



Kirtland Local School District  
9252 Chillicothe Road, Kirtland, OH 44094  
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CLEVELAND, OH  
PERMIT NO. 1

## UPCOMING EVENTS



November 24 - 29 - Thanksgiving Break -  
No School for Students  
December 9 - National Honor Society Induction  
at City Hall  
December 13 - Regular Board of Education Meeting -  
High School Cafeteria  
December 14 - PTA Meeting  
December 16 - KES Holiday Concert  
December 17 - End of Second Quarter  
December 20 - January 3 - Winter Break - No School

## BOARD OF EDUCATION

**President: Jonathan Withrow**

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**Vice President: Shannon Green**

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**Timothy Cosgrove**

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**Kathryn Talty**

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**Matt Whittaker**

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**Superintendent: Chad VanArnhem**

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**Director of Pupil Services: Kristen Schutte**

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**Treasurer: Lew Galante**

Lew.Galante@kirtlandschools.org

\*\*\*\*\*ECRWSSSEDDM\*\*\*\*\*

**RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMER  
KIRTLAND, OH 44094**

*Kirtland Elementary School*

**Principal: Katy Nagaj**

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*Kirtland Middle School*

**Principal: Scott Amstutz**

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**Assistant Principal: David Leone**

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*Kirtland High School*

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*Athletics*

**Athletic Director: Matt Paul**

Matt.Paul@kirtlandschools.org

# THE Kirtland CONNECTION

A Quarterly Newsletter for Kirtland Local Schools

Fall 2021

## THANK YOU TO OUR STUDENTS, STAFF, PARENTS AND COMMUNITY



### Hello Kirtland Community,

Our campus has such a positive energy with our students being back for in-person learning since the

beginning of the school year. While the ongoing pandemic has presented some challenges, I am so proud of our students, staff and families for persevering to ensure learning is taking place in a very supportive atmosphere. A lot of great instruction and learning is taking place daily in our classrooms.

Our students have also been active and thriving in their extracurricular activities and community service.

I want to give some updates on the larger Permanent Improvement projects that are planned for the campus. The district has hired ThenDesign Architecture (TDA) through a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) process that took place in July. The Board of Education is currently in the process of putting out an RFQ for a Construction Manager at Risk.

A series of meetings have taken place at Kirtland High School with staff to plan for the remodeling of a science lab. Two small classrooms that are not functional will be combined to create a flexible learning and lab area in one large room. Science teacher Alex Ardo has been involved with the design and has shown great excitement for what this remodeled classroom will allow her students to do.

The architects have presented different options for remodeling the stadium. Feedback was provided from a community group consisting of a variety of stakeholders. After receiving the input from the community group, the initial plans are to have the stadium in the same footprint that it currently sits. If two more lanes were added to the track, it would need to be slightly angled and would add an additional cost of over \$800,000 to the project. So, the decision was made to keep the track six lanes and resurface it. The visiting stands will be removed in the spring 2022 which will allow the field to be wide enough



for soccer, too. In the spring 2022, the plan is to add field turf, new LED lights and a new scoreboard to have in place for the 2022 fall season. Temporary stands will be used and placed on the track for the visiting side. The second phase of the stadium remodel will take place in the spring 2023. This will include moving the buses to a different location to create much more needed space. The current home side is very limited for development and will become the visiting side. The old visiting side will then become the home side which will allow for larger stands to accommodate more fans and the band, a press box, concessions, restrooms and a plaza space for the community. The district will also be soliciting in kind donations and generating revenue through advertising and naming rights. If you or your company are interested, please email [chad.vanarnhem@kirtlandschools.org](mailto:chad.vanarnhem@kirtlandschools.org).

The permanent improvement updates can be found on the district website (<https://www.kirtlandschools.org/permanentimprovement.aspx>). They also include pictures of the proposed plans.

There are a lot of amazing things going on around campus and it is a great time to be a Hornet!

