



Kirtland Local School District
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THE *Kirtland* CONNECTION

A Quarterly Newsletter for Kirtland Local Schools

Spring 2019

ISSUE 1 RENEWAL LEVY ON MAY BALLOT

Renewal levy will not raise taxes

Issue 1 on the May 7 ballot is a NO TAX INCREASE levy renewal for the Kirtland Local Schools. The 4.11-mill renewal levy originally was approved by voters in 1999 and will be extended for five years. This levy raises \$1.45 million annually – about 10 percent of the school district's budget – and is critical for maintaining current academic programming and services.

As revenues remain flat, the renewal levy is critical to the school district's budget. The district has worked hard to control and reduce expenses and will continue to do so into the future. The Board and administration are committed to maintaining fiscal responsibility with a goal of ensuring every dollar spent benefits students and the community. The Board and the district will remain transparent in financial discussions as they progress.



STATE OF THE SCHOOLS 2019

Superintendent Bill Wade presented the annual State of the Schools address in March at the Kirtland PTA meeting, highlighting the various ways we are aligning what we do to our vision, mission and beliefs.

The Kirtland Local School District received an overall grade of B on the most recent State Report Card. Our Performance Index score improved for the third consecutive year, ranking Kirtland Schools among the top 10 percent of school districts in the state. We continue to show progress in achievement while working to improve how we educate all of our students.

Personalized Learning

With the adoption of the Strategic Plan, our focus is on providing an educational program that personalizes learning to empower our students for future success. Through curriculum initiatives, our goal is to create a profile of a Kirtland graduate who possesses the skills to be a collaborator, communicator, critical thinker, problem solver, creative thinker and producer. These are skills in demand by employers that will ensure our students can be successful whether they go on to postsecondary education, the military or the workforce.

Part of our efforts to achieve success for our students includes the launch of a new "Excite, Explore & Engage" College and Career Pathways Program for grades 6-12. The program, which will start to be rolled out next school year, aligns with our goal of implementing a personalized learning pathway system for all students, with a focus on innovation, life skills, and career and college preparation.

A large part of the success of this program will be the partnerships and active participation of our local businesses, organizations and community members who are willing to provide real-life opportunities to our students. If you are willing to speak to students, or provide shadowing or mentoring opportunities, please fill out the survey at <https://tinyurl.com/KirtlandSurvey> or call Superintendent Bill Wade at 440.256.3311.

At the elementary level, the district is hiring a new coding/STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art, mathematics) teacher. The position will be added at no net cost to the district through reductions in other areas of the budget. This will introduce KES students to coding and computer science to increase their problem solving, persistence, creativity, collaboration and communication skills. This also will supplement students' understanding of coding/computer science with broader STEAM-based activities, particularly the expansion of the middle school Project Lead The Way (PLTW) initiative in grades 3-5 in the future.

Safety & Security

Behind the scenes, the district implemented a variety of initiatives to improve campus safety. Our administrative team met with the Kirtland Police Department and Evan Young, the corporate director of security for Parker Hannifin, to continue to evaluate security. One recommendation was to create controlled access points at visitor entrances and throughout the interior of our buildings to better secure students and staff in a critical event.

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LETTER FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT



To Our Kirtland Schools Families,

Election Day is May 7. Issue 1 is a five-year renewal levy that is **NOT A NEW TAX**. The levy, originally approved by voters in 1999, raises \$1.45 million annually – 10 percent of the district's annual budget

– and will help us maintain current educational programming and services.

The renewal is critical to the district as our revenue is projected to remain flat. We've worked hard to control and reduce expenses, and we will continue to do so. The Board and administration are committed to maintaining fiscal responsibility with a goal of ensuring every dollar spent benefits students and the community. We are committed to remaining transparent in our financial discussions with the community.

In March, we hosted a very successful Senior Citizen Appreciation Dinner. We invited our local senior citizens to join us for a free pasta dinner, sponsored by Angelo's Pizzeria and Restaurant, and to enjoy the Kirtland High School Drama Club's performance of "Rest Assured." Our high school Jazz Band also provided dinner music. Thank you to everyone who attended and participated in this first-time event. Stay tuned for details on our fall event!

If you missed the State of the Schools presentation in early March, you can find it on our website at www.kirtlandschools.org.

