



The Bridge

Serving the students of the Bellbrook-Sugarcreek communities since 1976

Bellbrook High School
Bellbrook Middle School
Bell Creek Intermediate
Stephen Bell Elementary
St. Pierre Education Center

Our Mission: Bellbrook-Sugarcreek Schools empowers our learning community to: Be responsible decision-makers and effective problem-solvers; Persevere in the achievement of life goals; Contribute to communities locally and beyond; and Embrace learning as a lifelong process

Spring 2019
Volume 42 Issue 3

BHS athletes make commitments official Page 3 Facts about the May 7th Replacement Levy Page 4
Bellbrook-Sugarcreek Schools income and operating funds Page 5 State funding system still flawed Page 6

Bellbrook-Sugarcreek Schools Places Operating Levy on May 7 Ballot – Issue 4

The Bellbrook-Sugarcreek Schools Board of Education unanimously voted to place a 7.5-mill continuing replacement operating levy on the May 7, 2019, ballot. This is due to the burdensome unfunded and under-funded man-

dates, the inadequacy of the state funding system and rising costs for our school district. The district only receives 27 percent of its funding from the state of Ohio, compared to the state average of 44 percent. This 27 percent also ranks us third lowest in Greene County.



These funds will be used to continue our excellent and innovative programs, purchase technology devices and infrastructure, replace old buses, purchase curriculum resources, and continue to provide competitive salaries to attract and keep great teachers and staff. We believe that we have been good stewards of our taxpayers' money. For example, we

made a reduction in expenses of \$500,000 before the start of this school year. We are also in the second year of implementing an energy-saving program that has saved the district about \$140,000 each of the past two years.

This levy will cost the taxpayer an additional \$17.59 per month, or \$211.13 annually, per \$100,000 of property value. Additional information can be found on the Bellbrook-Sugarcreek Schools' website (About Us page, then Levy Info). The direct link is www.sugarcreek.k12.oh.us/LevyInformation.aspx.

Bellbrook-Sugarcreek Schools An investment in our schools is an investment in our community

Bellbrook-Sugarcreek Schools is worth the investment. It is not only one of the top districts in the Miami Valley, but one of the top in the state! The district received an "A" on the 2018 Ohio School Report Card, one of only 28 districts in the entire state to receive this grade. The graduation rate of 96.4 percent earned a component grade of "A," and 100 percent of third-graders met the Third Grade Reading Guarantee. Since 2007, Bellbrook High School has been nationally recognized by U.S. News & World Report, Newsweek and/or The Washington Post

Continued on Page 2

Issue #4
Invest in our kids' future! Remember to vote on May 7!

2018-19 School Calendar

Apr. 19 - No school
 Apr. 26 - Two-hour early dismissal
 May 15 - Senior Awards
 May 18 - Graduation 5 pm - Trent Arena
 May 23 - 1-hour early dismissal K-12
 May 23 - Last Day for Students

Check out the 2019-20 School Calendar at www.sugarcreek.k12.oh.us/calendar.aspx.

Search for Students With Disabilities

Bellbrook-Sugarcreek Schools is participating in an effort to identify and locate all children from 3 to 21 years of age who may have disabilities. For more information please contact Tonya Wilson, Director of Special Education and Preschool, at 848-6251.

BCI working to become certified as a Heart Safe School

Bell Creek Intermediate (BCI) hopes to soon earn accreditation as a Heart Safe School through the Sudden Arrhythmia Death Syndromes (SADS) Foundation! Because students, teachers, staff, family and community members may be in the school on any given day, BCI is making a focused effort toward cardiac-arrest preparedness.

BCI Nurse Eileen Malas received a grant from the Bellbrook-Sugarcreek Education Foundation (BSEF) for the purchase of cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) manikins and automated external defibrillator (AED) trainers, to train 14 adult staff members in CPR. In addition, 187 fifth-grade students will receive instruction in "hands-on only" CPR.

Emergency-response and evacuation drills for cardiac emergencies have been organized, so students and staff know what to do in the event of such an emergency. For more information on the accreditation program, visit www.StopSADS.org/HSSA.



