

THE **Kirtland** CONNECTION

A Quarterly Newsletter for Kirtland Local Schools

Winter 2023

MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT



Hello Kirtland Community,

Happy New Year to all!

Our staff and students have had a great first half of the school year inside and outside of the classroom. I have the privilege of seeing our students in all three buildings almost daily and they never cease to amaze

me with their work ethic, collaborative nature and politeness. We truly have amazing students within our district. Our teachers have been working extremely hard in their classrooms and have been very busy with a variety of professional development. The training includes using best instructional strategies, using the English language arts curriculum pilot, science curricular audits and instructional practices, personalized learning, dyslexia training, CPR/First Aid and a lot of work with their instructional standards. I also want to give a special shoutout to our bus drivers and custodians. As we continue to be short staffed, those dedicated employees that we have continue to

go above and beyond to make sure school is running smoothly. Thank you!

We were fortunate to have had a historically successful extra-curricular fall season capped off by the eleventh state championship appearance in twelve years by the football team. While we have student-athletes that have done very well in their sports, they take great pride in their academics. I am very proud to announce that our fall Varsity athletes, despite their hours of dedication after school with sports, worked equally as hard in the classroom by earning a cumulative 3.65 combined GPA for our fall grading period!

Also, our Kirtland Hornet Marching Band was featured on Channel 19 and Fox 8 News this fall.

I look forward to a great second half of the school year. I am also very excited for our KHS students to start using the newly renovated science lab starting in January!

Thanks for your support,
Chad VanArnhem, Superintendent

FINANCIAL UPDATE FROM THE TREASURER

In November, The Kirtland Board of Education approved the district's five year forecast. The five-year forecast is a state mandated document which provides revenue and expense data for a three year look back and five year forward look period of time.

From an expense perspective, the district spends nearly 85% of all expenses for salaries and benefits. These include salaries of teachers, bus drivers, custodians, secretaries, administrators, and other school personnel. It also includes the cost of health insurances and required retirement contributions as provided for in state law. The remainder of the budget is spent on supporting teachers to provide for a well-rounded education both inside and outside of the classroom. These items include utilities, paper products, computers, as well as buses and costs associated with special education, gifted education, athletics and the arts. Whereas the district too has seen inflation pressures associated with healthcare, wage growth, and supply items. The district continues to spend less than the inflationary rate elsewhere in the economy. Over the past three years, the district's average expense cost has been **1.42% per year!**

At the same time, the district's revenue has and will continue to remain stable but flat. It is expected to increase at less than 0.5% annually. The district is funded predominantly on local tax dollars. The state contributions include state foundation representing 6.5% of our revenue, and the contribution from local tax exemptions representing 10.5% of total general fund revenue. The bulk of all general fund revenue (75%) is generated by local tax dollars. In addition, 88% of that is from residential properties within the community.

With this in mind, the district has balanced its annual budget in each of the last five years. We anticipate a balanced budget for the current year ending June 30, 2023, but with inflationary costs rising faster than revenues, we see deficit spending in FY24 and beyond.

So what does this mean for the district? The district is preparing for long-term fiscal discussions. We are placing a renewal levy on the May primary ballot for revenue that represents 10% of our general fund and have another levy renewal set for the following year. The district last passed new general fund revenue in 2012.

NAMING RIGHTS OF KIRTLAND HIGH SCHOOL STADIUM SECURED

The Kirtland Local School District is pleased to announce that John Wilson, Jr., owner of AQUA DOC Lake & Pond Management and a 1980 graduate of Kirtland High School, has purchased the naming rights to the stadium for \$200,000.

John Wilson Jr. was introduced to the football team in the locker room prior to their November 4 playoff game. Athletic Director Matt Paul said to the players, “Mr. Wilson is allowing us to get exactly what we want in our stadium because of his generosity.”

“We are getting the best materials money can buy because of him,” said Coach Tiger LaVerde.