It's hard to believe the school year is already coming to a close. Our students and staff have accomplished so much this year, and we thank our community for their continued support. If you have any comments or questions, please reach out to me at bill.wade@kirtlandschools.org or call 440.256.3311.

Bill Wade
Superintendent

TREASURER'S FINANCIAL UPDATE

The Kirtland Board of Education and administration work hard to keep expenses down. But decreasing state and federal funding, as well as inflationary budget items, can make this difficult.

Last year, the district's \$12,261 per pupil spending ranked Kirtland Local Schools at fifth in Lake County out of nine school districts. The Board of Education and district administration have worked to cut expenditures, including reducing teaching positions, restructuring administration and implementing pay freezes, consolidating bus routes, reducing athletic coaching positions, decreasing building and department budgets, increasing school and technology fees, and implementing a 6-12 activity fee. It is expected that even with the inflationary pressures, those reductions will drive the district's per pupil expenditure down to sixth in Lake County. The statewide average expenditure last year was \$11,953 per student.

On the revenue side, the Kirtland Local Schools received about \$1,882 per student in total state funding - this compares to the average state revenue per student of \$6,084. One major factor is the state funding formula that provides only \$636 per student versus the state average of \$4,024 per student - this is due to the state's formula that penalizes higher property value districts. Local funding in Kirtland (\$9,037) is greater than the state average of \$6,059, primarily due to the need to offset state shortfalls. Overall, Kirtland's total revenue per student is \$13,104 per student which ranks sixth of the nine Lake County School Districts, and well below the statewide average of \$14,223.

The Kirtland Schools have lost \$1.1 million in state and federal funding since 2011. While the state average for state foundation funding is 42 percent, Kirtland only receives 14 percent of its budget from the state foundation - the lowest in Lake County.

Last year, the Kirtland Schools earned the Auditor of State Taxpayer Hero Award for using innovative ideas to cut costs and increase efficiency to protect taxpayer dollars. The Board is committed to academic excellence and being prudent stewards of taxpayer dollars.

KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN

Kindergarten registration for the 2019-2020 school year will take place on **May 17**. **You must call the office to set up an appointment at 440.256.3344.** Your child must be 5 years old by Sept. 30, 2019. All required enrollment documents are on the Kirtland Local Schools' website under the Parents tab. If you need a paper copy, please stop in the Kirtland Elementary School office. **Parent(s) and child will both attend registration.**

KIRTLAND ACADEMIC ACADEMY PROVIDES ACADEMIC SUPPORT

Kirtland Middle School (KMS) created a new forum to ensure all KMS students have the academic supports they need to succeed outside of the classroom.

Kirtland Academic Academy (KAA) provides students with the opportunity to receive guided assistance from high school National Honor Society (NHS) students one morning a week in the KMS Library. KAA is an optional program for all students, but the academic team – including teachers, parents and administrators – has the ability to make the program mandatory for students with excessive missing work that negatively impacts student learning and success within the classroom. The goal is to provide students with the resources they need to find success.

The idea for KAA came out of a series of discussions the Building Leadership Team – a group of teachers, the guidance counselor and 6-12 Principal Scott Amstutz and Assistant Principal David Leone – had regarding the desire to help students who need a little assistance every so often, while also trying to hold students with high amounts of missing work accountable.

"We believe this program is a tremendous opportunity for kids who need help getting back on track, while also supporting students that just need a bit of assistance every now and again," Leone said.

All KMS students are welcome at KAA. Required attendance will be based on students demonstrating a trend of not submitting work. KAA will offer those students a tool to help remediate that issue. NHS students spend the hour moving around between the various students in an effort to provide academic guidance on whatever topic they need. In many ways, KAA offers help with homework, tutoring and general academic assistance for any KMS student.



save the date Saturday, May 18



KIRTLAND FUN RUN & WELLNESS FAIR

Kirtland Local Schools will host a Fun Run & Wellness Fair on Saturday, May 18, at 9 a.m. at Kirtland Elementary School (KES), 9140 Chillicothe Road. The event is open to community members and children of all ages.