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"Stop waiting, get moving!"

HotMetalDumpsters@gmail.com (937) 478-3630 Amanda Braydich, Owner	Hot Metal Dumpsters P.O. Box 225 Waynesville, Ohio 45068
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"Let's get this project started!"

Bellbrook-Sugarcreek Schools Board of Education Members Honored

Frantz and Betz together have served 50 years!

Two members of the Bellbrook-Sugarcreek Schools Board of Education (BOE) recently received local and state recognition for their dedication and long-term service to the school community.

Mary Frantz has been a BOE member for 30 years, and Elizabeth (Liz) Betz for 20. Both were graciously thanked for their service and given certificates during their regular board meeting in February 2019. Superintendent of Schools Dr. Douglas A. Cozad said, "On behalf of the administrative team, teachers, staff and students, it is my privilege to say thank you for your service."

Current board members include Mrs. Betz, David Carpenter, Mrs. Frantz, Kathy Kingston and Virginia Slouffman.



As you drive through the community, you may see our new spirit signs, designed to help foster school spirit in our students and to increase our social media presence. Kids want to show their pride for their schools!

Continued from Cover: Investment

as one of America's Best High Schools. Bellbrook Middle School is also recognized by both National Forum Schools to Watch® and Ohio Schools to Watch. Bell Creek Intermediate received a Purple Star Award (friendly to military families) by the Ohio Department of Education in 2018. Stephen Bell Elementary received a grade of "A" on the Ohio School Report Card.

Bellbrook-Sugarcreek Schools spends around \$650 less per student than the state average and about \$130 less than similar districts. It is clear that we truly have a great school district! It is also evident that we cannot do it alone. We strongly believe education is a high priority for our families in the community. This partnership between schools and community truly creates a great place to live and raise a family. A community is only as strong as its schools. Your investment will continue to build a strong community, through our strong school system!

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 Bellbrook-Sugarcreek Schools
 3757 Upper Bellbrook Rd.
 Bellbrook, Ohio 45305

District Contract Info

District Super Number

848-5001 (to reach any school)

Bellbrook-Sugarcreek Schools' Board of Education Office

3757 Upper Bellbrook Rd, Bellbrook, OH 45305
 P: 848-6251/848-4800 Twitter: @Bellbrookschool

Bellbrook High School

3737 Upper Bellbrook Rd, Bellbrook, OH 45305
 P: 848-3737 Twitter: @Bellbrook_HS

Bellbrook Middle School

3600 Feedwire Rd, Bellbrook, OH 45305
 P: 848-2141 Twitter: @Bellbrook_MS

Bell Creek Intermediate

3777 Upper Bellbrook Rd, Bellbrook, OH 45305
 P: 848-3777 Twitter: @BellbrookBCI

Stephen Bell Elementary

4122 N. Linda Dr., Bellbrook, OH 45305
 P: 848-7831 Twitter: @BellbrookSBE

St. Pierre Education Center

3757 Upper Bellbrook Rd, Bellbrook, OH 45305
 P: 848-3757

Bellbrook-Sugarcreek Schools' Honors

The Washington Post

— THE HIGH SCHOOL CHALLENGE —

2011-2017

Ranked 39th in Ohio and
 in the top 10% in the USA!

Newsweek
 AMERICA'S BEST
HIGH SCHOOLS



**2007, 2008,
 2012-2018**



BCI 2018



BHS Athletes Make College Commitments Official

Twelve Bellbrook High School (BHS) students signed national letters of intent to play collegiate sports! The senior athletes signed their letters of intent in front of an energetic crowd during halftime at a varsity basketball game on February 12, 2019. Congratulations to:

- Hayden Bullock: football, Div. I United States Air Force Academy
- Clay Cavanaugh: cross country/track, Div. III Muskingum University
 - Jade Edwards: soccer, Div. III Piedmont College
 - Amira Faulkner: women's triathlon, Div. III Trine University
- Hayden Greene: basketball, Div. II Pasco-Hernando State College
 - Abby Judge: soccer, Div. III Piedmont College
 - Ethan Knisley: football, Div. III University of Mount Union
- Brendan Labensky: football, Div. III Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology
 - Kira Merkle: volleyball, Div. II Ferris State University
- Sara Rogers: volleyball, Div. III Case Western Reserve University
 - Bethany Ullring: volleyball, Div. III Trine University
 - Jared Zacharias: soccer, Div. II Cedarville University

Stephen Bell Elementary's First Literacy Lock-In a Big Hit!