“John is a great fit for the naming rights of our renovated stadium. He is a Kirtland graduate and self-made success story from years of hard work! Mr. Wilson is a huge sports fan and loves following the Hornets. I am very thankful for his generosity and support which will allow us to upgrade our turf and provide funding to our facilities and programs” said Superintendent Chad VanArnhem.

The district will receive \$20,000 for the next 10 years with \$10,000 paid at signing of the agreement. Under terms of the deal, which was voted on officially at the Board of Education meeting on November 28, the stadium will be known as “Wilson Stadium.” The Rogers Family (Rogers Field) was contacted and they gave their support to the district to pursue the naming rights of the stadium which was much appreciated.

Now with John Wilson, Jr.’s commitment to our stadium project, we are able to use private money to upgrade the turf that has a longer warranty and put it towards



maintaining the district’s athletic facilities. The Kirtland Athletic Boosters have also donated \$40,000 to this project. Their support has helped ensure that the turf will be upgraded. The Kirtland Athletic Boosters continue to be extremely supportive and helpful to the district’s athletic programs.

Wilson has lived in Kirtland for 29 years and has always loved Kirtland athletics. “Watching football in Kirtland is always so unbelievable,” said Wilson. “You have put yourself on the map and created a phenomenal program. We want our home to be the best. It’s exciting to be a part of it.”

Since 1983, AQUA DOC has been maintaining ponds for individual homeowners, associations, condominiums, businesses, golf courses, municipalities and marinas. AQUA DOC’s focus is sustainable stewardship of freshwater ecosystems and maintaining a healthy balance in the waters they manage.

Wilson’s passion for lakes and ponds began in 1983, when he began working for the small family company that would one day become AQUA DOC. In 1989, he purchased the company from founder William P. Cloonan and has grown AQUA DOC into the industry leader it is today. To this day, Wilson’s hands-on involvement with his company has not changed and he can still be found on the many lakes and ponds AQUA DOC manages and meeting with clients. When Wilson is not out on the waters, he is spending quality time with his wife of 34 years, Jeanine and their two children, Maddie and Johnny III. He enjoys playing hockey and baseball and can often be found attending sporting events from the local Kirtland High School football game to the World Series.

The district continues to pursue other sponsorships. Interested businesses, organizations or individuals can contact Superintendent Chad VanArnhem at chad.vanarnhem@kirtlandschools.org.



“John is a great fit for the naming rights of our renovated stadium. He is a Kirtland graduate and self-made success story from years of hard work!”

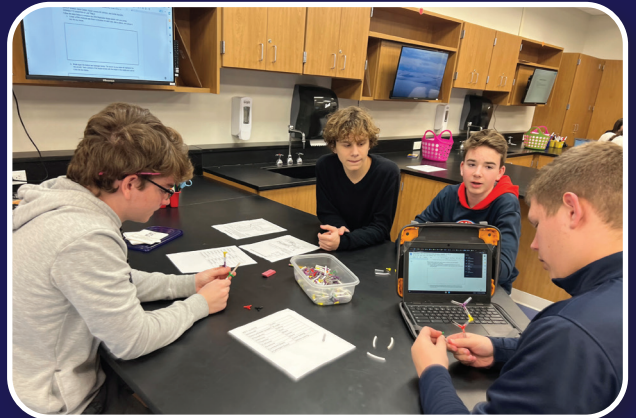
KIRTLAND HIGH SCHOOL COMPLETES SCIENCE LAB RENOVATION

At the July 2022 Kirtland Local Schools Board of Education meeting, the Board voted to approve the financing of the science lab and stadium using permanent improvement money.

The Kirtland High School science lab renovation was focused on opening up two small rooms to create one larger, improved and functional learning area for the students. Kirtland students and teachers got to use the lab for the first time after winter break, the week of January 3.

“I was lucky to have been included in all the meetings when designing the new science lab. The administration team, led by Superintendent Chad VanArnhem, along with the architecture team, asked for my input on every decision,” said science teacher Alexandra Ardo.

