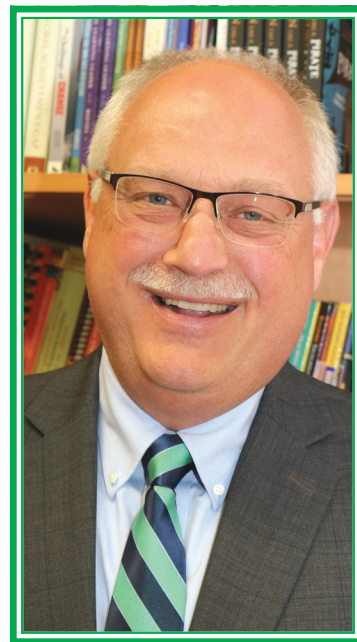
Ever wonder what our lives would be like without school? I have. The vision in my mind is not assuring or comforting. The start of a new school year is an annual event many in our society and culture look forward to with renewed anticipation and excitement each year! In spite of the lingering effects of COVID-19, the start to the 2021-22 school should look and sound similar to that of a normal school year.

Our district's goal is to meet the learning needs of all our students regardless of their interests, abilities,

skills and talents. The Berrien Springs Public Schools vision statement, *"Inspiring students to think, learn, achieve and care in a global society,"* motivates us every day to serve the needs of our students and school families. In our efforts to continue meeting the diverse needs of our students and community, our district will continue on the journey toward becoming a Competency-Based Education school system. Competency-Based Education will serve as the pathway to personalizing learning for every student, the district's ultimate goal. We will continue to provide updates and communication about

Competency-Based Education throughout the school year.

This "Back to School" edition of the Shamrock Connection is filled with information needed to start the new school year successfully. There are many new faces, new programs, new looks to facilities, and renewed relationships reflected in the following pages. Please read and review the contents carefully. Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your school superintendent. This role continues to be an honor that I value and respect. We are oping our students have a fulfilling and successful school year! **Go Shamrocks!**



David Eichberg

New Arts and Athletic Center will serve students well into the future

**By Debbie Haight
BSPS Correspondent**

With less than a year to go to the completion of the new Arts and Athletic Center, work is progressing on a number of fronts at the new facility. The \$19.7 million project is being funded by a bond issue approved by voters in 2018.

People driving by the high school over the last year have been watching the new center rise up and take shape. They have seen the construction of foundations progress to masonry walls, roof structure, and brick veneer. The project seems to progress with each passing week on the 76,559 square-foot construction project.

While there's been less action to see on the outside in recent weeks, people can rest assured that progress is continuing day-to-day and week-to-week as the completion date of March, 2022 gets closer.

"Progress has not slowed by any means, but the pedestrian may not have the ability to view the interior improvements that take place inside



Maintenance and Grounds Coordinator Ron Bartz looks over the plans as progress continues on the new Arts and Athletic Center.

the structure," Superintendent David Eichberg said.

DJ Beckering of Beckering Construction has overseen the construction side of the project. He gave a progress report on the project to school board members in late May.

"It's a wonderful project, it's really coming along nicely," he said. "We're at 50 percent completion."

He said the project has been moving along smoothly after a brief rough patch at the beginning when the state held up the permitting needed to get started.

"We've made up that time and we're now back on our original schedule," he said. "It was a great winter for construction, we got a lot done ... I'm excited, I hope everyone else is too."

Carmi Design Group architect and
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New Arts and Athletic Center will serve students well into the future

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district consultant Tony Leininger has spearheaded the project for the last few years, helping the district with the original proposal put before voters in 2018 as well as the finetuning of the design work in 2019 and early 2020.

“Mechanical ductwork, plumbing, and electrical work that make up the working infrastructure have all been making great strides,” Leininger said. “Even now as we turn the calendar and look forward to interior finishes such as painting of the hallways, polishing of the concrete floors and setting the grid for the ceilings has already begun.”

He reported that great strides

will continue to be made toward a March, 2022 completion date. He identified work in the gymnasium, auditorium, and lobby as areas that still have 10 months of construction ahead of them.

In addition, he said elements such as the exterior window glazing and entry systems, the lighting and technology systems, the basketball and other gymnasium equipment will still be added in coming months.

Some of the biggest progress is expected to be seen with the auditorium side of the center.

