



Kirtland Board of Education
9252 Chillicothe Road, Kirtland, OH 44094
440.256.3311

THE *Kirtland* CONNECTION

A Quarterly Newsletter for Kirtland Local Schools

Winter 2017

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Two years ago, taking a cue from *USA Today's* National Make A Difference Day, the Kirtland PTA invited students and parents to clean up the school campus on a Saturday morning. Volunteers picked up trash, cleaned up flower beds and planted tulip bulbs.

"It was really exciting to see the kids take pride in doing something, and they saw the results of their hard work a few months later when the tulips bloomed," said PTA President Shannon Green.

Building on a successful first-year project, this year the PTA partnered with WKYC Channel 3 and student councils from Kirtland Elementary School and Kirtland Middle School to collect school supplies for Cleveland Kids in Need Resource Center. The non-profit ensures

that every child is prepared to learn by providing free school supplies to teachers of students who are most in need.

Green said when they put out the call for donations, they received bins filled with everything a student needs to be successful in school. Families delivered those supplies on Make a Difference Day last fall.

"I think the experience was great for kids and their parents because we were all able to see where our donations were going and how beneficial they were to everyone that received them," said Green.



BOARD OF EDUCATION

President: Timothy Cosgrove

tim.cosgrove@kirtlandschools.org

Vice President: Ron Stepanovic

ron.stepanovic@kirtlandschools.org

Tom Meyer

tom.meyer@kirtlandschools.org

Joe Solnosky

joe.solnosky@kirtlandschools.org

Kat Torok

kat.torok@kirtlandschools.org

Superintendent: Bill Wade

bill.wade@kirtlandschools.org,

Director of Pupil Services: Becky Rowell-Malinas

becky.malinas@kirtlandschools.org

Treasurer: Daniel L. Wilson

dan.wilson@kirtlandschools.org

Kirtland Elementary School

Principal: Chad VanArnhem

chad.vanarnhem@kirtlandschools.org
9140 Chillicothe Road, Kirtland, OH 44094
440.256.3344

Kirtland Middle School

Principal: Scott Amstutz

scott.amstutz@kirtlandschools.org
9152 Chillicothe Road, Kirtland, OH 44094
440.256.3358

Kirtland High School

Principal: Lynn Campbell

lynn.campbell@kirtlandschools.org
9150 Chillicothe Road, Kirtland, OH 44094
440.256.3366

Athletics

Athletic Director: Matt Paul

matt.paul@kirtlandschools.org

KIRTLAND SCHOOLS RECEIVES \$225,633 OHIO EPA GRANT FOR BUSES

Kirtland Schools received a \$225,633 Ohio EPA Diesel Emissions Reduction Grant (DERG) to buy four new 72-passenger school buses.

Kirtland was among 52 applicants requesting more than \$25 million in grant funding. Kirtland's grant was one of 29 grants awarded for a total of \$12 million, and one of only 11 school bus projects funded.

Transportation Director Sheila Dikowicz, who applied for the grant in October, said the district will save \$225,633 on the purchase price of four new school buses. The new buses will replace 14- to 21-year-old buses that will be permanently disabled and scrapped as specified in the DERG grant, reducing high emissions produced by older buses.

"The DERG grant will allow the district to buy four new school buses for the price of one and a half buses,"

said Dikowicz. "The new buses offer durability, better fuel economy, meet emissions standards and provide additional savings to the district by reducing repair and maintenance costs on the older buses being replaced."

Kirtland has 22 school buses in its fleet that transport 1,176 students, traveling 1,209 miles daily. The district's 17 drivers and five bus aides also provide transportation services to and from 13 private/parochial schools and six schools for special education. Kirtland buses typically travel 21,504 miles annually transporting students safely to academic and athletic events.

The Ohio EPA estimates these projects will achieve an estimated annual emission reduction of more than 136 tons of air pollutants in Ohio counties. These grants are supported with federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality funds allocated to Ohio by the Federal Highway Administration.

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LETTER FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

To Our Kirtland Schools Families,



We're more than halfway through the 2016-2017 school year, but I wanted to take this opportunity to thank everyone for the warm welcome to the district. The Kirtland Local School District has a tradition of excellence that exists due to a supportive community and the commitment of our parents, students and staff.