Thanks for your support,

Chad VanArnhem  
Superintendent

## FOLLOW US

Chad VanArnhem on Twitter @KLSDSupt  
Kirtland Schools on Facebook @KirtlandSchoolsOH  
Kirtland Schools on Twitter @KirtlandSchools  
Kirtland Elementary School on Twitter @mrsnagaj  
Kirtland Middle School on Twitter @MrAmstutz | @MrLeoneMS  
Kirtland High School on Twitter @MrAmstutz  
Kirtland Hornets athletics on Twitter @kirtlandsports

Kirtland Athletics at [www.kirtlandhornet.org](http://www.kirtlandhornet.org) | Kirtland Local Schools at [www.kirtlandschools.org](http://www.kirtlandschools.org)



# “BUILD THE BRIDGE” PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTED AT FOOTBALL HALL OF FAME CEREMONY

Students on the Kirtland High School varsity football team have continued their efforts in becoming more social-emotional players and people through the “Build the Bridge” program over the summer. The significance of the program between not just Kirtland and Shaker Heights City School District, but all participating teams in Ohio, led to a recognition at the Football Hall of Fame.

Build the Bridge was established by two coaches in Cleveland Heights and one in Beachwood to foster student-athletes’ success through social-emotional, educational and athletic advancement. Coaches, players, parents, school administrations and the community play an important role in ensuring the players develop personal connections with other players. Key areas of focus are awareness of social justice and race relations.

Kirtland Varsity Football Coach Tiger LaVerde said, “The hopes of all the football coaches involved in this program is that we educate all of our players to appreciate others from different backgrounds and cultures. All the coaches involved care about our country and want to make it a better place for our children.”

Since the partnership between Kirtland and Shaker formed in September of last year, the teams have continued to work on creating connections. Over the summer, LaVerde said student-athletes participated in a softball game with Shaker Heights, held combined team workouts and ate lunch together.



Cleveland Heights Coach Kahari Hicks; Hall of Fame player Chris Carter (also former Ohio State Buckeye); and Kirtland Coach Tiger LaVerde



“Partnering with Shaker Heights through the Build the Bridge program is an excellent opportunity to show how athletics can provide a platform to help our student-athletes better understand and appreciate one another,” said Athletic Director Matt Paul, Kirtland Local Schools.

This program caught the attention of the National Football League, as it was highlighted at a recent NFL ceremony held at the Football Hall of Fame in Canton, Ohio. LaVerde said one of the Build the Bridge founders, Cleveland Heights Coach Kahari Hicks, invited him to attend the ceremony with him.

“It was a once in a lifetime experience to be in a room with more than 100 Hall of Fame players,” said LaVerde. The Hall of Fame thanked Kahari for starting the initiative and LaVerde

witnessed the occasion while sitting among every living hall of fame member.

As the program continues to develop between the Kirtland and Shaker Heights football teams, the goal remains clear to LaVerde. “I want our players to have a heart for others and care about people.”



“The hopes of all the football coaches involved in this program is that we educate all of our players to appreciate others from different backgrounds and cultures. It was a once in a lifetime experience to be in a room with more than 100 Hall of Fame players” - Tiger LaVerde Kirtland Varsity Football Coach

# SPORTS SHORTS

Kirtland’s fall sports teams have enjoyed unprecedented success this season as all four of Kirtland’s team sports squads entered October ranked by their respective state polls.

**The Hornets were a unanimous No. 1 choice in the Division V AP state football poll.** Kirtland received all 23 first-place votes after entering the week 5-0 with a back-to-back-to-back state titles and a 46-game winning streak. The Hornets also sit atop the weekly OHSAA computer point rankings, which determine the playoff seedings.

Mason Rus is nearing the 1,000-yard mark for the season as he has carried the ball 118 times for 925 yards and a team-best 13 touchdowns. Tommy Gogolin has added 478 yards on the ground with seven touchdowns and Ramon Lescano has rushed for 383 yards and three scores. Lescano also has thrown for 437 yards and seven scores. His favorite target is Gage Sullivan, who has hauled in 20 passes for 372 yards and eight scores.