“I wanted a classroom and lab that was open and functional, and gave students the best tools to succeed. The team members were able to bring my vision to life. This opportunity will be beneficial because it will



provide our students with exposure to more hands-on inquiry and real-life scientific investigations.

The lab received a complete renovation with new electrical, plumbing, floors, ceiling tiles, countertops, and a fresh coat of paint on the walls. Upgraded technology also was added to the classroom and lab. Every station has a monitor that can display students’ real-time work or teaching materials. The furniture is flexible and will help with the flow of lab activities, station work, and personalized learning pathways.

“This will be a great addition to our high school because it will allow students to experience a better lab experience that will prepare them for college-level labs and for future career opportunities,” said Ardo.



KIRTLAND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL FIFTH GRADERS CONTINUE TO LEARN ABOUT ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The fifth-grade STEAM students at Kirtland Elementary School (KES) continue to learn about being entrepreneurs. After a generous donation of 100 bottles of honey from local beekeeper, John Urbanick, the students decided they wanted to start a business.

The students designed and packaged the bottles for sale and also developed a name for their company based on votes. Student Isabella Brkic was the brain behind their new company name - The Bee Kind Honey Co. - with the help of Brian Harvey from the Kirtland High School (KHS) art department and Scott Greenlee from the KHS Hackerspace, the students got their business up and running.

The students loaded their honey onto their Honey Bus cart and started by offering free samples to the teachers



before purchasing. A bottle of honey from The Bee Kind Honey Co. is priced at \$12.

The entrepreneurs have begun to expand and collaborate within the District. In partnership with Coach J.P. Moran and the cross country team, fifth-and-sixth-graders teamed up to take The Honey Bus to Kirtland Middle School in an effort to raise money for the Cross Country program.

The Honey Bus made sales at the Kirtland Elementary School conferences in November where the students set up a table at the KES entrance with samples and bottles of honey to sell to our KES families.

THE KIRTLAND HORNET MARCHING BAND EXPLORES TWO COLLEGE CAMPUSES

The Kirtland Hornet Marching Band visited the University of Akron and Kent State University during their annual fall college visit trip on November 16. The students experienced different aspects of college life and saw first-hand what music looks like at the college level.

The college visit is a Kirtland tradition in its 10th year (except during the pandemic) and gives band students a much-earned fun field trip after their marching season. The band rotates college destinations and in the fall of 2023 the KHS band students will visit the campus of Ohio University. “The students get to visit five very different campuses in a low key and low stress way if they stay in the program all four years,” said KHS Band Director Tom Dingeldein.

Students were able to tour the campus, see the University of Akron’s (UA) band room, observe a saxophone quartet practice, and attend a conducting class for music education majors. They participated in warmups and conducting patterns. They asked questions about college, music and choosing a major. Students enjoyed lunch in the dining hall. After lunch, they observed either a percussion studio rehearsal or tuba/euphonium studio rehearsal. They concluded their time by attending a UA Wind Symphony rehearsal.

At Kent State University (KSU), students attended a game day marching band practice with the Marching Golden Flashes inside of Dix Stadium. Following rehearsal, the students headed to the college bookstore for Kent gear and ate dinner in one of Kent’s dining halls. The final portion on their college tour was watching KSU play Eastern Michigan while observing and sitting next to the

Marching Golden Flashes. The evening ended with a half-time performance of the Marching Golden Flashes’ “Disney Show.”

This trip was at no cost to the students thanks to the generosity of several organizations. Kirtland Music Boosters paid for the chartered bus, UA paid for the on-campus lunch, KHS band paid for dinner, and KSU covered the game ticket.