“The auditorium development will also see the progression from its current state of a dirt floor to the

pouring of a concrete sloped floor for upper and lower seating areas,” he said.

In addition, he said work in that area will include the suspension of ceiling acoustical clouds and the stage rigging system containing 25-line sets for backdrops, lighting, and curtains within the fly stage.

Leininger said the AAC will also be busy this fall with work going on throughout the facility. The months of October and November will be busy with hanging interior doors and hardware, as well as installing plumbing fixtures in all locker rooms and restrooms, he said.

Looking past the fall, he said December and January will see the

installation of the gymnasium and stage wood floor systems, as well as the completion of interior millwork and other wood finishes in the lobby and auditorium in advance of the project end date.

When completed, Superintendent Eichberg said the community can expect to see a state of the art facility that will serve district students well into the future. The performing arts side of the Arts and Athletic Center will give students much needed space for both classes and performances by the bands and choirs, while the athletic side will provide students with more practice, training and competition space.

New staff members join the district as Shamrocks for 2021-2022 school year

Please welcome the following new administrators, teachers, and staff to Berrien Springs Public School District. They are looking forward to meeting students, parents, and the community in the upcoming school year.

Dr. Tom Bruce has been hired as the new assistant superintendent for Berrien Springs Public Schools. He has a Masters in Teaching and Learning from Marygrove University in Michigan, and a Doctorate in Educational Leadership from Azusa Pacific University California. Tom has been in education for 26 years, and he and his wife, Kirstin, have two daughters, Madison and Andia.

Adam Carr is the new BSHS Assistant Principal and Career Technology Education (CTE) Director. He has 15 years of experience in the classroom and is a graduate of Central Michigan University with a Bachelor's degree in Industrial Education and Construction Management with an emphasis in secondary education. Mr. Carr and his family look forward to being a part of the Berrien Springs community.

Val Carr is the Virtual Academy Director. She has 14 years of

teaching English Language Arts (ELA) and computer-based elective teacher. In the last two years, Mrs. Carr was ELA high school curriculum coach. She received a double major in history and English Language Arts with a secondary emphasis and a middle level education minor from Central Michigan University. She also earned her Masters in Literacy Studies at Grand Valley State University and is currently working towards an Ed.D. degree. Originally from Niles, she is excited to be back in Berrien County and serve students and staff through the Berrien Springs Virtual Academy.

John Legus is the Director of Transportation. Over the past 25 years, he has worked as a school bus driver and administrator, and spent four years with the Sheriff's Department as a Corrections officer while remaining a substitute bus driver. His transportation career has been focused on school bus safety and student success. Mr. Legus was awarded the Transportation Supervisor of the Year award by the Michigan Association of Pupil Transportation in 2015. He and his wife have five kids and he looks forward to being part of this



Dr. Tom Bruce

community.

Joe Stephens is the BSHS Athletic Director. He has been a high school math teacher at Coloma Junior High and high school for the past 13 years. He has served in many assistant coaching capacities in boys and girls programs; and he was the head varsity football coach at Coloma from 2015-2020.

Michael Schmidt is the high school Algebra teacher. Originally from Mason, Michigan, he received his Bachelors from Central Michigan in secondary education with endorsements in Mathematics and Physics. He spent the last six years teaching math and STEM at Lawton High School. He enjoys reading, golf, hockey, and fishing.

Kourtney Stuckey is the Seventh Grade Resource Room teacher at the Middle School. She graduated with her Master's degree from Grand Valley State University and received her Bachelor of Science degree from Western Michigan University in Special Education. Mrs. Stuckey enjoys spending time with her family and friends, watching her children in extracurricular activities, going to the beach, and traveling.

Calea Dominello is the seventh grade Math teacher. She is the proud mom of two sons, Dylan and Ryan, and has a daughter-in-law, Elizabeth. She graduated from IUSB with a BA in mathematics and from the University of Notre Dame with a Masters in Education. She has been teaching grades 5-8 math for 13 years, the last six years as a

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Adam Carr



John Legus



Val Carr



Joe Stephens

New staff members join the district

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8th grade homeroom teacher, and served as the assistant principal at a small catholic school, Saint Jude. She loves traveling, reading, going to the beach or anywhere there is water and sunshine.

