



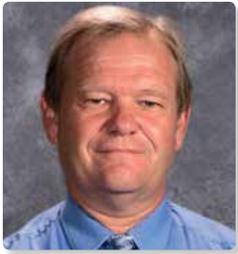
**PIRATE PRIDE!**

# BLACK RIVER LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

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

January 2018

## Message from the Superintendent



Thank you to our residents for voting on Nov. 7 to pass the renewal levy. The renewal will allow the district to maintain current levels of programs, services and staff while providing a high-quality education for our students. We appreciate your support and faith in the operations of the district.

While not a new tax, we will use the funds generated by the renewal levy to maintain class sizes, as well as resources for students with developmental disabilities, STEM and vocational classes, and extracurricular and extra academic programming. The dollars will also be put toward maintaining the district's buildings, upgrading safety and security systems and allowing community use of the facilities after school hours.

The next step is to determine how best to maintain fiscal stability for the Black River Local Schools.

In 2019, the district will be able to pay off the bond for the Black River Education Center. The bond currently generates approximately \$313,000 in order to pay for the building. To maintain fiscal stability,

the district would like to find a way to maintain generating these funds. This could potentially take the form of an operating levy or a permanent improvement levy.

As a district, we want to know if our residents would support a levy to retain this funding. The levy would not cost residents additional tax dollars. If you have any thoughts, please email the superintendent at [cclark@blrv.org](mailto:cclark@blrv.org) or call 419-736-3300. If the district decides to go in this direction, we would be able to pass a levy with **NO** increase in taxes for our community members while maintaining financial stability.

At Black River, our goal is to provide our students with an excellent education while being fiscally responsible and transparent. Additional information will be provided as we determine the best next steps for the district.

Thank you again for your continued support of our students and our schools.

Sincerely,  
*Chris Clark, Superintendent*



## SCHOOL CALENDAR

### FEBRUARY

- 15 - Board of Education Meeting, BREC Media Center, 7 p.m.
- 16 - No School – Teacher In-Service Day
- 19 - No School – Presidents Day
- 24 - High School Winter Dance
- 27 - High School Band and Choir Concert
- 27 - High School ACT Test (Juniors)

### MARCH

- 1 - Middle School Band Concert
- 6 - High School and Middle School Parent-Teacher Conferences
- 8 - High School and Middle School Parent-Teacher Conferences
- 13 - Elementary Choir Concert
- 15 - Middle School Choir Concert
- 15 - Board of Education Meeting, BREC Media Center, 7 p.m.
- 22 - Spaghetti Dinner Sponsored by the Endowment Fund
- 26 - Elementary School Parent-Teacher Conferences

- 26 - Kindergarten Registration, 4-7 p.m. at Black River Elementary School
- 28 - Elementary School Parent-Teacher Conferences
- 28 - Kindergarten Registration, 4-7 p.m. at Black River Elementary School
- 30 - No School – Good Friday

### APRIL

- 2-6 -No School – Spring Break
- 19 - Board of Education Meeting, BREC Media Center, 7 p.m.



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



Follow us 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.

## ***Kindergarten Registration for the 2018-2019 School Year***

Kindergarten registration will take place Monday, March 26, and Wednesday, March 28, from 4-7 p.m. at the Black River Elementary School's office for the 2018-2019 school year.

There are three all-day kindergarten programs available. Parents who have a child(ren) who will be five years old by Aug. 31 are encouraged to register.

During registration, parents will fill out forms that include parent and student information. Parents should bring their child(ren)'s birth certificate, proof of living in the district, immunization records and custody papers (if applicable), as the district will need a copy of each form.

If either of those dates do not work for you, registration will also take place daily from 8 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. at the district's Board Office.

## ***Enroll Your Child in Black River's 5-Star Preschool Program***

If you are interested in enrolling your child in Black River's preschool program this year, there are still several openings available:

**Monday-Wednesday-Friday PM class: 8 openings**

**Tuesday & Thursday AM class: 4 openings**

**Tuesday & Thursday PM class: 9 openings**

**Monday through Thursday AM class: 2 openings**

**Monday through Thursday PM class: 2 openings**

Registration forms can be picked up in the elementary office or the board office.