KHMB enjoying Kent State University’s Marching Golden Flashes Halftime Performance (KSU vs. Eastern Michigan)



KHMB at University of Akron’s Wind Symphony rehearsal. Lead by Dr. Galen Karriker

FALL SPORTS SHORTS

Kirtland's fall sports teams enjoyed their fair share of success during the fall season. Highlighted by the football team's run to the Division VI state title game, the Hornets won three Chagrin Valley Conference titles and shared another, with several teams making deep postseason runs, four coaches earned CVC Coach of the Year honors, and 46 players were named all-conference. Kirtland also had 14 student-athletes earn All-Ohio honors.

The football team's bid for a seventh state title came up short with a 14-6 loss to Marion Local in the state championship game at Tom Benson Hall of Fame Stadium in Canton on Dec. 3. Kirtland finished the year 15-1 with a Chagrin Valley Conference Chagrin Division title and landed 11 players on the Division VI All-Ohio team.



Senior Philip LaVerde became the eighth Kirtland player to earn a state player of the year award when he was named the Division VI Defensive Player of the

Year. LaVerde also was named the CVC Chagrin Division Defensive Player of the Year, and head coach Tiger LaVerde was named the league's Coach of the Year. Defensive lineman Daven Patel and defensive backs Tommy Gogolin and Will Sayle joined LaVerde on the first team. Sayle and Gogolin both are two-time first-team All-Ohioans as they earned the honor last fall as well. Will Bates, a defensive lineman, was named third-team All-Ohio.

The Hornets landed six offensive players on the Division VI All-Ohio team. Offensive linemen George Prusock and Joe Pekar were named first team, wide receiver Gino Blasini and tight end Adam Knaak were second-team selections and running back Rocco Alfieri and offensive lineman Matthew Kahley were named third team. Prusock is a three-time All-Ohioan after earning first-team honors in 2021 after being named second-team All-Ohio in 2020.

Kirtland's volleyball team continued to raise the bar as it finished a second straight CVC Valley Division schedule unblemished and won a fourth straight sectional title. The Hornets, who finished 22-3 overall, have won 27 straight conference matches dating back to September 2020. Ava Golem earned third-team All-Ohio honors and Natalie Glowe was an honorable mention All-Ohioan. That dynamic duo also shared the CVC Valley Division Player of the Year honors and closed out their four-year careers with a remarkable 81-17 record, four sectional titles, two



district titles, and two appearances in the Division III regional tournament. Junior Katie Reynolds joined Golem and Glowe on the All-CVC first-team, Tessa Gordon and Nina Loncar were second-team selections, and Marissa Carmosino and Georgia DeJohn earned honorable mention All-CVC honors. Head coach Arlayna Newcomer was named the CVC Coach of the Year.

Kirtland's boys' soccer team shared the CVC Valley Division title with Berkshire. The Hornets finished 12-5-1 overall and lost to Beachwood in a penalty kick shootout in a Division III district championship game. Kirtland has played in five straight district finals. Head coach John Valentic was named CVC Valley Division Co-Coach of the Year, and eight Hornets earned all-conference honors. Nick Barisic, Vince Carriero, and Owen Mueller earned first-team honors, Drew Duncan, Austin Leland, and Vikram Sundararajan were second-team selections, and Daniel Bak and Vincent Vukovic were honorable mention selections.

Kirtland's girls' cross country team made a third straight trip to the regional meet this fall and also won a third straight CVC Valley Division title. Head coach JP Moran was named the league's Coach of the Year and five individual runners earned all-conference honors. Ainsley Borthwick, Sylvia Vosicky, and Izzie Copeland each were named to the first team while Stephanie Drazetic and Jessy Jackson were honorable mention selections.

Four boys earned All-CVC honors in cross country. Ben Sherman and Ian Borthwick both earned second-team honors while Warren Eveland and Brigham Weight were named honorable mention.

Kirtland's girls' soccer team finished the season 9-6-4 with an appearance in a Division III district semifinal. The Hornets lost that game to Wickliffe, 1-0, in double overtime. The win was the first for Wickliffe over the Hornets in 17 games between the two schools. The Hornets landed six players on the all-conference team and one All-Ohioan.