Abby Sandmann is the high school Interventionist English teacher. She graduated from Berrien Springs in 2006 then went on to get her Bachelor's from Michigan State. She earned her teaching certificate from Western Michigan University and then moved to Kansas for five years where she taught at Great Bend High School and taught the last two years at Dowagiac Union High School. She is excited to be back at Berrien Springs.

Ryan Mohney is the 7th Grade Integrated Studies teacher. He is a former graduate of Western Michigan University. He has taught math, science, and art at the Middle School level. This is his 19th year in education. In his spare time, he likes to be as active as he can. He is excited to be a Shamrock and looks forward to his first year in Berrien Springs Middle School!

Emily Laukus is the Elementary Physical Education teacher. She

has been a physical education teacher for the last eight years and most recently taught elementary PE at Eau Claire. Emily has a 3 year old daughter and they enjoy spending time with family.

Sandy Harner is the Middle School 8th grade teacher. She is a graduate of Western Michigan University with a degree in Education and a Master's degree from Walden University in Curriculum Instruction and Assessment. She has taught at Eau Claire for 13 years in grades 5-8 English and 5th and 9th grade Science. She loves spending time with family and friends. She also enjoys soapmaking, quilting, and reading.

Kristi Etter is the DHH Teacher at the Middle School and Sylvester Elementary teacher. She has been in deaf education for 25+ years. She received her degree from Ball State University and her National Board Certification in 2017 in the area of Exceptional Needs. She has two grown boys that stayed in NE Indiana and her hobbies are cooking and baking.

Ivette Ruban is the new Speech Pathologist serving the high school, middle school, and Sylvester

Elementary. She was born and raised in Berrien Springs, Michigan and graduated with her Masters of Science in Speech-Language Pathology from Andrews University in August 2021. She loves cats, traveling, and going to the beach. She looks forward to getting to know each of her students and helping them communicate effectively with their environment.

Other new hires are Meghan Anderson, Kindergarten teacher; Theresa Beaurain, Title One Professional; Stacie Bladen, Social Worker; Beth Boven, 7th Grade Integrated Studies teacher; Wanda Cannon, Success VLC Social Worker; Nicole Dudley, 4th Grade teacher; Stefanie Fitzgerald, Third Grade teacher; Shalanda Flowers, Bus Driver; Brian Gelder, Link Learning Virtual teacher; Katie Gould, Third Grade teacher; Jared Graybeil, Social Worker for Success; Alexadrea Herrington, Link Learning Paraprofessional; Dion Holmes, Success VLC Social Worker; Stacie Hutchingon, Link Learning Paraprofessional; Quinten Johnson, MS MICI Classroom Paraprofessional; Devonte Jones, Discovery Academy Workforce

Coordinator; Nicole Kaiser, High School Counselor; Greg Kindt, Success VLC teacher; Alexandria King, Success VLC Social Worker; Patricia Knuth, Link Learning Virtual Teacher; Kim Kubatzke, 8th Grade Integrated Studies Teacher; Erma Marschke, Virtual Academy Elementary teacher; Jordan Moore, Link Learning Virtual teacher; Leslie Morrison, High School Secretary; Ily Murrillo, Paraprofessional; Andrew Radenbaugh, Discovery Academy Teacher; Juan Rodriguez, Bus Driver; MaryNell Rosenboom, Sylvester Elementary Social Worker; Jenna Ruddell, Virtual Academy Secretary; Desiree Schueler, Mars Elementary Secretary; Brenda Siebold, Sylvester Elementary Title One Paraprofessional; Christina Stackman, Mars Elementary DHH Paraprofessional; Rachelle Swackhamer, Second Grade Teacher; Jacqueline Tidey, High School Resource Room Teacher; Ashlie Wattles, Sylvester Elementary Secretary; Mary Wilcoxon, Virtual Academy teacher; Ted Zahrt, 7th Grade World History teacher; and Amber Zebell, High School Science teacher.



Berrien Springs High School Assistant Band Director Adam Emeigh, Color Guard Captain Izzy Constable and Color Guard senior Morgan Shembarger, Drum Major Lauren Geates, trumpeter Tristan Shepler, trumpeter Javier Contreras-Ramirez, tenor saxophone player Jeffrey Blakeman, clarinet player Aldrich Mongkau, mellophone player Lucas Bowen, base guitarist Hannah Moler, and Director Kelly Rosselit worked together on *Dangerous Games* during band camp.