Enrollment for the preschool program for the 2018-2019 school year will begin in March. Students ages three to five are eligible to enroll in the preschool program. Completion of the enrollment packet is required to begin the registration process. These will be made available in the elementary office or the board office.

The Black River Local School District preschool was awarded a five-star rating from the Ohio Department of Education's (ODE) Step Up to Quality Program. The five-star rating is the highest rating a preschool program can receive from ODE.

For more information regarding the preschool program, please contact Angelique Kuba in the elementary office at [akuba@blackriver.k12.oh.us](mailto:akuba@blackriver.k12.oh.us) or 419-736-2161.

## ***MTD Products, Inc. Donates New Lawn Mower to Black River Local School District***

The Black River Local School District recently received a donation of a new Cub Cadet PRO Z™ 554 L lawn mower from MTD Products Inc., headquartered in Valley City. The new mower will replace old, outdated equipment used to maintain the lawn at the district's sports facilities and on other school properties.

"Our professional development team visited the Black River School District campus this past fall and saw there was a need for new equipment," said Sarah Mlinarcik, a Cub Cadet brand manager at MTD Products. "We felt the district would benefit from a reliable piece of lawn care equipment that will deliver results, season after season."

"We are truly grateful for the generosity of MTD Products," said Superintendent Chris Clark. "The new mower will help us better maintain our sports fields and other facilities. Thanks to this donation, we were able to replace our outdated equipment without any additional cost to the school or reliance on taxpayer dollars. We cannot thank MTD Products enough."

## ***District in Need of Substitutes***

The Black River Local School District is in need of substitutes for a number of positions throughout the district.

Substitute teachers are needed for all grade levels. Community members with a four-year degree can qualify to become a substitute teacher in the State of Ohio, regardless of the concentration of the degree.

Qualifying substitute teachers receive training through the Medina County ESC. Upon completion of training, subs are able to teach at most schools throughout Medina County.

Other substitute positions available throughout the district include: bus drivers, cooks and daytime and second shift custodians. The district provides training for all qualified substitutes.

For more information on any of the open substitute positions, please contact the district's main office at **419-736-3300**.

## **Volunteer Opportunities Available Throughout the District**

Are you a community member who is interested in getting involved or volunteering for the Black River Local School District? The district has a number of volunteer opportunities available for qualifying individuals.

Currently, volunteers are needed to take tickets at athletic events, chaperone school dances, and organize school book rooms.

Additionally, at the elementary grade level, volunteers are needed to listen to students read, work on flashcards with students including sight words, addition, subtraction, multiplication and division, and play learning games with students in the classroom. Teachers also request volunteers to help laminate papers and prepare classroom materials.

In order to volunteer, individuals must complete the proper paperwork and background check process. Forms can be found at the main office of each school building. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact the building principal or the board office.



## **Camp Invention Registration Now Available**

Registration for Camp Invention is now open! Camp Invention will take place at Black River Elementary School on June 11-15, 2018. Camp Invention is a science camp where students in kindergarten through sixth grade are presented with fun, hands-on challenges that encourage creative problem solving, teamwork, entrepreneurship and curiosity.

The structure of Camp Invention is designed to allow students to explore their scientific imaginations. This year, students have the opportunity to participate in several activities that will allow them to:

- Explore the technology behind self-driving cars and invent a vehicle of the future
- Design futuristic dream homes with smart furniture and smart energy
- Build and personalize a robotic dog and compare the inner mechanics to the biology of living animals

Additionally, all students will take home two custom robots!

"This is our third year having the camp here at the elementary school," said Principal Becky Luth. "The staff is made up of a team of dedicated Black River teachers, and I could not speak more highly of them."

Camp Invention is a national non-profit organization inspired by the inductees of the National Inventors Hall of Fame and is dedicated to advancing the future of innovation and STEM.