Corinne Greenlee was named first-team All-Ohio and first-team All-CVC. Nora Sherman joined Greenlee on the CVC first team while Lily Whittaker and Stephanie Drazetic were second-team selections, and Emily Ridgeway and Kennedy Boyd both earned honorable mention honors.

Kirtland's young boys' golf team showed plenty of progress from the start of the season to the end and the future is bright for the Hornets.

Two players—Micah Reynolds and Knox Crisci—earned All-CVC honorable mention honors.

KIRTLAND LOCAL SCHOOLS ADDS MORE MEDIA CLASSES TO SCHEDULE

Kirtland Local Schools has offered media courses to their high school students for some time, but the course has now evolved into what is now a combination of both classic media forms and newer digital mediums and is increasingly hands-on for the students.

Kirtland High School (KHS) offers a “Media I” course for students interested in graphic design and multimedia editing. In the past, this course was taught as a film making/appreciation course. The course changed direction when KHS teacher Brian Harvey became the instructor in 2011. The number of sections has tripled since last year with more than 50 students registered for the course in the 2022-2023 school year.

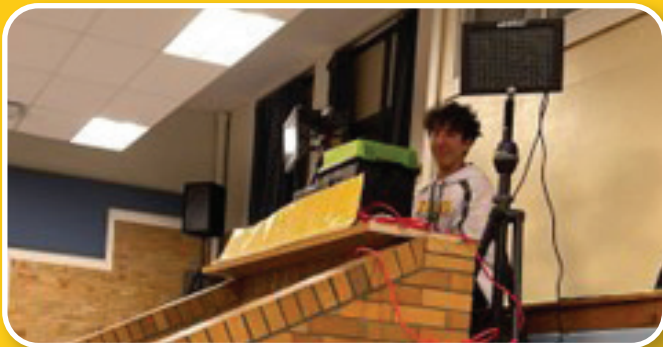
Harvey used his own background in art and graphic design to shift the course focus into exploring all types of media including print, audio, and video based around

real world project-based assignments. Additionally, the students are able to spend time working on projects that impact their school and community culture.

So far this year, the media students produced homecoming candidate videos viewed by the student body, vehicle wraps for the Kirtland Police Department, concert programs for the concert choir, positive stickers for lockers, PBIS videos for the guidance counselors which aired through the internet for each classroom, the holiday banner and Shamrock Shuffle banners for Kirtland City Hall, and printed t-shirts and stickers for many district groups and school clubs.

Another part of the course is that each student is also required to live stream an event, giving them the opportunity to see and execute live media work for themselves. “Personally, it’s been awesome for me to see this creative/artistic side of my students,” said KHS Teacher Greg Cosimi. “These classes include many students who would not count themselves as artists or computer scientists, but who would count themselves as digital creators.”

A major goal of the class is for students to finish the course as proficient users of many of the Adobe Creative Suite applications such as Illustrator, Photoshop, and Premiere Pro. The students also learn how to use a vinyl printer for their banner, shirt transfer, and sticker creations. This class is possible in-part through contributions from the KHS technology department and Scott Greenlee for helping to supply these necessary tools.



Bobby Whittaker - participating in democracy on October 19 by live streaming Candidates Night.

GREAT LAKES THEATRE ACTORS BRING ROMEO AND JULIET TO LIFE FOR NINTH GRADERS

On October 24, the Great Lakes Theatre Residency Actors visited the English classes at Kirtland High School to help bring Shakespeare to life for the students. Yearly, ninth graders read Romeo and Juliet, so having the students work with the actors allows them to think about the story in a new, creative and hands-on way.

The English department prides itself on offering a rich, quality selection of texts for students. William Shakespeare is a critical author who explores universal themes, compelling stories, and relatable characters. “By exposing students to the living, breathing text, our students become active participants, not merely passive consumers,” said teacher Jennifer Berry. “As educators, we are always looking for ways to engage our students and help them to better understand the texts we are studying.

