



# PIRATE PRIDE!

## BLACK RIVER LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Proudly Serving the Communities of Albion, Cinnamon Lake, Homerville, Huntington, Spencer and Sullivan.

June 2019

### Message from the Superintendent



The local communities that make up the Black River Local School District were proud to watch 110 students graduate on Memorial Day weekend from Black River High School. We again extend our congratulations to the Class of 2019 in earning their high school diploma as well as the

families and friends who encouraged them to achieve this wonderful life milestone.

This graduation concluded another successful year of education and participation in school activities, allowing graduates to have a tremendous number of opportunities made uniquely available to them as they navigate future plans. These opportunities included over \$2 million dollars of scholarship money and acceptance into additional technical training and placement, college, a chosen field of study or the armed services.

Our school community is more than proud of the high standards that were achieved by these students as they make their mark on the future.

As we head into the summer months, the central office and building-level administration will be busy preparing for the 2019-2020 school year, including performing deferred maintenance, developing and providing professional development opportunities, working on curriculum enhancements, reviewing the recently released student achievement data and developing a plan for the implementation of a Specific Educational Learning Classroom.

In the event that you require information about the district or need to make changes to a student's enrollment and/or other miscellaneous items, the Black River Local School offices will be open during the summer months as we prepare for the first day of school.

Thanks for a great year. We will see you all August 27!

Sincerely,  
Chris A. Clark, Superintendent

#WeAreBR



### SCHOOL CALENDAR

#### June

- 27 Board of Education Meeting, High School Media Center - 7-9 p.m.
- 29 Al "Buz" Anderson Fallen Fullbackers Memorial 5K Run, Black River Cross Country Course - 8:30 a.m.

#### July

- 15-19 Safety Town, BREC - 9-11 a.m.
- 16 Fall Sports Meeting, BREC - 6 p.m.
- 18 Board of Education Meeting, High School Media Center - 7-9 p.m.

#### August

- 2-4 Stuff the Bus - Huntington AMVETS
- 15 Sixth-Grade Orientation, BREC - 6-7:30 p.m.
- Board of Education Meeting, High School Media Center - 7-9 p.m.
- 26 District Open House, All Buildings - 5-7 p.m.
- High School Open House, 6-8 p.m.
- Freshman Orientation, 6-7 p.m.
- 27 First Day of School for Students

#### September

- 2 Labor Day - NO SCHOOL

Visit [www.blackriverschools.org](http://www.blackriverschools.org) to view our full calendar of events.

## Class of 2019 Future Plans

Congratulations to the Black River Class of 2019! Their pride and connection with our community has been outstanding. Their efforts in organizing multiple events to support our community has truly made Black River a better place.

I am happy to announce that the future plans reported for this year's graduating class include approximately 60% attending post-secondary education with financial support received, 30% entering the workforce within and surrounding our community and 10% enlisting in the armed forces. Thank you to Black River families, friends and faculty for your continued support of our students. On behalf of the Black River community, we wish the Class of 2019 the best of luck!



## Bridging Ceremony

On May 31, BRMS eighth-grade students were recognized during a Bridge Ceremony to celebrate the end of their middle school years. As each student crossed the bridge, a list of their activities and accomplishments as well as their picture and future plans were displayed on the screen and read for the audience. Students were congratulated by the eighth-grade team prior to their walk across the bridge and were then greeted for a farewell from Mrs. Cathy Aviles, middle school principal, and welcomed by Mr. Tracey Lambdin, high school principal.

During this ceremony, top honors were also given to the following students:

- BRMS 2018-2019 School Citizen of the Year: Zachary Workinger
- Archie Griffin Sportsmanship Award Recipients: Jessica Kozik and Tyler Mrakuzic
- BRMS Award of Excellence Recipients: Catherine Aviles, Travis Bloom, Noah Hopek, Kylie Leonard, Keyera McLean, Ivey Neff, Nick Newman, Adam Ramsey, Genelyn Tolibas and MacKenzie Vonderau

To the Class of 2023 – we hope that you hold many fond memories of your experiences and that each of you take advantage of the solid foundation you have created as you continue to pursue your future plans.



**Black River Local School  
District is Now  
on Facebook!**



Follow us on Facebook to stay up to date with the latest happenings at Black River. Visit [www.facebook.com/BlackRiverSchools](http://www.facebook.com/BlackRiverSchools) and click the "Like" button.

Don't forget to use our hashtag: #WeAreBR

**Now Enrolling  
Students for Preschool  
and Kindergarten**

### Preschool Registration

Registration for public or integrated preschool is open to children ages three to five who live in the Black River Local School District. Parents with children in other districts are welcome to register for only the public preschool classroom. For information on tuition and schedules or to register your child, please call the board office at 419-736-3300. You can also visit the board office to pick up a registration packet in person.

### Kindergarten Registration

Children who will turn five years old by Sept. 30 are eligible for kindergarten. Kindergarten registration takes place Monday through Thursday from 8 - 3 p.m. at the Black River board office. When registering your child, please bring their birth certificate, proof of living in the district, immunization records and custody papers (if applicable). For more information, call the board office at 419-736-3300.

# Summer Projects

There are numerous summer projects underway that the district hopes to accomplish before the start of the 2019-2020 school year. Many of these projects, as listed below, are part of the five-year facility plan that the Black River Board of Education adopted in 2018.