My goal is to maintain and grow a rigorous teaching and learning environment where every student has the support to reach their maximum potential. As a district, we will continue to commit ourselves to providing the best educational experience for our students, which includes athletics, performing arts and other extracurricular opportunities. Our focus is on continuous improvement and communication, with a plan to update you often through this new printed newsletter, a Quality Profile highlighting what we do best, social media and our district website.

Over the coming months, I will share a five-year vision for the schools that will be reviewed through a strategic planning process. This means working collaboratively with the community, staff and students to continue moving into the 21st century in education.

Under the leadership of our Board of Education, the district placed a 7.07-mill renewal operating levy on the May 2 ballot. The levy is a five-year renewal of a 2012 levy that expires at the end of this year. It will not raise taxes, but it will generate \$2.28 million annually and allow our schools to maintain educational excellence into the future.

At its organizational meeting the Board of Education changed its leadership, appointing Tim Cosgrove as president and Ron Stepanovic as vice president. Joining them are returning members Tom Meyer, Joe Solnosky and Kat Torok.

Our school district excels due to the collective efforts of our community, parents, staff and students. I look forward to continuing a productive school year.

Bill Wade
Superintendent

BOARD OF EDUCATION PROMOTES FISCAL STEWARDSHIP

The Board of Education through the Finance Committee takes a prudent and thoughtful approach to fiscal management of the community's investment in the Kirtland School District. The goal is to ensure every dollar spent benefits students and the community.

In an effort to avoid deficit spending and be cost effective, the Board implemented cost-reduction measures through shared services of a treasurer, bus mechanic, food service program, and a facilities, custodial and maintenance supervisor.

Over the last two years, the district made efforts towards full disclosure by posting the annual budget, five-year forecast, audits and monthly financial statements online at www.kirtlandschools.org. Kirtland Schools participates in the OhioCheckbook.com program. The Board also encourages pursuit of alternative revenues for the school district. Past successful efforts include:

- A partnership with Lake Health provides \$125,000 in sponsorship funds, \$3,000 for annual college scholarships and a \$26,000 reduction on physician

and trainer services over the next 10 years.

- Opportunities to increase cell tower revenue.
- \$225,633 Ohio EPA grant to replace four school buses.
- \$1.7 million State of Ohio Straight A grant for instructional technology and professional development.
- Increase investment income of reserve funds.
- Ongoing support of the athletic program by the Kirtland Booster Club.

Despite this aggressive fiscal oversight, the dynamics of public education funding in Ohio results in virtually no annual growth in operating revenue to offset the inflationary growth in expenses. The five-year forecast shows that beginning this fiscal year expenses will exceed revenue. To maintain educational excellence into the future, the district placed a five-year renewal levy – that will not raise taxes – on the May 2 ballot.

If you have questions about district finances, contact Treasurer Daniel L. Wilson at dan.wilson@kirtlandschools.org or 440.256.3360 x1003.

SPORTS SHORTS

Congratulations to the following student-athletes on their fall athletic accomplishments:

Kirtland High School (KHS) Hornets football players earned the following recognitions:

- Senior linebacker Owen Loncar was named OHSAA Division VI Defensive Player of the Year and 1st Team All-Ohio.
- Running back Joey Torok was named 1st Team All-Ohio.
- Lineman Brett Diemer was named 2nd Team All-Ohio.
- Sam Speece, Antonio Rini, Blake Andonian, Jeremy Davis and Palmer Capretta earned special mention in All-Ohio honors.

KHS men's soccer team was named Regional Semi-Finalists and District Champions - the first district championship in program history.

- Jared Ianiro named 1st Team All-Ohio.

KHS women's soccer Coach Edward Bradac was named All Greater Cleveland Division II Coach of the Year, Kim Mahoney Award winner.

- Hannah Vouk was named 2nd Team All-Ohio.
- Hannah Vouk and Lindsay Ward were named 1st Team All Greater Cleveland and 1st Team Chagrin Valley Conference (CVC).
- Grace Powers and Maggie Kadas were named

2nd Team All Greater Cleveland and 2nd Team CVC.