More information and registration for Camp Invention can be found at [www.campinvention.org](http://www.campinvention.org).

For any additional questions, please contact Michele Yocum at [myocum@blackriver.k12.oh.us](mailto:myocum@blackriver.k12.oh.us) or **419.736.2161**.

## **American Red Cross Approves District as Disaster Facility**

At its Jan. 16 meeting, the Black River Board of Education approved both Black River High School and the Black River Education Center has designated disaster facilities for the American Red Cross.

This came after a recent audit by the Red Cross ensuring the buildings could be used in the event of natural disaster. The Red Cross reviewed and measured all of the classrooms and the gymnasiums to determine how many people they could house. They also made sure the buildings were handicap accessible, had air conditioning and the kitchens that could be used to make food in large quantities.

After the audit, the Board of Education signed a contract with the Red Cross officially designating the buildings as Red Cross shelters for Ashland, Lorain and Medina counties.

"For many years, we've been unofficially recognized as a designated site for the Red Cross," said Superintendent Chris Clark. "Now, it's official. There is no cost to the district to do this. If our facilities were used in the event of an emergency, the district would be reimbursed. This is another way Black River can continue reinvesting in and providing services for the communities it serves."

## **Black River Facility Commission to Hold Laundry Detergent Fundraiser in Spring**

The Black River Facility Commission will be holding a laundry detergent fundraiser in the spring to raise the funds needed by the Black River Facility Commission for the construction of a new fieldhouse.

This unique fundraising idea was brought to the school by staff member Matt Stafford. Stafford learned about the idea after attending a football clinic in Cleveland last year.

The Black River Facility Commission was created to secure funds for the improvement of the Black River facilities. To date, the commission has helped with a number of major outdoor projects including residing the existing fieldhouse, installing fencing around the athletic facility and clearing the tree line on the east side of the athletic facility.

The Facility Commission is continuously working to secure corporate sponsors and relies on the support of local donors to complete the updates for the district, without relying on tax payer dollars.

The proposed new fieldhouse will be complete with men's and women's locker rooms, public restrooms, concessions and a large multipurpose room that will serve as a visiting team locker room, wrestling room and large group meeting/conference space.

More details about the laundry detergent fundraiser will be available at a later date. The Facility Commission includes representatives from the athletic, music and youth sports programs. The group meets on the last Thursday of each month.

## **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  
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### **CONTACT US**

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## ***Black River Local School District Released from Fiscal Caution***

***“We appreciate the community’s continued support of our district, as residents recently passed a renewal levy to help ensure our fiscal sustainability. We will continue to remain fiscally transparent and responsible with taxpayer dollars.”***

On Dec, 28, 2017, the Black River Local School District was officially released from fiscal caution by the Ohio Department of Education (ODE).

The district was placed in fiscal caution in February of 2011 as it was spending more than it was bringing in. Black River then had to submit a plan for recovery to the ODE. In the first year of the plan, this included not hiring any additional positions, laying off six employees and not filling 12 supplemental positions. The district did not continue with the D.A.R.E. officer program and increased preschool fees and implemented pay-to-participate fees. In the second year of the plan, the district eliminated high school busing, increased breakfast and lunch prices, increased preschool fees and pay-to-participate fees, and began charging for all-day, every day kindergarten.

“This plan, coupled with the community passing an emergency levy, helped get the district out of fiscal caution,” said Treasurer Connie

Hange. “Additionally, the administration and board of education became more diligent about reducing costs and working more closely with the treasurer’s department to ensure fiscal responsibility.”

Hange said the district is also very cognizant of student numbers as it relates to staffing levels. If there is an open position, the district tries to fill it from within versus hiring someone new. Additionally, each principal was given a budget for his or her building that must be adhered to throughout the year to help maintain costs.

“We appreciate the community’s continued support of our district, as residents recently passed a renewal levy to help ensure our fiscal sustainability,” Hange said. “We will continue to remain fiscally transparent and responsible with taxpayer dollars.”