Over 150 students in kindergarten through second grade participated in their school's first literacy lock-in. Reading is a fundamental skill that can define the academic success of students. Kids at Stephen Bell spent time after school on Valentine's Day "locked in," enjoying many activities to boost their literacy skills.

Stephen Bell Librarian Stephanie Vukovich came up with the idea of the lock-in as a fundraiser to purchase new books for classroom libraries, ensuring that students have access to quality reading materials. The cost to participate was \$10 per stu-

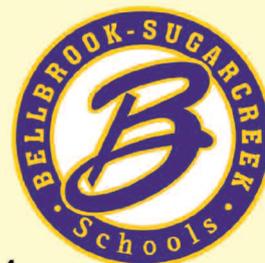
dent, and all proceeds went toward books and materials.

The Valentine's Day-themed activities included a scavenger hunt, a sing-along, bingo and an escape room, in which students worked collaboratively to solve puzzles. Every activity ended with a "read-along" session.

Principal of Stephen Bell Elementary Ginger Keeton said, "Our librarian, Mrs. Vukovich, continues to implement creative ways to increase love for reading. Our students eagerly participated and enjoyed reading!"



Strong Schools, Strong Community



Facts about the May 7th Replacement Levy - Issue 4

Bellbrook-Sugarcreek Schools has a
7.5 mill continuing replacement operating levy on the ballot May 7.

**Passage of this levy will erase the \$3.2 million deficit projected for 2021-22
in the 5-Year Forecast.**

Treasurer Receives Awards!

Bellbrook-Sugarcreek Local Schools has received the Ohio Auditor of State Award five years in a row! According to Kevin Liming, Treasurer/CFO, the requirements to qualify for the award are both timely financial reporting in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and compliance with all applicable laws for each fiscal year. Liming said, "As chief fiscal officer of the district I am committed to wise fiscal management. Achieving continual clean audits and consistently receiving these awards, prove that our treasurer's office and leadership team are indeed good fiscal stewards of taxpayer dollars."

The Auditor of State's office is responsible for auditing all public entities in Ohio. Its mission is to protect Ohioans' tax dollars.

The Bellbrook-Sugarcreek Schools are a great value at a moderate cost. We spend around \$650 less per student than the state average and about \$130 less than similar districts. We are one of Ohio's top school systems! We achieved an "A" on the 2018 Ohio School Report Card and was one of only 28 districts in the state to receive this grade!

Expenditure Per Pupil

Ohio	\$11,603
Similar Districts	\$11,082
Bellbrook-Sugarcreek	\$10,948

2016-17 latest available comparison number.

Additional Cost

\$211.13 per
\$100,000 of
appraised property
value annually, or
\$17.59 per month.

This levy is critical to maintain our excellent schools, programs, and fund our day-to-day operations. Continuing to support our schools will protect the investment in our students. Every dollar remains local and will support quality teaching and educational excellence, maintain current operating expenses, and help fund extracurricular activities.