**Kirtland’s girls’ soccer team**, the defending Division III state champion, is ranked third in Division III. The Hornets are 7-2-3 on the year. Erika Zschuppe, the reigning Division III Player of the Year, recorded the 150th goal of her career on Sept. 26 and leads the Hornets with 28 goals this season. She also is second on the team with eight assists. Giuliana Vladic is the team leader with nine assists.

Expectations are high for the **Kirtland boys’ soccer team**, which is off to a 10-1-1 start. The Hornets’ success hasn’t gone unnoticed as they currently are ranked No. 5 in Division III. Marco Valentic leads the Hornets with 28 goals and Jason de Zwaan is close behind with 18. Six of Kirtland’s 10 wins have been shutouts.



Among the biggest stories of the fall has been the success of **Kirtland’s volleyball team**. Last fall, the Hornets won their first Division III district title in school history and appeared in the regional tournament for the first time since winning a Division IV district title in 2010. They opened the season this year with a loss to defending Division III state runner-up Independence but have since reeled off 16 straight wins and are ranked No. 20 in the state. Sophomore Georgia DeJohn leads the Hornets with 72 kills, Ava Golem has recorded a team-high 20 service aces and 148 digs, and Katie Reynolds has 174 assists in 17 matches.



**Kirtland’s golf team** closed out the season at the sectional tournament on Sept. 27. Prior to that, Victor Alfieri shot a 75 at the league’s postseason tournament to claim medalist honors. He also finished the season as the Chagrin Valley Conference Valley Division’s MVP with a total of 244 points.

**The Hornets are off and running on the cross country course** with Reilly Greenlee and Sylvia Vosicky leading the girls’ team to a few top finishes in various invationals. Ian Borthwick and Brigham Weight have paced the boys’ team this season.



# PAOLO DEMARIA, STATE SUPERINTENDENT, VISITS KIRTLAND LOCAL SCHOOLS

On September 9, Kirtland Local Schools welcomed and gave a tour to State Superintendent Paolo DeMaria and State Board member Tim Miller. DeMaria and Miller were greeted in the front entrance of Kirtland High School by the drumline from the school's band as well as peer student leaders.

Students then went to The Nest where the guests were interviewed by students on camera in front of the green screen using the school's broadcast technology. They then visited the middle school's eighth-grade band. DeMaria was the honorary conductor for the class. They also visited science classes at the middle school.

Fifth graders were excited to showcase their work in their STEAM class and had fun recording a morning video announcement for Friday, September 10 with DeMaria. The afternoon visit concluded with a "read aloud" with kindergarten students.

"We were delighted to have the State Superintendent visit us here at Kirtland today," said Superintendent Chad VanArnhem. During DeMaria's visit, VanArnhem

and his team were able to showcase the district's 'Profile of a Hornet' work as well as the college and career readiness program, Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) Program, Kindness Council, math and English language arts curriculum, wellness initiatives, and Responsive Classroom activities.



# KIRTLAND HORNETS TEAM UP FOR SERVICE



The Kirtland Hornets soccer team started off the 2021 season by winning in more ways than one. Following the girls' soccer game on August 13, both the boys' and girls' soccer teams partnered with their opponents from Eastlake North to host a soccer clinic as part of the Empower Sports program.

Empower Sports is a nonprofit organization that provides sports and exercise programs for children and adults with physical and cognitive disabilities. Its mission is to enrich the lives of athletes of diverse challenges through exercise and sports while promoting kindness, character and tolerance.

Student athletes participated in the program as part of the Ohio High School Athletic Association's Friday Night Futbol Initiative. There were six different stations in the clinic

available for Empower Sports participants to sharpen their skills. A Kirtland or North student athlete was paired with a participant while other students acted as coaches at each of the stations.

Kirtland Senior Macy McIntosh said in an Ohio Varsity article that it was a new opportunity for Kirtland athletes as they had run a children's camp before, but not for those with disabilities. "It was super nice to have our teams come together to give back to those kids and it's definitely something I hope other people can see and want to take part in with the program they have at Empower. It's nice to know the love of the sport can bring us all together," said McIntosh. The Kirtland girls' soccer Coach Ed Bradac said having the student athletes work with the Empower Sports participants fell in line with one of the team's core values, which states that the truly extraordinary do something every day.

