

Superintendent's Office

8542 Byron Center Ave. SW
Byron Center, MI 49315
616.878.6100

Superintendent: Kevin Macina, Ph.D.
Chief Financial Officer: Tamara Powers

2020-2021 Board of Education

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2020-2021 Board of Education Meetings

*District Services Building in the
Board of Education Room.*
*These regular meetings begin at
6:30 pm unless noted otherwise.*

December 7	March 8
January 11	April 12
February 8	May 10
June 28 (6:15 pm)	

Check www.bcpsk12.net
Board page for meeting specifics.

*Work Sessions will be scheduled
as needed.*

*Upon request at least ten (10) days
prior to a meeting, the District shall
make reasonable accommodations
for a person with disabilities to
be able to attend and participate.
Contact the Facilities Director at
616.878.6100.*

*There is a time for public
participation during a meeting as
indicated in the agenda.*

*Official minutes are available and
stored at the administration office.*

Stay informed! Check out
Byron Center Public Schools
on Facebook, Twitter, and the
BCPS app for information
on school closings, upcoming
events, and more!

Working Together for a Successful Year

Thank you, BC community, for your support in a school year with continual changes and challenges. We appreciate the opportunity to work together to find ways to support one another. The partnership between staff, administration, and parents encourages students in all areas of their learning. As we progress through the hurdles presented this school year, which are rapidly coming to the district and families, we reflect on the positives surfacing throughout the school district.

Students, teachers, and staff are connecting in unique ways, both for in-person and virtual learning. BCPS has accepted the challenge presented by COVID-19. In the fall, we saw many teachers take the opportunity to learn from nature and instruct students outdoors. BCHS had outdoor jazz orchestra concerts, like symphony picnic pops, combining the best of instrumental and contemporary music with the freshness of the great outdoors.

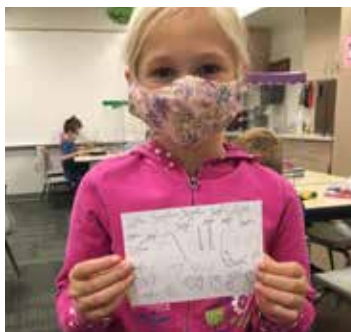
Whether students are learning at school or home, all parents are encouraged to develop learning stations to add valuable experiences to each child's repertoire. For example, one station could be a hands-on center where students build, touch, taste, or experience. Another area could focus on academics, where the student writes a few sentences or paragraphs about the hands-on experience. Physical activity could be a station where they can jump, bounce, roll, or dance. And last but not least, include some artistic creations just for the joy of it!

Byron Center Public Schools continues to be blessed with success. Going into the holiday season, we indeed remain thankful for our community support.

Please check www.bcpsk12.net for many specific details relative to Byron Center Public Schools.



Kevin Macina, Ph.D.
Superintendent of Schools



DISTRICT BOND UPDATE

Construction work is underway, and improvements are being made all over the district. New buses, expansion of the bus garage, a bus wash bay, Early Childhood classroom construction, new science room at West MS, and reroofing are a few of the current projects. Upcoming projects include additional long jump and pole vault, relocation of the shot put and discus, technology department offices relocated to District Services building, additional mechanic's bay, replacement of some original equipment at VSFAC, and replacement of foodservice equipment. Students at WMS and Nickels received new devices in technology. The district also purchased land, and the design of the new 5/6 building is in the works.



HAND2HAND MINISTRY

Hand2Hand kicked off the week of September 28 by packing weekend food bags and praying for 129 students in our schools. Amidst the challenging school year, there is hope in seeing that so many people in our community want students and families to know they are cared for and supported. Hand2Hand works with six area churches in Byron Center to do the weekly work of making sure that weekend bags are packed and delivered each week. Thank you to South Harbor, Rush Creek Bible, St. Sebastian Parish, Corinth Reformed, First Cutlerville CRC, and Woodhaven Reformed for the work done behind the scenes. Anyone interested in getting involved with this ministry may send an email to hand2handbc@gmail.com. Let's let hope fly together in the Byron Center community!"



BYRON CENTER High School

BC TEACHERS ARE MAKING IT WORK!



Byron Center Schools have amazing teachers! During the pandemic, the teachers at all levels have adapted well and continued to effectively educate our students through both online and in-person classes. This has been a difficult season for everyone, but we are thankful that the Byron Center teachers are rising to the challenge!