All high school English classes attended the play Romeo and Juliet at the Hanna Theater in Cleveland on November 2. It is a long-standing tradition for Kirtland to attend the theater production together in order to share the experience of live theater, but also to see one of the texts students study brought to life.

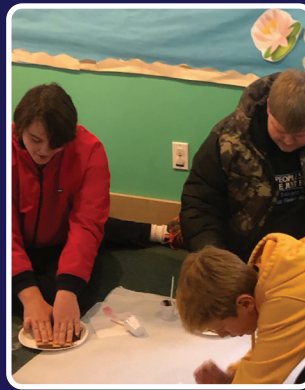


KIRTLAND MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS VISIT LOCAL METROPARK FOR SCIENCE FIELD TRIP

In November, Kirtland Middle School eighth graders had the opportunity to dive head first into interactive learning labs on a field trip to the old schoolhouse, located within the Lake MetroParks Children's Schoolhouse Nature Park, which dates back to 1894.

The field trip allowed the students to gain a deeper understanding of their science lessons on plate tectonics, which is the study of the structure of the earth's crust and how it moves. "The kids were immersed in activities that they couldn't do here at school," said Katie Vitatloe, KMS science teacher. "We did a lot of work with the academic standards in school but on the field trip, they got to have that hands-on connection as well."

While at the old schoolhouse, the students participated in three different activities to further their understanding of the material they had already discussed in the classroom. The first lab focused on density and they got to see that in action using hot and cold water. The students saw first hand that warm water is less dense than cold water so the warm water will sit on top of the cold water when the divider is removed from between them. Next, they got to experiment with graham crackers to simulate how the plates in the earth's crust move together and break apart at plate boundaries. The final experiment of the trip was a water lab. Hot and cold water were used to show how the continents "float" above the mantle and move based on changes in convection currents.



"The kids were immersed in activities that they couldn't do here at school. We did a lot of work with the academic standards in school but on the field trip, they got to have that hands-on connection as well."

Katie Vitatloe, KMS Science Teacher

KIRTLAND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS COMPETE IN NATIONAL ONLINE MATH CONTEST

Third, fourth, and fifth graders at Kirtland Elementary School (KES) have been competing in an online Noetic Learning Math Contest since fall 2020. The contest happens biannually in the fall and in the spring and focuses on problem-solving. Thirty students from each grade level who scored the highest on their math assessment competed in the fall competition this November.

Team members gather together semi-regularly to solve sample problems using multiple strategies/models. The students also have access to Problems of the Week online to help them practice their skills. "The energy during practice sessions is quite amazing, and the mathematical conversations are so rich and exciting," said teacher and coach Michelle Molchen.

On contest days, aside from the sound of pencils moving across scratch paper, there has been almost complete

silence in Hornet Hall. Students work independently to solve 20 problems within 50 minutes, and each correct solution earns the student 5%, with the max they can earn is 100%. Top scorers are awarded medals and/or ribbons for honorable mention. Each team's average score is ranked among all others at the same grade level from elementary schools across the country.

The KES students are led by their coaches: fifth-grade teacher Jessie Denton; fourth-grade teacher Kate Lafferty; and third-grade teacher Michelle Molchen. Linn Bown, Kirtland's Gifted Coordinator, takes responsibility for registering the teams, communicating with NOETIC, and accessing official practice materials.

The next Noetic Learning Math Contest will happen in April 2023.



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UPCOMING EVENTS



- January 23 - Regular Board of Education Meeting, KHS cafeteria
- February 7 - PTA Meeting
- February 9 - 6-12 Conferences
- February 10 - Teacher Work Day - No School for Students
- February 16 - 5th Grade and High School Concert Band Concert
- February 20 - Presidents' Day - No School
- February 27 - Regular Board of Education Meeting, KHS cafeteria
- April 3 - Regular Board of Education Meeting

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