"It was great to see our women's team interact with Empower athletes and the teams from North, it was fun to watch," said Bradac.

# KIRTLAND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL RECOGNIZES FIRST RESPONDERS WITH ANNUAL PARADE

On Friday, September 10, in honor of Patriot Day, the staff and students at Kirtland Elementary School honored all of the community's first responders in an outdoor parade. Officers in their vehicles drove through the school parking lot as students lined the driveways wearing red, white and blue and waving American flags to show appreciation for all they do. First responders from Kirtland Police Department, Kirtland Fire Department, Lakeland Police Department, Waite Hill Police Department and Kirtland Hills Police Department were part of the parade.

"September 11, 2001, was one of the darkest days in our country's history," said Superintendent Chad VanArnhem. "Not to be lost in the tragedy was the heroism and selfless acts of so many from the passengers on Flight 93 to the first responders in Washington D.C. and New York City. While remembering the events of 9/11, I would like to publicly thank all the emergency forces that serve the Kirtland Local Schools: Kirtland Police Department, Kirtland Fire Department, Kirtland Hills Police Department and the Waite Hill Police Department for their tireless dedication to keeping us safe."

September 11th is a day we will not forget and also provides a day of reflection and thankfulness for those that risk their lives daily to protect ours."



# KIRTLAND HIGH SCHOOL YEARBOOK INDUCTED INTO GALLERY OF EXCELLENCE

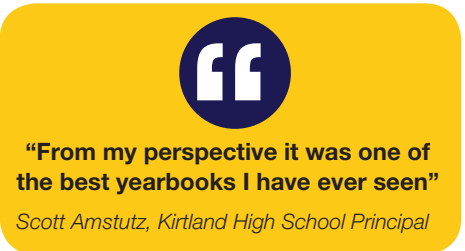
Kirtland High School's (KHS) 2021 yearbook was inducted into the Walsworth Gallery of Excellence for the second year in a row. Walsworth, the school's printing partner for its yearbooks, inducts a select group of yearbooks of the highest caliber each year and these books are showcased to students and advisers across the country.

Books are chosen based on their display of theme, coverage, design, photography, and copy. Walsworth yearbook representatives share the inducted books at workshops and with visiting schools to provide staff members with inspiration and to offer visual examples of journalistic excellence.

Walsworth features these quality yearbooks at regional, state, and national conventions and displays specific covers, spreads, photos, and coverage ideas on the company website and in educational materials.

In a letter to the KHS Yearbook Adviser, Jennifer Berry, the president of Walsworth Yearbooks wrote, "Achieving this prestigious honor is a testament to the hard work, dedication and talent of our students. We are proud to serve as your printing partner."

"From my perspective, it was one of the best yearbooks I have ever seen," said Principal Scott Amstutz, Kirtland High School. "Great job, and we are very proud of our KHS advisor, students in the yearbook class, and all the other groups of students that contributed to this book of memories!"





# KIRTLAND HIGH CLASS OF 1971 TOURS SCHOOL CAMPUS AFTER 50 YEARS

The Kirtland High School class of 1971 took a walk down memory lane when they revisited the Kirtland campus 50 years after graduating. The class had their 50th high school reunion during the weekend of August 28, and when alumna Nora Nemec reached out to Kirtland Local Schools' Superintendent Chad VanArnhem about taking a tour of the buildings, he was more than accommodating.

A group of 20 alumni took an hour and a half tour of the now connected elementary, middle, and high schools. Nemec said the connected buildings were one of the changes she noticed. "Kirtland High School used to have two floors and one hall with a corridor to the gym," said Nemec. Her class was the first sixth-grade class in the new middle school, which opened in the late 1960s, and students had to walk outside to get to the building. "The campus has changed tremendously, it doesn't even resemble what it was 50 years ago," said Nemec.