HOMECOMING 2020

While 2020 has been an unusual year on many fronts, the Byron Center High School Homecoming Week was still a spirited one! Students and staff participated in Spirit Days throughout the week, submitting "Spirit Selfies" for a chance to win daily prizes. From "Tropical Tuesday" to "Tie-Dye Thursday," everyone was encouraged to get in on the fun. The Student Life & Leadership class also organized a school-wide "Polarized Scavenger Hunt" which challenged students to get outside in Byron Center. Students took time outside of school hours to complete a Scavenger Hunt checklist and take a photo to win! The Junior-Senior Powderpuff game was still held on Monday night at Waddell Field—and not even rain could dampen the school spirit of our Powderpuff teams!



On Wednesday, September 30th, the BCHS Homecoming Court was presented in front of a limited audience. Our 2020 Homecoming King was Matthew Garbarino, and the Homecoming Queen was Katelyn LaTour. BCTV broadcasted the ceremony.

FOREIGN EXCHANGE STUDENTS

BCHS welcomes two exchange students this year! Alaia Ruiz de Infante Beltran de Nanclares from the Basque Country in Spain lives with ESL Teacher Christy Tripp's family and Paula Klotz from Germany lives with Mike and Joanne Boorsma. It's a wonderful experience for both of these students and for the Byron Center community. If anyone is interested in hosting an exchange student in the future, please contact Christy Tripp at christytripp@sbcglobal.net. Host families are always needed and hopefully we will be back to full speed next year with ten students from an array of countries.



Alaia Ruiz de Infante

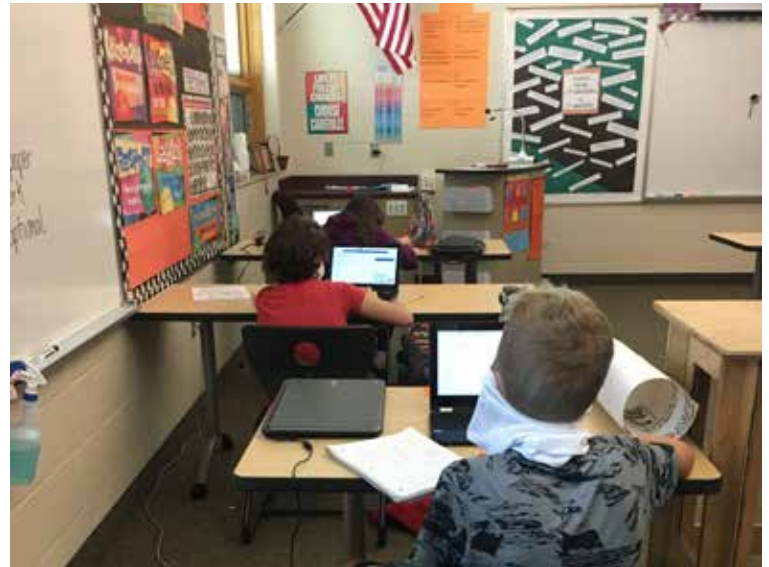


Paula Klotz

WEST Middle School

ART

Students in visual arts are learning about architecture in their latest design challenge. Students are using perspective drawing and the computer-assisted design program TinkerCad to develop structures of the future. Some of these works will be 3D printed and submitted to the 2021 Scholastic Art Awards competition.



MATH

West didn't slow down during our time in the Hybrid model. Students were busy MAP testing in science, English, and math. Getting baseline data in those classes will allow teachers to determine the path of instruction in their studies.

BAND

The word "perseverance" has been spoken a lot in the past several weeks in the WMS Band program. Students and staff have been working hard following safety protocols while still maintaining excellent progress with the students' music education and preparing for future performances.



HISTORY

Students at West Middle School honored first responders and those who tragically lost their lives 19 years ago on September 11, 2001. "Patriot Day is an important day to reflect and remember those who lost loved ones," stated 7th-grade history teacher Ryan Molenkamp. Students spent time in their history classes identifying the specific events of that day. They also discussed changes that have taken place concerning security to keep our country safe.

NICKELS Intermediate School

SELF-PORTRAITS AT SCHOOL

Students have been working very hard in the art room at Nickels making digital illustration self-portraits. Self-portraits look a little different this year; being able to record a bit of their history in visual form is an excellent way for students to express themselves.



Autumn Kartes

This year has been a little different with wearing masks and everything. I found it very fun and interesting, making this piece and doing all the little designs on my mask.



Kaeden Alber

This school year has been hard; wearing a mask is hard, but we know this won't last forever. We can get through this, B.C. Nation!



Fionna Vu

The background I made was based on cherry blossom trees found in Japan because I have always wanted to go to Japan. I also feel like Japan has very beautiful places to see. I made this by tracing my face from a picture. I then took the background I made from looking at pictures of cherry blossoms as a reference.