- The high school will undergo an electrical upgrade. The electrical service that will be installed in the high school will have a larger switch gear system. The new system will allow future upgrades to be made to the high school heating system and also to provide an opportunity for future power needs. The district will also be removing some of the electric poles and placing the electric cable underground. This is in anticipation of conducting a paving project for the high school at the end of the 2020 school year.
- The Black River High School Fire Alarm Phase 3 will be completed. This is the final phase for the installation of an emergency sounder system that is very similar to the Black River Education Center System that was installed in 2015.
- A fiber optics cable will be installed, which will connect to the fieldhouse and allow internet access. There are several classes that are scheduled year-round in this building so student and teacher access is needed. Also, this will allow for a security and safety upgrade for the building. The fiber optics line that currently feeds the district internet will be transferred from overhead to underground and our fiber optics system will be upgraded.
- The high school's VRF heating/cooling system will also have a newer control system installed. This will allow for a more consistent cooling of classrooms based on individual need. The goal is to maintain a constant temperature between 70 and 74 degrees Fahrenheit.
- The high school lockers will receive a fresh makeover with a new coat of black and gold. They are the original building lockers and are in need of some attention due to years of use.
- Some of the Black River Education Center's hallways will be painted in school colors. This project is being completed in phases. Currently, the cafeteria is complete as well as the auditorium foyer area.
- The district is in the process of developing a Specific Education Learning Classroom for students that are experiencing limited success in the classroom due to one or more disabilities. In tandem with developing this classroom, we are also in the process of moving the special education office. As we make this move and develop the classroom, one of the items that will be upgraded is the surveillance and camera system. This will be the first, primary piece of equipment added so the district can begin creating a high-speed security camera system and begin to replace our older camera system.

Currently the district is waiting on funds to be released from the Bureau of Worker's Compensation. If released, the district will be making further door upgrades at the Black River Education Center.

One last item the district is looking at is the upgrade of the Public Address System at the Black River Education Center. If the district can determine there are funds available, this system will be replaced late summer and during the first quarter of fall classes.

Many of these projects are part of the district's five-year facility plan and were shared with the district's administration and board from our safety audits with the area emergency responders.

## Strategic Plan Update

The Black River Board of Education is in the phases of identifying key steps and processes in developing a working strategic plan for the Black River Local School District. The Ohio School Board Association (OSBA) is assisting with the planning and implementation process.

Currently, the district is looking for approximately 30 persons that would like to be a part of the core team that will be instrumental in developing the final document. As of now, there are 10 individuals in the Black River community that have expressed interest. The core team's meeting dates are set for **Aug. 12, Sept. 9, Oct. 7 and Oct. 28** and will run from **5:30-9:00 p.m.** The goal is for the Black River Board of Education to review the plan and institute it at either the November or December Black River Board of Education meeting.

If you would like to be a part of the process that will steer the operations of BRLS for the next five years and are interested in joining the core team, contact the district Superintendent Chris Clark at 419-736-3300 or [cclark@blr.org](mailto:cclark@blr.org).

## E-Communication Now Available

Black River Local School District now offers an option to register for eCommunication. The goal is to provide tailored communication for parents and community members. When you create your account, you will be able to choose which types of information you are interested in receiving. By choosing the Online Dashboard Weekly Updates, you will receive weekly updates on any new content added to the sections you select. Information can be sent via e-mail or text. If your contact information changes or you wish to change the type of information you receive, you can update your account at any time.

Please visit [www.blackriverschools.org/protected/PublicUserLogin.aspx](http://www.blackriverschools.org/protected/PublicUserLogin.aspx) to register.

Black River Local School District  
257-A County Road 40  
Sullivan, Ohio 44880

Non-Profit  
US Postage Paid  
London, OH  
43140  
Permit #48

### CONTACT US

257-A County Road 40  
Sullivan, OH 44880  
419.736.3300

## Treasurer's Update

By: *Connie Hange, Treasurer*

Fiscal year 2019, like most years, came with challenges in regard to our finances. However, comparative to this same time period last year, our operating income increased by approximately \$214,000, while our expenses decreased by just over \$280,000.

The most significant revenue increase was in taxes and the most significant expense decrease was in benefits. This means that the district will end the fiscal year having revenue in excess of expenditures.

The district will pay off the bond debt from the construction of the BREC on Dec. 1, 2019. Due to the generosity of our community, the district will now receive a similar amount of tax dollars (about \$350,000 annually) that are to be used for permanent improvements. The district has not had a permanent improvement levy in more than 20 years. The Board of Education along with administrators, staff and community members, will be putting together a five-year strategic plan in order to determine where that money will be best spent.

The State of Ohio is reviewing a new funding formula. The Fair School Funding Plan (FSFP) provides for increased statewide aid to schools by about 6% the coming year, then an additional 4% the year after. However, not every district will see an increase. This new plan bases state aid on the minimum number of teachers and other staff a school needs for the number of students attending, while also weighing the income and property values per student of a district.

Preliminary simulations released by the Ohio Department of Education suggest Black River *could* see an increase in state funding between \$240,000 to \$288,000 for fiscal year 2020, with an additional increase of \$327,000 to \$477,000 the following year. It will be interesting to see the final version of this funding formula and the actual result for our district. This bill, HB166, has passed the House, but is still being considered in the Senate.