- Lidia Rodin, Jenna Sayle and Katie McCollister earned Honorable Mentions All Greater Cleveland. Jenna and Lidia also earned Honorable Mention CVC.
- Lindsay Ward was named Senior Academic All-Ohio. Lindsay and Grace Powers earned All-Academic Award CVC.

Kirtland Middle School 7/8 girls' soccer team won the CVC Tournament Championship and had an undefeated season.

Michael Schnur, a three-time league MVP, finished in the top 20 in the Division III state golf tournament.

KHS women's cross country team placed 8th at Districts.

- Sydney Snyder was a Regional Championships Qualifier, placing 33rd.
- Sydney Snyder and Lauren Snyder won multiple individual medals throughout the season for top finishes at several invitationals, and were co-MVPs on the team.
- Lauren Snyder earned 1st Team CVC.
- Sydney Snyder, Konnor Duncan and Jack Grdadolnik were 2nd team CVC.



PTA NATIONAL SCHOOL OF EXCELLENCE AWARD

The Kirtland PTA received the PTA National School of Excellence Award 2016-2018, recognizing the group's efforts to enrich the educational experience and overall well-being of all students. To receive the award, PTAs must demonstrate that they:

- Welcome all families into the school community
- Communicate effectively
- Support student success
- Speak up for every child
- Share power with families and school staff
- Collaborate with the community

The Kirtland PTA was one of only 173 National PTA Schools of Excellence named nationwide, and one of only 15 in Ohio. PTA President Shannon Green said she wants people to realize that the Kirtland PTA isn't just here for the elementary school, but also for the middle and high schools.

"We truly have wonderful, invested families that are so very helpful with their time," said Green. "Our teachers, school leaders, guidance counselors and our new Superintendent Bill Wade are all dedicated to student success. They are extremely hard working and very much vested in the system, students and parents."

Among the projects the PTA supported:

- Added six new water bottle filling stations (two per building) last school year
- Buy locks for 6th grade lockers
- Help fund annual spring camping trip fees for 6th-8th grades
- Middle school dances
- High school scholarships – last year the PTA funded five \$1,000 scholarships for graduating seniors
- Supported the high school robotics team's trip to state competition
- Technology purchases at each grade level



- Annual Deck the Halls fundraiser to provide winter clothing and accessories for needy students.
- Annual Kids Bingo

The PTA also organizes the annual Kirtland Elementary School Walkathon, which raised over \$15,000 this year. Green said the money raised is divided among the grade levels to fund their needs.

"We're not just giving money – we collect things for organizations," said Green. "Our PTA and school board are effective because of the families that donate their time and effort for all of these activities and events to take place."

Green credited PTA Vice President Hettie Carestio, 2nd Vice President Lisa Alejos, Secretary Kyle Crisci, Treasurer Andrea Ribic and Sunshine Committee Chair Allison Wuliger for their hard work.

GRANT DOLLARS INFUSE TECHNOLOGY IN KIRTLAND CLASSROOMS

Grants totaling about \$10,000 from the Kirtland Educational Foundation (KEF) have helped add a variety of technology to Kirtland classrooms over the past few years to support blended learning and STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art/Design, Math) programming.

Blended learning combines online digital media with traditional classroom teaching methods. In fifth-grade teacher Bob Lasecki's math and social studies classes, for example, students can rotate between technology, collaborative and traditional learning stations. Depending on the assignment, students may use online programs to research a problem, collaborate on a solution, and then share their discoveries with the entire class.

STEAM education recognizes that to be successful in technical fields, individuals must also be creative and use critical thinking skills, which are best developed through exposure to the arts.

Grant dollars helped purchase Chromebooks, televisions with Chromecast and Apple TV to access educational videos, a Lego wall and flexible furniture.

A \$3,200 KEF grant was used to buy a T-shirt press shared by Kirtland High School (KHS) and Kirtland Elementary School (KES). The press is part of the fifth-grade Makerspace program and the Graphics Arts class at KHS. Makerspaces provide hands-on, creative



ways to encourage students to design, experiment, build and invent as they engage in science, engineering and tinkering. Transfer Express in Mentor is providing students lessons on T-shirt making.

"The goal is to make shirts for anything needed in the district," Lasecki said, adding that the first project will be shirts for the end-of-the-year fifth-grade field trip. "We want to tap into the kids' entrepreneurial side to keep our Makerspace going."