STUDENTS AT NICKELS MAKE SAFETY A PRIORITY

Students at Nickels have done a fantastic job adapting and staying positive through some of the changes in safety protocols this school year.



NEW BUSES ADDED TO FLEET

The Byron Center transportation department purchased three 2021, 77-passenger buses this past summer through a \$75,000 grant from the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes & Energy division. These grants started so that school districts can replace aging buses with high emissions with more energy-efficient ones.

ELEMENTARY Schools

MARSHALL SHOWS ITS PATRIOTISM

A time-honored morning tradition of raising the flag continues at Marshall Elementary. This year four flag girls from Mrs. Chateau's class perform this important task.

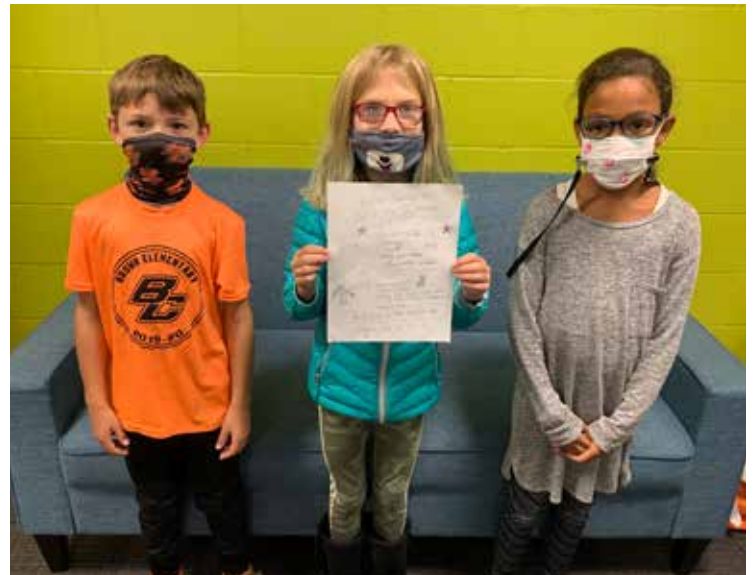


Mrs. Allan's Classroom joined the November election excitement with a vote for *Pete the Cat* or *Curious George*. All the votes were tallied on the whiteboard above the students. *Pete the Cat* was the winner!

BROWN HONORS ALL STUDENTS

The Brown halls look a little different this year. Over the summer, more than 40 canvases now hang around the entry halls of Brown Elementary. The canvases are an outstanding representation of the entire student body at Brown Elementary School. As more pictures come in during the school year, this project will be expanded to cover all of Brown's walls!

Students in Mrs. Newenhouse's STEM class outlined their hands and decorated them with a unique design or saying they thought was important. The hands have been hung outside the STEM room for the entire school to enjoy.



BROWN STUDENTS FOR A GOOD CAUSE

Third-grader Josephine (Jojo) Gurd told her parents she wanted to do something to help others in and around her community. Her parents allowed her imagination to go and follow her passion. Jojo has decided to do a Winter Clothing Drive at Brown Elementary School. Jojo teamed up with her brother, Hudson Gurd, and friend Storey Lambert to collect new winter clothes at Brown.

The collection begins November 30 and ends December 18. Please feel free to drop off new blankets, sleeping bags, winter hats, gloves, coats, and boots in the bins in the Brown entryway.

Jojo is very excited to have a clothing drive for children and adults in need.

COUNTRYSIDE LOVES LEARNING

The Countryside staff and students are excited to be back in school! There are many different things happening now, but one thing remains the same: our love for learning! Students have been getting outside as much as possible to learn and take mask breaks. Last spring,

a Countryside parent, Christie Koester, received a grant from the Whole Kids Foundation Garden Grant. Some of the funds were used to purchase yoga mats, so students could get outside to learn. Also, six shade awnings were added for outside instruction.



Nickolas Opatik working hard at the water's edge.



Fresh air helps Rylee Herrmann come up with creative ideas.



Jackson Buer is super-focused as he reads outside on his yoga mat.



Rylee Yuk enjoys drawing a picture for Miss Ambroso.

MARSHALL GETS CREATIVE

Mrs. Lawton's art class is using the beauty of nature to create lovely pieces of art.



STUDENTS ENJOY NEW PLAYGROUND

Marshall students enjoy new playground equipment that was made possible through a matching grant program.



CELEBRATING OUR DIFFERENCES at BC

BC DIVERSITY TEAM

This fall, Byron Center Public Schools officially rolled out the new BCPS district logo, tag line, and mission statement for diversity:

What makes **YOU** unique
makes **US** strong!