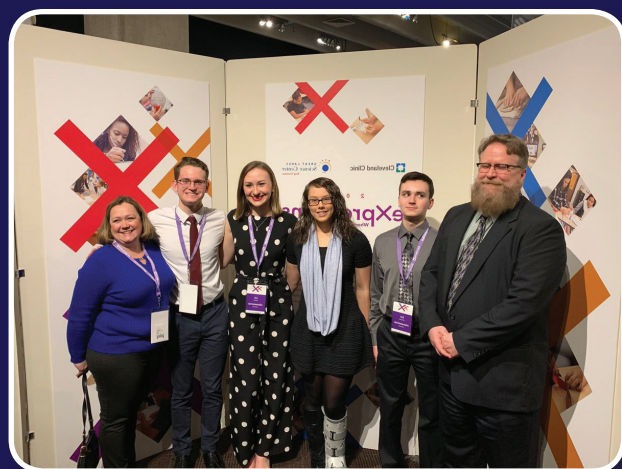
The 1.5-mile Fun Run begins at 9 a.m. at the KES Pavilion near the playground and will take runners around the Kirtland Schools campus. The event is designed to promote health and wellness in the Kirtland community. After the race, stop by the Wellness Fair, which runs 9-11:30 a.m., for a variety of vendors that will provide activities and healthy food options.

Register by May 8 to be guaranteed a t-shirt. Cost is \$10 for an individual pre-registration, \$15 on race day, or \$35 for an entire family. Money raised will be used to support various student health and wellness initiatives. For more information, contact KES Principal Chad VanArnhem at chad.vanarnhem@kirtlandschools.org.

KIRTLAND HAS SEVEN WINNERS IN CLEVELAND CLINIC EXPRESSIONS

Kirtland High School writers took home top awards in the Cleveland Clinic eXpressions Language Program.

Blue Ribbon winners are Audra Bielinis for "Ten Minutes," Kirk Brauer for "I Am the Riddle of Life," Lilly Kelemen for "Perceptions," and Eric Vinciguerra for "Walks in the Park." Red Ribbon winners are Laura Koschik for "Easier," Brandi Martz for "Life's Soundtrack" and Kate Ricketti for "The Five Senses." Their teachers are Meriah Duncan and Eric Eye.



In the eXpressions Language program, a panel of content specialists used four criteria to evaluate each submission – interpretation, presentation, creativity and initiative.

Kirtland students competed against about 1,400 art, language and math projects from 53 schools. Blue Ribbon winners receive a \$100 gift card, Red Ribbon winners receive \$75 and White Ribbon winners receive \$50. Teachers with at least one award-winning student will receive a \$100 educational grant.

Award-winning projects will be featured in an eXpressions catalogue and on the Cleveland Clinic eXpressions website, and will be displayed in the 2019 eXpressions Art, Language and Math eXhibition at the Great Lakes Science Center.

The eXpressions program is an interdisciplinary program that engages high school students in the world of scientific research. Through project-based, peer-to-peer learning, students produce creative interpretations of research conducted by Cleveland Clinic science interns.

EXCITE, EXPLORE & ENGAGE PROVIDES PERSONALIZED LEARNING

"Excite, Explore & Engage" focuses on innovation, life skills, and career and college preparation through an updated curriculum. The program offers students multiple opportunities to create a postsecondary planning pathway, whether students continue their education or head out into the workforce.

Behind the scenes, the administration is expanding partnerships, planning career fairs and networking with community members, organizations and local businesses.

Next year, Kirtland Middle School students will be immersed in the "Excite" phase - grade-level exploration and awareness. Students will take the entire year to explore specific careers and colleges related to multiple fields. They also will begin their pathway portfolio.

At the high school level, students will explore pathways and participate in shadowing and site visits. Older students will investigate internships and summer college road trips.

The college and career pathways program provides a personalized education for all students while educating them to become empowered citizens. Scott Amstutz, 6-12 principal, said the program will give students

the knowledge, skills, tools and experiences necessary to be successful in any of the pathways a student may choose - enrollment in postsecondary education, employment, enlistment or entrepreneurial pursuits.

A large part of the success of this program will be the partnerships and active participation of our local businesses, organizations and community members who are willing to provide real life opportunities to our students. The district is looking for individuals to speak to students about a particular career, allow students to shadow their business, help students with their interviewing skills and/or resumes, serve as a mentor or spend time speaking to students at a career fair. If interested, please fill out the survey at <https://tinyurl.com/KirtlandSurvey> or call Superintendent Bill Wade at 440.256.3311.