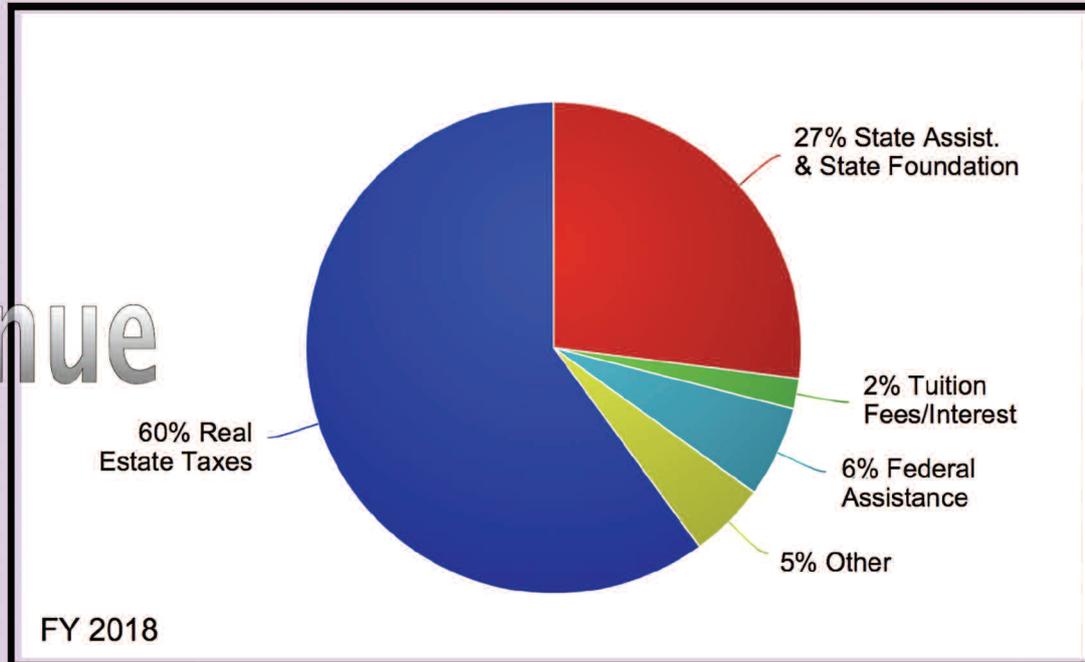
Please Remember to Vote on May 7th!

Polls are open 6:30 am to 7:30 pm

Where the Money Comes From & How Operating Funds are Utilized

Continued community support will help avoid additional cutbacks.

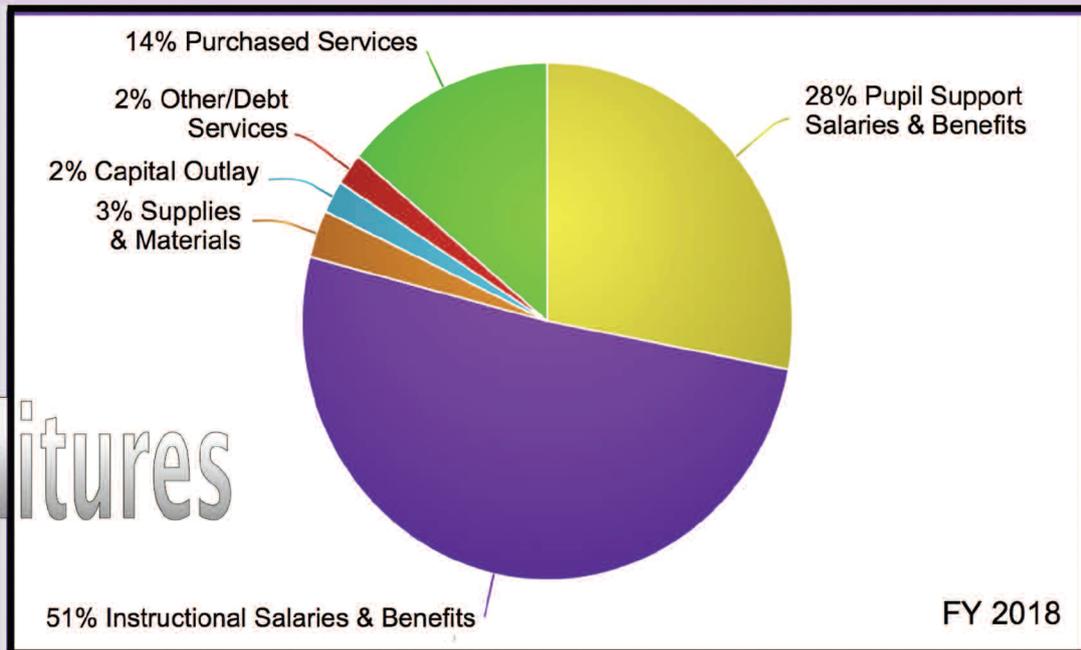
Revenue



Only 27% of revenue comes from the State of Ohio.