Byron Center's Diversity Team meets online.

Mission Statement:

Creating safe spaces for ALL as we welcome, celebrate, and value our differences. We strive to listen, understand, and learn from one another to grow personally and enhance our community.

The BCPS mission statement was written with input from staff, students, and teachers. The goal was to develop a message that encompasses the staff's passion for welcoming and embracing all those who are connected and will be connected to Byron Center Public Schools. Communication with the community is accomplished through the BCPS District Diversity Team. Throughout the year, the district team meets to discuss and plan activities and report events occurring in each building. A monthly diversity newsletter is also sent out via email and is posted on the BCPS website.



BOOK-A-DAY

Marshall and Brown have been incorporating discussions and conversations revolving around diversity, equity, and inclusion through books! Teachers are reading books to students that include characters who may have similar interests, backgrounds, and experiences as the students. The staff and students have had conversations about the beauty of differences, whether related to skin color, religion, abilities, the hair on our heads, or even names. Literature can present students with different perspectives and ideas that build a community of inclusivity, understanding, and insight.

HEALING OUR NATION



At West Middle School, the 8th-grade English classes have engaged in circles discussing difficult topics. The English teachers tell their students, "To build a stronger community,

one where we feel safe, valued, and included, we need to start talking about some tough topics." To prepare for the 2020 Election, the students discussed how to build community and a safe place in our school for people with different perspectives. Each student thought about and shared their ideas on how to heal a divided country. Students talked about how difficult it is to understand people who think differently due to misinformation, social media, and people's lack of listening to each other. To overcome this, students gave various ideas: stop making jokes about people who are different from you, actually listen to someone who thinks differently, have a polite conversation where you can agree to disagree, read/watch information from a new source.



SPINA BIFIDA DAY

We can't think of a better way to celebrate here at Countryside than being part of our students' fight club, honoring our differences. Zela Henline, a kindergarten student, was born with Spina Bifida. She was also born determined and is the ultimate fighter. As a school, we celebrated our second World Spina Bifida day on October 23 to shine bright for Zela and all those affected by Spina Bifida. We know that what makes YOU unique makes us strong.

Our Countryside students learned and celebrated what makes Zela unique. Spina Bifida is caused by the back not wholly closing, which creates a hole in the back, damaging the spinal cord. The spinal cord is what sends messages from the brain to the arms, hands, legs, and feet.

We may not walk the same or look alike, but EVERYONE is special in their own way. Keep tearing down barriers, Zela - Countryside is fighting with you!



DAY OF THE DEAD

Nickels' staff started the year by discussing diversity and inclusion. They passed around the book, "Teach Me Your Name" to read aloud and discuss the importance of inclusion and acceptance. In an effort to increase exposure to diverse perspectives and traditions, Nickels staff members have access to online lesson plans and resources for monthly celebrations. One celebration that stood out was Day of the Dead or Dia de Los Muertos. Some teachers used reading time to understand the traditions. Others used social studies time to discuss the culture in which those beautiful traditions began. Teachers noticed students spoke up if they celebrated this holiday and allowed for their classmates to gain new perspectives on the holiday!



This Cultures Day event was pre-COVID.

CULTURES DAY

Both Room to Bloom and the first graders at Brown celebrated Zambian Independence Day!

Room to Bloom invited Mr. Sibalwa to present his hometown in Zambia, Africa, for their February 2020 Cultures Celebration. Mr. Sibalwa shared a unique story with the children and brought several items to the classroom from his home country. The children enjoyed seeing Zambian money and making dresses and headbands from African printed fabric. Each child enjoyed playing music on an African instrument called a tongo while the others danced.

Mrs. Issa's first-grade class at Brown celebrated by reading a Zambian folk-tale, hearing stories about Zambia, and even learning a bit about the country through a classmate's presentation.

Exploring other cultures is a great way to help children see how we are all different yet similar in many ways.



BCHS staff is united in welcoming all students. The shirts say "Welcome" in four of the 13 languages spoken by BC families.

ONLINE Learning

K-4 ONLINE LEARNING

The Byron Center elementary school students have been hard at work! All the K-4 virtual learning students in the district work with the same grade-level teacher. Students are engaged in reading, writing, and math lessons daily and science and social studies throughout the week. They also meet in one-on-one, small, and whole-group meetings with their virtual teachers. While learning virtually, the students still take part in the fun dress up and spirit week activities. Pictured below are some kindergarten students having a great time meeting as a class on pajama day during spirit week. Along with dressing up, they have been working on letter sounds and beginning sight words!