“Dangerous Games” is the 2021 festival theme for the Berrien Springs High School Marching Band

By Kelly Rosselit
BSHS Band Director

The Shamrock Marching Band is back! The group came together August 2-6 for a very successful band camp and is looking forward to a fun and exciting marching season. This year’s show is *“Dangerous Games.”* It is packed with great

music, including pieces by the Foo Fighters, Elvis, and Elton John. In this show, our color guard captain, senior Isabela Constable, goes rogue and begins causing havoc and chaos throughout the band. The rest of the band and color guard members must catch her before she completely upends the show! Will

they catch her? Will Izzy win? Find out throughout the season!

In October, the band will perform at home football games and three marching competitions: October 9th at the Lakeshore Invitational, October 12 at the MSBOA Festival at Niles High School, and October 16th at the Vicksburg Invitational.

This year, the band is led by drum majors senior Lauren Geates and junior Klay Raschke. Soloists are sophomore Zack Hance on the trumpet, and junior Jon Clough on the tenor saxophone. *Go Shamrocks!*



Practicing *“Dangerous Games”* are trumpeters Jamir Flie, Collin Craig, Jonathan Orlando, and Zackary Hance.

Integrated Pest Management Notification is provided in advance of non-emergency applications



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.

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).

You may review our Integrated Pest Management program and records of any pesticide application upon request by contacting Ron Bartz, Maintenance 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 3 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.

Asbestos inspections occur each year in the district

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 6 month periodic inspection was in December of 2018 and the last 3-year inspection was conducted in June of 2019.

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

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 (M-F 8:00 a.m.–3:30 p.m.).

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Visit our website at:
www.homeoftheshamrocks.org
or contact us
at (269) 471-2891



SUMMERTIME LEARNING AT SYLVESTER--Keana Smith and Janiya Taylor worked on their math skills with teacher Jessica Schoeneich.

Students had fun learning together while they spent time at the Speech and Language Camp held at Mars Elementary

By Ashley Porter
M.A., CCC-SLP,
Speech-Language
Pathologist

This summer, several students at Berrien Springs Public Schools were given a unique opportunity to continue to make progress in the areas of speech and language such as articulation, receptive/expressive language, pragmatics, phonemic awareness, etc.

Speech and Language Summer Camp was offered to students who currently receive speech and language services as part of an IEP in grades preschool through 6th grade. This opportunity was created as a way to help students continue to make improvements with their speech and language goals throughout the summer. Students work so hard throughout the school year to grow and accomplish their goals, we wanted to offer a way for the learning to continue all year long!

The Speech and Language Summer Camp was run by myself, Ashley Porter, Speech-Language Pathologist at Mars Elementary, and Katia Ozuna, Speech-Language Pathologist and teacher for the Speech and Language Impaired Preschool Program. We were able to establish a partnership with Andrews University. Graduate students studying speech-language pathology completed their summer internships during our camp.

Each day, students participated in large group activities that focused on whole body movement and general receptive/expressive language enrichment. We had play based free time activities outside to target peer interactions and social communication skills. Students also participated in small group lessons to target their specific speech/language skills.

Students and staff had so much fun this summer and we are glad that we were able to spend time together learning!



Speech and Language Pathologist Ashley Porter works with Zephyr Hart and Ellee Latino-Powell.



Speech Pathologist and Certified Teacher Katia Ozuna works with Leah Falak and Caleb Cramer.



The students did yoga through story-telling in the Mars Community Center as part of their Speech and Language Summer Camp.



2021-22 BERRIEN SPRINGS PUBLIC SCHOOL YEAR CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER

September 3 & 6 LABOR DAY HOLIDAY, NO SCHOOL

OCTOBER

October 6 Early Release (2 hours)
October 29 End of 1st Marking Period

NOVEMBER

November 3 Full Day, PM Parent-Teacher Conferences
November 4 Half Day for Students, Afternoon & Evening Conferences
November 5 Half Day for Students & Staff
November 17 Early Release
November 24-26 THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY, NO SCHOOL

DECEMBER

December 1 Early Release
December 17-Dec 31 WINTER HOLIDAY BREAK, NO SCHOOL

JANUARY

January 3 Classes Resume
January 17 NO SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY FOR STAFF
January 20 HALF DAYS FOR MS/HS STUDENTS for Exams, Teacher Record Day
January 21 HALF DAY ALL STUDENTS, Virtual Teacher Records Day End of 2nd Marking Period, End of 1st Semester