Passage of this levy will allow the district to maintain its current operating budget.

Expenditures



As a percentage of its total budget, Bellbrook-Sugarcreek Schools spends less than the state average on salaries and benefits.

District & Levy Did You Know:

- * Bellbrook High School has received national acclaim for being a top high school in the United States!
- * Bellbrook Middle School has been repeatedly named a Top-Rated School to Watch!
- * Bell Creek Intermediate received a Purple Star Award!
- * Stephen Bell Elementary received an "A" on the 2018 Ohio School Report Card!
- * The former Sugarcreek Elementary School building is being utilized by community organizations such as the Bellbrook-Sugarcreek Family Resource Center, the Bellbrook-Sugarcreek Chamber of Commerce, Sovereign Grace Church, Girl Scouts and the Bellbrook Amateur Radio Club, which engages in emergency preparedness and public service.
- * The district had to pay \$3.2 million on unfunded or underfunded state and federal mandates in just the 2017-18 school-year. Under state law we, as a public institution, must admit ALL students between the ages of 6 and 18 who are considered residents in our district. We may not pick and choose; we educate all of them. Particular state mandates apply to students under various categories, and not all of the costs are funded. These include, but are not limited to, special education, preschool special education, English as a second language, gifted services and College Credit Plus.
- * A levy passed in 2019 would not be collected until 2020.
- * The assessed value of the property in the school district has TRIPLED from \$171 million in 1994 to \$565 million in 2018! This is an increase of 330 percent.
- * Funding from the state is based on the property wealth of a district. The higher the property values in a community, the lower the percentage of funding it gets from the state. The state believes that communities like ours have a better ability to pay.
- * Even with all of the new housing in our area, the school district receives only a minimal amount of new money. In calendar year 2018, this amounted to about 1 percent of our \$28 million budget.
- * Although the inflationary costs of education increase, the education funding is fixed and inflexible. Many costs – such as consumer goods, utilities, legal requirements, unfunded mandates and technology – are out of the control of local school boards. Education is a personnel-intensive business; people

State Funding System Still Flawed

Over 20 years ago, the Ohio Supreme Court determined our funding system for public schools to be unconstitutional. The decision was rendered multiple times; in its last ruling, the court noted that it had ruled multiple times and would not be involved further. The two tenets of the decision were equity and adequacy for funding all Ohio students, and an overreliance on local property taxes. These flaws still exist. Ohio's legislature and governor have given nothing more than indifference to the issue, and almost 70 percent of the burden/responsibility to fund Bellbrook-Sugarcreek Schools falls to the local taxpayers. Shame on the state! However, until the archaic system changes, it also means that the quality of curricular programming, staffing and fulfilling the district's mission become the decision of our community.

Editorial by Dr. Jeff Lewis
Manager of Business

teach our young citizens.

Strong School-Community Partnership Makes a Great Place to Live and Work

It's no secret that Bellbrook-Sugarcreek Schools is a top-ranked school district in the state of Ohio. Our reputation as such is a major draw for prospective residents and employees. Strong schools, in combination with a great community, are pulling many Bellbrook High School (BHS) graduates back to the district to serve as faculty and staff. Out of 290 employees, 56 certified and support-staff members are BHS graduates. Bellbrook Middle School Principal Jenness Sigman said, "We are fortunate that we get to pick from the best when it comes to hiring staff, because people look at our district as a career destination, not a stepping stone."

Three Kinds of Levies for Schools

There are three kinds of levies for schools. An OPERATING levy is the major source of school funding necessary for daily operations, instruction and support of educational programs. A BOND levy provides funds that can only be used for construction/renovation of buildings and equipment or furnishings. Money from a PERMANENT-IMPROVEMENT levy (also called a capital-improvement levy) may only be used for purchases such as school buses, computers and classroom equipment, as well as building/vehicle/bus/property maintenance and repairs.