SPORTS SHORTS

KHS senior Konnor Duncan's high school wrestling career came to a close with a second straight trip to the OHSAA State Wrestling Championships. He closed out his career with an 82-62 record and two state tournament berths in four years of wrestling.

State awards banners for KHS Boys Soccer, Girls Soccer and Varsity Hornets Football were unveiled during halftime of a Varsity Boys Basketball game in February. The Boys Soccer Team made it to the Final Four, the Girls Soccer Team was the State Runner Up, and the Varsity Hornets Football Team were State Champions.

KHS freshman Kaley Ream was the first Kirtland female swimmer to qualify for the 2019 Ohio High School Athletic Association State Swimming and Diving Championships. She finished ninth overall, but first in the B Final with a time of 5:04.89. She and teammates Emily Morris, Mateja Mrva and Payton VanArnhem set a school record in the 200-freestyle relay earlier in the season.



KHS Hornets Football defensive coordinator Ryan Beeler was named the Ohio Assistant Coach of the Year at the annual Ohio High School Football Coaches Association coaching clinic and banquet in February. The award, sponsored by Winning Edge Fundraising, sends Beeler and his wife Julie to Las Vegas for an all-expenses-paid vacation this summer.



KHS STUDENTS RECOGNIZED WITH ASPIRATIONS IN COMPUTING AWARDS

Kirtland High School junior Rylee Domonkos and senior Lilly Kelemen earned Honorable Mentions for the 2019 Ohio Affiliate National Center for Women & Information Technology (NCWIT) Award for Aspirations in Computing. The award recognizes high school women across Ohio for their leadership and involvement in technology, robotics and applied science, along with their academic success and plans for post-secondary education.



Lilly is president of Student Council and Key Club. She also is a member of the Math Club, National Honor Society and Academic Challenge. She plays volleyball and spends her summers volunteering at Broadmoor School. Her proudest accomplishment as a programmer is creating a system that mimics the periodic table and outputs reactants or products based on user-given information. Lilly credits her computer science teacher Greg Cosimi with inspiring her to pursue this subject. She scored the highest score possible on both AP Computer Science Principles and AP Computer Science tests. An aspiring neurologist or biomedical engineer, Lilly

plans to double major or minor in computer science. She is interested in the design of artificial organs and the development of disabilities in the mind.

Rylee is co-captain of FIRST Tech Challenge team 8120 and a member of Student Council, Kirtland Kiwanis Key Club, Drama Club, Math Club, Academic Challenge and Foreign Language Club. She enjoys computer programming, math and science and intends to go into a STEM field. Rylee is taking three AP courses and two community college courses. She is a second-degree black belt in the American Taekwondo Association, earning state and district championship titles and ranking on the national and world levels. Last year she earned a NCWIT National Certificate of Achievement.

"Rylee and Lilly are two of Kirtland's strongest computer science students, and I am so proud of them," said Cosimi, who nominated the two for the recognition. "Their leadership in class and in our school community is awesome. While these awards reflect their hard work in high school, I cannot wait to see what happens when Lilly and Rylee get to share their talents with the world outside of Kirtland."

The two will be honored at an awards ceremony in Columbus in May.

KMS POWER OF THE PEN WRITERS ADVANCE IN TOURNAMENTS

Four Kirtland Middle School (KMS) writers who competed at the district level advanced to the Power of the Pen Regional Tournament at Villa Angela-St. Joseph High School.

Seventh-grade students Tabitha Blankenship and Nishaan Bhinder, and eighth-grade students Mark Hauptman and Sheridan Kochevar are KMS Power of the Pen regional qualifiers. Power of the Pen only recognizes and gives awards to the top 12 writers in each grade level at the district level. If the KMS students make it past the regional contest, they will qualify for the state competition at the College of Wooster on May 23 and 24.

Power of the Pen is Ohio's interscholastic creative writing program for middle schools. The program aims to

positively impact academic achievement overall. Power of the Pen provides in-class instructional aids that will serve more than 120,000 students in Ohio this year. More than 7,500 students will compete in tournaments.

Susan Summerhill is the Power of the Pen advisor.