Among the stops on the tour was the high school library, which now features a 3D printing lab. Nemec said she and her classmates were surprised at the amount of technology compared to their library, which was a renovated classroom primarily filled with books. "Everything is so modern. It was an eye-opener for the class. They were impressed."

As she and her classmates toured the campus, every room brought a new memory and stories were told throughout the tour. The experience culminated with the class eating lunch together in the cafeteria. "It was a blast," Nemec said, noting she promised VanArnhem there would be no food fights.

The 20 people on the tour had all been classmates at Kirtland Local Schools since kindergarten. Nemec said she received emails from some of the attendees thanking her for coordinating and stating their amazement at the stories people remembered and shared.



# KIRTLAND PTA AWARDED NATIONAL PTA SCHOOL OF EXCELLENCE DESIGNATION



The Kirtland PTA was awarded the National PTA School of Excellence designation for 2020-2022 for their accomplishments in building a strong, effective family-school partnership that is enriching the educational experience and overall well-being for all students.

"We worked towards this goal for two years through Covid-19 and unprecedented times," said former President Alison Wuliger. "Our School of Excellence goal was to promote healthy lifestyles at home and school. When Covid-19 hit, focusing on the physical and emotional well-being of our school community became even more important. I am so proud of the work the PTA has done and thrilled our application was accepted."

Only five PTA's in the State of Ohio received this recognition and Kirtland is the only PTA in Lake County.

The PTA created a speaker series with presentations from a psychologist who talked about "Managing Stress and Anxiety through a Wellbeing Approach." They also had a former prosecutor and current Juvenile Court Magistrate who educated parents on internet safety. District guidance counselors reported on social-emotional learning at school and the director of pupil services presented on ways to avoid the "summer slide." A Kirtland parent and yoga instructor, ran two interactive programs—"Family Movement and Music" and "Family Yoga." Both allowed families to exercise and spend quality time together.



2020-2021 Kirtland PTA Board holding School of Excellence Banner. L to R: Amanda Kidd, Kyle Crisci, Nicole Bruckman, Andrea Ribic, Stephanie DiFranco, Allison Wuliger. Not pictured: Sandy Bradshaw, Lisa lanetta, Jennifer Samac.

For Valentine's Day 2020, the PTA focused on being heart healthy. They provided fruits and vegetables for all elementary students. Students could try healthy foods that they might not otherwise have access to or want to sample. In 2021, the PTA focused on hydration. All students received a bottle of water with a "Stay Heart Healthy and Hydrated" sticker, a heart shaped fun straw, and a hand-out with a water tracker and strategies to encourage water consumption.

"When COVID hit, we immediately shared resources to help our families get through that difficult time via our website and social media," said

Wuliger. "This included mental health resources such as mindfulness apps, resources to manage anxiety and depression, COVID resources, digital safety resources, self-help suggestions, fun virtual activities to do from home, and making sure families knew how to receive a free lunch."

Other COVID safe activities included a virtual spirit week, pumpkin carving contest, holiday coloring contest, and virtual canvas painting events. Last spring, the PTA also purchased stencils and painted "activity zones" on the elementary school playground to encourage our kids to stay active and help practice gross motor skills.

To celebrate their achievements, National PTA presented Kirtland Local Schools and Kirtland Local Schools PTA with a certificate and a National PTA School of Excellence banner to hang in their school.

# DISTRICT'S QUALITY PROFILE RELEASED

A successful school district places a high degree of importance on ensuring that all students have the opportunity to reach their full potential inside and outside of the classroom. The 2020-21 Kirtland Local Schools' Quality Profile helps characterize the overall educational value provided by the district in areas that matter to our community. These areas include fiscal stewardship; progress on the district's Strategic Plan; awards and accolades; accomplishments of the Class of 2021; academics at all grade levels; technology; art/music; leadership/enrichment; and parent and community involvement.

Residents can view the Quality Profile on the district website at [www.kirtlandschools.org](http://www.kirtlandschools.org).