We have an OPERATING levy on the May 7, 2019, ballot.

2018 Area Tax Costs

How do the costs of real estate taxes, school district income taxes and city income tax compare in surrounding districts?

City/Village/Township	(1) Real Estate Taxes	(2) City Income Tax	(3) School District Income Tax	Total
Sugarcreek Township	\$2,334.29	0	0	\$2,334.29
Bellbrook City	\$2,385.90	0	0	\$2,385.90
Beavercreek City	\$2,429.39	0	0	\$2,429.39
Fairborn City	\$1,954.49	\$ 750.00	\$250.00	\$2,954.49
Xenia City	\$1,718.81	\$1,125.00	\$250.00	\$3,093.81
Yellow Springs	\$2,132.55	\$ 750.00	\$500.00	\$3,382.55
Centerville City	\$2,505.96	\$1,125.00	0	\$3,630.96
Kettering City	\$2,648.19	\$1,125.00	0	\$3,773.19
Oakwood City	\$3,046.44	\$1,250.00	0	\$4,296.44

(1) Home value of \$100K. Real Estate includes taxes for county, City/Village, School, Twp, /Board of Health & Vocational School.

(2) Estimated earned income \$50K in the city/Village of residence. (If income is earned in other than the place of residence, that City's earnings rate would apply and thus change the total cost.)

(3) This is if the school district imposes an income tax above the property tax amount. Based on \$50K with one personal, one spouse, and one dependent exemption.

Income and school district averages are based on the number of the cities/villages with taxes.

Taxes are based on the 2017 property tax rate paid in 2018.

2017 Tax Rates--Montgomery County--http://www.mcoho.org/Taxation_Rate_2017_payable_2018_.pdf

2018 Tax Rates--Greene County--<http://www.co.greene.oh.us/DocumentCenter/View/17279/2017-Tax-Rate-Sheet-PDF>

Information compiled from City of Beavercreek Spring 2019 Newsletter and/or Greene and Montgomery Co. Tax documents



"I am so grateful to call myself a second-generation Bellbrook graduate and a third-generation Bellbrook business owner. I returned home after 19 years of living in Kansas City, Missouri. When we made the important decision of where we would raise our five children, it came down to finding a great place to call home, where our children would receive a quality education. That's why we are here, and that's why we will stay." - **Gwen Grushon-Price**



"Eight years ago we decided to relocate our home and dental practice to Bellbrook, Ohio, for many reasons. Some of our children participated in and graduated from Bellbrook-Sugarcreek Schools. We witnessed a school district that recognized that genius comes in many styles and forms, which produces excellent student results. We also appreciate the responsible local government." - **Dr. & Mrs. Bill Dahling**



"Bellbrook-Sugarcreek Schools, its staff and even the students themselves are great partners with the Bellbrook-Sugarcreek Family Resource Center (FRC). They often work in partnership with the FRC to assure that needs for students are met. This level of collaboration – schools with a local agency – is important and lacking in nearly every community except this one. Students and families are fortunate to have school leadership and teachers who value the students and community to such an extent, to partner together toward student success." - **Susan Lopez, Executive Director Bellbrook-Sugarcreek Family Resource Center**



"A good school system and a supporting community will always be two of the major factors determining home values." - **Ron Folkerth**



"This school system is a great place to work and a great place to grow up! As a student here, I remember feeling that the adults I was around cared deeply about me, as a student and as a person. This is one reason I chose to work in the great district I graduated from. Today we strive to create that same rich student experience. The devotion that our staff has for each other and for the students whom we serve makes this a great place to work and a great place to grow up!" - **Charlie O'Dell (BHS Athletic Director - Class of 2002)**



"During the 38 years we have lived in the Bellbrook-Sugarcreek community, we've seen monumental changes and growth. The quality of our schools has developed to the point at which they now provide one of the best educations in the state! Bellbrook-Sugarcreek Schools guided my three boys into great futures. Families move into this community because of the great school system. We must continue the excellence!" - **Jon & Chris Ewing**

Bellbrook-Sugarcreek Schools
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Bellbrook-Sugarcreek Schools

Just Bead It: Business is booming at Middle School

The business "Just Bead It" is a hit at Bellbrook Middle School (BMS)! Intervention Specialist Michelle McDermott has students producing products and selling them as part of their work-study class. Students are putting their creative talents to use, by making necklaces, bracelets, key chains and lanyards from handmade beads that they have the opportunity to design and make.