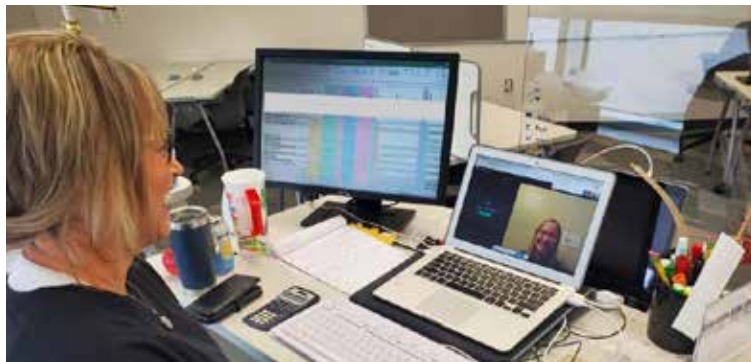


NICKELS

5th and 6th-grade virtual students participated in a Halloween costume contest by submitting pictures of themselves in their costumes. They also voted on a REACH representative from their virtual classroom that exemplified the REACH characteristics: R=Respect E=Effort A=Attitude C=Collaborate H=Heart.

WEST MIDDLE

The WMS BC Virtual students have been working hard this semester! 7th and 8th-grade virtual students use an online learning platform called Edgenuity to power them through their virtual learning journey. Students are engaged in daily lessons in history, science, math, English language arts, and elective courses. They are also learning the importance of time management, self-accountability, and responsibility. Students meet one-on-one and in small groups with their virtual teacher.



HIGH SCHOOL

Students in the BC virtual program meet weekly with their mentor to discuss weekly goals. Each Monday, 76 students gather in small groups to learn new processes and celebrate successes such as course completion or meeting progress milestones.

NUTRITION Services

FREE SCHOOL MEALS FOR ALL STUDENTS FOR THE ENTIRE 2020-21 SCHOOL YEAR



The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced on August 31, 2020, that ALL schools would be able to serve free meals to ALL students! As of October 9, 2020, the USDA announced that it extended the Free School Meals for All Students program for the entire 2020-21 school year. Please visit [USDA Free School Meals For All Students Extended through June 30, 2021](#), to read the USDA press release. This program will ensure that safe and delicious meals reach all students—whether they are

learning in the classroom or virtually at home. Please visit the BCPS Nutrition Services web page to find out more information on school meal availability and your student's chosen learning option.

As Byron Center Public Schools and the country continue to put students' health and well-being at the forefront, BCPS Nutrition Services has kept pace. We have made many changes and adhered to the strictest Kent County Health Department recommendations on the packaging and serving meals to minimize touchpoints. Your BCPS Nutrition Services will continue to put students' health and nutritional needs first as we all work through the COVID-19 pandemic. Nutrition Services wants parents and students to know the school meals they are receiving are safe, healthy, and delicious.

For questions or concerns regarding school meals, please email nutritionservices@bcpsk12.net.



GRAB A FREE BREAKFAST PACK TO GO

If you don't have time in the morning or your student is not hungry when they wake up, know that a variety of your student's favorite Kellogg's and General Mills breakfast items are available every morning for FREE. Students may choose ice-cold 1% TruMoo chocolate milk or 1% Country Fresh white milk with the breakfast packs. These breakfast packs are FREE for all students. Breakfast packs items are shelf-stable and can be enjoyed by students any time of day.

Eating breakfast helps a student's academic performance (CDC). Make their day a success and encourage your student to grab a free breakfast! It's good for their brain!

HELP WANTED

NUTRITION SERVICE SUBSTITUTE WORKERS NEEDED

BCPS Nutrition Services is looking for substitute workers. It is a great way to earn money for the holidays while your student is in school. You choose the days you want to work. Competitive hourly wage, no weekends, no holidays, a fast-paced environment, finished by 2 pm, and you get to interact with students! Experience helpful but not necessary. Please contact Nutritionservices@bcpsk12.net or call Kerri Saltzgaber at 616.878.6115 to sign up to be a substitute or get more information.



BYRON CENTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
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ROOM TO BLOOM AT THE EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER

At Room to Bloom, we love getting the children outside to play in all sorts of weather. Playing outside is great for a child’s health, as well as their large motor development. Finding caterpillars and “roly-polys” are amazing treasures that are priceless in the world of the young child. By exploring the outdoors, a child’s confidence grows as well as their running, skipping, and hopping skills, which all lead to a well-balanced educational experience. We love the playgrounds at our building and take full advantage of the nearby athletic fields. Watching the little ones run on the track is a glimpse of the future athletes they’ll become.