FEBRUARY

February 16 Early Release

MARCH

March 9 Early Release
March 21 – 25 SPRING BREAK, NO SCHOOL
March 28 CLASSES RESUME

APRIL

April 1 End of the 3rd marking period
April 6 HALF DAY FOR STUDENTS, PM Parent-Teacher Conferences Elementary Exhibition Night for Secondary
April 15 GOOD FRIDAY, NO SCHOOL
April 20 Early Release

MAY

May 30 MEMORIAL DAY, NO SCHOOL

JUNE

June 3 Half Days for Students Pre-K - 12, MS/HS Semester Exams
June 6 Half Days for Students Pre-K - 12, MS/HS Semester Exams
June 7 LAST DAY OF SCHOOL, End of 4th Marking Period End of 2nd Semester; Half Day Students Pre-K - 12, MS/HS Semester Exams, Virtual Teacher Records Day

2021-22 BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING SCHEDULE

July 22, 2021	Mars Community Center
August 12, 2021	Mars Community Center
August 26, 2021	Mars Community Center
September 9, 2021	Virtual Academy
October 7, 2021	Virtual Academy
October 21, 2021	Virtual Academy
November 4, 2021	Virtual Academy
November 18, 2021	Virtual Academy
December 16, 2021	Virtual Academy
January 20, 2022	Mars Community Center
February 3, 2022	Virtual Academy
February 17, 2022	Sylvester Elementary
March 17, 2022	Virtual Academy
April 7, 2022	Middle School
April 21, 2022	Virtual Academy
May 5, 2022	High School
May 19, 2022	Virtual Academy
June 2, 2022	Virtual Academy
June 9, 2022	STEM Central Conference Room
June 16, 2022	Virtual Academy (8:00 AM Board Retreat, 2:00 PM Budget Hearing & 2:30 PM Board Meeting)
July 21, 2022	Virtual Academy



Show your Shamrock spirit at several special home events



Show your shamrock spirit and cheer on our Shamrock football team! We are planning the following events at our Home football games:

- Friday, September 17 vs. Loy Norrix High School - Alumni Night (Calling All Alumni)
- Friday, September 24 vs. Watervliet High School - Rocket Football Night
- Friday, October 1 vs. Buchanan High School - Homecoming Night
- Friday, October 8 vs. South Haven High School - Senior Night

Please join us for our home football games as we celebrate together with these groups. **Go Shamrocks!**

Berrien Springs Public Schools
One Sylvester Avenue
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Berrien Springs, MI 49103

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It's a Great Time to Be a Shamrock!

By Joe Stephens
BSHS 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 2021-22 seasons. There has been a constant stream of athletes and teams working out, lifting weights, and competing in open gyms and scrimmages. As school quickly approaches, our fall athletic teams are eager to get into regular season competition. This is certainly shaping up to be an exciting start to the athletic year.

We have a very dedicated fall coaching staff; all of these coaches are committed to the development of our athletes as people and players.

Coaching varsity football is Elliot Uzelac, head coach, with assistance from Ryan Garton, Larry Jackson, Devontae Jones, Ben Illif, and Kelly Branch. Coaching junior varsity football is Doug O'Dell, head coach, and assistant coach Mike Villwock.

Coaching varsity soccer is Octavio Latino.

Coaching varsity volleyball is Renee Vorrath and she will be assisted by Emily Laukus. Coaching junior varsity volleyball is Courtney Vorrath.

Coaching cross country is new coach Brad Wurzel. Brad is a Shamrock graduate who brings a lot of positive energy

to the program. We are happy to welcome him to our fall coaching staff, and look forward to working with him and the success of his athletes.

Coaching the tennis team is head coach David Shembarger, and he is assisted by Brian Shembarger and Heather Shembarger.

The Sideline Cheerleading coach is Laurie White.

Sports are underway, and I encourage all our Shamrock fans to come out and support our student athletes!

Find our up-to-date schedules at www.shamrocksathletics.com.



Shamrock soccer player Josiah Pittman speeds past Zech Gardner during his team's recent game against Howardsville. Pittman scored two early goals in the first half.