According to BMS Principal Jenness Sigman, the work-study program provides support and training to students, while promoting work and social skills.

The items that the students produce are on display and for sale in the BMS office. The most popular items are the ID-badge lanyards. Just Bead It takes special orders upon request.



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Bellbrook Resident

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BONUS BRIDGE ARTICLES!

Click on this QR Code (download a QR code reader app) to go to The Bridge webpage (or search Bridge on the BSS website) for articles about BHS Swimming, Middle School Science and more!



Spirit Wear

BellbrookEagles.com

Women's, Professional, Vintage,
Children's and More...



Check out our Social Media Hub at www.sugarcreek.k12.oh.us

BMS Sixth-Grader Creates Piece About Peace in Lions Clubs International Contest

Diana Smith, a sixth-grade student at Bellbrook Middle School (BMS), entered an annual Peace Poster art contest for kids, sponsored by Lions Clubs International. Diana's artistic talents played a role in winning the local (Bellbrook) competition. Her poster was then entered in the district competition. From among the

entries of 61 other clubs in the district, Diana's was once again named the winner!

According to Lions Clubs International, this is the 31st year that Lions Clubs around the world have been sponsoring the art contest with schools and youth groups. Creating peace posters gives children



everywhere the chance to express their visions of peace and inspire the world through art and creativity.

Science Continues to Soar!

Seventh-graders at Bellbrook Middle School (BMS) wrapped up their environmental-science unit with guest speakers Kendra Schide and Mike Vaughn. A Chief Naturalist at the Bellbrook-Sugarcreek Park District, Kendra Schide explained the differences among species that are in danger of extinction, threatened species that are likely to become endangered in the foreseeable future and those that are extinct (have already died out). Mike Vaughn, an 88th Air Base Wing Civil Engineer with outstanding achievements in the field of environmental conservation, spoke about environmental-science career opportunities and the dangers of invasive species. An invasive species can be any kind of living organism – such as an amphibian, plant, insect, fish, fungus or bacterium – that is not native to an ecosystem and causes harm. One of Mr. Vaughn's passions is teaching future environmental leaders.

Science teachers Jennifer St.Pierre (BMS) and Dave Lambright (Bellbrook High School) coordinated the 2018-19 Bellbrook-Sugarcreek Schools District Science Fair. Always a popular event, it was a huge success! Sixty-seven students participated, 37 of whom earned Superior ratings and qualified to advance to West District Science Day.

BMS eighth-grade students participating in Kids 'N Science were introduced to the world of genetics by Katlin Peck, a Clinical Program Development Analyst and Genetic Counselor for eviCore healthcare. She led an activity on strawberry DNA extraction.

Kids 'N Science students also visited the Boonshoft Museum of Discovery for a self-tour and planetarium show about telescopes titled "Two Small Pieces of Glass." They learned the history of the telescope, types of telescopes and how they work. Students then built their own telescopes.



Civil engineer and BHS graduate Mike Vaughn speaks to students about environmental-science careers and invasive species.



Bellbrook-Sugarcreek Park District Chief Naturalist Kendra Schide addresses students regarding extinct and endangered animals.

Swimmers Shine at District Swim Meet

Congratulations to Nitika Arora, Emmalee Benson, Cloe Caldwell, Amira Faulkner and Avarie Faulkner, who recently competed at the girls' Southwest District swim meet! After

some great competitive swims, the team finished in 24th place.

Cam Bybee, Carter Caldwell, Zach Hulett, Adam Johnson and Keenan McCormick swam at the boys'

Southwest District swim meet in mid-February 2019. The team had many personal bests! Cam qualified for the state meet in the 500-meter freestyle; he placed 24th at state.

Science Fair & Kids 'N Science Pics