Lasecki's students will team with Brian Harvey's design classes at the high school to learn about design principles, as well as entrepreneurship as they learn about pricing and supply chain.



An \$8,000 STEM grant enabled students to have a more authentic experience in high school computer programming classes. The purchase of a new server allows students to test their work and gives them the freedom to do more with their projects. In addition, 15 tablets were purchased to allow students to test the apps they build on actual devices.

The STEM grant also helped purchase a 3-D printer shared by KES and KHS.

BLENDING LEARNING GRANT CREATES INNOVATIVE LEARNING SPACES

In 2014, a partnerships between Kirtland and Mentor schools resulted in a \$13.8 million five-year grant to develop and expand blended learning programs for students in both school districts. Kirtland received about \$1.7 million of the Ohio Straight A Fund grant to address grades 8-12.

The Straight A grant was implemented at the start of the 2015-2016 school year and included:

- Classroom renovations at Kirtland High School (KHS) – New paint, carpeting, window treatments, lighting, ceiling tiles and wireless access points.
- Professional development opportunities for staff on the station rotation model, project-based learning, technology devices and online curriculum.
- Media Center renovation – Modern workspaces with wireless access, printers, online periodicals, charging stations, opportunities to take online classes and comfortable furniture. Students can research, collaborate on projects, create presentations and tutor their peers.
- Creation of an observation classroom to allow teachers to participate in model lessons, enabling

them to demonstrate new strategies or refine their approaches to teaching with technology.

- Cafeteria renovation – The space doubles as a large classroom where students can complete online coursework or assignments.
- Notebook computers for all students grades 8-12, as well as teachers and administrators.

KHS computer science teacher Greg Cosimi said the grant transformed high school classes by allowing students to carry their work home.

“This allows learning to reach beyond 50 minutes a day and allows students to practice what they learn in class. This practice leads to better understanding and increased formative assessment by both student and teacher,” said Cosimi. “The students’ fluidity with technology has improved with the grant. Students can intuitively do more as they have been exposed and accustomed to software and hardware tools that make them consumers of information and functionality.”

The grant also provided a variety of virtual opportunities for students, including:

- Online Health for ninth grade students.
- Online electives through Pearson Connections provide students with the ability to take a wider range of courses and work flexibly and independently on subjects of interest to them.
- Distance learning courses in collaboration with Mentor High School.

Implementation of the grant was led by Technology Director Ed Bradac, KHS Principal Lynn Campbell and former Superintendent Steve Barrett. Superintendent Bill Wade previously worked closely with Kirtland during his tenure at Mentor High School on implementing the grant as well.



CLEVELAND CLINIC eXPRESSIONS WINNERS

Five Kirtland High School students were award winners in language category of Cleveland Clinic eXpressions for their short stories and poems.

Cleveland Clinic eXpressions is an educational initiative that engages high school students in the exploration of science and medicine through creative expression. Students translate research studies conducted by Cleveland Clinic high school interns by producing artistic, literary and mathematical interpretations of the science.

Lilly Kelemen won an Honorable Mention for her work “Clouds of Frustration, Rains of Relief.” Anna Woolough and Nathan LaMantia won Red Ribbons for their works

“Untitled” and “Hands,” respectively. Isabel Anness and Katie McCollister won White Ribbons for their works “Masterful Destruction” and “Be Still,” respectively. Our students competed against about 1,500 art, language and math projects from 51 schools. Red ribbon winners receive \$75, white ribbon winners \$50 and Honorable Mentions \$25. Each teacher of an award-winning student also receives a \$100 educational grant. Kirtland teachers who supported their students in this effort include Jen Berry, Eric Eye and Meriah Duncan.

All five students will have their work displayed as part of the annual eXpressions eXhibition, Feb. 9-March 17, at the Global Center for Health Innovation.

KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION

Kindergarten registration for the 2017-2018 school year will take place on **May 5**. To set up an appointment, call 440-256-3344. Your child must accompany you to the registration appointment. Your child must be 5 years old by Sept. 30. All required enrollment documents are on the Kirtland Schools website under the Parents tab. If you need a paper copy, please stop in the Kirtland Elementary office.