ONE SCHOOL, ONE BOOK

Kirtland Elementary School's One School, One Book program revolved around the book *Fenway and Hattie* by Victoria J. Coe. It is the story of a dog and his humans, their understandings and misunderstandings. It is a tale of dedication and friendship. Fenway and his favorite Short Human, Hattie, find a way to better understand one another. Readers follow along as they both learn to see things from one another's perspective.

One School, One Book is a school-wide book club that involves the entire school community – students, parents, teachers, office staff, cafeteria staff, bus drivers and custodial staff – as well as community members and local businesses.

Each student was provided a book by the Kirtland Education Foundation to read at home. Students and

families went on scavenger hunts at local businesses, answered nightly questions after reading each chapter, and participated in fun activities throughout the program. Special guests also came to school to read aloud to students.

During the One School, One Book program, students were given the opportunity to follow Fenway's adventures at a Family Reading Night at the Geauga Humane Society's Rescue Village. Children signed up to read a chapter to the dogs at the facility. Reading to the animals reduces anxiety, nurtures empathy in children and helps students practice their reading skills with a captive listener.



STATE OF THE SCHOOLS 2019 (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

The district is phasing in security upgrades that will update entrances at the high school and middle school. Adjusting entrances will create vestibules visitors will pass through to limit and regulate entrances, control visitor access, and improve screening processes of people entering our buildings. Increased electronic access control points throughout the campus also will provide the ability to lock down sections of the campus to limit intruder access.

The district is constantly reviewing its procedures and upgrading safety systems, including internet safety. We work with local law enforcement to review and update safety plans and conduct drills for a variety of scenarios.

The ultimate goal is to create a comfort level among staff and students with safety policies and procedures, as well as enhance partnerships with law enforcement to ensure the safest environment for all.

You can view the entire State of the Schools presentation online at www.kirtlandschools.org.

KMS FACE-TO-FACE HOLOCAUST EDUCATION FIELD TRIP

Kirtland Middle School seventh-grade students visited the Congregation Shaarey Tikvah in Cleveland in March as an extension of the Holocaust-related reading they completed this year in English Language Arts classes. The program allowed students to learn about Judaism, visit a museum via Holocaust education stations and, ultimately, participate in a question and answer session with a Holocaust survivor or family member of a survivor. The program gave students the opportunity to make real-world connections with community members and develop a deeper understanding of this historical time period, as well as the literature they read in class.

KHS ROBOTICS TEAM PLACES AT STATE COMPETITION

The Kirtland High School FIRST Tech Challenge Robotics Team finished ninth out of 36 teams at the 2019 iSPACE Ohio FIRST Tech Challenge State Championship in February. It was the team's fourth straight state appearance.

The team's robot had its best performance of the year at state competition. This year's team advanced to the state contest from the competitive FIRST Tech Challenge Cleveland Qualifying Tournament in January. At that tournament, the team won the Inspire Award for embodying the "challenge" of the FIRST Tech Challenge program, and for being a strong ambassador of the program in the community. The Electric Hornets also picked up the Motivate Award at the Kent State Qualifier.

Team members are Kirk Brauer, Rylee Domonkos, Octavian Donca, Daniel Frederick, Jake Grdadolnik, Cali Ihnat, Aiden Knaus, Gent Semaj, Anthony Shepard and Mark Svigel. Coaches are Donna and Michael Rudder and Jason Knaus.



KHS VOCAL STUDENTS BRING HOME SUPERIOR PERFORMANCES

Kirtland High School vocal students brought home a variety of awards during recent Ohio Music Education Association (OMEA) contests.

Isabelle Reynolds and Eva Shepard were selected for the 2019 OMEA All State Choir. The group performed in February as part of the 2019 OMEA Professional Development Conference in Cleveland.

The Honors Choir performed at the OMEA Large Group District Contest in March at Kenston High School, receiving the top Superior rating. Their performance

qualified them to move on to the state adjudicated festival this spring. This is the fourth consecutive year the Honors Choir earned a Superior rating.

Four vocal students also earned Superior ratings at the OMEA Solo & Ensemble Festival in February. Jordan Jontz, Ninah Johnson, Shawn Guenther and Isabelle Reynolds earned top ratings for their performances.

These vocal students are led by Choir Director Suzanna Adkins.

